

# Lesson 1, PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

Paul founded the church at Philippi on his second missionary journey. It was the first church established in Europe, and its first convert was a woman named Lydia whose heart was open and ready for the gospel message. From this prominent city, the gospel began spreading across the continent that would be the backbone of Christianity in centuries to come. The letter to the Philippians is a thank you note from Paul for the faithful financial and emotional support they had given to him during his missionary journeys. Now while he was imprisoned, they gave sacrificially so that Paul would have the necessities of life. It is arguably the most tender and personal of all Paul's writings.

1. Read Philippians 1:1. How does Paul identify himself in this passage? In Deuteronomy 15:12-18, the slave chooses to remain a slave to the master. Paul seems to be voluntarily committing to stay with his Master, Jesus, forever. How do we commit to being a "slave" to Jesus in our lives?
2. Read Philippians 1:2-11. Write down phrases that denote his intimacy with the church at Philippi.
3. Verse 6 is not only a powerful declaration, it is the theme of Philippians. What does it tell you about Paul? If the "day of Christ Jesus" is the second coming or the time of our leaving this world at death, what does this say to you about loved ones who may not know the Lord at this point in their lives? Write a prayer claiming this verse for anyone the Holy Spirit puts on your heart.
4. Read Philippians 1:3. What does it say about Paul's prayer attitude? Do you remember times when Jesus prayed? See also John 17:20.
5. See Mark 11:24, 1 Peter 3:12, James 5:15-16. What do these verses say about prayer and the importance of waiting on the Lord?

*Application:* Read Paul's prayer in verses 9-11. Put the name of your loved one in that prayer. Commit to praying it while we journey with Paul through Philippians.

*Prayer:* Most Gracious Father, how we long to go deeper with You. How we seek an intimacy so that we are able to hear your will for our lives. Draw us from our "grocery list" of prayers to prayers that align with Your will. We praise you that Jesus showed us the importance of prayer as he broke away from the world to meet with You. Give us that same passion to be in Your Presence. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.



