

STUDY GUIDE

PHILIPPIANS

To Live is Christ & to Die is Gain

MATT CHANDLER

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The Amazing views of Downtown Dallas provided by:

Philippians was filmed at the beautiful and exclusive homes of The Azure in downtown Dallas. For information on The Azure you can visit www.azureliving.com.

We wish to thank **Harwood International** (www.harwoodinternational.com/azure.php) **and the entire staff at The Azure**. The views you have are the best in the city and the spirit of the team was fantastic. Thanks again for your hospitality.

ABOUT THE HUB

Thanks for taking a moment to learn more about us. Our organization began in 1995 working with one speaker, Tommy Nelson and one amazing message, The Song of Solomon. It was and is our privilege to help champion God's written Word on Love, Dating, Marriage and Sex based directly on Song of Solomon. It is a book that has been censored for centuries and it has been a total blessing and thrill to see it change my life, and millions of others.

As of August 2009 we have rebranded our organization to reflect the root of our passion and the future of our organization:

To Develop, Find and Share life changing Bible Centric tools that move people forward. We have renamed our organization to The Hub. It is our passion and commitment to be a Hub for unique, challenging and grace filled resources. I hope you will agree after you participate and interact with one of our resources.

God Bless you and know that if you will listen, God's Truth will move you forward in life, no matter where you have been or are currently.

Doug Hudson, President - The Hub

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STUDY TIPS

BEFORE YOU GO ANY FURTHER... READ THIS!

If you are a small group leader, thanks for taking the opportunity to shepherd others along the way. And if you are using this series for personal study, get ready for a life-changing experience you will want to share with others! Here are a few tips as you get started with the series:

- This study was designed with small groups in mind. So put a small group together and get started.
- The series is also perfect for individuals or couples who are looking for ways to deepen their devotions or find practical ways to apply the timeless truths of Scripture.
- Philippians is designed to be used as either a 12-week or a 6-week study. Each DVD session is approximately 30 minutes. The sessions are designed to be used as follows: watch each session and then discuss the questions in the Study Guide.
- Depending on the length of your meeting time, you can watch two sessions per meeting to make Philippians a 6-week series.

A WORD TO SMALL GROUP LEADERS

Special Note - take a moment to go to **Behind The Book** feature (page 85). This is a quick overview that will give you the who, what, when, where and why of Philippians.

There is no separate leader's guide. Leaders are facilitators of the material: Answers to Text Questions are in the back of Study Guide.

Before each session we encourage leaders to:

- **Pray** – ask the Lord for guidance on how to lead the members in your group. Pray that He will show you ways to stimulate genuine, dynamic and open communication.
- **Preview** – it will be very beneficial for you to watch the session before you share it with your group. You will notice the key points from each session and you can better facilitate the discussion questions within your group.
- **Prepare** – a small group will only go as deep and be as transparent as the leader. If a leader or facilitator is not willing to get personal, then the group will float on the surface. Let God speak through your own struggles and weaknesses.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Matt Chandler serves as Lead Pastor of *The Village Church* in Dallas, TX. He describes his six-year tenure at *The Village* as a re-planting effort where he was involved in changing the theological and philosophical culture of the congregation. The church has witnessed a tremendous response growing from 160 people to over 6,000 including satellite campuses in Dallas and Denton. Alongside his current role as lead pastor, Matt is involved in church planting efforts both locally and internationally through *The Village* and various strategic partnerships.

Prior to accepting the pastorate at *The Village*, Matt had a vibrant itinerant ministry for over 10 years where he spoke to thousands of people in America and abroad about the glory of God and beauty of Jesus. Matt is currently listed as #17 on itunes podcasts for Religion and Spirituality. Approximately 300,000 downloads per year. He is a sought after teacher and speaker by such organizations as *Catalyst*, *Desiring God* and many others.

His greatest joy outside of Jesus is being married to Lauren and being a dad to their three children, Audrey, Reid and Norah.

INTRODUCTION

If someone has read only one book of the Bible, often I find it to be Philippians.

Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of the most taught books of the Bible from the pulpit today and with excellent reason. The book is simple, straightforward, and broadly relevant—easy for all Christians to understand and apply.

Often people come away from this text and sum it up in one word: 'joy'. This is both true and tragic.

It is true in the sense that the letter is conceivably the quintessential treatise on joy that all believers must read to see the fullness of joy with which Christians are intended to live. The letter makes joy real, practical, and alive and is unmistakably a vital part of this great text.

But it is also tragic to sum it up simply as 'joy', in that there is so much more there. It answers all sorts of practical questions for the believer today:

- How can I effectively share my faith?
- What does it mean to live a worthy Christian life?
- What does true Christian humility look like?
- Where can I find true satisfaction for my soul?
- How can I rejoice during tragedy?
- What do I do when I am stressed?
- What does a passionate follower of Christ look like?

This letter answers so many questions for the believer and paints a beautiful picture of what the mature Christian life is.

Enjoy this expositional teaching of Philippians—a book you may have heard many times—like you have never heard it before.



ODD BEGINNINGS

ACTS 16:6-40

1

Ironically, in this study on Paul's letter to the Philippians, we ask you first to open your Bible to... not Philippians. We start out this study of Philippians in the 16th chapter of the book of Acts. Allow me to illustrate why that would be.

Though I am not as avid a world-traveler as many, I have been on numerous national and international mission trips. When I get back home, I generally tell my friends and family only a little bit about the culture, the sights, the accommodations, and the travel itself, but I spend the majority of my time talking to anyone that will listen about the people. My photo albums are not filled with pictures of the (often breathtaking) scenery, but I have scores of pictures of the people that I met while serving there. The individuals in the area are the reason I went in the first place. They are the topics that consume my post-trip conversations and memories which I will keep with me for life.

The most important thing about the mission trip is the people. It is the people that endear the city to our heart. The same is true for Paul and the Philippians.

On Paul's second missionary journey (recorded in Acts 16), he spends time in Philippi. It is this experience in Philippi that sets the backdrop for the letter that he would write later to the Philippians. Before we study that letter we need to meet the people that Paul met. This first session introduces us to three people that Paul met in Philippi whose stories the Scriptures have preserved for us to study for centuries. Their stories and backgrounds could not possibly be any different.

Though every church has a somewhat unique story of its beginnings, none is as unique as Philippi, the first church in the history of all of Europe. The story is far from how you and I would start the Christian movement on a continent. But then, again, God is a touch smarter than we are.

The birth of the church in Philippi is truly an odd and seemingly unadvisable way to start a church, but isn't that just like God?

Let's check it out.

ACTS 16:6-18

⁶And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. ⁷And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. ⁸So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. ⁹And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

¹¹So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. ¹³And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

¹⁶As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. ¹⁷She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

ACTS 16:19-36

¹⁹But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. ²⁰And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. ²¹They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." ²²The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. ²³And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. ²⁴Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, ²⁶and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. ²⁷When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." ²⁹And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³²And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. ³⁴Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

³⁵But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." ³⁶And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. There-

ACTS 16:37-40

fore come out now and go in peace.”³⁷But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”³⁸The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.³⁹So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.⁴⁰So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. (Per the DVD) What are the relationships you have into which you could bring the gospel? What reasons keep you from hesitating to share it boldly?



IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THIS LETTER, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND ITS BEGINNINGS.

2. Describe the people that Paul meets in Philippi as described in Acts 16 and how the gospel is shown or spoken to each of them:



A. Lydia (16:14-15) _____

B. The demon-possessed girl (16:16-18) _____

C. The Jailer (16:23-34) _____

3. Paul approached three different people three very different ways. What does that say about how we spread the good news today?

A. How would you approach a 'Lydia' today? Similar to how Paul did or differently?

B. Probably you do not regularly encounter demon-possessed girls in our culture today. Is there any modern-day application for the approach Paul took to the demon-possessed girl?

C. The conversion of the jailer is remarkable in that Paul was able to forgive his unnecessary stocks for the sake of telling him about Christ. Why could Paul forgive so quickly something so awful and undeserved, yet we are so slow to forgive wrongs done to us?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

DON'T JUST READ THE BIBLE. BE THERE. SMELL IT.

4. In the first two conversions, Paul approached the women with words. In the third (the jailer) he used only actions, and the man begged him to tell him about Jesus. What does this say about the balance of words and actions communicating the gospel in our culture today?

DIVING DEEPER

Map of Philippi with Paul's missionary journey.



prayer requests

PHILIPPIANS

To Live is Christ & to Die is Gain

The story begins in Philippi. Where Paul introduces three individuals that were all enslaved by the kind of things we often choose over the gospel.

- Lydia, the Business Executive
- The Little Slave Girl
- The Hard Working Jailer

Their lives portray dysfunction and emptiness but are totally transformed by the Gospel. True joy and Christ's love begin to live within them, giving them a life of purpose.

In fact, Paul himself was enslaved and then by God's grace and mercy he could pen these popular and profound words:

*To live is Christ & to die is gain
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*

Let's join Matt Chandler, Pastor of The Village Church in Dallas, Texas, as he walks us through Philippians. In this, one of the most intimate of Paul's letters, he paints a beautiful picture of what it is to be a mature Christian.



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