

Day 1



Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

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.

Q1. Paul writes that he is “united with Christ”. How is Paul able to make that declaration?

Q2. How do we know that Paul is loving, tender, and compassionate toward the Philippians?

Q3. Verse 2: How might the Philippians make Paul joyful?

Q4. [Personal] Are you, like Paul, “united with Christ”? Are you “one in spirit and purpose”?

How am I “united with Christ”?

How am I united “in spirit and purpose”?

Lesson 2: *Philippians 2:1-30*

Q5. (1) Is Paul obedient? (2) Is Paul God's voice in this world? (3) How would you explain that Paul is God's feet and hands in this world?

(1) Obedient?

(2) Voice?

(3) Feet and hands?

1 Corinthians 1:1 [The Message (MSG)]

I, Paul, have been called and sent by Jesus, the Messiah, according to God's plan, along with my friend Sosthenes.

1 Corinthians 4:19^a [English Standard Version (ESV)]

But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills

1 Corinthians 16:7-9 [NIV]

⁷ For 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.

Ephesians 3:7-19 [The Message (MSG)]

⁷⁻⁸ This is my life work: helping people understand and respond to this Message. It came as a sheer gift to me, a real surprise, God handling all the details. When it came to presenting the Message to people who had no background in God's way, I was the least qualified of any of the available Christians. God saw to it that I was equipped, but you can be sure that it had nothing to do with my natural abilities.

⁸⁻¹⁰ And so here I am, preaching and writing about things that are way over my head, the inexhaustible riches and generosity of Christ. My task is to bring out in the open and make plain what God, who created all this in the first place, has been doing in secret and behind the scenes all along. Through followers of Jesus like yourselves gathered in churches, this extraordinary plan of God is becoming known and talked about even among the angels!

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.

Q6. What are normal human traits that seem to drive much of the evil in this world (e.g., pride)?

Q7. How does the dictionary define "humility"?

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Q8. Is it easy for us humans to “consider others better than yourselves”?

James 2:1-4, 8-13 [NIV-1984] [James was written by Jesus' stepbrother]

² My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? . . .

⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. ¹² Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, ¹³ because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

Q9. Paul asks us to “look . . . to the interests of others”. Who is our “neighbor”?

Lesson 2: *Philippians 2:1-30*

Day 2

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 In three sentences (verses 2:5-11 ↴), Paul (as prompted by the Holy Spirit) writes one of the most succinct and profound statements that describes our Lord Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. This passage has been called "Christ's Hymn". The full statement is duplicated below, and then we'll study it – sentence-by-sentence.

Philippians 2:5-11 [NIV-1984]

⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature 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.

⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Q10. Verse 5: how would you describe the attitude of Christ Jesus?

Q11. Verse 5: how do we humans adopt the "attitude . . . of Christ Jesus"?

Q12. Verse 6: is Jesus equal to God?

Genesis 1:26 [NIV-1984]

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move

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along the ground."

John 1:1, 2, 14, 17 [NIV-1984]

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. . . ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 5:17-26 [NIV-1984]

¹⁷ Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

¹⁸ For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. ²⁴ "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

Q13. Verse 6: Why cannot human beings grasp the "very nature of God"?

Q14. Verse 7: (1) How did Christ Jesus "[make] Himself nothing"? (2) What did He have prior to the time of His ministry, before His birth into this world?

(1) "nothing"?

(2) Prior/before?

 Commentators generally agree that the Old Testament tells of events in which the Lord Jesus in His 'preincarnate' form walked this earth. For examples, please read Genesis 18:1-3; Genesis 32:24-25, 28-30; and Judges 13:3-6.

Q15. Verse 7: What is "a servant"?

Q16. Verse 7: What did Paul mean, when he wrote, "the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness"?

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Day 3

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⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

Q17. How did He “humble Himself”?

Q18. What is “agapé love”? (See [Greek definitions for “love”](https://GodIsLife.org/LoveGreekDefinitions.pdf) [<https://GodIsLife.org/LoveGreekDefinitions.pdf>])

Q19. What is meant by the phrase “became obedient to death”?

John 5:21-24 [NIV-1984]

²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. ²⁴ "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

John 10:17-18 [NIV-1984]

¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life -- only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Hebrews 4:14-16 [NIV-1984] [Jesus, the great High Priest]

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -- yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

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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.

Q20. What is the “highest place”?

Q21. What is the “Name that is above all names”?

Revelation 19:11-16 [NIV]

¹¹ I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword [see Hebrews 4:12 (↓)] with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Hebrews 4:12 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Q22. What is meant by the phrase “every tongue”?

✍ The event described in verses 9-11 is future to us. In my opinion, it is a description of the most beautiful, extraordinary event to ever occur. Imagine, every being bowing before the Lord Jesus and confessing “Jesus Christ is LORD”! I interpret this to mean that every being from Satan and his demons, to you and I, to the Apostles; we all will proclaim “Jesus Christ is LORD”. What a thunderous proclamation! And to be in the presence of the LORD; wow! My imagination is not vibrant enough, vast enough, or creative enough to depict this event. The proclamation from all of our voices raised in honor to our King will be incredible! By the way, this event may occur after the final battle and before the “fire . . . from Heaven . . . [devours] them” (as briefly described in Revelation 20:9).

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Day 4

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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.

Q23. To whom is Paul writing: Believers and/or non-believers? What does "my dear friends" connote (synonyms: mean or signify)?

Believers and/or non-believers?

.....
.....
.....

Q24. If a Believer is assured of salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14 ↓), why does Paul write, "continue to work out your salvation"?

.....
.....
.....

Ephesians 1:13-14 [NIV-1984]

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession -- to the praise of his glory.

Matthew 5:10 & 12^a [NIV-1984]

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . ^{12a} Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven . . .

Matthew 6:1-4 [NIV-1984] [Jesus taught:]

¹ "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

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Matthew 11:28-30 [The Message (MSG)] [Jesus taught:]

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

2 Thessalonians 1:11 [NIV]

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.

James 2:14 [NIV]

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?

Q25. [Personal] How does my personal example demonstrate the love of Christ Jesus to non-believers?

Q26. Verse 12: Why does Paul write, “with fear and trembling”?

✍ *with fear and trembling*; “Not slavish terror, but wholesome, serious caution. ‘This fear is self-distrust; it is tenderness of conscience; it is vigilance against temptation; it is the fear which inspiration opposes to high-mindedness in the admonition ‘be not high-minded but fear.’ It is taking heed lest we fall; it is a constant apprehension of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the insidiousness and power of inward corruption. It is the caution and circumspection which timidly shrinks from whatever would offend and dishonor God and the Savior. And these the child of God will feel and exercise the more he rises above the enfeebling, disheartening, distressing influence of the fear which hath torment.” [©1886, Vincent’s Word Studies, by Marvin R. Vincent. Text: Internet Sacred Texts Archive. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/philippians/2-12.htm>]

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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 the word of life -- in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

Q27. Verse 14: This is a difficult teaching. How do you interpret “Do everything without complaining or arguing”?

Q28. Verse 14: Does this mean that we must endure, without complaint, an abusive relationship (in our personal or work lives, e.g., an abusive spouse or an abusive boss)?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Psalm 4:4-5 [The Message (MSG)]

Complain if you must, but don’t lash out. Keep your mouth shut, and let your heart do the talking. Build your case before God and wait for his verdict.

Q29. Psalm 4:4-5 (↑) seems to allow us to include complaints and arguments in our prayers.

(1) Does God want us to be honest in our prayers? (2) If God wants a true conversation (prayer) with each us, may we include complaints and arguments? (3) Under what circumstances does God frown on complaints and arguments (is it when we complain to others or when we complain to God)?

(1) Yes? } Why?
No? }

(2) Yes? } Why?
No? }

(3) Why?

Q30. Do we, too, live “in a crooked and depraved generation”?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

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Q31. Paul states that the Philippians are “[holding] out the word of life”. What does this mean to you?

John 1:1-2, 4 [NIV-1984]

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. . . ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Q32. Verse 16: The phrase “in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing” seems self-serving, even selfish. Of what is Paul fearful? And why?

 *That I may boast:* “This was one reason which the apostle urged, and which it was proper to urge, why they should let their light shine. He had been the instrument of their conversion, he had founded their church, he was their spiritual father, and had shown the deepest interest in their welfare; and he now entreats them, as a means of promoting his highest joy, to be faithful and holy. The exemplary piety and holy lives of the members of a church will be one of the sources of highest joy to a minister in the day of judgment...” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/philippians/2-16.htm>]

Day 5

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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.

Q33. Why does Paul attribute his suffering (“poured out like a drink offering”) to “the sacrifice and service coming from your faith”?

Matthew 5:11-12 [International Children’s Bible (ICB)]

¹¹ “People will say bad things about you and hurt you. They will lie and say all kinds of evil things

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about you because you follow me. But when they do these things to you, you are happy. ¹² Rejoice and be glad. You have a great reward waiting for you in heaven. People did the same evil things to the prophets who lived before you.

John 16:33 [NIV-1984]

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Q34. ***Be glad and rejoice:*** Why should the Philippians "be glad and rejoice" in Paul's suffering?

Q35. ***Be glad and rejoice:*** If I loved someone, shouldn't I attempt to lessen the pain and suffering placed upon that person by my actions?

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.

Q36. Paul wrote, "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon". Why did Paul include the Lord's name in his plans for Timothy?

Matthew 6:9-10 [NIV-1984]

⁹ "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. . .'"

²¹ For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

Q37. In Paul's praise of Timothy, what seems to be Timothy's noteworthy focus?

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Q38. (Personal) What is your focus?

Q39. How might we achieve a focus like Timothy's?

²²But 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. ²³I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

Q40. Verse 22: How would you describe the bond between Paul and Timothy?



Verse 24: Paul writing in 2 Timothy 4:16-17 (¶) indicates that he was indeed released. Although his release seemed to be short-lived, because he was imprisoned once again.

2 Timothy 4:16-17 [NIV-1984]

¹⁶At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.

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Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

²⁵ But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus [Ē-pă-frō-dī-tūs], my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.

Q41. Why did the Philippians send Epaphroditus to Paul? (Two reasons are listed)

(1)

(2)

Q42. Paul demonstrates to all readers how to encourage others through positive, heartfelt praise.

(1) How would you respond if someone complimented you with words, such as "my brother (or sister), fellow worker, and fellow soldier"? (2) How can we use Paul's example and apply it to our lives?

(1)

(2)

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.

 Evidently, the Philippians had heard rumors of their beloved Epaphroditus' near-fatal illness and their alarm reached Paul. So, Paul in these verses wanted to allay their fears.

Q43. Verse 26: What two characteristics are driving Epaphroditus' desire to return home to Philippi?

(1)

(2)

 *But God had mercy on him:* "By restoring him to health, evidently not by miracle, but by the use of ordinary [care]." [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/philippians/2-27.htm>]

 *but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow:* "In addition to all the sorrows of imprisonment, and the prospect of a trial, and the want of friends. The sources of his sorrow, had Epaphroditus died, would have been such as these: (1) He would have lost a valued friend, and one whom he esteemed as a brother and worthy fellow-laborer. (2) He would have felt that the church at Philippi had lost a valuable member. (3) his grief might have been

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aggravated from the consideration that [Epaphroditus] had been lost in endeavoring to do him good. He [Paul] would have felt that he was the [reason], though innocent, of his [death]." [Ibid.]

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.

Q44. Was Epaphroditus serving as God's hands, feet, and voice in Rome, since Paul was imprisoned?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Q45. Based on this text regarding Epaphroditus, did God grant the power of healing to every apostle for as long as the apostle lived?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

 *to make up for the help you could not give me:* There is not in the original the touch of reproach which our version may seem to imply. Epaphroditus' presence and activity are said to have "filled up the one thing wanting" to make the service of the Philippians effective for its purpose. [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/philippians/2-30.htm>]

Q46. Assuming that Paul prayed for the miraculous healing of Epaphroditus, why might God have allowed Epaphroditus to heal through normal care?

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