

Indescribable Joy Week 1

Day 1

1. **Read Philippians Chapter 1.** There are four chapters in Philippians so we will study one chapter per week. I will always recommend that you read the entire chapter we are studying on the first day of the week. This will help you understand the context of the entire chapter. I recommend starting a *Choose Joy Journal* in an old-fashioned school journal. As you read, write any verses which stand out to you in your journal. Make note if the Lord convicts you of any sin. You may also want to incorporate these verses in your prayer at the end of today's lesson. You might want to be a little selective as to what you write in your journal. I never write anything so personal that the entire world could not read it. I am sure that Anne Frank would be very upset if she knew how many people around the world have read her diary.
2. **As you read through Chapter 1, mark every reference to the words *joy* and *rejoice* in a distinct way in your Bible.** These are repeating words throughout the book of Philippians. When you mark them in your Bible, you will be able to scan your Bible quickly to see what Paul teaches about joy.

I highlighted *joy* and *rejoice* in red with a colored pencil.

Be careful what type of pens or pencils you use in your Bible. Some colors, especially red, will bleed over time. Others will soak through to the opposite page. I prefer Crayola colored pencils or Bic 4-color pens. The ink in these pens will not bleed, smear or show through to the back page.

Most of the letters or epistles in the Bible have a specific writing style, which is different than our modern letters. When you write a letter, you sign your name at the end of the letter. This was not the case during the first century. Instead, the author's name was often placed at the beginning of the letter, then the name of the recipients (the group or person the letter was addressed to) was written. This was followed by a greeting and a prayer. We will spend some time later in the week evaluating some of Paul's prayers. Here are the first two verses of Philippians:

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:1-2, NASB

3. **In Philippians 1:1 above, who are the Authors?**

In verse 1, who are the recipients (group receiving letter)?

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How does Paul refer to the Christians in this letter?

Do you feel that you are worthy to be called a saint? If not, list the reasons why.

Day 2

DO YOU EVER FEEL JOYFUL WHEN YOU PRAY FOR OTHERS? Paul says he offers prayers for the church with joy. As you study today, pay attention to Paul's example as we continue to seek the secret of Paul's joy.

1. Read Philippians. 1:2.

Where does our peace come from? We will learn more about peace in chapter 4 of Philippians.

2. Read Philippians 1:1-8.

What does Paul say about joy in verse 4?

How often does Paul pray for the church in Philippi (see verse 4)?

Does he praise or rebuke the saints of Philippi?

What is Paul confident about in verse 6?

How does Paul feel about the church in verses 7-8?

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Day 3

PAUL PRAYS WITHOUT CEASING FOR THE CHURCHES HE HELPED START. We will look at three of Paul's prayers to see how he prayed for the church. His prayer life was much deeper than the way I used to pray. I like to use his prayers as a pattern for my own. Memorize some of these verses and you will never be at a loss for what to pray again.

Read Philippians 1:9-11. This is a prayer that Paul prays for the saints of Philippi. List some of his prayer requests below. How does this compare with your prayer life?

Now we will look at some of Paul's prayers in Ephesians and Colossians.

Read Ephesians 1:15-19. List some of his prayer requests.

Read Colossians 1:9-12. Take note at how often Paul prays for this church. List what he prays for in each verse.

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Day 4

PAUL DOES NOT LET HIS CIRCUMSTANCES GET HIM DOWN. Even though he is imprisoned, he focuses on the positive outcomes of his situation rather than the negative living conditions. He does not grumble, gripe or complain nor does he encourage the church to feel sorry for him. Because he does not fill his mind with toxic thoughts, he experiences joy.

1. **Read Philippians 1:12-14.** Paul is strengthened by the response to his imprisonment. Rather than sulk over his circumstances, he recognizes the blessings which have come as a result. List the reasons Paul gives for rejoicing over his imprisonment.

2. **Read Philippians 1:15-19.** Paul mentions a problem with those sharing the gospel message.

What is the problem?

In verses 18 & 19, what is Paul's response to the problem?

Why does Paul rejoice in verses 18-19?

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Day 5

PAUL DOES NOT FEAR DEATH OR IMPRISONMENT. What is his source of strength? We will find out today as we conclude the first chapter of Philippians.

1. **Read Philippians. 1:18-26.** Paul tells us how he feels about life and death. One of his sources of strength is prayer from the church. He rejoices because of these prayers.

What does he say about life, living and the flesh?

What does he say about death?

The key to Paul's joy can be found in verse 21. Write the verse below.

2. **Read Philippians. 1:27-28.**

List how Paul instructs a Christian to act.

What will cause the saints to stand firm (see verse 27)?

I have summarized Philippians 1:27 below. Paul wants the saints of Philippi to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. As you can see, this would require unity.

- a. Standing firm in one spirit (unity)
- b. One mind (like-minded)
- c. Striving together for the faith of the gospel

Read Philippians 1:29-30. What does Paul say about suffering?