

Bible Study, Series 4, Week 1

Personal Bible Study

Day: 1

Read Philippians 1: 1-2

Paul: Paul was in jail when he wrote this letter to the Philippians. The Philippians were the first city in Europe where Paul founded a congregation.

Timothy: Paul's spiritual child. He was well known in Philippi. (Acts 19: 21-22 and Philippians 2: 22)

"We greet you with the grace and peace" the well known Jewish greeting.

Grace: undeserved and spontaneous love from God.

Peace: the result and fruit of God's grace.

1. How does one really get the grace and peace mentioned in verse 2? You'll get the answer in verse 1.
2. Do you really know this peace in your life on a daily basis? Romans 5: 8 can help you with this.

Day: 2

Read Philippians 1: 3-5

1. What example does Paul give us in verse 3 that we should follow?
2. What are the two characteristics of the members of that congregation is the reason for Paul's joy? (Verse 5)
3. What does a life, that preaches the gospel from the very first day until today, look like? (From the day you heard it right up to the present)
4. Write down your own commitment and tell God about it in prayer.

Day: 3

Read Philippians 1: 6

If we had to maintain our faith ourselves, it would have been a hopeless case!

1. When does God "start" the good work in us?
2. When only will it be complete?
3. What does John 15: 5-8 teach us about our dependence?
4. God's love for us cannot be described! Our certainty does not lay within ourselves but exists through what He does for us. Read Romans 8: 29-30, 38-39, John 6: 37, 39, John 10: 28 and 1 Peter 1: 4-5. Take it as your own once again and Philippians 1: will become true for you.

Day: 4

Read Philippians 1: 7-8

1. There is a specific reason why the congregation is especially close to Paul's heart. What is it (Verse 7.)
2. This characteristic is sometimes missing in student congregations. This is why we often hear the church is cold and dead. What is your stand on the following:
 - a) The congregation is as cold and as dead as the members of the congregation.
 - b) It is the pastor's fault that there is so little happening in the church.
3. Have a look at verse 7 again and pay special attention to the part the congregation has to play.
4. Do you pray enough for the pastor, minister or reverend of your church? He or she is supposed to know you, but, do you know him or her? Have you ever been to the parsonage? Have you ever in honesty and with good intentions discussed things that are bothering you with him or her? Or do you only criticize?
5. If you become an active member the warmth and love, that we all need so desperately, will flourish, even in very big congregations with many members.

Day: 5

Read Philippians 1: 9

Today we are having a look at some of the principles Paul uses in his prayers.

"Your love" The mentioning of love for God on purpose and the giving of yourself, spontaneously to Jesus Christ. This love should be visible in your values, deeds and attitudes.

"Abound yet more and more" your love has to grow - overflow! The love is not only an emotion but must grow in:

"Knowledge" Still Paul warns against some kinds of knowledge and there also are some limits to knowledge - read 1 Corinthians 8: 1 and 1 Corinthians 13: 8. Even so, we have to grow in knowledge - the key for this word we find in Colossians 1: 9. Knowledge is an expression of the relationship with God through Christ.

"All perception" Paul explains this himself in verse 10.

1. How visible is your love? Can others really see it?
2. Zeal without knowledge and love without perception can damage the Kingdom. If Paul prays for it regularly should you not do so, for yourself and for others?
3. How does a person's "love in knowledge" and "love in perception" grow?

Day: 6

Read Philippians 1: 10-11

Paul name four things here that is very important in the life of a Christian.

"Distinguish between things that differ" what has real value; the things that are important, be able to distinguish it from things that are unimportant.

"Be sincere" tested, pure, tempered and cleansed; shows to the correct attitude that should be in every Christian.

"Without offense" not being an obstacle in the way of someone because of your example, to not give offence

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness" a life according to God's will, right according to His measures; to be filled everyday with the fruit of a correct life.

"Through Jesus Christ" on our own we cannot bear such fruit

1. In verse 10 we get an important measure for our practical Christian life. Test your life in the light of it and answer to it in prayer.
2. What other measures do we get in 1 Corinthians 6: 12 and 1 Corinthians 8: 9 and 13?
3. To what extend is your life full with the "fruit of righteousness?"
4. What is the connection between Matthew 5: 16 and the last part of verse 11?

Group Bible Study

Read Philippians 1: 1-11

In the first eleven verses of Philippians we see the love of Paul for the congregation of Philippi. There true interest in him and his work is also very evident.

1. In verse 1 Paul and Timothy is called "servants of Jesus Christ" Where and how did Paul became a servant? (Acts 9: 3-6) And Timothy? (2Timothy 1: 3-5) What do we learn here about a certain "day and date" of a persons conversion? What are the demands made on servant of Jesus Christ according to Romans 6: 10-11?
2. According to Philippians 1: 3-4 Paul spent hours in prayer because he prayed for a wide circle of people around him. How long is a person supposed to pray - or is the time not important?
3. Thankfulness and happiness formed an important part of Paul's prayers. Name the things he is saying tank you for in verse 3-11 and what he is happy about. Does your Bible study group have the same qualities? If not, what are you going to do about it? If so, how can it be improved?
4. In his prayer Paul also ask quite a few things from God for the congregation. Make a list of those things. How can it be assured that these things become a reality in the lives of Christians?
5. The congregation of Philippi was very close to Paul's heart. (Verse 7) What is the reason according to verse 7-8? How can real fellowship become a reality in a congregation? Discuss the following statement: "The church or congregation is as cold and dead as it's members."

6. In verse 10 we read about for matters that was very important to Paul, what are they? (Compare week 1 day 6) Judge your self according to these matters.