Lesson 1

Rejoicing in Relationships, Prayer and Circumstances Philippians 1:1-26

Take some time to slowly read through the first chapter of Philippians every day this week, asking the Holy Spirit to illumine your thinking and to speak to you through this portion of the Word of God.

1. Look for a verse in the lesson this week that is meaningful to you and make it your memory verse. Write it down, carry it with you, put it on your refrigerator or mirror or dashboard and memorize it. Share your memory verse with your small group.

"...Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice."

Philippians 1:18

Rejoicing in Relationships: Philippians 1:1-2

- 2. How does Paul describe his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in Philippians 1:1?
- 3. Look up the following verses that describe the relationship between Paul and Timothy (Timitheus) and discuss.
 - * Acts 16:1-3, 18:5, 19:22 and 20:4
 - * Romans 16:21
 - * I Corinthians 4:17 and 16:10-11
 - ✤ I Thessalonians 3:2, 3:6
 - **♦** I Timothy 1:2, 1:18

- ✤ II Timothy 2:1-2
- * Hebrews 13:23

The Greek word for bond-slave or servant in verse 1 is *doulos* and means one who gives himself up to another's will, devoted to another to the point of disregarding one's own interests.

- 4. According to Philippians 1:1, to whom is this epistle written?
- 5. Read Acts 16:6-15 to get the background of the founding of the church at Philippi. Discuss what you learn about the beginning of Paul's relationship with the people there.

Rejoicing in Prayer: Philippians 1:3–11

- 6. What does Paul do every time he thinks of the Philippians according to Philippians 1:3-5?
- 7. According to Philippians 1:6, why did Paul have the confidence that the Philippians would persevere in their faith even while he was away from them?
- 8. Describe and discuss Paul's relationship with the believers in Philippians according to Philippians 1:7-8, 2:19 and 2:23-24.
- 9. Philippians 1:9-11 gives Paul's prayer for the Philippians. Discuss how the four points of his prayer are still paramount for the spiritual growth of believers.
- 10. Thankfulness is one of the keys to finding the joy that Paul exudes in this letter. Can you think of someone that you are thankful for because they have influenced you for the Lord Jesus Christ? If possible you may want to encourage this person with a note or call.

Rejoicing through Circumstances: Philippians 1:12–26

- 11. What was Paul's present circumstance according to Philippians 1:7 and 1:12-14?
- 12. Many Christians think God's love and favor means they will enjoy a "nice" life. What does the life of Paul demonstrate about this idea? See also II Corinthians 6:3-10 and 11:24-28.
- 13. The Praetorian (Palace) Guard was an elite group of Roman soldiers established by Augustus. What was apparently happening with the Praetorian guard as they were chained to Paul for several hour shifts? Also see Acts 28:16-31.
- 14. Is there some area of your life that seems like a setback to you but from God's perspective is really an advancement? What attitude does Paul model for us in these setback times?
- 15. Even while in confinement Paul is envied and opposed. How does he handle this opposition?
- 16. According to Philippians 1:20 what is the goal of Paul's life?
- 17. Take some time this week to prayerfully consider and write a succinct sentence that states the mission or goal of your life.
- 18. From II Corinthians 5:8 what did Paul say happens when a believer dies? Discuss how this truth relates to Philippians 1:21.

- 19. In the light of the wonderful truth about what happens when a believer dies, how appropriate are crying and grieving at the death of a loved one? See John 11:25-36 and I Thessalonians 4:13-14.
- 20. Based on your study this week, what do you think God is teaching you or inviting you to do or be?