Philippians

A Study of Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Echo, the college ministry of First Evangelical Free Church

Spring 2006

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Philippians

Semester Summary for Echo Discipleship Groups*
Spring 2006

*****This schedule may not be accurate to the date. We recognize that some groups will start earlier and others later. We've left you a column to fill in the actual date for your group so you know how to prepare. Note that we have the study ending early – this is so you can make up time if you started late. We really want everyone to finish the book.

Study #	Potential Week	Actual Week	Passage
1	Jan. 23		Reconnect w/group
2	Jan. 30		Overview
3	Feb. 6		Phil. 1:1-11
4	Feb. 13		Phil. 1:12-18
5	Feb. 20		Phil. 1:19-30
6	Feb. 27		Phil. 2:1-11
7	Mar. 6		Phil. 2:12-18
	Mar. 13		Spring Break
8	Mar. 20		Phil. 2:19-30
9	Mar. 27		Phil. 3:1-21
10	Apr. 3		Phil. 4:1-9
11	Apr. 10		Phil. 4:10-23
	Apr. 17		Hang Out
	Apr. 24		

A note on how this study is set up:
This study has been prepared to guide you in your study of God's Word. It is a guide. You may find that the questions provided stir your heart and cause you ask more questions. The passages provided may lead you to other places in Scripture. That's awesome! That is our hope.

We have divided the study into five days each week. This is to help you not be overwhelmed and to help you spend time with God regularly.

Echo exists to glorify God by making disciples transformed by God who live to transform their world. Our desire for this study is that it would truly transform your life. If this study only leads to more knowledge but no life-change, that would be pretty disappointing. But, we believe that how we think is intimately connected to how we live. We want to think rightly about God, ourselves, and the world. We pray that this study helps you to think rightly and to live a life of greater love for God and others.

Be sure to review the following pages (3-4). They will help you as you dive into the Scripture as we look at the Book of Philippians. A book that we recommend for further helps is *How to Study the Bible* by Kay Arthur.

Websites you'll use (but are not limited to) in this study:
www.Biblegateway.com For word searches and other tools. Use the New American Standard Bible.
www.studylight.org/lex/ A great lexicon for word studies (definitions of words, etc.) Click on Hebrew for the Old Testament, and Greek for the New Testament.
www.dictionary.com For word studies/definitions
www.webster.com Good ol' Webster (not to be confused with the lil' guy on TV in the 80s).

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE FOR TRANSFORMATION

The Bible is the only book we'll ever read that is inspired by the one true, living God. Second Timothy tells us that it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." No other book has been as controversial or changed as many lives. The Bible provides us with a way to know God and to become more and more like Jesus Christ. One of the most amazing things about the Bible is that it is readable. Certainly, there are confusing and disturbing passages but that does not mean that we can't understand the true meaning of the text. Perhaps the best way to read and understand the Bible is to study it inductively.

To inductively study the Bible is to let the Bible interpret itself. When we study the Bible inductively we seek to put aside our own preconceived notions and discover what the Bible really says. For every passage in the Bible there is one meaning and intent for the original audience. To handle God's word correctly and avoid wrong thinking and wrong living we want to know what the Bible really says -- not what we think it says or what we want it to say. The place to start is with the Inductive Bible Study Method.

The Heart of Inductive Bible Study

Inductive Bible Study is made up of three steps:

1. **Observation -** What do I see?
2. **Interpretation -** What does it mean?
3. **Application -** What do I do?

Step One: Observation (What do I see?)

The hardest part about the observation stage is not jumping too quickly to interpretation. When making observations you record exactly what you see in the text. Here's an example of what to do and what not to do:

> *For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.* 1 Corinthians 1:18
>
> An ***incorrect*** observation of this passage is:
> "Non-Christians can't understand the word."
>
> A ***correct*** observation of this passage is:
> "To those who are perishing the word of the cross is foolishness."

The *incorrect* observation is an interpretation but the correct observation simply records what the passage says. Discipline yourself to make good observations so that your interpretation will be correct. **When making observations, look for:**

People	Places	Times	Promises	Commands	Lists
Relationships	Contrasts	Context	Key Words	Progressions	
Questions	Answers	Details	Warnings	Repeating words	
Cause/Effect	Comparisons	Verb Tense	Themes		
Emphasis	Exhortations	What's not said			

Always ask: Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?

Step Two: Interpretation (What does it mean?)

Correct interpretation begins with a commitment to fact that there can only be one right interpretation. There can be many applications but only one correct interpretation. This requires thorough observation.

In the interpretation stage you look for the following:

Cross-references: These are the little numbers or letters that appear next to a word in the passage. In the margin or at the bottom of the page you will see that this letter is leading you to look up other passages. Look these up to see what other passages in the Bible say about this word/concept/teaching.

Context: The context is the text that surrounds the passage. What precedes and follows your reading? Scripture should always be interpreted in light of the context of the entire Bible.

Definitions: Look up the meaning of words in a dictionary. If you have a Dictionary of New and Old Testament words you will get an even better understanding. Warning: sometimes definitions change over time. Example: "Bad" – in the 70s this word also meant good.

Outside insight: At this stage you can use outside resources to help you gain great understanding. Here are few sources to consider:

1. **Commentaries** -- it's best to look at least two so that you have multiple perspectives. Check out www.soniclight.com for a commentary on every book of the Bible.
2. **Bible Dictionaries:** The New International Dictionary of the Bible, Douglas & Tenney
3. **Word Studies**: The Complete Word Study New Testament, Zodhiates and the Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words/Old Testament Words
4. **Theological works**: New Dictionary of Theology, IVP; Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem; The Concise Evangelical Dictionary of Theology
5. **A Concordance:** Strong's Exhaustive or go to www.biblegateway.com -- a concordance allows you to see every time a particular word appears in the Bible.
6. **The World Wide Web:** You can find most of the tools listed above on the www. Some really helpful sites: biblegateway.com; bible.crosswalk.com; seekgod.org; bible.org; soniclight.com

Step Three: Application (What do I do?)

This is the most important step of Inductive Bible Study. What good is studying the Bible if we don't apply it to our lives?

Helpful applications will always be measurable and doable.

An unhelpful application:
"I'm going to love more."

A helpful application:
"By Friday I will clean the apartment for my roommates."

Philippians

WEEK TWO: Overview of Philippians

This week you will read the entire book of Philippians several times to get a broad overview. It may seem redundant, but ask the Lord for a tender heart and patience as you read. Don't worry about details so much since you will delve in more specifically in the next couple of weeks.

Day One

Pray: Ask God to reveal Himself to you today through His Word.

Read: Read through the whole book of Philippians in one sitting. Don't be too analytical.

Record: Record any thoughts or prayers after reading today.

Day Two

Pray.

Read: Use a study Bible or go online to http://bible.crosswalk.com/Dictionaries/BakersEvangelicalDictionary/bed.cgi?number=T553 to read some history of the book of Philippians.
Read through the book again, if you have time.

Record:
Who is the author?

Who is the audience? What name(s) does the author use to the describe them?

What were the circumstances under which the author was writing?

Day Three

Pray.

Read: Read through the whole book of Philippians again. This time make a list of repeated themes. What ideas and concepts do you see coming up repeatedly.

Apply: What will you apply to your life today from your reading of Philippians? Record it here.

Day Four

Pray: Ask God to give you a fresh look at Philippians today.

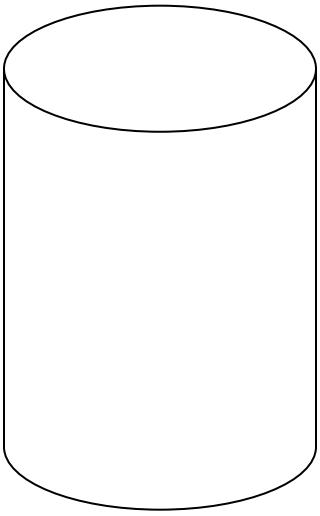
Read: Again, we'll read through the whole book. Don't give up. I know preachers who will not preach a book until they have read it through at least 50 times!

Record: All the repeated words. Why is it significant that these words are repeated?

Apply: What will you apply to your life today from your reading of Philippians? Record it here.

Day Five

Joy is a recurring theme throughout the book of Philippians. Paul's heart was full of joy as he wrote to the Philippians. We could say that his "cup of joy" was overflowing. Sometimes we can relate to Paul's overflowing joy, but there are times when our "cup" feels dry. Mark the level on the cup to show your level of joy at this moment.



Reflect.
Is your cup full or empty? Why?

Look Up: Go to www.biblegateway.com and look up the times that the words *rejoice* and *joy* appear in Philippians. Record your thoughts:

Pray.

WEEK THREE: Philippians 1:1-11

Day One

Pray: Ask God to reveal the truth of His Word to you today.

Read: Philippians 1:1-11.

List:
Make at least 10 observations here. Take note of repeated words and/or phrases. Who are the people and places mentioned? (For more tips on making observations, see the previous section on Inductive Bible Study.) Use the chart below to make observations about people in the passage and the space below for any additional observations.

God/Jesus	Paul	The Philippians

Other observations:

Day Two

Pray.

Read: Philippians 1:1-11.

Reflect:
What are some words that Paul uses that inform us about his relationship with the Philippians?

Why does Paul thank God for the Philippians? How does he thank God for them?

Respond:
Who are you particularly thankful for today?

Write out a prayer of thanksgiving to God for them. You might follow Paul's prayer for the Philippians as a guide.

Day Three

Pray.

Read: Philippians 1:-11.

Look up:
Use www.studylight.org/lex/grk/ to look up the following words and write down their definitions.

Servants (1401)

Saints (40)

Grace (5485)

Peace (1515)

Thank (2168)

Remembrance (3417)

Joy (5479)

Pray:
Write out a prayer to God today.

Day Four

Look up: The following cross references and record your findings.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

2 Corinthians 7:3

Acts 20:23

2 Timothy 2:9

Romans 1:11

1 Thessalonians 3:12

Acts 24:16

Day Five

Pray.

Consider: Joy.

Take time to look up some of the verses below on Joy.

JOY:

1. God gives. Ec 2:26; Ps 4:7.
2. Christ appointed to give. Isa 61:3.
3. Is a fruit of the Spirit. Ga 5:22.
4. The gospel, good tidings of. Lu 2:10,11.
5. God's word affords. Ne 8:12; Jer 15:16.
6. The gospel to be received with. 1Th 1:6.
7. Promised to saints. Ps 132:16; Isa 35:10; 55:12; 56:7.
8. Prepared for saints. Ps 97:11.
9. Enjoined to saints. Ps 32:11; Php 3:1.
10. Fulness of, in God's presence. Ps 16:11.
11. Vanity of seeking, from earthly things. Ec 2:10,11; 11:8.
12. Experienced by
    a. Believers. Lu 24:52; Ac 16:34.
    b. Peace-makers. Pr 12:20.
    c. The just. Pr 21:15.
    d. The wise, and discreet. Pr 15:23.
    e. Parents of good children. Pr 23:24.
13. Increased to the meek. Isa 29:19. [1]

[1]Torrey, R. 1995, c1897. *The new topical text book : A scriptural text book for the use of ministers, teachers, and all Christian workers*. Logos research Systems, Inc.: Oak Harbor, WA

What/who gives you joy?

What/who robs you of joy?

WEEK FOUR: Philippians 1:12-18

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 1:12-18.

Observe: Make at least 10 observations from this passage.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Pray: Take time to simply pray through this passage.
Pray for yourself and others who come to mind. To pray through a passage is to slowly read it and let it be your guide in prayer. For instance, you might read verse 14, "…most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear," and pray, "Lord, please give me more courage to speak of you without fear. I confess that I am fearful when…"

Day Two

Pray: Ask the Lord to search your heart (Psalm 139:23), and confess any known sin. Then ask Him to reveal Himself to you today.

Look up: The following words and record their definitions. You might use a dictionary like Websters, a Bible dictionary, or www.studylight.org/lex/grk/.

Circumstances (3588)

Progress (4297)

Gospel (2098)

Imprisonment (1199)

Known (5318)

Praetorian (4232)

Trusting (3982)

Courage (5111)

Word of God (3056)

Fear (870)

Defense (627)

Selfish ambition (2052)

Pure motives (55)

Good will (2107)

Proclaim (2605)

Reflect:

What was Paul's attitude toward his imprisonment?

What was Paul's attitude toward the Gospel?

Look up Acts 20:22-24 for more insight.

Respond:
Think back to a time in your life when God used seemingly adverse circumstances to show forth His glory. How does this encourage you for the future?

Day Three

desmós [imprisonment], ***désmios*** [prisoner]

Paul's imprisonment (literally "fetter") has special religious significance in phrases like *désmios Christoú Iesoú* (Eph. 3:1; Phlm. 1:9), *désmion autoú* (2 Tim. 1:8), *désmios en kyríō* (Eph. 4:1), and cf. Phlm. 13 and Phil. 1:13. Actual imprisonment underlies the usage, but the real bondage is to Christ for whose sake it is suffered and to whom self-will is offered in sacrifice. In answer to the idea that Paul borrows here from the concept in the mysteries that *katoch* precedes the final dedication, it should be noted that Paul nowhere calls imprisonment a penultimate stage prior to being with Christ (Phil. 1:23). Imprisonment symbolizes his whole life and ministry.[2]

Look up: These various instances of people of God being imprisoned. What do you learn from them?

Look up	What do you learn?
Joseph (Genesis 39:20-23; 50:15-21)	
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3:8-4:3)	
Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24-32)	

Respond.
Respond to God in prayer.

cf. *confer*, compare
[2]Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. 1995, c1985. *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. Translation of: Theologisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament. W.B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Mich.

Day Four

Pray: Ask God to draw near to you as you draw near to Him today (James 4:8).

Read: Today, focus only on Philippians 1:14.

Compare and Contrast: Look up the definitions of fear (870) courage (5111). What are some differences between the two?

Fear	Courage
Lexicon #870	Lexicon #5111

What makes you fearful when you think about proclaiming Christ?

What gives you courage?

Day Five

Paul had a heart for others to know Christ -- so much so, that he would desire to be cut off from Christ so that others might know and worship Him (Romans 9:3). We see his heart throughout his letters (1, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1,2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon) as he labors and suffers for the sake of the Gospel.

Look up: These passages and meditate on them.

Romans 9:1-3

2 Timothy 2:8-13

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Respond: Who are 3 people that you love and desire to come to know Jesus Christ? Your dad, co-worker, high school friend, fraternity brother? Take some time to list them here and pray for them by name. Use the article (*Discipleship Journal*, Issue 34, 1986, p.32 *What to Pray for Non-Christians*) to pray through specific Scripture for them.

1.

2.

3.

What to Pray for Non-Christians

1. That God draws them to Himself

Jn. 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him…."

2. That they seek to know God

Acts 17:27 "God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."

Dt. 4:29 "But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul."

3. That they believe the Scriptures

1 Thess. 2:13 "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God…."

Ro. 10:17 "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

4. That Satan is bound from blinding them to the truth

Mt. 13:19 "When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and "etches away what was sown in his heart…."

2 Cor. 4:4 "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

5. That the Holy Spirit works in them

Jn. 16:8-13 "When (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment…. He will guide you into all truth…."

6. That God sends someone to lead them to Christ

Mt. 9:37-38 "Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"

7. That they believe in Christ as Savior

Jn. 1:12 "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

Jn. 5:24 " I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

8. That they turn from sin

Acts 17:30-31 "… (God) commands all people everywhere to repent."

Acts 3:19 "Repent then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

9. That they confess Christ as Lord

Ro. 10:9-10 "…if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

10. That they yield all to follow Christ

2 Cor. 5:15 "And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."

Phil. 3:7-8 "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ…."

11. That they take root and grow in Christ

Col. 2:6-7 "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

WEEK FIVE: Philippians 1:19-30

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 1:19-30.

Observe: Make at least 10 observations from this passage.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Look up: The following words and record their definitions.

Deliverance (4991)

Prayers (1162)

Provision (2024)

Spirit (4151)

Jesus (2424)

Expectation (603)

Hope (1680)

Shame (153)

Boldness (3954)

Exalted (3170)

Body (4983)

Life (2222)

Death (2288)

Live (2198)

Gain (2771)

Flesh (4561)

Hard-pressed (4912)

Day Two

Pray: For joy as you meet with God.

Read: Philippians 1:19-30

Reflect: Paul is at a point where he realizes he could live or die. He lists advantages of both. Contrast them.

To live	To die

Why is he "hard pressed" (vs. 23)?

Do you ever feel this way? When?

Day Three

1:19 *As a man of convictions, Paul shared his assurance that his fetters would eventually result in his* ***deliverance.*** *The Greek word translated "deliverance" here was used in different ways in the New Testament. It often meant spiritual deliverance—salvation, being born again. Here (v. 19) Paul used the word to refer to either the final stage of his salvation (cf. Rom. 5:9) or future vindication in a Roman court. It seems unlikely that he had his release in mind since in the next two sentences he wrote of the real possibility of his near death.*[3]

Pray.

Read: Philippians 1:19-26.

From the passage, what are the two things that gave Paul confidence that he would be delivered?

Look up: the following cross references and record your findings.

Passage	Observations
2 Corinthians 1:11	
Galatians 3:5	
Romans 5:5	
Acts 4:13	
Passage	**Observations**
1 Corinthians 6:20	
Romans 14:8	
Galatians 2:20	
2 Corinthians 5:8	

v. verse
cf. *confer*, compare
[3]Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

2 Timothy 4:6	
John 12:26	
Philippians 1:12	
Romans 15:13	
2 Corinthians 1:14	

Day Four

Reflect: Simply meditate on this one verse and record any thoughts/prayers. (Feel free to be creative—you could draw a picture or write a poem, etc.)

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21)

Day Five

Consider: Some of the following passages on suffering. Jot down your thoughts as you read.

Alleviation of Suffering: Job 22:29; Isa. 58:6, 7, 10; Matt. 25:34–45; Luke 10:30–37; Phil. 2:1, 2; 1 Tim. 5:10; Jas. 5:13–15

Suffering for Christ: Acts 9:16; Rom. 8:17–23, 26; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13; 2 Cor. 1:7; 2 Cor. 4:11–18; Phil. 1:29; Phil. 2:27–30; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2 Thess. 1:4, 5; 2 Tim. 2:12; Jas. 5:10; 1 Pet. 4:13, 14; 1 Pet. 5:10 See AFFLICTIONS AND ADVERSITIES; PERSECUTION.

The Suffering of Christ: Luke 24:46, 47 *v.* 26.; John 6:51; John 10:11, 15; John 11:50–52; Rom. 4:25; Rom. 5:6–8; Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 1:17, 18, 23, 24; 1 Cor. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Gal. 1:4; Gal. 2:20, 21; Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 Thess. 5:9, 10; Heb. 2:9, 10, 14, 18; Heb. 5:8, 9; Heb. 9:15, 16, 28; Heb. 10:10, 18–20; 1 Pet. 2:21, 24; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Pet. 4:1; 1 John 3:16 See ATONEMENT; JESUS, DEATH OF, DESIGN OF HIS DEATH, SUFFERINGS OF.

Vicarious Suffering: See SUBSTITUTION. Ex. 9:13–16; John 15:13; Rom. 9:3; 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 John 3:16 See above OF CHRIST. *Instance of:* Goliath for the Philistines, 1 Sam. 17.[4]

What are some ways in which you have “suffered for His sake”?

[4]Swanson, J., & Nave, O. 1994. *New Nave's*. Logos Research Systems: Oak Harbor

WEEK SIX: Philippians 2:1-11

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:1-11

Look up: the following words and record their definitions.

Encouragement (3874)

Christ (5547)

Comfort/consolation (3890)

Love (26)

Fellowship (2842)

Spirit (4151)

Tenderness (4698)

Compassion (3628)

2:1. In 1:27 Paul had written about living the Christian life in harmony with the message on which it is based. He followed that message with a call to show forth spiritual unity. This unity is possible because of the reality of the four qualities mentioned in 2:1. The "if" clauses, being translations of first-class conditions in Greek, speak of certainties. So in this passage "if" may be translated "since." Paul wrote here about realities, not questionable things. Paul appealed on the basis of (a) **encouragement from being united with Christ . . .** (b) **comfort from His love . . .** (c) **fellowship with the Spirit . . .** (d) **tenderness and compassion.**[5]

[5]Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

The “if” statements in 2:1 can be translated “since.” Rewrite the verse, replacing “if” with “since.”

Respond: Take time to pray to God in response to what you read today.

Day Two

Pray.
Read: Philippians 2:1-11
A practical and easy way to approach Scripture is to simply ask these two questions:

1. *Who are you, Lord?*
2. *What would you have me do? (or not do?)*

Try this out with the passage today.

Who are you, Lord? (What do you discover about God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit?)	What would you have me do?

Reflect and respond: Now use this list as a prayer guide. For example, you could use the list about the Lord to praise Him. Then you could use the right hand column to pray for yourself. Ex: "I praise you Jesus for being in the form of God but not counting equality with God a thing to be grasped…." Or "Lord, I confess that often I look first to my own interests. Help me to take an interest in my roommate today when I have lunch with her."

Day Three

Pray.

Look up: the following words and record their definitions.

Conceit (2754)

Humility (5012)

Servant (1401)

Obedient (5255)

Look up the following cross references and record what you learn about these 2 things:

Conceit	Humility
Galatians 5:26	Ephesians 5:21
Deuteronomy 8:14	Romans 12:10
Psalm 31:23	2 Chronicles 7:14
Proverbs 16:5	Matthew 18:4
I Peter 5:5	Ephesians 4:2

How have you been conceited/proud lately?

How can you imitate Christ's humility today? If you own *Mere Christianity,* by C.S. Lewis take a moment to read chapter 8 entitled, *The Great Sin.*

Day Four

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11

Consider: The following verses that refer to the Cross and record your observations

Passages	**Observations**
Hebrews 12:2-3	
Colossians 1:19-21	
I Corinthians 1:17-18	
Acts 2:22-24	
Mark 15	
Matthew 16:24-25	
Galatians 2:20	

Apply: How will you apply this to your life today?

Day Five

Read: Philippians 2:5-11

Meditate and Pray: Upon the lines of this hymn –

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood
Died He for me who caused His pain
For me who Him to death pursued

Amazing love, how can it be?
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Consider the following excerpt from *Systematic Theology,* by Wayne Grudem (btw – this is a book everyone should own):

Did Jesus Give Up Some of His Divine Attributes While on Earth? (The Kenosis Theory).
Paul writes to the Philippians,
Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil. 2:5–7)

Beginning with this text, several theologians in Germany (from about 1860–1880) and in England (from about 1890–1910) advocated a view of the incarnation that had not been advocated before in the history of the church. This new view was called the "kenosis theory," and the overall position it represented was called "kenotic theology." The *kenosis theory* holds that Christ gave up some of his divine attributes while he was on earth as a man. (The word κενόσις is taken from the Greek verb κενόω, G3033, which generally means "to empty," and is translated "emptied himself " in Phil. 2:7.) According to the theory Christ "emptied himself " of some of his divine attributes, such as omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, while he was on earth as a man. This was viewed as a voluntary self-limitation on Christ's part, which he carried out in order to fulfill his work of redemption.

But does Philippians 2:7 teach that Christ emptied himself of some of his divine attributes, and does the rest of the New Testament confirm this? The evidence of Scripture points to a negative answer to both questions. We must first realize that no recognized teacher in the first 1,800 years of church history, including those who were native speakers of Greek, thought that "emptied himself " in Philippians 2:7 meant that the Son of God gave up some of his divine attributes. Second, we must recognize that the text does not say that Christ "emptied himself of some powers" or "emptied himself of divine attributes" or anything like that. Third, the text *does* describe what Jesus did in this "emptying": he did not do it by giving up any of his attributes but rather by "taking the form of a servant," that is, by coming to live as a man, and "being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8). Thus, the context itself interprets this "emptying" as equivalent to "humbling himself " and taking on a lowly status and position. Thus, the NIV, instead of translating the phrase, "He *emptied* himself," translates it, "but *made himself nothing*" (Phil. 2:7 NIV). The emptying includes change of role and status, not essential attributes or nature.

A fourth reason for this interpretation is seen in Paul's purpose in this context. His purpose has been to persuade the Philippians that they should "do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3), and he continues by telling them, "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4). To persuade them to be humble and to put the interests of others first, he then holds up the example of Christ: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant..." (Phil. 2:5–7).

Now in holding up Christ as an example, he wants the Philippians to imitate Christ. But certainly he is not asking the Philippian Christians to "give up" or "lay aside" any of their essential attributes or abilities! He is not asking them to "give up" their intelligence or strength or skill and become a diminished version of what they were. Rather, he is asking them to put the interests of others first: "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4). And because that is his goal, it fits the context to understand that he is using Christ as the supreme example of one who did just that: he put the interests of others first and was willing to give up some of the privilege and status that was his as God. Therefore, the best understanding of this passage is that it talks about Jesus giving up the *status* and *privilege* that was his in heaven: he "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped" (or "clung to for his own advantage"), but "emptied himself " or "humbled himself " for our sake, and came to live as a man. Jesus speaks elsewhere of the "glory" he had with the Father "before the world was made" (John 17:5), a glory that he had given up and was going to receive again when he returned to heaven. And Paul could speak of Christ who, "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9), once again speaking of the privilege and honor that he deserved but temporarily gave up for us.

The fifth and final reason why the "kenosis" view of Philippians 2:7 must be rejected is the larger context of the teaching of the New Testament and the doctrinal teaching of the entire Bible. If it were true that such a momentous event as this happened, that the eternal Son of God ceased for a time to have all the attributes of God—ceased, for a time, to be omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, for example—then we would expect that such an incredible event would be taught clearly and repeatedly in the New Testament, not found in the very doubtful interpretation of one word in one epistle. But we find the opposite of that: we do not find it stated anywhere else that the Son of God ceased to have some of the attributes of God that he had possessed from eternity. In fact, if the kenosis theory were true (and this is a foundational objection against it), then we could no longer affirm Jesus was fully God while he was here on earth. The kenosis theory ultimately denies the full deity of Jesus Christ and makes him something less than fully God. S.M. Smith admits, "All forms of classical orthodoxy either explicitly reject or reject in principle kenotic theology."

It is important to realize that the major force persuading people to accept kenotic theory was not that they had discovered a better understanding of Philippians 2:7 or any other passage of the New Testament, but rather the increasing discomfort people were feeling with the formulations of the doctrine of Christ in historic, classical orthodoxy. It just seemed too incredible for modern rational and "scientific" people to believe that Jesus Christ could be truly human and fully, absolutely God at the same time. The kenosis theory began to sound more and more like an acceptable way to say that (in some sense) Jesus was God, but a kind of God who had for a time given up some of his Godlike qualities, those that were most difficult for people to accept in the modern world.

Conclusion: Christ Is Fully Divine. The New Testament, in hundreds of explicit verses that call Jesus "God" and "Lord" and use a number of other titles of deity to refer to him, and in many passages that attribute actions or words to him that could only be true of God himself, affirms again and again the full, absolute deity of Jesus Christ. "In him *all the fulness of God* was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:19), and "in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9). In an earlier section we argued that Jesus is truly and fully man. Now we conclude that he is truly and fully God as well. His name is rightly called "Emmanuel," that is, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).
[6]

[6]Grudem, W. A. (1994). *Systematic theology : An introduction to biblical doctrine* (Page 549). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House.

WEEK SEVEN: Philippians 2:12-18

Day One

Pray: Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you today through His Holy Word.

Read: Philippians 2:12-18.

Record: Make as many observations as you can from this passage.

Respond: Respond to the Lord in prayer over what you read today.

Day Two

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:12-18.

Look up: the following words and record their definitions.

Work out (2716)
The words "work out" are the translation of a Greek word which means "to carry out to the goal, to carry to its ultimate conclusion." We say, "The student worked out a problem in arithmetic." That is, he carried the problem to its ultimate conclusion. This is the way it is used here. The Philippians are exhorted to carry their salvation to its ultimate conclusion, namely, Christlikeness. The salvation spoken of here is not justification, but sanctification, victory over sin and the living of a life pleasing to the Lord Jesus. They are to see to it that they make progress in their Christian lives. [7]

Salvation (4991)

Fear (5401)

Trembling (5156)

God (2316)

Will (2309)

Work (1754)

Pleasure (2107)

Apply: Record how you will apply this passage today.

[7]Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English reader* (Php 2:12). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Day Three

Read: Philippians 2:12-18

Record:

In one paragraph, summarize this passage:

What does this passage mean to you?

Day Four

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:12-18, focusing on 2:14-15.

Look up: the following words and record their definitions.

Grumbling (1112)

Disputing (1261)

Prove (1096)

Blameless (273)

Children (5043)

Reproach (299)

Perverse (1294)

Lights (5458)

Read Matthew 5:13-16 and record what it means for you to be the light of the world:

How can you live out verse 16 today?

Day Five

Pray: Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you today.

Read: Philippians 2:12-16

Consider: This passage contains an amazing truth. It speaks to the power of God who is at work in us and it speaks to our need to *work out our salvation.* The idea here is not that we need to work to gain salvation (Ephesians 2:1-10 is clear that we cannot do this) and it is not saying that we need to work to keep our salvation (Hebrews 12 reminds us that Jesus is both the author and finisher of our faith) but it is saying that we must participate with God in our *sanctification.* Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus Christ. It is a process that God is committed to in the life of the believer and it is a process we need to join in.

Read: Ephesians 4:17-5:14 and record what this passage has to say about your sanctification.

WEEK EIGHT: Philippians 2:19-30

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:19-30

Record: Make as many observations as you can from this passage.

Respond:

Day Two

Pray.

Read: Philippians 2:19-30.

Look Up:

The following cross-references for 2:20

2 Timothy 3:10-12

2 Timothy 1:1-7

The following cross-references for 2:21

1 Corinthians 10:24

1 Corinthians 13:5

Philippians 2:4

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Apply: How would you apply these passages to your life today?

Day Three

Pray.

Consider: All the relationships Paul had with people as he did ministry. Read the following passages and record what you learn about these relationships.

Passage	Paul's Relationships
Romans 16:1-25	
1 Corinthians 16:1-24	

Day Four

Pray.

Continue: Today we'll continue looking at the relationships Paul had with others.

Passages	**Paul's Relationships**
Ephesians 6:21-24	
Philippians 4:2-3, 15-22	
Colossians 4:7-18	
2 Timothy 4:9-22	
Titus 3:12-15	
Philemon 23-24	

List the relationships that have been significant in your life in Christ:

Who can you share ministry with?

Day Five

Pray.

Consider: Paul speaks of men almost giving their life for the work of Christ. Consider the following passages and how you might give your life for the work of Christ.

Passage	Observations	What this means for Me
Matthew 16:24-28		
2 Corinthians 11:23-30		

Write: Your prayer to God for today.

WEEK NINE: Philippians 3:1-21

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 3:1-21.

Observe: Make at least 10 observations from this passage.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Write: Your prayer to God

Day Two

Pray: Use Philippians 3:8 to guide your pray today

Read: Philippians 3:1-7

List: In these verses Paul describes all the things he can have confidence in or find his identity in. List those things here:

All that Paul *could* put his confidence in:

Find the meaning of Philippians 3:2-3 (Use a commentary or a study Bible *after* you look up the following cross-references):

Psalm 22:16-18 (consider the crucifixion as you read these words)

Revelation 22:15

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Romans 2:28-29

Romans 9:6-8

Romans 15:17

Galatians 6:12-16

Look up:

False Circumcision (2699)

True Circumcision (4061)

Record: What you learn from a commentary or study Bible.

Summarize: Philippians 3:1-7

All of us have things we are tempted to boast in other than Christ. All of us have things on our *resume* that we want to find our identity in. What are those things for you?

Pray: Spend time thanking God for all that He has given you and done in you and then offer those things to Him that He might be Lord over every area of your life. Write out your prayer.

Day Three

Pray: That you might get a small glimpse today of what it would mean to count all things in your life loss for the sake of knowing Christ

Read: Philippians 3:7-11

Record: All the beautiful things you discover about Jesus in the following passages

Passage	The Beauty of Jesus Christ – Who He is
Philippians 3:7-21	
Philippians 2:5-11	
Colossians 1:13-20	
Romans 8:35-39	
John 1:1-18	
Hebrews 1:1-4, 17-18	
Hebrews 4:14-16	

What would it look like in your life if you were to count all things loss for the sake of knowing Jesus?

Day Four

Pray: Use Philippians 3:8-11 to guide your time in prayer

Read: Philippians 3:12-16

List: At least 10 observations from this passage

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Discover: The meaning of this passage by looking up the following cross-references and key words and looking in a commentary or study Bible

1 Corinthians 9:23-27

Hebrews 6:1-2

Romans 8:28

Romans 11:29

2 Timothy 1:9

Look up: *Perfect* (5046)

Record: What you learn from a commentary or study Bible.

Summarize Philippians 3:11-16

Record: One thing you will do today to *press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*

Day Five

Pray: For God to give you a glimpse of your true citizenship in heaven and what this means for you today

Read: Philippians 3:17-21

Describe: The life of those who are enemies of the cross of Christ (3:18-19)

Describe: Those who according to the pattern of Paul

How do you walk? Why? When?

What will Jesus ultimately do to us**?** (See 3:21 and look up the following cross-references for understanding):

1 Corinthians 15:43-53

Colossians 3:4

Romans 8:29

What does a Citizenship in Heaven look like? Record what you find in the following passage:

Revelation 21:10-22:5 (Draw a picture of this scene if it helps you)

WEEK TEN: Philippians 4:1-9

Day One

Read: Philippians 4:1-9

Record: Rejoicing and thanksgiving seem to be key elements in this passage. Throughout this week we will keep a journal of all that we are thankful for. Each day you will record at least 10 things. You cannot repeat anything. We want to start that process today. Record your list in the box below:

10 Things I'm thankful for today:

Day Two

Pray: Start your time by thanking God. Add to your list in the box below

10 Things I'm thankful for today:

Read: Philippians 4:4-5

Compare and Contrast: Philippians 4:4-5 and Philippians 2:14-15

Philippians 4:4-5	Philippians 2:14-15

Look Up: In verse 5 the word *gentleness* (NIV) is translated different ways in different versions – *forbearing spirit* (NASB) and *reasonableness* (ESV). Look up this word in a lexicon using the Strong's number **1933** (www.studylight.org/lex/)

Why do you think that Paul adds, *The Lord is near***?** Why is this truth significant in living out what Paul is encouraging here? How do you know that God is near?

Day Three

Pray: Start your time by thanking God. Add to your list in the box below

10 Things I'm thankful for today:

Read: Philippians 4:6-9

Record: Make at least 20 observations from this passage

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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10.

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12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

Apply: Record one thing you will do to apply this passage to your life today

Day Four

Pray: Start your time by thanking God. Add to your list in the box below

10 Things I'm thankful for today:

Read: Philippians 4:6-7

Discover: The meaning of this passage by looking up the following cross-references and words

Matthew 6:25-34

Ephesians 6:18

Isaiah 26:3

John 14:27

2 Corinthians 10:5

Look Up: *Anxious* (3309) – look in a lexicon and a dictionary

Record: The things that are making you anxious today

What will you do with this anxiety as a result of studying this passage? What does it look like for you to guard your *heart* and *mind* in regard to your anxiety today?

Day Five

Pray: Start your time by thanking God. Add to your list in the box below

10 Things I'm thankful for today:

Read: Philippians 4:8-9

List: All that you are called to let your mind dwell upon in this passage and record the definition of each word

Let Your Mind Dwell On:	Definition

Record: How the following things effect you mind (positively and negatively):

What I Put in my Mind	How it Effects my Thinking	Amount of time I spend in this each week (in hours)
Scripture		
The Media (TV, Movies, Internet, Radio)		
Conversations with friends		
Books and Magazines		
Music		

Read the following passages and record you observations:

Romans 12:1-2

Luke 11:34-36

Psalm 119:9-16

Psalm 19:7-11

Summarize: This passage and what you have learned in this study today

Apply: Record one thing you will do this week to apply this passage to your life

WEEK Eleven: Philippians 4:10-23

Day One

Pray.

Read: Philippians 4:10-23

Record: At least 10 observations from this passage

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

How does Philippians 4:10-23 connect to Philippians 4:1-9?

Apply: One principle from this passage to your life today

Day Two

Pray: Use Philippians 4:10-20 as a guide to your prayer

Read: Philippians 4:10-13

Look Up: The following words

Lord (2962)

Learned (3129)

Content (842)

Added Insight:
The words "have learned" are in a construction in the Greek which speaks of entrance into a new condition. It is, "I have come to learn." Paul had not always known that. He had been reared in the lap of luxury, and had never known want as a young man. The "I" is emphatic. It is, "I, for my part, whatever others may feel." The word "therewith" is in italics and therefore not in the Greek text. It is not needed. The word "content" is the translation of a Greek word used by the Stoic school of philosophy which taught that man should be sufficient to himself for all things. It means "to be independent of external circumstances." It speaks of self-sufficiency and competency. But Paul's self-sufficiency was not of the Stoic kind. It was Christ-sufficiency. Paul's independence was not Stoic independence, but dependence upon Christ. He found his sufficiency in Christ. He was independent of circumstances because he was dependent upon Christ.[8]

What does verse 13 mean in light of this passage?

[8]Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English reader* (Php 4:11). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Day Three

Pray.

Read: Philippians 4:14-23

Discover: What this passage has to say about giving to the Church and ministries of the Gospel. Look up the following passages and record your observations:

Philippians 4:14-23

2 Corinthians 11:19

Deuteronomy 14:22

1 Corinthians 9:14

2 Corinthians 9:5-7

Matthew 6:1-4, 19-24

Summarize: In a paragraph what you have learned today.

Apply: What will you do today to apply this passage to your life?

Day Four

Meditate: On Philippians 4:19-20

Record: Your thoughts and prayers. Pray this passage for yourself and at least one other person.

Day Five

Read: The entire book of Philippians one last time

Record: How this whole book fits together. For instance, what does chapter 3 have to do with chapter 4?

Record: What amazes you about the following people in this book?

Paul –

God, the Father –

God, the Son –

God, the Holy Spirit –

Summarize: This book in one word or sentence.

What is the most significant thing you have learned in the study of Philippians?

How are you different from when you started this study?

What is one principle from this book that you want to apply to your life this year? How will you do this?