

# MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY



## JOY!

Text: Philippians 4:1-7

Philippi was a small Roman colony in Greece. Paul established the Christian church there on his second missionary journey. He was thrown into prison and then asked to leave town for his efforts (51 A.D.). About six years later he returned on his third journey. Paul later wrote Philippians while in prison, to encourage these new believers. In prison himself, Paul was keenly aware that the Philippian believers were being persecuted for their beliefs, and he wanted to support, strengthen and encourage them, in part by sharing his experience as a prisoner for Christ's sake. He wanted them to know about real Christian Joy!

1. Philippians 4:1 – Stay true to the Lord. Literally stand in the Lord. How do we stay true to the Lord? (Check out chapter 2). What do YOU do to stay true to Jesus?
2. Philippians 4:2-3 – Is it possible to believe in Christ, work hard for His kingdom, and yet have broken relationships with other Christians committed to the same cause?
  - Read 4:2-3 – Although it is possible, it is not desirable, and the point Paul is making is there is NO excuse to remain unreconciled! (Galatians 6:10)

Do you need to be reconciled to someone today? If necessary, seek the help and wisdom of those known for peacemaking.

3. Philippians 4:4-5 – Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice! Where does ultimate and true joy come from? From his prison dungeon Paul teaches us – joy is NOT dependent upon outward circumstances. Joy is a result of a personal relationship with Jesus. Joy is an inner attitude. Joy and rejoicing are a response to the Good News and the Holy Spirit within.
  - See Ephesians 5:18-20. Believers can find joy in Jesus even in the midst of suffering. (Philippians 2:18, 3:1; Romans 12:12, 15; 1 Thessalonians 5:16)
  - Share the greatest experience of JOY in your life.
  - What's the worst circumstance you ever found joy in?
  - What are you rejoicing about today?
4. Philippians 4:6 – There is certainly plenty to worry about in our world and lives today. Why does Paul tell us NOT to worry? What are you worried about today? Pray for one another!
5. Why would Paul tell us to pray about everything and thank God for what He has done?
  - What is the advantage to that?
  - Does God truly care about EVERYTHING in our lives?
  - Is there any advantage for Christians being grateful and showing that gratitude to God?

(Matthew 6:25-34, 7:9-11; Romans 12:12, Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Peter 5:7)

- What are you most thankful for today?

6. Philippians 4:7 – Is God's peace different from the world's peace? (John 14:27)

- How do you react to this statement? True peace comes from knowing that God is in control. (Isaiah 26:3; John 14:27; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9)
- Are you living in peace today? Why or why not?
- Are we told to live peaceful lives? All the verses below talk about peace.
  - Mark 9:50
  - John 14:27, 20:21
  - Romans 12:18
  - 1 Corinthians 14:33
  - Galatians 5:22
  - Ephesians 2:14
  - Colossians 3:15
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:13
  - 2 Thessalonians 2:16
- What is the promise of Philippians 4:7(b)?
- Is that reason to rejoice?

PRAYER: Pray for courage and wisdom to stay true to Jesus. Pray for JOY and peaceful relationships. Be grateful for what God has done, and pray for what you need.