



Philippians Bible Studies

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Introduction

The book of Philippians is one of the Apostle Paul's 13 inspired letters, preserved in our New Testament. Paul (and Timothy) wrote to the church in Philippi, which today corresponds to Northern Greece. It's worth reading Acts 16 now to see the background.

In Acts 16:12, Paul and Timothy took the gospel to Philippi which is described as "a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia". There they suffered and were "treated outrageously" (1 Thess 2:2, Acts 16). Sometime later, from jail (Phil 1:13), Paul wrote this letter to the church in Philippi to encourage them in their partnership with him in gospel ministry. He sent the letter via Epaphroditus (2:25-30). Paul hopes to also send Timothy (2:19-23) and then he hopes to visit them in person (2:24).



<http://www.ccel.org/bible/phillips/CN092MAPS1.htm>

What is the main theme of Philippians?

(1) Partners in the Gospel ... with each other

Christian ministry is all about partnership, and it's a rich theme in Philippians. Paul begins and finishes his letter on this idea, and the whole letter is set up around this theme. The Philippians haven't just associated with Paul's ministry but have profoundly joined him in it, through prayer, standing united, suffering, and finances.

The specific word 'partner' (Greek word *koinōnia*) is used 14 times in the New Testament, and in each chapter of Philippians:

- 1. Partnership in prayer (Phil 1:3-7)** [v5 "partnership"; v7 "share"]
Since we share in God's grace together, we are partners in the gospel. The gospel brings us into deep bonds with each other as we share in God's work together. Since God controls all things, the foundational way that we partner with other Christians is through prayer. Paul starts with thanksgiving and prayer with joy, for past, present and future partnership.
- 2. Partnership = Spiritual unity in Christ (Phil 2:1-2)** [v1 "sharing"]
Our unity with Christ should be expressed in our unity with one another. We're to have the same mindset as Christ, standing united with each other as one in love, spirit and mind. Since we are in God's work together, we are not to be divided on lesser things, like Euodia and Syntyche (4:2-3).
- 3. Partnership in suffering (Phil 3:7-11)** [v10 "participation"]
So profound is our partnership with Christ that we're called to suffer like him. The world rejected Jesus and so those in Jesus will also be rejected (1:29, cf 2 Tim 3:12). We need to encourage each other to never give up on Jesus, confident that sharing with Christ in suffering means that we will also share with him in resurrection.
- 4. Partnership in financial support (Phil 4:15-16)** [v15 "shared"]
Our partnership in the gospel is expressed in giving to gospel ministry. As we financially support people to share Jesus, we enable more ministry.

It's an extraordinary privilege to be partners in the gospel. We are part of something so big. As we work together, God uses each one of us to grow his kingdom.

But where does this partnership come from? What makes the Philippians partner so profoundly with Paul and each other?

(2) Partners in the Gospel ... with Jesus

The foundation of all Christian ministry is partnership with Christ Jesus. Jesus is the centre of the Philippian church; from the “first day” they knew him, until the “day of Christ Jesus” (1:5-6). All Christian Partnership is “in the gospel” – we share together because of the great news about Jesus.

Throughout the letter, two equivalent phrases (2:11) highlight this:

- “in Christ Jesus” (1:1, 3:14, 4:7, 4:19, 4:21)
- “in the Lord” (1:14, 3:1, 3:19, 3:24, 3:29, 4:1, 4:2, 4:4, 4:10)

As we are united in Christ, we are united with each other – one with him and therefore one with each other. God’s power is at work to change us (3:10, 21), enabled by his Spirit (1:19, 27, 2:1, 3:3), producing faith (1:25, 27, 2:17, 3:9) and unity with other believers. So the Philippians partnered with Paul through prayer; standing united; suffering and finances – in, through and because of Christ.

This is important to keep in mind as we read Philippians.

While Philippians emphasises our partnership with each other, it only makes sense when we understand our partnership with Jesus. Philippians is about Christian partnership, based on partnership with Christ.

As we seek to apply any part of the book, we need to remember that it is motivated by, and enabled by Jesus.

Throughout Philippians, we are given models of the Christian life.

- (1) Most importantly, Jesus’ life is *the model* in 2:1-11. “In your relationships with one another, have the same mind set as Christ Jesus” (2:5).
- (2) We are also given *3 human models*:
 - Paul 1:12-26, 3:1-21 (esp. v10-11)
 - Timothy 2:19-23
 - Epaphroditus 2:25-30“Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do” (3:17, cf 4:9).

In the end, Philippians asks us to respond in joy to our salvation in Christ, as we:

- look back – to the earthly life of Christ, culminating in the cross (2:6-8);
- look forward – to what Christ has achieved (2:9-11, 3:14).

My brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. (3:1)

Memory Verses from Philippians

Why do adults tend to grow out of memorising scripture?

Consider each of the Philippians memory verses below.

- In what context would each one be helpful?
- How many could your group realistically memorise this term?
Pick one to start with.

Memory Verses

1:6 He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.

1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

1:23 I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

1:29 It has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him.

2:3-2:5 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mind set as Christ Jesus:

2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3:12-3:14 I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your

Study 1 Partners in the Gospel (Philippians 1:1-11)

Partnership is an arrangement where parties, known as partners, agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests. The partners in a partnership may be individuals, businesses, interest-based organizations, schools, governments or combinations. Organizations may partner together to increase the likelihood of each achieving their mission and to amplify their reach. Wikipedia

The Greek word 'koinōnia' means 'a participation in' or 'a sharing in' a venture.

Where in your life has partnership been really important?

Read Acts 16:11-40, Phil 1:5, 2:19, 25-26, 4:2-3, 14-18

What do we discover about the church in Philippi?

Read Philippians 1:1-2, 2:19-23

How would you describe the relationship between Paul and Timothy?

See also: Acts 16:1-5, 18:5, 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Thess 3:2, 3:6; 1 Tim 1:2, 18, 6:20.

Read Philippians 1:3-8

How would you describe the relationship between Paul and the Philippians? What caused it?

Read Philippians 1:9-11

- What does Paul pray for?
- How will their love abound more and more? Why is this important?

- How does Paul's prayer overlap with the Lord's Prayer? (Matt 6:9-13, Luke 11:2-4)
- Why is Christ mentioned 7 times in v1-11 (and 36 times in the book)?

Implications

- What is the basis of Paul's joy and confidence? Is this ours? If not, why not?
- How does Paul's affection for the Philippians compare to our affection for others in our congregation? What holds us back? What can we do better?
- How does Paul's prayer compare with our usual prayers? How can we expand our prayers?
- Given the Bible reveals everything we need for life (2 Tim 3:16-17), what is the place of "discernment" (1:10)?

'Our faith is not about complying with numerous rules and regulations. The Mishnah (200AD) was a compendium of Jewish laws that applied to every aspect of life, every day of the year. In turn, this approach created a class of experts in religion and law who became effective rulers of their religious communities. By contrast, Christianity is based on its key historical facts and a small number of key principles, for example the primacy of truth and love. Church ministers are not legal experts in a maze of intricate laws, but exemplars of the faith and ethic they teach to their churches.'

(Philippians and Philemon, Barnett, Aquila, 2016).

Prayer

- Thank God for his work in each member of your group, from the "first day" until now, and until Christ returns.
- Each group member could take one part of Paul's prayer each, and pray it, applying it to our context.
- Why not pray Paul's prayer for your group this week?

Study 2 To Live is Christ (Philippians 1:12-26)

On New Year's Eve, a friend asks you "what's on your bucket list?". How would you answer?

In the last week, what has caused you to rejoice?

Read Philippians 1:12-14

- How might the Philippians have thought about Paul's on-going confinement?
(cf Acts 28:16, 20, 30).
- How does persecution help to advance the gospel?
- How does persecution help to give confidence to Christians?

Read Philippians 1:15-18

- What can be different motives to preach Christ? Give modern examples.
- If the integrity of gospel ministers matters (1 Tim 3:1-12, James 3:1, Rom 16:17-19), why is Paul not concerned here? (cf Mark 9:38-40)
- How can Paul still rejoice in prison?
- How does v12-18 critique our desire for a "successful" looking ministry?

Read Philippians 1:19-28

Paul was falsely accused of causing the unrest in Acts 21:27-36 and is soon to defend his case before the Emperor/Caesar (Acts 25:11-12, 11:21, 11:25, 26:32, 28:19).

- What type of deliverance does Paul mean in v19? How does Paul see prayer working for his deliverance?

- Why can Paul eagerly expect that he will not be ashamed?
- What is the tension in v21-26? What does Paul choose

Implications

- How should we respond to the 21C persecution of Christians?

EACH MONTH

322 CHRISTIANS ARE
KILLED FOR THEIR FAITH



214 CHURCHES AND
CHRISTIAN **PROPERTIES**
ARE DESTROYED



772 FORMS OF **VIOLENCE**
ARE COMMITTED AGAINST
CHRISTIANS (SUCH AS BEATINGS, ABDUCTIONS,
RAPES, ARRESTS AND FORCED MARRIAGES)



<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>

- What type of persecution do we currently face? How can we not be ashamed of being Christian? How can we prepare ourselves (and future generations) to have courage as Christians?
- “Paul, although in prison, is truly free” (Barnett). Do you agree?
- How is our “bucket list” critiqued by Paul’s view of life and death? How can we continue to enjoy God’s good world, while remembering, “to live is Christ and to die is gain”?
- How can we have joy like Paul?

Prayer

- Thank God that we are free in Christ, no matter where we live in the world.
- Pray for brothers and sisters suffering throughout the world, to respond like Paul.

- Pray our life is transformed by knowing “to live is Christ”.

Study 3 Live Worthy of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27-30)

Have you every seen disunity in a church? What were the effects?

Read Philippians 1:27-28

- What does Paul mean to “conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel”? Is it individual or corporate?
- What are 3 ways it will be seen?
 -
 -
 -
- What are the hints that the Philippi church was facing disunity? (cf 2:1-4, 2:14, 3:15-16, 4:1-3)
- How does Paul’s situation (Study 2) help the Philippians not to be frightened by those who oppose them?
- What’s the “sign” and how does it indicate both destruction and salvation?

‘The immovability of Christ in crucifixion and of his followers who faced crucifixion ... were each frightening reminders of the coming, inevitable and just judgment of God that would save the faithful but condemn those who inflicted unwarranted punishment on them.’ (Barnett, p44)

Read Philippians 1:29-30

- What two things have been “granted” to the church? Does this surprise you? (cf 1 Peter 2:21, 1 Cor 11:1)
- How does Paul reassure the Philippian Christians in their suffering? (cf James 1:2-4; 1 Pe 1:3-9; Acts 5:41)

Implications

- How we going at conducting ourselves worthy of the gospel at St Christopher’s?
 - Are we standing firm in one Spirit?
 - What can hinder our unity?
 - Are we striving together as one for the faith of the gospel?
 - What can distract our attention?
 - Are we being frightened in any way by those who oppose us?
 - What can zap our courage? In what situations do we feel intimidated as Christians?
- Why is suffering for Christ such a privilege? In what areas of our life can we take comfort and reassurance from v29? How does v29 critique the “prosperity gospel” (which is wrongly argued from 1 Chron 4:10, Mal 3:10, Mark 11:24)?

Prayer

- As sinners we often fail to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Thank God that he forgives us and loves us, in spite of our failings and that his grace is ever sufficient for us, as his power is made perfect in our weakness. (2 Cor 12:9).

- Pray for us to stand firm and strive together, as we share Jesus with our neighbours in Blenheim. Pray that guests to our church would see unity.

Study 4 United with Christ (Philippians 2:1-11)

Unity is being joined as a whole.

Unity among two or more people gets its virtue entirely from something else. Unity itself is neutral until it is given goodness or badness by something else.

So if Herod and Pilate are unified by their common scorn for Jesus (Luke 23:12), this is not a good unity. But if Paul and Silas sing together in prison for Christ's sake (Acts 16:25), this is a good unity. Therefore, it is never enough to call Christians to have unity. That may be good or bad. The unified vote fifty years ago in my home church in South Carolina to forbid blacks from attending services was not a good unity. The unified vote of a mainline Protestant denomination to bless forbidden sexual acts is not a good unity.

John Piper, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-christian-unity>

Can you think of situations of 'good' unity and 'bad' unity?

Read Philippians 2:1-4

- Here Paul unpacks the "good work" mentioned in 1:6. Fill out the details.

V1 God's Gifts to Us	V2-4 Complete Paul's joy by
<input type="radio"/> Encouragement from being united with Christ <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Being like-minded <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Ⓟ

- In a word or phrase, summarise the things that make Paul's joy complete (v2-4)?

- How is “selfish ambition” (cf 1:15) so at odds with this way of living?
- What does it mean to “value others above yourselves”? How can this be misapplied?

Read Philippians 2:5-8

- How does v5 link to v2?
- How is Paul’s plea for humility in v1-4 enriched by v5-8?
- In what ways did Jesus “made himself nothing”? (cf John 1:1-14, 10:11-18; Isa 53:1-9)

Read Philippians 2:9-11

What was God’s response to Jesus’ humiliation? (Isa 52:13-15; 53:10-12)

Implications

- How is being united in Christ so different from groups based on uniformity?
- Reflecting on our relationships at church:
 - In what ways are we tempted to selfish ambition and vain conceit?
 - How can we better express humility and servant-hood?
 - How can we practically look out for the interests of others?

- How should we deal with differences or conflicts?

Prayer

Thank God for Jesus' humility that brought salvation. Pray that God would grow humility in us. Pray for real healing from any past divisions within our church, and protection from any gospel disunity in the future. Pray that God would have mercy on Blenheim and that more knees would bow to Jesus this year.

Study 5 – Work Out Your Salvation (Philippians

"Aslan is a lion, the Lion, the great Lion."

"Ooh" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he-quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion"

"Safe?" said Mr Beaver, "Who said anything about safe? Of course he isn't safe. But ... he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*

2:12-30)

Would you say that you “fear” God? Why or why not?

Read Philippians 2:12-13

- What is the “therefore” linking together?
- What does Paul mean by “work out”? How is it different to “work for” and “work in”? What are God’s role and our role in salvation?
- What is “fear and trembling” important?

Read Philippians 2:14-18

- What is achieved as the church works out its salvation? (cf “discern” 1:9-11)
- How does “grumbling and arguing” work against God’s will for his church?
(cf Ex 15:24, 16:7, Num 14:27-29, Deut 32:5, Matt 20:11, John 6:41-43, James 5:9).
- How does Paul describe the world in v15?
- How do we “shine among them like stars”?
- What makes Paul rejoice?

Read Philippians 2:19-30

Paul first meets Timothy in Acts 16:1-5 and he accompanied Paul for much of his ministry (eg Macedonia Acts 17:14; Corinth 1 Cor 4:17; Ephesus 1 Tim 1:3).

- What do we learn of Timothy's character in v19-24? Compare to 2:1-11.
- What do we learn of Epaphroditus' character in v25-30? Given how Paul speaks up Epaphroditus, what does it suggest about the Philippian's attitude to him? Why?
- Why is "in the Lord" highlighted throughout this section? (v19, 24, 29)
- How would you describe the relationships between Paul, the Philippians, Timothy, Epaphroditus and Jesus?

Implications

- Given that we're saved by Christ alone, how do we "work out our salvation with fear and trembling"?
- Do you think of yourself as a "star"?
 - What stops us shining?
 - How can we "hold firmly to the word of life"? (v16 NIV11 cf "hold out" NIV84)
- What situations cause us to grumble or argue?
- How do Timothy and Epaphroditus challenge our depth of concern for our brothers and sisters in Christ? Who has been a Timothy or Epaphroditus to us?

Prayer

Praise God for 2:13 and pray for 2:12. Thank God for the privilege of being “stars” and pray we would shine more brightly. Pray for unbelievers in your life.

Study 6 - Straining Forward (Philippians 3:1-14)

Coal miners know that dangerous gases can gather silently and secretly in the tunnels. In the early days of coal mining, they brought canaries into the mines. A canary's metabolism is very sensitive to air quality. As long as the bright yellow birds chirp and sing, miners know the air is safe. If gas levels rise, the canaries stop singing. Christian joy is like that singing, yellow bird. When your heart stops singing ... John Piper

Have you ever experienced a season when your heart 'stopped singing'? How did you pull through?

Read Philippians 3:1-6

- Why do you think Paul repeats the idea of “rejoice”? (cf 1:18, 2:17-18, 3:1, 4:4, 4:10)
- Why is Paul so impassioned against “those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh”? Where is their “confidence”?
- In what ways is Paul able to put more “confidence in the flesh”? Why does he list his Jewish pedigree?

Read Philippians 3:7-14

- Where is Paul's “confidence” now? Why is Paul so dismissive of his background?
- How did Paul change so dramatically? (cf Acts 9)
- What is righteousness? What does it mean that it comes “on the basis of faith”?

- Paul has been dramatically transformed from the day he approved of Stephen's stoning (Acts 8:1) and his past achievements in the flesh (Phil 3:4-6). But in v10-14 how does Paul see his life now? (cf 2:12)
- How is Paul "becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead"? (v11 cf 2:6-11)
- What is Paul's motivation for "straining toward what is ahead" (v13)?

Implications

- Paul makes 16 references to joy/rejoice/glad in Philippians.
 - What situations rob us of this joy?
 - What practical steps can we do, to make sure we don't get bored, distracted or tempted, and lose our everyday joy?
- What did you put your confidence in, before knowing Jesus?
- An unbelieving friend questions the benefits of "knowing Christ" (v8). How could you respond?
- What has been your experience of "forgetting what is behind" (v13)?
- What are some of the challenges we have in "straining toward" what God has planned for us?

Prayer

Praise God for the joy of boasting in Jesus and serving God by his Spirit. Pray that no 'evildoer' would ever convince us to put our confidence in the flesh. Pray God would equip us to strain toward what is ahead, "to win the prize for which God has called (us)... in Christ Jesus".

Study 7 Citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3:15-21)

Maturity is the ability to respond to the environment in an appropriate manner. This response is generally learned rather than instinctive. Wikipedia Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. 1 Cor 14:20 (ESV)

When you first became a Christian, who did you model your life on?

Read Philippians 3:15-16

- Given the context v1-14, what is the “mature” and immature view of things?
- How should we respond to each other when we think differently on some point? How does God make his truth clearer to us?
- What does it mean “to live up to what we have already attained”?

Read Philippians 3:17-21

- What is Paul’s “example” for us to “model”?
- Why does Paul mention his “tears” in v18?
- What is Paul’s mind on in v20-21?
 - How do we know heaven is true?
 - Where is our “citizenship”?

Implications

- Maturity requires us to keep our eyes on those who live like Paul and Timothy and Epaphroditus. Who do you model the Christian life from?

- Who do/could you model to? How could you be more deliberate in your discipleship?
- How do we model Christ in different relationships?

	More casually	More formally
Someone older		
A peer		
Someone younger		
A family member		
An unbeliever		

- “Many live as enemies of the cross” (v18). Who does this make you think of?
- When do we normally shed tears? Do we share gospel tears like Paul?
- How can we live as citizens of heaven on earth?

Prayer

- Praise God that we are not enemies of the cross and pray that God would give us gospel tears for those who are.

- Pray for us to desire maturity and to live up to what we have already attained. Pray for St Christopher's to have a culture of formal and informal discipleship.
- Thank God for the assurance of knowing our citizenship is in heaven and that God will transform our lowly bodies to be like Christ's glorious eternal body.

Study 8 Standing Firm (Philippians 4:1-9)

Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness and worry, usually generalised and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing. Wiki

Here's a little song I wrote, you might want to sing it note-for-note. Don't worry, be happy.

In every life we have some trouble, but when you worry, you make it double.

Don't worry, be happy. Don't worry, be happy now. Bobby McFerrin 1988

What makes you anxious?

Read Philippians 4:1-3

- In v1, how does Paul describe the Philippian believers? What does he desire for them? (cf 1:27)

- Why are Euodia and Syntyche singled out? (cf 2:14, 3:15)
 - What does it mean to be of the “same mind”? (cf 2:2, 3:19, 4:7)
 - Who does Paul ask to help them?

Read Philippians 4:4-9

- What does and doesn't it mean to “rejoice”?

- What does and doesn't it mean to be gentle? (cf 2 Cor 10:1)

- How are anxiety, prayer and thanksgiving related?

- What is the peace of God? How does it guard our hearts and minds?

- Could v8-9 be the summary verses of Philippians? Why/why not?

Implications

- Do you think of other believers like Paul does in 4:1? What tends to be our loves, longings, joys and crowns?
- How can our gentleness be evident to all? (Eg in the car; at home; at work; at the shops)
- How can we practically live out v6? Give some examples.
- How does the peace of God change our everyday experience?
- How can you fill your mind with v8? Is there anything you need to stop thinking about?

Prayer

- Pray for the peace of God to keep transforming us as we appreciate Christ Jesus all the more.
- Pray that the peace with God will overflow to our St Christopher's family, as we bear with each other and stand united.
- Pray that the peace with God will overflow into our inner life, displacing our anxiety.
- Pray that our minds are set on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy, and that we are a model to others in all this.

Study 9 Financial Partnership (Philippians 4:14-16)

Note: Before we finish our series in Philippians, we pause to reflect briefly on 4:14-16, and consider a thematic study on partnership with our finances.

Why is it important to talk about money?

(1) "Money is dangerous. If you have it and depend on it, it will kill you. If you don't have it and crave it, it will kill you. Money can kill us, because it reveals our hearts ... The movement of your money signifies the movement of your heart. Where your money goes, your heart is going. You exchange money for what you value, what you treasure.

John Piper, <http://www.christianpost.com/news/john-piper-christians-must-choose-god-over-money-154078/>

(2) "It is important that ministers teach about giving so as not to rob the congregation. For the real beneficiary of the gift is not the minister but the Christian - the donor is also the recipient. As Jesus himself taught, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). In giving we become like God - the God of all Grace who loves the cheerful giver."

Phillip Jensen, <http://phillipjensen.com/articles/beg-to-give/>

Why do we often feel awkward talking about our finances, individually and a church?

Read Philippians 4:14-16

- Which of the early churches supported Paul financially?
- Why caused the Philippian church to support Paul?
- Are we like the Philippian church?

Read 1 Cor 16:1-4, 2 Cor 8:1-9:15

- What should be our attitudes towards giving?
- What practical principles should govern our giving?
- Do you agree with statement: *"Four principles of Biblical giving are: prayerfully, cheerfully, generously and regularly/electronically."*

Implications

- Why is the love of money a root of all kinds of evil? (1 Tim 6:10)

Note: This verse is commonly mis-quoted as "*the* root of all kinds of evil".

- In what ways do we find it easy to give money to gospel ministry? Share a story of the joy of supporting overseas mission.
- In what ways do we find it hard to give money to gospel ministry?
 - Whose responsibility is it to work out how generous we are to be?
 - Most of us worry about economic security. How can we "not worry" while remaining generous?

Prayer

- Pray that Christ's generosity to us would keep transforming us into generous people.
- Pray that God help us see where we are in danger of serving money as our God.
- Pray as a church family we would be prayerful, cheerful, generous and regular givers to our ministry together at St Christopher's and

our mission partners, so that more people would be built up and reached for the glory of Christ.

Note on giving at St Christopher's

As a church, it is our joy to offer the gospel to Blenheim and beyond free of charge. This is enabled by the generosity of our members. We see giving as the privilege and responsibility of all members. God has gifted us all in different ways, some with much, some with just enough to cover daily costs. As a general guide, we encourage members to give 90% of giving to St Christopher's and 10% direct other gospel work.

Study 10 Partners in the Gospel (Philippians 4:10-23)

Contentment an internal satisfaction which does not demand changes in external circumstances. Holman Bible Dictionary

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.
Courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.
Serenity Prayer

Has there been a time in your Christian walk when you felt most content?

Read Philippians 4:10-23

- How did the Philippians “renew their concern” for Paul? (2:25, 14-18)
- Why does Paul talk so much about contentment? (cf 1 Cor 9:12b-18)
- What does “all this” refer to in v13?
Note: This verse can be mis-read if taken out of its context (ie assuming “this” = everything).
- Why doesn’t Paul desire the Philippian’s gift? (v17)
- In what sense does Paul mean that “God will meet all your needs”? (v19)
- How might Paul have got to know people in Caesar’s household? (v22, cf 1:13)

- What's the significance of the final greetings? (v20-23)

Implications

- Reflect on v11-12
 - Is it possible to be content in every situation?
 - In all the business of life, how can we practically follow Paul's example to seek joy and contentment in Christ? (cf 1 Tim 6:6-8, 2 Cor 12:7b-10).
- How can we help each other trust that "God will meet all your needs"? What situations do you find that hardest?
- Reflecting on Philippians
 - What has struck you most?
 - What is the main message for your life at the moment?

Prayer

- Praise God for his Son Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage, but made himself nothing by taking on the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, humbling himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross.
- Pray for us to more fully grasp our partnership with Jesus so that we better express our partnership with each other.
 - Pray for unity, gentleness, not being anxious, sharing in each other's troubles, financial generosity and contentment in every situation.