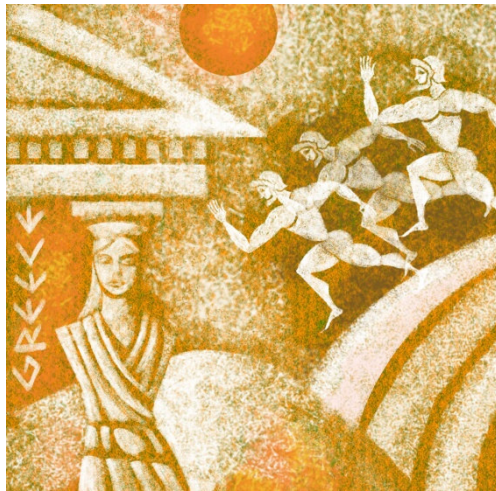


PHILIPPIANS

Φιλιππήσιος



Calvary Bible Church Overview of The book of Philippians

Wednesday Night Discussion Groups

Tim & Melinda Inman

2011-2012

The Inductive Method

Observation

What does the text say?

Overview

Establish Context by determining Historical Background

Where does it fit in the Bible timeline?

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?

Make simple lists of people, places, and events mentioned in the text

Make simple lists of key words that are used throughout large portions of the entire book

Determine Book and Chapter Themes

Mark questions to return to later for future study

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Chapter Studies

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?

Make more thorough lists of people, places and events

Make more thorough lists of Key Words in chapter or section

Ignore chapter divisions when the theme is carried forward

Mark Contrasts, Comparisons, Expressions of Time, Terms of Conclusion

Beginning of Interpretation: Tie this all together by examining text verse by verse

Outline or complete Structural Analysis to break down difficult text

Examine meanings of Key Words as you study verse by verse

Meditate on text to determine paragraph themes

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Interpretation

What does the text mean in correct context?

What principles do I see that tie to other sections of scripture?

Complete Cross References of those passages of scripture

Complete examination of Key Words: meaning, tense, voice

Notice and examine meaning of verbs & descriptive adjectives

Note commands and warnings

Consult commentaries after completing your own study

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Application

Based on correct interpretation of the text:

What must I do?

How can I apply this truth to my life?

How does this affect me?

How does this better knowledge of God change me?

Meditate on scripture and Memorize important, applicable passages of scripture

How to Do an Overview: General Information

Observation is the Key: What do I see?

What does the text say?

Overview

Establish Context by determining
Historical Background

Where does it fit in the Bible timeline?

**Ask: Who, What, When, Where,
Why, and How?**

Pray before beginning each day and ask for the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit to see clearly what God's holy words of Scripture actually say. Pray for better observation skills:

"Open my eyes, that I may see wonderful things in your law," Psalm 119: 18 (NIV).

WHAT WE'LL DO OVER THE NEXT THREE WEEKS:

Overview and Observation about the church in Philippi:

1. The first week and a half, we will investigate the history of the founding of the church in Philippi (approximately 50 A.D.), Paul and Timothy's ministry, and their many interactions with the Philippians from the time the church was planted until they wrote this letter to the Philippians in approximately 62 A.D.
2. The second week and a half, we will read through Philippians several times in order to familiarize ourselves with its content, organizing what we see there and noting key themes and persons. Our job is relatively easy with the book of Philippians. The entire book is only four chapters long.

What is the foundation of an Overview?

"The more time you spend in **observation**, the less time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the more accurate will be your results. The less time you spend in observation, the more time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the less accurate will be your results."¹

The Text: Philippians

A working copy for marking is provided at the end of this handout (pg. 53-71). You may remove the working copy from this material to use for the rest of the study of the entire book, because we will break it into sections for study. However, the text for each section of the book will be provided within each study packet of material.

¹ Howard G. & William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 43.

Thorough Observation is the key to establishing context.

FIRST: INVESTIGATING THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH

Historical/Biblical Setting: Where does this fit in the biblical timeline?

Though it is tempting to find this background information in a reference tool, it is far more useful and will be retained in your memory better if you do the work of discovery yourself by focusing on the people mentioned in this book of the bible and the facts of these person's interactions with Paul. To do this, **we will investigate the history of the church in Philippi, Paul and Timothy's dealings and interactions with the church after its founding, and biblical evidence of the relationship between these two men and the church members in Philippi.**

TIMOTHY: Because Timothy is mentioned as an example in this letter, and we are studying Paul's first letter to Timothy after we study Philippians, we will also focus on Timothy in this overview.

Geographical & Cultural Background Information:

We'll examine cultural and geographical information about the establishment of this church and Paul and Timothy's ministry, providing links to reputable reference material about cultural, extra-biblical, and geographical background information that affects this particular book. Sometimes we'll quote these sources right in the material. Compare this with what you find as you make your own observations.

Good bible study sources to use (hard copies are all available in the church library):

- ***The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)***, Eerdmans. Also available online at: <http://www.bible-history.com/isbe/>.
- ***The New Unger's Bible Dictionary***, Moody Press.
- ***How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth***, by Fee & Stuart, Zondervan.
- Additional biblical research is also available online at: <http://www.bible-history.com/>.
- Online bible study sites: www.biblos.com, www.biblestudytools.com/csb/, www.biblegateway.com, www.blueletterbible.com, and www.crosswalk.com.
- **Commentaries:** *The NIV Application Commentary: Philippians*, by Frank Thielman, Zondervan, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Philippians*, by John MacArthur, Moody Press, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Abridged Edition*, Barker & Kohlenberger III, Zondervan. *The Epistle to the Philippians*, NICNT, by Gordon Fee, Eerdmans.

Digging into Philippians: Overview

We will examine some passages to help us address these questions:

HISTORY: What do we know about the church in Philippi? How was it founded? What kind of church was established? Have we seen these people in the other letters we've studied? What types of deeds of righteousness did the Philippians do that demonstrated love for Paul and for their fellow believers? How have Paul, his disciples, and fellow workers interacted with this church in Macedonia from the time they first met? What role did Timothy play?

After studying all four gospels, our chronological study through the New Testament has covered:

- Acts 1:1-11:18
 - James
 - Acts 11:19-14:28
 - Galatians
 - Acts 15:1-18:17
 - 1 Thessalonians
 - 2 Thessalonians
 - Acts 18:18-19:41
 - 1 Corinthians
 - Acts 20:1-6
 - 2 Corinthians
 - Romans
 - Acts 21:1-28:31
 - Ephesians
 - Philemon
 - Colossians
 - and now Philippians
 - followed by 1 Timothy
-  **Here we met both Timothy & the Philippians**

Therefore, the information about the church and its interactions with Paul and his group of fellow workers will be a review. What have we learned about the Philippians and Timothy since our first encounter with them mid-way through Paul's ministry? Follow the instructions on the following pages in order to complete this investigation.

**Orienting ourselves: Where are we as we begin this review?
Map of the geographic area of the New Testament**



Paul and Barnabas' First Missionary Journey, 46-47 A.D.



Map of New Testament Asia Minor

Map of Paul's Second Missionary Journey, 48 or 49 – 51 A.D.



http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_second_missionary_journey.html

Week One, Day One: Getting to Philippi, Replacing John Mark

After Paul's first missionary journey, during which numerous Gentiles were converted to Christ and churches established in **many Gentile cities in Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Galatia after starting in Cilicia and Syria (see maps on previous pages)**, a church council was held in Jerusalem in approximately 48-50 A.D. to establish what was necessary for these new, Gentile believers. The decision was made that they did not need to convert to Judaism or undergo circumcision, as many of the Jewish believers had been insisting. According to Acts 15: 19-20, 29, Gentile believers were to:

- abstain from the things polluted by (sacrificed to) idols
- abstain from sexual immorality
- abstain from what has been strangled and from blood

Coming out of pagan lifestyles, which were typified by these things in their religious, moral, and dietary practices, these instructions would set them apart from their pagan neighbors and would prompt Paul to write instructions on each of these commands to most of the Gentile churches as he completed his decades of ministry. A letter explaining these requirements was composed and addressed to "the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia."

The leaders in Jerusalem sent Paul and Barnabas back to Antioch with the letter to all the Gentile churches (Acts 15:22-35), sending along their own chosen men: Silas and Judas (called Barsabbas). Carrying this verdict, Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas returned to Antioch. Silas and Judas were leaders among the brothers. Both encouraged and strengthened the believers then returned to Jerusalem. (Silas came back to Antioch at some point.) **What happened some time later? Read Acts 15: 36-41 (NIV) and complete the questions that follow:**

³⁶ Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Why did Paul and Barnabas want/need to take this second trip, according to verse 36 and the opening paragraphs?

After the dispute over John Mark, (deserted them in Acts 13:13), **who did Barnabas take and where did they go? Find this island on the map on page 6 or 7.**

Who did Paul take and where did they go? Find these regions on the map on page 6 or 7. What was their task?

Read Acts 16:1-5 (NIV) and complete the questions that follow:

¹ He (Paul) came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. ² The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³ Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Look at the map on page 6 and 7 and locate the towns that are listed here. Timothy's age: In 1 Timothy (4:12), written approximately 13-15 years later, Paul referred to Timothy as "young" and urged him not to let anyone despise him for his youth. Therefore, as Timothy began his ministry with Paul, most commentators believe he was approximately 15-20 years of age.

Where was Timothy from?

Of what religious persuasion was his mother?

What about his father? How is he described?

What is Timothy's reputation?

Did his reputation affect Paul's decision to take him with him?

What does he do to Timothy?

In light of the decision just issued by the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, why does this passage tell us that Paul does this?

What does Timothy's submission to this rite as a very young man, unnecessary and foreign to him, tell us about Timothy?

What are Paul, Silas, and Timothy doing as they travel, according to verse 4?

What is the result, according to verse 5?

Read Acts 16:6-10 (NIV) and complete the questions that follow:

⁶ Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When **they** came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, **we** got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called **us** to preach the gospel to them.

Who were Paul's companions (look back at the previous two sections if you don't remember)?

Consult the map on page 7 and trace where they traveled, according to verse 6. These regions are in modern day Turkey.

According to verses 6 - 8, who kept them from preaching the word in the province of Asia and in Bithynia on this trip (two names for the same Person of the Godhead are given)?

Trace on the map on page 7 where they went instead, according to verse 8. Two significant things occurred in Troas.

1. A significant change in direction occurred. What happened in verse 9?

Where is Macedonia? Find Macedonia on the map on page 7. The dividing line between Asia and Europe is the tiny land bridge that connects Bithynia with Thrace on the map, making a bridge between the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea; this is the location of modern-day Istanbul.

What kind of help might the Macedonians need?

**2. A significant person joined them in Troas. Re-read the passage. Note that in verses 6-8, Paul and his companions are referred to by the pronoun "they." The author of the book of Acts is not a member of the group; he refers to them in the third person. But, what happens in verse 10? How is the group of Paul and his companions referred to in this verse—what pronouns are used in this verse? _____
Who joined the group? Who is the author of Acts? Is he with them for this portion of the trip? How do we know? _____**

God having prevented them from going to Asia, they had been led toward the city of Troas. Since God had called them to preach in Macedonia, according to verse 10, what did they do?

Read Acts 16:11-13 (NIV) and answer the questions that follow:

¹¹ From Troas **we** put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

How did they travel?

Who is in the group now?

Trace their route on the map on page 7.

How is Philippi described?

How long did they stay?

Information on Philippi from the ESV Study Bible:

http://www.esvonline.org/Philippians+1/#introduction_esvsb

“After their victory at the Battle of Philippi in 42 B.C., Antony and (later) Augustus re-founded this Macedonian city with army veterans. Its special status as an Augustan colony exempted the city from significant forms of taxation and gave it additional privileges of land ownership. The city encompassed good agricultural land, and it was on the Egnatian Way, an important Roman commercial road (built mid-2nd century B.C.). The Roman ethos of the colony is evident in Philippi’s Latin civic inscriptions and in the worship of Roman gods. (**see city map on pg. 12**) Extant archaeological remains from Paul’s day testify to the presence of a theater, a large forum (beneath the later 2nd-century-A.D. forum), shops, and two city gates (designated Krenides to the west and Neapolis to the east). There is a speaker’s platform (Gk. *bēma*) in the existing second-century forum between a pair of large fountains. One small stone crypt (built over a cistern) near the forum was designated in later church tradition as the prison site of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:23–34). Other structures dating from NT times and the early centuries of the church (e.g., a sports facility, pagan temples, octagonal and basilica style churches) can still be seen in Philippi.”

A lot happened in those several days. Tomorrow we’ll investigate what occurred during their time in Philippi. These events laid the foundation of the church there, its composition, and the lifelong friendship between Paul, his companions, and the church in Philippi.

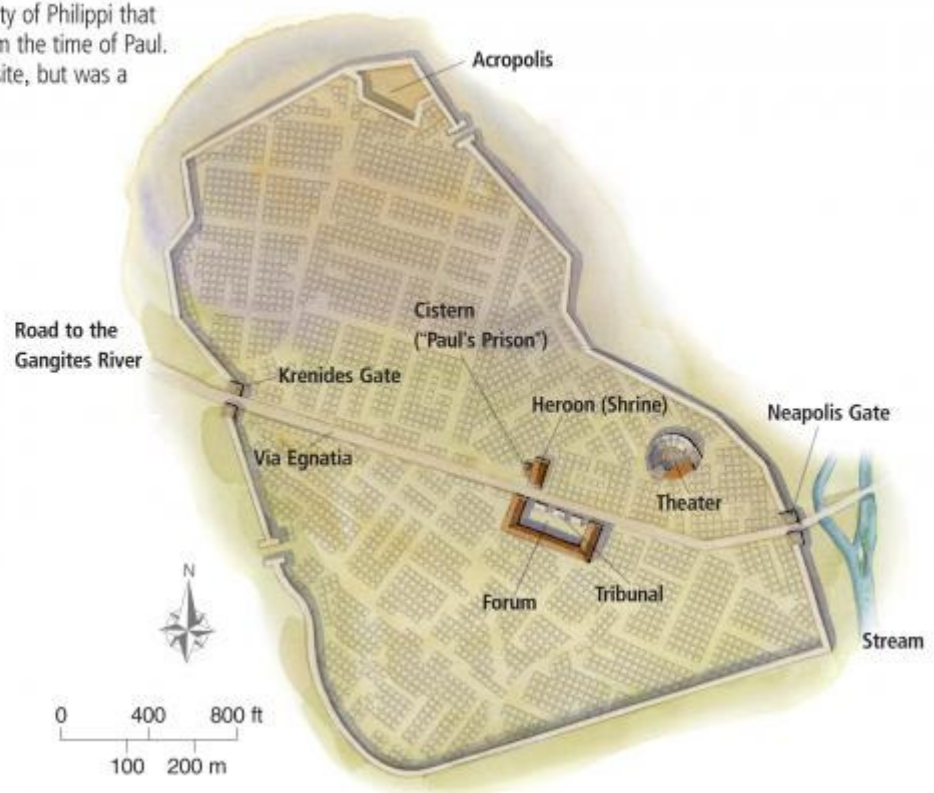
Week one, Day Two: In the Macedonian city of Philippi, a Roman colony

Read what happened in Philippi in Acts 16: 13-15 (NIV). Examine the maps on pg. 12 & 13.

¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

PHILIPPI IN THE TIME OF PAUL (C. A.D. 60)

The city plan below shows those features of the city of Philippi that archaeologists have so far identified as dating from the time of Paul. "Paul's Prison" is not believed to be an authentic site, but was a cistern later associated with Christian worship.



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Philippi in the Time of Paul (c. A.D. 60)

http://www.esvonline.org/search/Philippians/#map_esvsb

The Setting of Philippians (c. A.D. 62)

Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians during a time of imprisonment, probably in Rome. Located along the famous Egnatian Way, Philippi was the site of a key military victory by Augustus Caesar, and as a result it was declared a Roman colony, ensuring it immunity from taxation and drawing many veterans to settle there. Philippi was the first city in present-day Europe where Paul established a church.



<http://www.esvonline.org/resources/esvsb/map-50-01/>

Re-read Acts 16:13-15 and answer these questions:

Where was the place of prayer?

Why would Jews or converts to Judaism have been meeting there?

Who was gathered at the river for prayer?

Who were they worshipping?

Why all do you learn about Lydia in verse 14?

As a seller of purple, Lydia would have had some wealth. Thyatira was famous for its purple dyes, derived from the snails there.

Why did Lydia respond to Paul's message, according to verse 14?

What does verse 15 say she did immediately? Who else was baptized?

Then, what was Lydia's first act of Christian service, according to verse 15?

A center of operations having been established in Lydia's home, what did Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke spend their time doing while there? Read on in Acts 16:16-24 (NIV):

¹⁶ Once when **we** were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹ When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. ²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴ Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

What was the slave girl doing as Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke went to the place of prayer or walked about the city talking to citizens of Philippi about the gospel? What did she say? What tone of voice did she use?

While her statement is true, might this be distracting if you’re trying to preach the gospel?

How long did she do this, according to 18a?

If you were outside in the marketplace, whose voice would you hear—the quiet, reasonable voice of the man explaining the gospel to you or the young woman behind him shouting at the top of her voice?

So, what did Paul do in v. 18?

What was up with the slave girl? Pagan people in the Greco-Roman culture of Philippi sought revelation or inspiration to guide their lives in several ways: omens, divination by sacrifice, dreams, and oracles or fortune tellers. The most commonly sought oracles were the priestesses of Delphi. This girl appears to be one of these women based on the Greek text. Here are two sources of information about this cultural-religious practice:

Greece, Religion, Oracles (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia):

“**Oracles:** The most important oracle was that of Apollo at Delphi. Hither came envoys of nations as well as individuals, and none went away without some answer to their questions. After preliminary sacrifices, the priestess purified herself and mounted the tripod in the temple; the question was propounded to her by a temple official, and it was his function also to put her wild ravings into hexameter verse for the person consulting the oracle. A considerable number of these answers remain to us, all, of course, somewhat vague, many of them containing shrewd advice on the question that was brought to the oracle. The honor paid to the oracle and its influence, on the whole an influence making for high ethical standards and wise statesmanship, must be recognized. The early Christian Fathers held that the Pythian priestess was inspired

by an evil spirit; later critics have treated the whole institution as a clever device to deceive the people; but in view of the respect paid to the oracle through so many generations, it is hard to believe that its officials were not honest in their effort to discover and make known the will of the god they served.”
<http://www.bible-history.com/isbe/G/GREECE%2C+RELIGION+IN+ANCIENT/>

Kenneth L. Barker and John R. Kohlenberger III, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Abridged Edition*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994, pg. 471:

“One day on their way to the Jewish place of prayer, the missionaries were met by a slave girl possessed by a demonic spirit. Undoubtedly all who knew the girl regarded her as neither fraudulent nor insane but one who could foretell the future. By her fortune-telling, she earned her masters much money. As the girl followed Paul and his companions around, she kept on screaming out: ‘These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved’ (cf. Mk. 1:24; 3:11; 5:7; Lk. 4:34, 41; 8:28). This acknowledgement is stated in terms acceptable to the Jewish world and readily understandable to Gentiles...But while the demon-inspired words provided some free publicity for the missionaries and helped gather an audience, when it continued for many days, it became a nuisance. The demon’s words were getting more of a hearing than the proclamation of the Gospel! So Paul commanded the evil spirit ‘in the name of Jesus Christ’ to come out of the girl, and the demon left her. Presumably, having been delivered by the power of God, she became a Christian and a church member.”

Now, back to the passage.

In Acts 16:19, according to the text, why were her owners upset?

Who did they seize (interestingly, the two Jews in the missionary group)?

Was the charge they made in verse 20-21 accurate? Is that really why they were upset with Paul and Silas?

Christianity was not a “custom” outside of Roman law at this time; it was considered to be a sect of Judaism, which was allowed to retain its customs and practices.

So, what did the authorities do to Paul and Silas, according to verse 22-24?

How might Luke and Timothy have felt as they watched this outcome?

Pause here to consider what this type of public event would produce in the infant church in Philippi. How might these new believers feel?

Week one, Day Three: What next? Would you respond like this?

Read the account of what happened next, Acts 16:25-34 (NIV):

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. ²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family.

According to Acts 16:22-24 (the last passage we examined yesterday), in what condition were Paul and Silas as they were singing hymns and praying to God at midnight?

Had there been a trial? _____

Had legal evidence been produced? _____

Had they been able to defend themselves? _____

How would you respond to a similar miscarriage of justice?

In verse 26, how does God change the circumstances? What effect did the earthquake have?

Why would the jailer have thought of killing himself? What type of responsibility did a Roman jailer have?

How did Paul respond in verse 28?

“The conversion of the Roman jailer, a man belonging to a class ‘insensible as a rule and hardened by habit, and also disposed to despise the Jews, who were the bearers of the message of the gospel,’ is one of those cases which illustrate its universality and power. (Easton’s Bible Dictionary, from www.biblos.com)

What did the jailer do in verse 29 & 30? Why would he have responded like this? Why would he assume that they would be able to tell him how to be saved?

How did they respond in verse 31?

Where did the jailer then take them and what did they do there, according to verse 32-33?

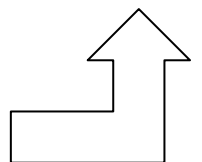
What does their immediate response of baptism tell us about their transformation?

After the preaching, the salvation, and the baptism, what is the jailer’s first act of Christian service, according to verse 34 (note: his home hadn’t been destroyed, just the nearby jail)?

How did the jailer now feel?

How might you feel if these events had happened to you and you had seen these miracles followed by the salvation and baptism of your entire family?

What happened next? What interesting news do the Philippian officials receive?



Read Acts 16: 35-40 (NIV):

³⁵ When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: “Release those men.” ³⁶ The jailer told Paul, “The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace.”

³⁷ But Paul said to the officers: “They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.”

³⁸ The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. ³⁹ They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then **they** left.

In the morning, what do the magistrates want to do with Paul and Silas?

What surprising information does Paul tell them in verse 37?

Why would this information alarm the officials?

This information is from www.bible-history.com/isbe, following the link Paul the Apostle, 4:

“It was no idle boast with Paul when he said, ‘But I am a Roman born’ (Acts 22:28). The chief captain might well be ‘afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him’ (Acts 22:29). Likewise the magistrates at Philippi ‘feared when they heard that they were Romans’ (Acts 16:39), and promptly released Paul and Silas and ‘asked them to go away from the city.’ ‘To the Roman his citizenship was his passport in distant lands, his talisman in seasons of difficulties and danger. It shielded him alike from the caprice of municipal law and the injustice of local magistrates’ (Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 203). As a citizen of Rome, therefore, Paul stood above the common herd. He ranked with the aristocracy in any provincial town (Ramsay, *Paul the Traveler*, 31). He would naturally have a kindly feeling for the Roman government in return for this high privilege and protection. In its pessimism the Roman Empire had come to be the world’s hope, as seen in the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil (Ramsay, *Cities of Paul*, 49). Paul would seize upon the Roman Empire as a fit symbol of the kingdom of heaven. ‘Our citizenship is in heaven’ (Phil 3:20); ‘Ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints’ (Eph 2:19). So he interprets the church in terms of the body politic as well as in terms of the Israelite theocracy (Col 2:19). ‘All this shows the deep impression which the Roman institutions made on Paul’ (Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 205).”

“Roman law forbade scourging or imprisoning a Roman citizen without a formal hearing.”²

² *ESV Study Bible*, Lane T. Dennis, Executive Editor (Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois, 2008), 2120.

Remember what type of city Philippi is. Review the previous information you learned about Philippi (see pg. 10). Based on the information about Paul’s citizenship and the founding of the city of Philippi, why did the officials react with alarm?

Because of Paul and Silas’ status as Roman citizens, according to verse 39, how did the city officials respond?

Why did they proclaim their citizenship at this point in time? Was it because of a personal offense or to put the reputation of the church they were leaving behind in Philippi on better legal and social footing, or for some other reason? What are your thoughts?

ESV Study Bible note: “Paul was concerned for the public reputation of his gospel message and also, no doubt, for the good standing of the church that was being established in Philippi. Thus he insisted on public vindication lest the people of Philippi continue to believe that he was a troublemaker and a lawbreaker, ideas that would have presented barriers to the gospel in Philippi for years to come. Paul wanted to make it clear that a mistake had been made. Christianity is no threat to Rome.”³

In verse 40 what did Paul and Silas do after they were released?

Who stayed behind? Examine the pronoun used in the last sentence (Acts 16:40).

What was the composition of the church now? List all who are now members of the church in Philippi:

³ Ibid., 2120.

Week one, Day Four: Pause, consult, meditate, evaluate

Before moving on to the next part of our investigation, pause and read historical and cultural information on Philippi from International Bible Encyclopedia:

“In the course of his second missionary journey Paul set sail from Troas, accompanied by Silas (who bears his full name Silvanus in 2 Cor 1:19; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1), Timothy and Luke, and on the following day reached Neapolis (Acts 16:11). Thence he journeyed by road to Philippi, first crossing the pass some 1,600 ft. high which leads over the mountain ridge called Symbolum and afterward traversing the Philipplan plain. Of his experiences there we have in Acts 16:12-40 a singularly full and graphic account. On the Sabbath, presumably the first Sabbath after their arrival, the apostle and his companions went out to the bank of the Angites, and there spoke to the women, some of them Jews, others proselytes, who had come together for purposes of worship.

“One of these was named Lydia, a Greek proselyte from Thyatira, a city of Lydia in Asia Minor, to the church of which was addressed the message recorded in Rev 2:18-29. She is described as a ‘seller of purple’ (Acts 16:14), that is, of woolen fabrics dyed purple, for the manufacture of which her native town was famous. Whether she was the agent in Philippi of some firm in Thyatira or whether she was carrying on her trade independently, we cannot say; her name suggests the possibility that she was a freedwoman, while from the fact that we hear of her household and her house (Acts 16:15; compare 16:40), though no mention is made of her husband, it has been conjectured that she was a widow of some property. She accepted the apostolic message and was baptized with her household (Acts 16:15), and insisted that Paul and his companions should accept her hospitality during the rest of their stay in the city.

“All seemed to be going well when opposition arose from an unexpected quarter. There was in the town a girl, in all probability a slave, who was reputed to have the power of oracular utterance. Herodotus tells us (vii. III) of an oracle of Dionysus situated among the Thracian tribe of the Satrae, probably not far from Philippi; but there is no reason to connect the soothsaying of this girl with that worship. In any case, her masters reaped a rich harvest from the fee charged for consulting her. Paul, troubled by her repeatedly following him and those with him crying, ‘These men are bondservants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you a way of salvation’ (Acts 16:17 margin), turned and commanded the spirit in Christ's name to come out of her. The immediate restoration of the girl to a sane and normal condition convinced her masters that all prospect of further gain was gone, and they therefore seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the forum before the magistrates, probably the *duumviri* who stood at the head of the colony. They accused the apostles of creating disturbance in the city and of advocating customs, the reception and practice of which were illegal for Roman citizens. The rabble of the market-place joined in the attack (Acts 16:22), whereupon the magistrates, accepting without question the accusers' statement that Paul and Silas were Jews (Acts 16:20) and forgetting or ignoring the possibility of their possessing Roman citizenship, ordered them to be scourged by the attendant lictors

and afterward to be imprisoned. In the prison they were treated with the utmost rigor; they were confined in the innermost ward, and their feet put in the stocks. About midnight, as they were engaged in praying and singing hymns, while the other prisoners were listening to them, the building was shaken by a severe earthquake which threw open the prison doors. The jailer, who was on the point of taking his own life, reassured by Paul regarding the safety of the prisoners, brought Paul and Silas into his house where he tended their wounds, set food before them, and, after hearing the gospel, was baptized together with his whole household (Acts 16:23-34).

“On the morrow the magistrates, thinking that by dismissing from the town those who had been the cause of the previous day's disturbance they could best secure themselves against any repetition of the disorder, sent the lictors to the jailer with orders to release them. Paul refused to accept a dismissal of this kind. As Roman citizens he and Silas were legally exempt from scourging, which was regarded as a degradation (1 Thess 2:2), and the wrong was aggravated by the publicity of the punishment, the absence of a proper trial and the imprisonment which followed (Acts 16:37). Doubtless Paul had declared his citizenship when the scourging was inflicted, but in the confusion and excitement of the moment his protest had been unheard or unheeded. Now, however, it produced a deep impression on the magistrates, who came in person to ask Paul and Silas to leave the city. They, after visiting their hostess and encouraging the converts to remain firm in their new faith, set out by the Egnatian Road for Thessalonica (Acts 16:38-40). How long they had stayed in Philippi we are not told, but the fact that the foundations of a strong and flourishing church had been laid and the phrase "for many days" (Acts 16:18) lead us to believe that the time must have been a longer one than appears at first sight. Ramsay (St. Paul the Traveler, 226) thinks that Paul left Troas in October, 50 AD, and stayed at Philippi until nearly the end of the year; but this chronology cannot be regarded as certain.

“Several points in the narrative of these incidents call for fuller consideration. (1) We may notice, first, the very small part played by Jews and Judaism at Philippi. There was no synagogue here, as at Salamis in Cyprus (Acts 13:5), Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:14,43), Iconium (Acts 14:1), Ephesus (Acts 18:19,26; 19:8), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1), Berea (Acts 17:10), Athens (Acts 17:17) and Corinth (Acts 18:4). The number of resident Jews was small, their meetings for prayer took place on the river's bank, the worshippers were mostly or wholly women (Acts 16:13), and among them some, perhaps a majority, were proselytes. Of Jewish converts we hear nothing, nor is there any word of Jews as either inciting or joining the mob which dragged Paul and Silas before the magistrates. Further, the whole tone of the epistle to this church seems to prove that here at least the apostolic teaching was not in danger of being undermined by Judaizers. True, there is one passage (Phil 3:2-7) in which Paul denounces ‘the concision,’ those who had ‘confidence in the flesh’; but it seems "that in this warning he was thinking of Rome more than of Philippi; and that his indignation was aroused rather by the vexatious antagonism which there thwarted him in his daily work, than by any actual errors already undermining the faith of his distant converts" (Lightfoot).

“Even more striking is the prominence of the Roman element in the narrative. We are here not in a Greek or Jewish city, but in one of those Roman colonies which Aulus Gellius describes as ‘miniatures and pictures of the Rom people’ (Noctes Atticae, xvi.13). In the center of the city is the forum (agora,

Acts 16:19), and the general term 'magistrates' (archontes, English Versions of the Bible, 'rulers,' Acts 16:19) is exchanged for the specific title of praetors (stratagoi, English Versions of the Bible 'magistrates,' Acts 16:20,22,35,36,38); these officers are attended by lictors (rhabdouchoi, English Versions 'sergeants,' Acts 16:35,38) who bear the fasces with which they scourged Paul and Silas (rhabdizo, Acts 16:22). The charge is that of disturbing public order and introducing customs opposed to Roman law (Acts 16:20, 21), and Paul's appeal to his Roman civitas (Acts 16:37) at once inspired the magistrates with fear for the consequences of their action and made them conciliatory and apologetic (Acts 16:38,39). The title of praetor borne by these officials has caused some difficulty. The supreme magistrates of Roman colonies, two in number, were called duoviri or duumviri (iuri dicundo), and that this title was in use at Philippi is proved by three inscriptions (Orelli, Number 3746; Heuzey, Mission archeologique, 15, 127). The most probable explanation of the discrepancy is that these magistrates assumed the title of praetor, or that it was commonly applied to them, as was certainly the case in some parts of the Roman world (Cicero De lege agraria ii.34; Horace Sat. i.5, 34; Orelli, Number 3785).

“ Ramsay (St. Paul the Traveler, 200 ff) has brought forward the attractive suggestion that Luke was himself a Philippian, and that he was the 'man of Macedonia' who appeared to Paul at Troas with the invitation to enter Macedonia (Acts 16:9). In any case, the change from the 3rd to the 1st person in Acts 16:10 marks the point at which Luke joined the apostle, and the same criterion leads to the conclusion that Luke remained at Philippi between Paul's first and his third visit to the city (see below). Ramsay's hypothesis would explain (a) the fullness and vividness of the narrative of Acts 16:11-40; (b) the emphasis laid on the importance of Philippi (16:12); and (c) the fact that Paul recognized as a Macedonian the man whom he saw in his vision, although there was nothing either in the language, features or dress of Macedonians to mark them out from other Greeks. Yet Luke was clearly not a householder at Philippi (Acts 16:15), and early tradition refers to him as an Antiochene (see, however, Ramsay, in the work quoted 389 f).” <http://www.bible-history.com/isbe/P/PHILIPPI/>

Now consider several of the original questions from page 5:

What do we know about the church in Philippi? How was it founded? In what district?

What kind of church was established?

What types of deeds of righteousness did the Philippians do that demonstrated love for Paul and for their fellow believers?

How does this faith and service challenge us?

Week one, Day Five: What happened next? Learning about the Macedonians

Read Acts 17:1-9 (NIV), traveling away from Philippi and Luke:

¹ When **they** had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,” he said. ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined **Paul and Silas**, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

⁵ **But** the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to **Jason’s house** in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” ⁸ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. ⁹ Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

JOURNEYING IN THE DISTRICT OF MACEDONIA: Consult the inset box of the map on pg. 13 to trace Paul and Silas’ journey away from Philippi.

What did Thessalonica have that Philippi didn’t according to verse one? Instead of going to a river to find believers for prayer, where did they go (v. 1, 2)?

Over the three weeks Paul preached, what was his message and who were his converts (v. 2b-4)?

But then what happened in v. 5-7? What was the charge the Jews made?

Within the Roman Empire, Jews had the right to worship YHWH (Jehovah God). **Why are the Jews upset about Christians worshipping Jesus? Who does Christian worship of Jesus proclaim or designate Christ to be? Why were the Jews jealous?**

Jason’s first act of Christian service was to host Paul and Silas in his home. What type of trouble does he now find himself in as a result (v. 5-9)?

**IN MACEDONIA: So, what do the Thessalonian brothers do? By the way, where is Timothy?
Read Acts 17:10-15 (NIV)**

10 As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. **11** Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. **12** Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

13 When the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, they went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. **14** The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but **Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea**. **15** The men who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible....

What did the Thessalonian brothers do as soon as it was night?

Consult the map on page 13 to trace their route from Thessalonica to Berea.

What does it say about the Jews in Berea in verse 10-11?

Who believed (v. 12)?

But, what did the Jews of Thessalonica do (v. 13)?

So, where did the Berean brothers send Paul (v. 14a)? _____

Where did Silas and Timothy stay (v. 14b)? Does this inform us of where Timothy's been all along, though he wasn't mentioned in Acts 17:1-9? What did the fact that he had allowed Paul to circumcise him allow Timothy to do in both Thessalonica and Berea?

After sending him to the coast, where did the Bereans escort Paul (v. 15)? _____

Leaving Silas and Timothy in Macedonia, Paul gives them what instructions in verse 15?

Acts 18:1-7 (NIV), Waiting for Silas and Timothy, Paul's financial support

¹ After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³ and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴ Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

⁵ **When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia**, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶ But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

Bypassing Paul's reasoning with the Athenians on Mars Hill as he waited for Silas and Timothy to arrive from Macedonia (Acts 17:16-34), verse one of chapter eighteen tells us that he eventually left Athens to go on to where? _____

Here he met a couple who became long-time ministry partners. Who are they (v. 2, 3)?

What did they all do together (v. 3) in order to support themselves? _____

As they were engaging in this secular occupation, what was Paul doing every Sabbath, v. 4?

What happened when Silas and Timothy finally arrive from Macedonia, v. 5? What did Paul do after they arrived?

What made the difference? What might Silas and Timothy have done to make this possible?

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: An interesting bit of information

In addition to the possibility of Timothy and Silas joining Priscilla and Aquila in their tentmaking enterprise in order to support Paul, what were the other means of support for Paul's ministry? Paul himself tells us. Paul later wrote to the Corinthians about who was supporting him as he completed his ministry among them after leaving Macedonia. In 2 Corinthians 11:8, 9, he reminds them about who supported him financially during this time of ministry with their newly founded church.

Read 2 Corinthians 11: 8, 9 (NIV); When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia to join Paul in Corinth, here's how Paul was supported:

⁸ I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. ⁹ And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.

What churches did Paul “rob” to support him while he was in Corinth?

REVIEW: List the Macedonian cities:

According to v. 9, what did “the brothers” (Silas, Timothy, and, perhaps, Macedonian brothers accompanying them) bring back from Macedonia?

How did this free Paul to minister in Corinth?

What difference would it make in Paul's effectiveness in a wealthy pagan city that he could offer the gospel “free of charge” to the Corinthians?

How would this financial support have made Paul feel about the churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea?

What does this tell us about the character of the Macedonians?

Next week we will continue our investigation of the Macedonian churches—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea—and their long time financial support of Paul. The Jewish opposition continued; but Paul remained in Corinth for a year and a half. Keep in mind that these events occurred in 50-51 B.C. Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians in 62 B.C.

Next week we'll examine more comments Paul writes to the Macedonians from Corinth.

Week Two, Day One: Writing to the Macedonians from Corinth

During the one and a half year stay in Corinth, Paul sent Timothy back and forth between Corinth, which is in Achaia, and Macedonia, with letters to the churches there. We have two of these letters—1 & 2 Thessalonians. By examining portions of these letters, we can learn more about the Macedonian churches, and the church in Philippi in particular. **Get your bearings:** Look on the map on page 7 to trace the quick sea journey Timothy would have taken out of the harbor at Corinth or the harbor in Athens if he journeyed there to board ship.

Find out more about the Macedonians and their relationship with Paul, Silas, and Timothy:

Notice the authors of this letter—circle their names. Remember, these men journeyed from Philippi to Thessalonica to Berea, planting churches there. They now write from Corinth.

Underline what is said about the region of Macedonia and the qualities of the believers there.

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1:1-10 NIV

¹ Paul, Silas and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace and peace to you.

² We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. ³ We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, ⁹ for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

What did Paul, Silas, and Timothy do for the Thessalonians while in Corinth (v. 2-3)?

What happened in Thessalonica (v.4-5)?

QUICK REVIEW: Look at the account of Paul, Silas, and Timothy's visit to Thessalonica (pg. 24).

How did the Thessalonians respond (1 Thess. 1:6, pg. 28)?

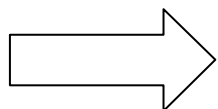
Who did they set the model for (v. 7)? What churches were in those regions?

What did the Lord's message do in all of Macedonia and Achaia (Greece) (v. 8)?

As Paul and his team are in Corinth, what do the believers in Macedonia (the Philippians and the Bereans) tell them about the Thessalonian believers (v. 8-10)? How would they have communicated this message to Paul, Silas, and Timothy?

Since Paul's ministry team had only been in Thessalonica approximately three weeks (see pg. 24, Acts 17:1-3), would receiving this follow-up news from the other believers of the region (the Philippians and Bereans) have encouraged the team in light of what had occurred in Thessalonica? Why or why not?

What do we learn about the sister churches of Macedonia—the Philippians and Bereans—by their passing on of this good report to the church founders? What does this tell us about the character of the people in Philippi and Berea? Do they understand the importance of encouragement? Remember, they left Luke there; he may have had something to do this with.



Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (NIV) Underline what Paul, Silas, and Timothy say about Philippi.

Here we find out how Paul and Silas felt about their treatment by the Roman officials there.

Number or put a star by the details that show how they ministered among the Macedonians.

1 You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. 2 We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.

As apostles of Christ **we** could have been a burden to you, 7 but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. 8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. 9 Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

10 You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. 11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Did they recover from their harsh treatment in Philippi? How did they recover, see v. 2?

The word *apostles* means “sent ones.” Who are the apostles in v. 6b? Who are the authors?

Read 1 Thessalonians 3: 1-5 (NIV):

1 So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens. 2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God’s fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know. 5 For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.

In order to find out about the Thessalonian church, Paul sent someone back to check on them and to carry this letter. Who was it? _____

What was Timothy to do? What is his mission? About how old is Timothy?

Consider all their travels since leaving Lystra and all Paul how Paul describes ministry in these last two passages. **What type of life was Timothy living as he worked with Paul? What was he doing while Paul was in Corinth?**

Why did Paul send Timothy back (v. 3-5)?

What does this tell us about Timothy—his character and his abilities? Remember, the last time he was in Thessalonica with Paul there was a hostile encounter with Jewish and Roman authorities.

Later in the letter, Paul writes about both the sending and the return of Timothy. Paul then sends Timothy back to them again. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10 (NIV):

⁶ But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you. ⁷ Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. ⁸ For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. ⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

What does he say about Timothy's return?

How would Timothy's report have been used in Paul's life?

Further information about the other churches in Macedonia, including Philippi: Read 1 Thessalonians Chapter 4:9-12 (NIV). Underline the statements about the Macedonian churches.

⁹ Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ¹⁰ And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

¹¹ Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹² so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

What type of people were these believers? What qualities keep being emphasized?

Who wrote to the church in Thessalonica again? Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-2 (NIV): Circle the names of the authors. Most probably, Timothy carried this letter back.

¹ Paul, Silas and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

² Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

What are the common character qualities of the Macedonian churches (Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea)? What do Paul, Silas, and Timothy praise them for continually?

Week two, Day Two: When do we encounter the Macedonians again?

In approximately 54-57 A.D., Paul's time ended in Corinth (Acts 18:18-19:7). He journeyed to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila, leaving them there while he returned to Antioch for a brief visit before returning to Ephesus, where he stayed for about three years. During this time, Timothy was with him in Ephesus for at least part of the time, perhaps making the entire journey with him after leaving Corinth. While in Ephesus, Paul completed correspondence with the Corinthian church, writing several letters back and forth (possibly four). We have two of these letters: 1 & 2 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians is a rebuking, instructional letter; Paul sent Timothy to deal with the fallout and follow-up of this first letter. He later sent Titus as well.

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (NIV): Timothy was probably around 20 years old at this time.

¹⁴ I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. ¹⁵ Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to imitate me. ¹⁷ For this reason I am sending to you **Timothy**, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

How is Timothy described?

What is Timothy to do in Corinth?

More information: At the end of the letter, Paul gave the Corinthians additional instruction. A famine in Israel had provoked the Gentile churches to collect an offering for the church in Jerusalem. Paul wrote the Corinthians about the offering and his coming visit.

In these verses, underline Macedonia (i.e., Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea). Circle Timothy's name. Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-11 (NIV)

¹ Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

² On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. ³ Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴ If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

⁵ After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. ⁶ Perhaps I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. ⁷ I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. ⁸ But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹ because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

¹⁰ If **Timothy** comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. ¹¹ No one, then, should refuse to accept him. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.

Who did Paul plan to visit on his way to Corinth, v. 5?

Why do you think Paul wrote about Timothy as he did, v. 10-11? What would Timothy have to fear? Why the “if”? Consider his age, the arrogant character of the Corinthians, and the fact that 1 Corinthians was a rebuking letter.

Retrace Timothy’s steps. Record the traveling he has done since he left home with Paul.

While Paul was in Ephesus, in addition to writing to the Corinthians, whom he had just left, he was completing an effective time of ministry, these events occurred: **Read Acts 19:8-22 (NIV):**

⁸ Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

¹³ Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, “In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.” ¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵ One day the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” ¹⁶ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

¹⁷ When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. ¹⁸ Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. ¹⁹ A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. ²⁰ In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

²¹ After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. “After I have been there,” he said, “I must visit Rome also.” ²² He sent two of his helpers, **Timothy** and Erastus, to **Macedonia**, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

After Timothy went to Corinth and then returned, where did Paul then send him, v. 22? Who went with him? _____

What next? After Timothy and Erastus left, a riot occurred in Ephesus (the entire account is in Acts 19:23-41). **Read this bit of information about the riot: Acts 19:29-31 (NIV):**

²⁸ When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹ Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. ³⁰ Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. ³¹ Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

During the riot, two men were seized. Who were they?

How were they described? Where were they from?

We didn't even know these faithful Macedonian men were with him, did we? But, they're described as his traveling companions. After the riot, Paul left and headed toward Corinth.

Read Acts 20:1-2a (NIV):

¹ When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia. ² He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people.

Look at the map on page 7. Is Paul taking a direct route to Corinth in passing through Macedonia? _____

What did he do in the Macedonian region, v. 2?

What churches were in the Macedonian region?

Who had gone ahead of Paul (see pg. 34, Acts 19:22)?

Week two, Day Three: what can we learn about the Macedonians' character?

While Paul was on the way to Corinth, Timothy rejoined him. Paul passed through Macedonia, teaching and encouraging the churches there (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, etc.) During the trip toward Corinth, Paul and Timothy co-authored a letter to the Corinthians (see 2 Corinthians 1:1-2) after they met Titus, whom Paul had also sent to Corinth. In this letter Paul and Timothy reminded the Corinthians of their work (along with Silas) among them when they planted the church there (1:19). They were greatly concerned about the church in Corinth and how they had responded to the receipt of the first letter.

As Paul journeyed to Corinth, one of his goals was to collect the offering for the Jerusalem church, who was suffering a time of famine. We learn much about the character of the Macedonians believers in 2 Corinthians, especially as pertains to financial giving and meeting the needs of other believers. **Reminder:** We have already learned that the Macedonians supported Paul financially while he was founding the church in Corinth, not very long after the churches in Macedonia themselves had been established.

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 (NIV): Underline the references to the Macedonians

¹ And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. ⁵ And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. ⁶ So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. ⁷ But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

Who does Paul hold up to the Corinthians as an example of godly giving?

Did they give because they were rich (v. 2)? What was their financial condition?

How does Paul describe their giving (v. 2-5)?

How was the Macedonian's giving to encourage the Corinthian's giving (v. 6-7)?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:1-5 (NIV):

¹ There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the saints. ² For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. ³ But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. ⁴ For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. ⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

Circle the *if*, v. 4. What else did Paul do to encourage the wealthy Corinthian church to give?

Whose generosity initially provoked the Macedonians to give?

Likewise, why did Paul now urge the Corinthians to have their offering ready?

Is positive peer pressure a good thing?

IN CORINTH: Paul finally did arrive in Corinth, and the offering was prepared. He stayed three months (Acts 20:2b-3a). While he was there, he wrote to the church in Rome, hoping to come and see them soon. Though Timothy did not co-author this letter, he sent a greeting to the Roman church (Romans 16:1); so, we know that Timothy was known to the Romans, especially to Priscilla and Aquila who were back in Rome and hosting a house church. Reminder: Priscilla and Aquila had labored with Paul and Timothy in Corinth and then in Ephesus.

Read Romans 15:23-29 (NIV): Note what is said about the offering and the Macedonians

²³ But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, ²⁴ I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. ²⁷ They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. ²⁸ So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Note who made the offering. Did the positive peer pressure work? In verses 26-27, what did he say about the Macedonians (and the Greeks of Achaia)?

After three months in Corinth, Paul left for Jerusalem, journeying back through Macedonia on the way. He took the offering and a large group of men to accompany the financial gift.

Who went with him? Underline Macedonia and the names of the Macedonian cities. Circle the names of the Macedonians; circle Timothy's name. Read Acts 20:3b-6 (NIV):

Because the Jews made a plot against him just as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia. ⁴ He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. ⁵ These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. ⁶ But **we** sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where **we** stayed seven days.

Who of Paul's fellow travelers had a tie in Macedonia?

Notice the pronoun change. Who had now rejoined Paul as well? _____

Where did they stop for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread? _____

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem, he was imprisoned. The full account is in Acts 20-28. At the end of his imprisonment, he was sent to Rome because he had appealed to Caesar.

Read Acts 27:1-2 (NIV): Circle the name of the Macedonian

¹ When it was decided that **we** would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ² **We** boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and **we** put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

What two men stayed with Paul during this time of imprisonment (remember the pronoun)?

Underline where Aristarchus was from? Where did we meet him earlier (see pg. 35 & above)? He was also mentioned in Phile. 24 and Col. 4:10, still helping Paul in prison.

From prison, Paul wrote: Ephesians, with Timothy he wrote Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians. He intended to send Timothy to Philippi (Phil. 2:19, 23); he praised Timothy (2:19-24). When Paul was released he wrote: 1 Timothy and Titus. His last letter was 2 Timothy.

Answer these initial questions:

Have we seen the Philippians and other Macedonians in the other letters we've studied as we've moved chronologically through the New Testament?

What types of deeds of righteous did the Philippians and other Macedonians do—both immediately after salvation and during the ten to twelve year between the establishment of their church and the writing of this letter—that demonstrated love for Paul and for their fellow believers?

How had Paul and his disciples and fellow workers, such as Timothy, Titus, Silas, and Luke, interacted with this church in Macedonia from the time they first met them?

What role did Timothy play?

In order to re-cap your historical investigation, consult the timeline on the next three pages:

New Testament Timeline from ESV Study Bible, 2008, Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL.

5 B.C.*	Jesus is born in Bethlehem.
4 B.C.	Jesus' family flees to Egypt to escape from Herod's plan to kill Jesus (Matt. 2:13–18); Herod dies; Judas (of Sepphoris) and others rebel, requiring the Syrian Governor Varus to intervene throughout Palestine; Sepphoris, a city four miles from Nazareth, is destroyed by Roman soldiers; Judea, Samaria, and Idumea are given to Herod's son, Archelaus; Galilee and Perea are given to his son Antipas; Jesus' family, after returning from Egypt, resides in Nazareth (Matt. 2:19–23), a small village in southern Galilee.
A.D. 6	Archelaus is exiled for incompetence; Judea becomes a Roman province; Judas the Galilean (of Gamla) leads a revolt against the tax census; the governor of Syria, Quirinius (A.D. 6–7), appoints Annas high priest (6–15).
8*	Jesus (age 12) interacts with the teachers in the temple (Luke 2:41–50).
8*– 28/30	Jesus works as a carpenter in Nazareth (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3) and probably in neighboring villages and Sepphoris, which was being rebuilt.
28–29*	John the Baptist begins his ministry around the Jordan River (John 1:19).
28–30*	Jesus begins his ministry in Judea, but soon focuses his efforts in Galilee. In Jerusalem, Pharisees (like Gamaliel) train disciples (like Paul) in their tradition. They send a delegation to Galilee, but the delegation rejects Jesus' teaching. In Alexandria, Philo (20 B.C.–A.D. 50) attempts to unify Greek philosophy with Hebrew Scripture.
33 (or 30)	Jesus returns to Judea, is crucified, and resurrected. James the brother of Jesus becomes a believer after witnessing the resurrected Jesus (1 Cor. 15:7; Acts 12:17). Jesus ascends to the Father's right hand (Acts 1). Jesus' first followers receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and begin to proclaim the gospel (Acts 2).
33/34*	Paul witnesses the resurrected Lord on the way to Damascus and is commissioned as an apostle to the nations (Acts 9; Gal. 1:15–16).
34–37	Paul ministers in Damascus and Arabia (Acts 9:19–22; 26:20; Gal. 1:16–18).
36	Pilate loses his position for incompetence.
36/37*	Paul meets with Peter in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26–30; Gal. 1:18).
37–45	Paul ministers in Syria, Tarsus, and Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Gal. 1:21).
38*	Peter witnesses to Cornelius (Acts 10).
39	Antipas is exiled.
40–45*	James writes his letter to believers outside Palestine (cf. James 1:1).
41–44	Agrippa, Herod the Great's grandson, rules Palestine; he kills James the brother of John (Acts 12:2) and imprisons Peter (Acts 12:3).
42–44	Paul receives his “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7).
44	Peter leaves Jerusalem; Agrippa is killed by an “angel of the Lord” (Acts 12:23).
44–46	Theudas persuades many Jews to sell their possessions and follow him into the wilderness where he claimed he would miraculously divide the Jordan River; Roman procurator Fadus dispatches his cavalry and beheads the would-be messiah.
44–47*	Paul's Second Visit to Jerusalem; time of famine (Acts 11:27–30; Gal. 2:1–10).
46–47	Paul's First Missionary Journey (with Barnabas) from Antioch to Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, and

	Lystra (Acts 13:4–14:26).
46–48	Roman procurator Tiberius Alexander crucifies two sons (Jacob and Simon) of Judas the Galilean.
48*	Paul writes <i>Galatians</i> , perhaps from Antioch (cf. Acts 14:26–28).
48–49*	Paul and Peter return to Jerusalem for the Apostolic Council, which, with the assistance of James, frees Gentile believers from the requirement of circumcision in opposition to Pharisaic believers (Acts 15:1–29); Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch (Acts 15:30) but split over a dispute about John Mark (Acts 15:36–40).
48/49–51*	Paul's Second Missionary Journey (with Silas) from Antioch to Syria, Cilicia, southern Galatia, Macedonia, notably Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea ; and then on to Achaia, notably Athens and Corinth (Acts 15:36–18:22).
49	Claudius expels Jews from Rome because of conflicts about Jesus (Acts 18:2); Paul befriends two refugees, Priscilla and Aquila, in Corinth (Acts 18:2–3).
49–51*	Paul writes <i>1–2 Thessalonians</i> from Corinth (Acts 18:1, 11 ; also cf. Acts 18:5 with 1 Thess. 1:8).
51	Paul appears before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18:12–17).
50–54*	Peter comes to Rome.
52–57*	Paul's Third Missionary Journey from Antioch to Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece (Acts 18:23–21:17).
52–55	Paul ministers in Ephesus (Acts 19:1–20).
53–55*	Mark writes his Gospel, containing Peter's memories of Jesus; perhaps within a decade, Matthew publishes his Gospel, which relies on Mark and other sources. Paul writes <i>1 Corinthians</i> from Ephesus (Acts 19:10).
54	Claudius dies (edict exiling Jews repealed); Priscilla and Aquila return to Rome and host a church in their home (cf. Rom. 16:3–5).
54–68	Nero reigns.
55–56*	Paul writes <i>2 Corinthians</i> from Macedonia (Acts 20:1, 3; 2 Cor. 1:16; 2:13; 7:5; 8:1; 9:2, 4 ; cf. 1 Cor. 16:5).
57*	Paul winters in Corinth and writes <i>Romans</i> (Acts 20:3 ; cf. Rom. 16:1–2 ; also cf. Rom. 16:23 with 1 Cor. 1:14); travels to Jerusalem (Acts 21:1–16), visits with James the brother of Jesus (Acts 21:17–26), and is arrested (Acts 21:27–36; 22:22–29).
57–59	Paul is imprisoned and transferred to Caesarea (Acts 23:23–24, 33–34).
60	Paul begins voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1–2); he is shipwrecked for three months on the island of Malta (Acts 27:39–28:10).
60–70*	Letter to the <i>Hebrews</i> is written.
62	James the brother of the Lord is executed by the Sadducean high priest Ananus.
62–63*	Peter writes his first letter (<i>1 Peter</i>) from Rome (1 Pet. 5:13).
62*	Paul arrives in Rome and remains under house arrest (Acts 28:16–31); he writes <i>Ephesians</i> (see verses for Colossians), <i>Philippians</i> (Phil. 1:7, 13, 17; 4:22), <i>Colossians</i> (Col. 4:3, 10, 18 ; cf. Acts 27:2 with Col. 4:10), <i>Philemon</i> (cf. Philem. 23 with Col. 1:7 ; Philem. 2 with Col. 4:17 ; Philem. 24 with Col. 4:10 ; also cf. Col. 4:9). Luke, Paul's physician and companion (cf. Col. 4:14), writes <i>Luke</i> and <i>Acts</i> .
62–64	Paul is released, extends his mission (probably reaching Spain), writes <i>1 Timothy</i> from Macedonia (cf. 1

	Tim. 1:3) and <i>Titus</i> from Nicopolis (Titus 3:12); he is rearrested in Rome (2 Tim. 1:16–17).
63–64	Work on the temple complex is completed.
64 (July 19)	Fire in Rome; Nero blames and kills many Christians.
64–67*	Peter writes his second letter (<i>2 Peter</i>). Jude writes his letter. Paul writes <i>2 Timothy</i> (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6–8). Paul and Peter are martyred in Rome.
66	First Jewish-Roman War begins with a riot between Greeks and Jews at Caesarea; Roman procurator Gessius Florus (A.D. 64–66) is murdered and a Roman garrison wiped out; Menahem, son or grandson of Judas the Galilean, murders the high priest Ananias and seizes control of the temple; Nero dispatches Vespasian with three legions.
67*	Romans destroy the Qumran community, who beforehand hid the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls in nearby caves; the church in Jerusalem flees to Pella (Matt. 24:15–16 ; Mark 13:14 ; Luke 21:20–22); John migrates to Ephesus with Mary, Jesus' mother.
68	Nero commits suicide; year of the three emperors.
69	Rebellion quelled in Galilee and Samaria; Vespasian summoned back to Rome to become emperor.
70 (Aug. 30)	Titus, Vespasian's son, after a five-month siege of Jerusalem, destroys the temple after desecrating it; the temple's menorah, Torah, and veil are removed and later put on display in a victory parade in Rome; the influence of the Sadducees ends; the Pharisee Johanan ben Zakkai escapes and convinces the Romans to allow him and others to settle in Jamnia, where they found a school.
73 (May 2)*	Before Roman general Silva breaches the fortress atop Masada following a two-year siege, 936 Jewish rebels commit suicide.
75	Titus has an affair with the Jewish princess Berenice, sister of Agrippa II (Acts 25:13, 23), whom he later abandons because of the scandal.
77	Pliny the Elder writes <i>Natural History</i> .
77–78	Josephus publishes <i>Jewish War</i> in Rome.
79	Pompeii and Herculaneum are destroyed by eruption of Vesuvius; Pliny the Elder dies attempting to investigate.
81	The Arch of Titus, celebrating his destruction of the temple, is erected in Rome.
81–96	Domitian, Titus's brother, persecutes Christians among the Roman nobility, including his own relatives Clemens and Domitilla.
85–95*	John writes his letters (<i>1–3 John</i>), probably in Ephesus.
89–95*	John writes his Gospel, probably in Ephesus.
93–94	Josephus publishes <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> in Rome.
94	Domitian exiles philosophers from Rome.
95*	Amidst persecution, Clement, a leader in the Roman church, writes his <i>Letter to the Corinthians</i> (<i>1 Clement</i>) appealing for peace between the young men and elders.
95–96*	Exiled by Domitian to Patmos, John writes <i>Revelation</i> (Rev. 1:9).
96–98	Nerva, the first of five “good” emperors, ends official persecution.

* denotes approximate date; / signifies either/or

Week two, Day Four - Five: Digging into the letter

Thorough Observation is the key to establishing context.

READING, READING, and READING AGAIN: To observe the text thoroughly **ask who, what, when, where, why, and how of the text.** Always look for the obvious. Slow down to see what is actually there in the text, not what you *think* is there. **Read acquisitively.**

Significant words and phrases that are key to understanding the text are always important. A key word or phrase is one that is crucial to what the author is communicating and which unlocks the meaning of the text. **Discover what words & phrases are significant in this letter.**

Determine the type of Literature: When you begin to study a book of the bible you must determine what type of book it is because this information affects how you study the book. Is it History, Poetry, Prophecy, Letter, Biographical, Doctrinal, or a combination of several of these?

Observation
What does the text say?
<u>Overview</u> Establish Context by determining Historical Background Where does it fit in the Bible timeline? Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How? Make <u>simple</u> lists of people, places, and events mentioned in the text Make <u>simple</u> lists of key words that are used throughout large portions of the entire book Determine Book and Chapter Themes Mark questions to return to later for future study

Focus on this: What do I see? (Worry about what it *means* later.)

DAY FOUR & FIVE: FIRST READING: Read all of Philippians on page 53-71 or in your own bible. Read thoughtfully. Read acquisitively. Read like you've never read it before.

- Use the margins of the copy on pg. 53-71 to write down observations and questions so you can investigate them later. Mark it up.

Move on: Continue with this week's assignment on the next page....

DAY FOUR & FIVE: SECOND READING: Read through the entire book thoughtfully at least one more time (OR AS MANY TIMES AS NEEDED). Notice the PEOPLE mentioned.

- **Pay attention** to what the text says about the people you observed when you did the historical portion of the overview.
- **Mark these and other persons or group of persons in a separate way and/or make notes in the working copy or on pg. 44-46. Notice** praiseworthy persons. **Notice** “bad guys.” **Notice** details about each person or group of persons mentioned.
- **Notice things you want to study in greater detail later and make a note in the margin.**

As you complete these exercises see if you can answer the following questions:

Who were the authors? _____

Where was Paul when Timothy inscribed this letter for him? _____

Of these two men, who was the predominant author? How do you know? _____

When was this letter written (timeline on pg. 40-42)? _____

To whom did they write? _____

Where did these people live? Look at the map again.

What was Paul and Timothy’s purpose in writing? What important topics did Paul discuss?

Who was praised and held up as an example?

What do you know about Timothy from your historical investigation? Add what is said here.

Who was Epaphroditus (this is not Epaphras from Colossae)? What do you know about him?

In this letter, what did you learn about the Philippians generous giving that reinforces what you learned during the historical overview?

In this letter, what type of generosity did Paul mention?

What else did you learn about the Philippian church?

What other people were mentioned? What details do we learn about each?

Were there any “bad guys” mentioned? What were they doing?

What did you learn about Christ Jesus? What example did he set that shapes the entire letter?

Observation & Interpretation

What do I see?

Week Three: What are the significant words and themes?

Read and study prayerfully each day. “Prayer is really a key to effective Bible study. Learn to pray before, during, and after your reading of the Scriptures. Prayer is especially crucial when you come to a place in your study where you are stuck and confused.”⁴

READ and RE-READ: Read the letter to the Philippians each day as you consider these questions, keeping our historical review in mind. Suggestions:

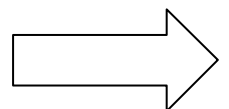
- **Every day read through the book at least once.** Read contemplatively and acquisitively. Jot down your questions and initial observations. Focus on what you “see”—interpretation comes later.
- As you read, **consider the questions on pg. 48 - 50. Jot down your answers.**
- **IF you find it helpful to mark the key words in a working copy,** as you read through the book each day, **complete the steps on pg. 51,** using the working copy on pgs 53-71. As you mark the key words, consider and answer the following questions on pg. 48-50.
- **IF marking the text isn’t helpful to you,** read the book each day of the week, making your own observations to answer the questions on pg. 48-50.
- **At the end of the week, turn to pg. 52 to summarize.**

WHILE READING, LOOK for KEY WORDS and THEMES:

What are the significant or key words in this letter?

Key Words

Repeated significant words and phrases which are key to understanding the text are always important. A key word or phrase is one that is crucial to what the author is communicating and which unlocks the meaning of the text. In this letter the key words pull together the themes Paul & Timothy address. What are the key words?



⁴ Howard G. & William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 100.

This week, consider these questions while you read:

In this letter, what do we learn about fellowship, unity in the church, and how it is maintained?

What evidence do you see that Christians are to press forward in growth? What makes a mature Christian? Unless daily dying to yourself is a function of your relationship with Christ, is there possibility for growth? What is the relationship between God's grace and human effort?

What do you find that tells you how important looking out for the interests of others is for your progress in the faith?

What is the perspective on suffering given in this letter?

How is Christ held up as a role model for believers? How did He look out for the interests of others? Does anyone in the letter model his example? Who? How?

What do we learn about what Christ accomplished for us on the cross?

What is said about “the day of the Lord,” Christ’s return?

How does faith in Christ change everything? What is said about the gospel? How are we supposed to live?

What do we learn about the Trinity?

What is the church's relationship to the fallen world?

What is said about the crucial nature of prayer?

What do we learn about Paul, his imprisonment, his hoped-for release, and his relationship with this church?

MARKING THE WORKING COPY:

If marking key words within a working copy helps you see more clearly as you study, take the entire week to complete these exercises as you read through the book over and over again throughout the week. While you do this, answer the questions on pages 48-50.

Mark Key Words

- Using your working copy (pg. 53-71) read through **Philippians** and as you do mark key or significant words or phrases, each in a different way, every time you see them
- What key or significant words? Words that are significant or very important for understanding the meaning of the text and are used throughout the entire book. These repeated ideas, words, or phrases will tell you the theme the author intends to convey.
- **As you read through the entire letter, look for one or two of these significant words at a time. Mark each word the same way every time you see it. Repeat this step for each word until you've marked them all (as your time permits).**
- **Words and phrases to consider as key or significant (including their synonyms):**
 - phrases pertaining to Christ Jesus: His character, His work on the cross, His return
 - these are also always significant: God, Holy Spirit
 - gospel
 - prayer, pray, thank
 - imprisonment and other suffering
 - mind (attitude, thoughts)—These English words are all the same Greek word *phronos* (Strong's #5426): *to feel* (1:7), *like-minded* (2:2); *attitude* (2:5); *take such a view* (3:15); *mind is on* (3:19); *to agree with each other* (4:2); *concern* (4:10), 2x
 - joy, rejoice, glad
 - interests, concerns
 - share, fellowship, partnership (related Greek words)

If you have time, make a simple list of all you observe about each key word

- Note how each use of each key words relates to Paul's other uses of the same word in the letter. Write it down. The letter is short; he uses the same words throughout in order to tie the theme together.
- *How* do the key words tie together the main ideas he seeks to convey? Write your ideas down.
- Always jot down any possible application to your own life to investigate further.

FINAL STEP OF OVERVIEW: Organize your thoughts

Consider how the letter is shaped around these significant, well-known, Pauline statements:

- “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”
- “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”
- “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”
- “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
- “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”
- “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

_____ **Write a Theme which summarizes the entire book.**

Write this on the blank at the beginning of the working copy on pg. 53. Use pencil for now.

What’s your hunch? This can be a few words, or as long as a paragraph and should include the author’s intended theme or purpose. What is Paul’s purpose in writing to the Philippians? What does he want the Philippians to *know*? What should they *do*? The key words you discovered should help you figure out the key theme of the book. **Is there a key verse or verses that summarize the content of this entire letter?**

_____ **Assign preliminary paragraph titles to each paragraph (each has space for a heading).**

What’s your hunch? These can contain as few or as many words as are necessary for you to feel you can look at the title and know what is contained within that particular paragraph. Use pencil—you can alter these titles after you actually study each chapter.

_____ **Organize all your work on the Overview by summarizing the book.**

Jot down a summary of what you learned in the Overview. Compile any significant information you discovered that will help you understand the content of the letter. Write a few lines that summarize the theme of the letter, and the theme of each section—at least what you’re able to tell at this point in your investigation.

Check your background and historical work to see if you’ve missed any pertinent information about Colossae. Recommended Commentaries (all are in the church library):

- ❖ *The NIV Application Commentary: Philippians*, Frank Thielman, Zondervan.
- ❖ *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Philippians*, John MacArthur, Moody Publishers.
- ❖ *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Abridged Edition*, Kenneth L. Barker and John R. Kohlenberger III, Zondervan.
- ❖ *The Epistle to the Philippians*, NICNT, Gordon Fee, Eerdmans.
- ❖ **See page 4 for additional study tools, including free online resources.**

Philippians (NIV, 1984) Working Copy

Theme of the letter: _____

Philippians 1

Theme of 1:1-11 _____

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with
the overseers[a] and deacons:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. **4** In all my
prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy **5** because of
your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,
6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in

you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ
Jesus.

7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I
have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or
defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in
God's grace with me. **8** God can testify how I long for all of
you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more
and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10** so that you
may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and
blameless until the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of
righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory
and praise of God.

Theme of 1:12-18a _____

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. **13** As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard[b] and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.

14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. **16** The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. **17** The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.[c] **18** But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false

motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Theme of 1:18b-26 _____

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, **19** for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.[d] **20** I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. **22** If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! **23** I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; **24** but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. **25** Convinced

of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, **26** so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

Theme of 1:27-2:4 _____

27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel **28** without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. **29** For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, **30** since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Footnotes:

- a. Philippians 1:1 Traditionally *bishops*
- b. Philippians 1:13 Or *whole palace*
- c. Philippians 1:17 Some late manuscripts have verses 16 and 17 in reverse order.
- d. Philippians 1:19 Or *salvation*

Philippians 2:1-4

2:1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. **3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. **4** Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Philippians 2, continued

Theme of 2:5-11 _____

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature[a] God,

did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

7 but made himself nothing,

taking the very nature[b] of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

8 And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Footnotes:

a. Philippians 2:6 Or *in the form of*

b. Philippians 2:7 Or *the form*

Philippians 2:12-30

Theme of 2:12-18 _____

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

14 Do everything without complaining or arguing, **15** so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe **16** as you hold out[c] the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. **17** But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice

with all of you. **18** So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Theme of 2:19-30 _____

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you.

20 I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. **21** For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. **22** But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. **23** I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. **24** And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier,

who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. **26** For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. **27** Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. **28** Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. **29** Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, **30** because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

Footnotes:

c. Philippians 2:16 Or *hold on to*

Philippians 3

Theme of 3:1-11 _____

1 Finally, my brothers, 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.

2 Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. **3** For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— **4** though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as for zeal,

persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness,
faultless.

7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. **8** What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. **10** I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Theme of 3:12-4:1 _____

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. **13** Brothers, 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, **14** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. **16** Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. **18** For, as I have often told you before and now say

again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. **19** Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. **20** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

4:1 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!

Philippians 4, continued

Theme of 4:2-9 _____

2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, [a] help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all

understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in
Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble,
whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely,
whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or
praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you
have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—
put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Theme of 4:10-23 _____

10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have
renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been
concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. **11** I am
not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to
be content whatever the circumstances. **12** I know what it is
to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have

learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **13** I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. **15**

Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; **16** for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. **17** Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. **18** I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice,

pleasing to God. **19** And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

20 To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

21 Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings. **22** All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Amen. [b]

Footnotes:

- a. Philippians 4:3 Or *loyal Syzygus*
- b. Philippians 4:23 Some manuscripts do not have *Amen*.