

Bible Jam Class Notes
Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Current Schedule

September Dates:	(Wednesdays)	9/13, 9/20, 9/27
October Dates:	(Wednesdays)	10/4, 10/11, 10/18, 10/25
November Dates:	(Wednesdays)	11/1, 11/8, 11/29
December Dates:	(Wednesdays)	12/6, 12/13, 12/20 (?)

Christmas is on a Monday this year.

1. Welcome
2. Checking In
3. *At Home Reflections*
Discussion/Review/Homework
 - a. Write about two of the questions below that speak to you to share with the group.
 - b. Read Philippians twice – once without the outline. What did you notice? What questions occur to you. Anything about Paul jump out?
 - c. Any questions or observations in general that you have?
4. List Of Questions/Items for Comment
 - a. Faith.
 - b. “Love God; in love with God”
 - c. “Believe Jesus; believe in Jesus”
 - d. To begin each day to know that God is most important to me in my life; To remember that. How?
 - e. How I wish I could talk to God and/or Jesus– and have a response
 - f. Where do Scriptures come into my understanding or relationship with my Higher Power?
 - g. How or does God “inform or inspire us” through our scriptures?
 - h. What happens to that inspirational process with old, very old texts?
 - i. What are we supposed to do with others who just don’t believe.

- j. Why do we gather?
 - k. Who taught us what we are supposed to believe? Who taught those who taught us...What's the meaning of that going forward
 - l. What have you taught others about God, Jesus, Spirit and what you believe in relation to the teachings we study?
 - m. Do we oversimplify the texts and their meanings?
 - n. What is it you have that you would like others to learn? How?
 - o. What – if anything – you have been taught, would you like to un-learn or un-know? What would that require of you, of others?
 - p. Is saying you have “faith” enough – to dismiss all these questions and others like them?
 - q. What is faith? What is belief? What is the difference – to you? After all, you are a teacher of these things. How would you teach these things today?
 - r. Is it our nature to be unsure?
 - s. Do we really even want to think, pray, swim about these things?
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5. Philippi:

- Philippi was a major Greek city in the first century.
- It was founded in 356 BCE by the Macedonian King Philip II, who was one of the parents of Alexander the Great.
- The city was considered an extension of Rome and had a higher status than Thessalonica. Philippi's citizens had Roman citizenship and *ius Italicum**, which allowed them to self-govern and be tax-exempt.
- The city's population was between 10 and 15 thousand people, with 40% being Roman citizens and 60% being Greek.
- Philippi was a typical first-century city in that many gods were worshiped. The emperor may have been worshiped as a god in the imperial cult.
- The apostle Paul established the first Christian church in Europe in Philippi around CE 50. He wrote the eleventh book of the New Testament, Philippians, to the Christian congregation in Philippi while he was in prison.

* **ius Italicum** (Latin, Italian or Italic law) was a law in the early Roman Empire that allowed the emperors to grant cities outside Italy the legal fiction that they were on Italian soil. This meant that the city would be governed under Roman law rather than local law, and it would have a greater degree of autonomy in their relations with provincial governors. As Roman citizens, people were able to buy and sell property, were exempt from land tax and the poll tax and were entitled to protection under Roman law. *Ius Italicum* was the highest liberty a municipality or province could obtain and was considered very favorable.

Background on the Letter of Paul

Video – 13 minutes

St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians | Overview & Bible Study
<https://youtu.be/QQF-NoDwFyM?si=RObH1NeqcXla75sM>

Notes:

FROM PAUL AND TIMOTHY, WHO SERVE CHRIST
Jesus,
To all the holy ones in Christ Jesus at Philippi,
together with their bishops and deacons:

² Grace and peace be yours from our Abba God and from
Jesus Christ, our Savior.

³ I thank my God every time I think of you. ⁴ In every
prayer I utter, as I plead on your behalf, I rejoice ⁵ at the way
you have all continually helped promote the Good News
from the very first day. ⁶ And I am sure of this much: that
God, who has begun the good work in you, will carry it
through to completion, right up to the day of Christ Jesus.
⁷ It's only right that I should entertain such expectations
about you, since I hold all of you dear—you who are all
partakers of grace with me, even when I lie in prison or
am summoned to defend the solid ground on which the
Good News rests.

⁸ God knows how much I long for each of you with all
the affection of Christ Jesus! ⁹ My prayer is that your love
may abound more and more, both in understanding and
in wealth of experience, ¹⁰ so that with a clear conscience
and blameless conduct you may learn to value the things
that really matter, up to the very day of Christ. ¹¹ It's
my wish that you be found rich in the harvest of justice
which Jesus Christ has ripened in you, to the glory and
praise of God.

I'm glad to announce to you, sisters and brothers, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the Good News. ¹³ Consequently it has become clear throughout the Praetorium and everywhere else that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴ Because of my chains, most of our sisters and brothers in Christ have been encouraged to speak the word of God more fearlessly.

¹⁵ It's true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others do so with the right intention. ¹⁶ These latter act out of love, aware that I am here in the defense of the Good News. ¹⁷ The others, who proclaim Christ for selfish or jealous motives, don't care if they make my chains heavier to bear.

¹⁸ All that matters is that in any and every way, whether from specious or genuine motives, Christ is being proclaimed! That is what brings me joy. ¹⁹ Indeed, I will continue to rejoice in the conviction that this will result in my salvation, thanks to your prayers and the support I receive from the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰ I firmly trust and anticipate that I will never be put to shame for my hopes; I have full confidence that, now as always, Christ will be exalted through me, whether I live or die.

²¹ For to me, "life" means Christ; hence, dying is only so much gain. ²² If, on the other hand, I am to continue living on earth, that means productive toil for me—and I honestly don't know which I prefer. ²³ I'm strongly attracted to both: I long to be freed from this life and to be with Christ, for that is the far better thing; ²⁴ yet it's more urgent that I remain alive

for your sakes. ²⁵ This fills me with the confidence that I will stay with you and persevere with you all, for the sake of your joy and your progress in the faith. ²⁶ My being with you once again should make you even prouder of me in Christ.

²⁷ Conduct yourselves, then, in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ. If you do, whether I come and see you myself or hear about your behavior from a distance, it will be clear that you're standing firm in unity of spirit, and exerting yourselves with one accord for the faith of the Gospel, ²⁸ without being intimidated by your enemies. Standing together without fear is an indication that they will be destroyed and you will be saved. It's a divine signal that God— ²⁹ on behalf of our Savior—has given you the privilege of believing in and suffering for Christ. ³⁰ You're now experiencing the same struggle that you saw in me—and now hear that I still have.

2¹ If our life in Christ means anything to you—if love, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness or sympathy can persuade you at all— ² then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. ³ There must be no competition among you, no conceit, but everybody is to be humble: value others over yourselves, ⁴ each of you thinking of the interests of others before your own. ⁵ Your attitude must be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶ Christ, though in the image of God,
didn't deem equality with God
something to be clung to—
⁷ but instead became completely empty
and took on the image of oppressed humankind:
born into the human condition,
found in the likeness of a human being.
⁸ Jesus was thus humbled—
obediently accepting death, even death on a cross!
⁹ Because of this, God highly exalted Christ
and gave to Jesus the name above every other name,
¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee must bend
in the heavens, on the earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God:
Jesus Christ reigns supreme!

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, you who are always obedient to my urging, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, not only when I happen to be with you, but all the more now that I'm absent. ¹³ It is God at work in you that creates the desire to do God's will.

¹⁴ In everything you do, act without grumbling or arguing;
¹⁵ prove yourselves innocent and straightforward, children of God beyond reproach, in the midst of a twisted and depraved generation—among which you shine like stars in the sky, ¹⁶ while holding fast to the word of life. As I look to the day of Christ, you give me cause to boast, proving that I didn't run the race in vain or work to no purpose.
¹⁷ Even if my life is to be poured out like a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I'm glad of it and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ May you be glad for the same reason, and rejoice with me!

2:19—3:16

I hope in our Savior Jesus to send Timothy to you soon. And I will be cheered when I hear news of you. ²⁰ I have no one else here like him, and he's genuinely concerned about you. ²¹ All the others seem more interested in their own welfare than in Christ Jesus. ²² But you know how Timothy proved himself—as a child helping a parent—by working with me to further the Good News. ²³ So I intend to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I am confident in Christ that I, too, will be coming soon.

²⁵ I feel I need to send back to you Epaphroditus—brother, coworker, spiritual warrior—who is also your messenger to me, the one you sent to be my companion in work and in battle. ²⁶ But he misses you all and was distressed when he learned that you had heard of his illness. ²⁷ Yes, he was sick; he almost died. But God had mercy on him—and on me as well, so that I wouldn't have one grief on top of another. ²⁸ I'll be sending him back as soon as I can. I know you'll be happy to see him again, and that will make me less worried about you. ²⁹ Welcome him heartily in Christ—people like him should be held in the highest regard. ³⁰ Know that he came so close to death in doing the work of Christ. He risked his life to give me the help that you were unable to provide.

3¹ Finally, my sisters and brothers, rejoice in Christ. To write the same things again is no burden for me, but I do it for your safety.

² Beware of the dogs! Beware of the troublemakers! Beware of the mutilators, who insist that Gentile Christians must become circumcised! ³ We are the true circumcision—we are ourselves the sign of the Covenant—each and every one of us who worships in the Spirit of God and glories in Christ Jesus, rather than trusts in external signs.

⁴ Yet I can be confident even there! If they think they have the right to put their trust in external evidence, I have even more right! ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day, being of the stock of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew origins; in legal observance I was a Pharisee, ⁶ and so zealous that I persecuted the church. I was above reproach when it came to justice based on the Law.

⁷ But those things I used to consider gain, I now count as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss in light of the surpassing knowledge of my Savior Jesus Christ, for whose sake I have forfeited everything. I count everything else as garbage, so that Christ may be my wealth— ⁹ indeed, that I may be found in Christ, not having any justice of my own based on observance of the Law. The justice I possess is that which comes through faith in Christ. It has its origin in God and is based on faith. ¹⁰ All I want is to know Christ, and the power of the resurrection, and how to share in Christ's sufferings by being formed into the pattern of Jesus' death—¹¹perhaps even to arrive at the resurrection from the dead.

¹² It's not that I have reached it yet, or have already finished my course; but I'm running the race in order to grab hold of the prize if possible, since Christ Jesus has grabbed hold of me. ¹³ Sisters and brothers, I don't think of myself as having reached the finish line. I give no thought to what lies behind, but I push on to what is ahead. ¹⁴ My entire attention is on the finish line as I run toward the prize—the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ We who are mature should adopt this attitude. And if you have a different opinion on any matter, God will make that clear to you as well. ¹⁶ Just resolve to live up to what we have already attained.

3:17—4:23

Join in following my example, my sisters and brothers. Take as your guide those who follow the example that we set. ¹⁸ Unfortunately, many go about in a way which shows them to be enemies of the cross of Christ. I have often said this to you before; this time I say it with tears: ¹⁹ their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame. I'm talking about those whose minds are set on the things of this world.

²⁰ But we have our citizenship in heaven; it's from there that we eagerly await the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will give a new form to this lowly body of ours and remake it according to the pattern of the glorified body, by Christ's power to bring everything under subjection.

4¹ For these reasons, my sisters and brothers—you whom I so love and long for, you who are my joy and my crown—continue, my dear ones, to stand firm in Christ Jesus.

² I implore Euodia and Syntyche to come to an agreement with each other in Christ. ³ And I ask you, Syzygus, to be a true comrade and help these coworkers. These two women struggled at my side in defending the Good News, along with Clement and the others who worked with me. Their names are written in the Book of Life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Savior always! I say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let everyone see your forbearing spirit. Our Savior is near. ⁶ Dismiss all anxiety from your minds; instead, present your needs to God through prayer and petition, giving thanks for all circumstances. ⁷ Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, my sisters and brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, decent, admirable, virtuous or worthy of praise. ⁹ Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you.

¹⁰ It gave me great joy in our God that your concern for me bore fruit once more. You had been concerned all along, of course, but lacked the opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I don't say this because I am in need, for whatever the situation I find myself in, I have learned to be self-sufficient. ¹² I know what it is to be brought low, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret: whether on a full stomach or an empty one, in poverty or plenty, ¹³ I can do all things through the One who gives me strength.

¹⁴ Still, it was kind of you to want to share in my hardships. ¹⁵ You yourselves know, my dear Philippians, that at the start of my evangelizing, when I left Macedonia, not a single congregation except yours shared with me by giving me something for what it had received. ¹⁶ Even when I was at Thessalonica, you sent something for my needs, not once but twice. ¹⁷ It's not that I am eager for the gift; rather, my concern is for the ever-growing balance in your account. ¹⁸ Here's my receipt—it says I've been fully paid, and more. I am well supplied because of what I received from you through Epaphroditus—a fragrant offering—a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

¹⁹ In return, our God will fulfill all your needs in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can. ²⁰ All glory to our God and Creator for unending ages! Amen.

²¹ Give my greetings to all the holy ones in Christ Jesus. The sisters and brothers who are with me send their greetings. ²² All the holy ones send their greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ be with your spirit.