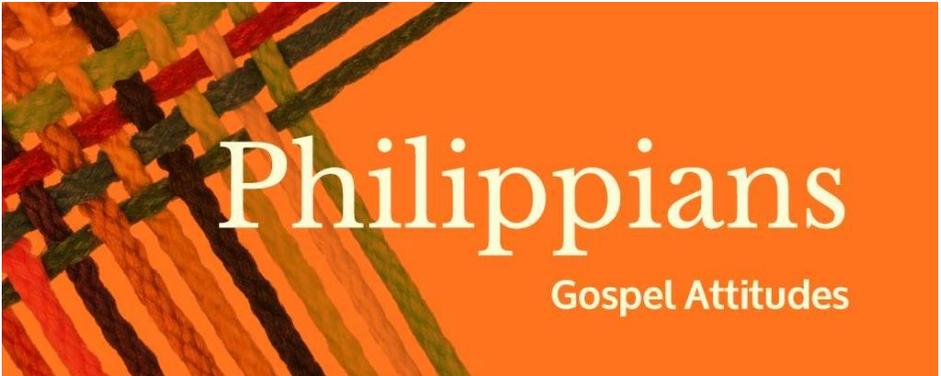


# Stromlo

CHRISTIAN CHURCH



1	Partnership	Philippians 1:1-11	8 February
2	Courage	Philippians 1:12-30	15 February
3	Humility	Philippians 2:1-11	22 February
4	Honour	Philippians 2:12-30	1 March
5	Confidence	Philippians 3:1-11	8 March
6	Perseverance	Philippians 3:12-4:1	15 March
7	Joy	Philippians 4:2-9	22 March
8	Contentment	Philippians 4:10-23	29 March

# Getting more out of your studies

**READ** the relevant passage before the Sunday talk (and look through the investigate questions). Wrestling with God's Word for yourself before hearing the talk will help you to get much more out of it.

**PREPARE** by thinking about the passage before the study. If you missed the talk you can listen to it online on our website or subscribe to it on iTunes or similar at <http://stromlo.org/sermons/feed/>. You can also prepare by answering the study questions before your Life Group meets. You'll be in a better position to serve others in your group through thought out contributions. If everyone in the group prepares in this way, it will be easier to dig deeper, and to devote more time to application and prayer.

**Our Bible group aims to prepare by:**

**PRAY** for those teaching the Word; for those leading groups; for other members of your group; and for yourself. Pray that your heart, mind and actions will all be challenged over this series and that God would be glorified.

## Key



### **kick off**

this question just gets us talking about the broad subject of the study before we see what God's Word says about it.



### **think & apply**

is where the rubber hits the road: applying it to our lives. Doing studies linked to the Sunday talks allows more time to be devoted to this vital step



### **big idea**

gives a 'ballpark' sense of the focus of the study - to keep us on track. It's great to get into the detail, but we also want to pull it all together.



### **digging deeper**

gives you the chance to chase up the big idea in other parts of the Bible, especially if your group prepares ahead and covers the main set passage faster.



### **investigate**

draws out what the Bible text is actually saying. Stay focused on the passage as you answer these questions.



### **reading ahead**

gives you a reminder of what's coming up next week. You'll serve your group well by preparing for the study. For study 1 read Philippians 1:1-11

# An introduction to Philippians

The Philippian church is 10 years old. Paul, the original church planter has been locked up in Rome under palace guard and the Philippians are still just learning to do life together. You can find out more about the Philippians in Acts 16:11-40.

Even though Paul and the Philippians are going through difficult times, they both show concern for each other. The Philippians sensing Paul's need send gifts with one of their church members, Epaphroditus. Paul, sensing the needs of the Philippians addresses some of the issues that can arise amongst church members and pleads with them to be united in mind and spirit, and to look out for the interests of others. Although life is messy for both Paul and the Philippians, this letter demonstrates how it's possible for Christians to be joyful in every circumstance.

## Timeline:

Jesus death A.D. 30

Pauls Conversion A.D. 33

Paul plants the Philippian church A.D. 51

Paul writes to the Philippian church A.D. 61

Paul martyred in Rome A.D. 64

It is most likely that this letter to the Philippians was written when Paul was in Rome as there is mention of the palace guards and Caesar's household (1:13 and 4:22)

# 1. Partnership



*Thank God for the partnership in the gospel you have with other Christians, praying that the gospel would continue to work in their lives to the glory and praise of God*



Describe a friendship or work relationship that has worked well? What do you think made the relationship work really well?



**Read Philippians 1:1-11**

1. What was Paul's relationship with the Philippians like?

2. The partnership of the gospel is a central element of Paul's relationship with the Philippians. More details about this partnership can be found in Philippians 4:10-20. What did this partnership look like?

3. Why do you think Paul was so joyful about their partnership?



9. What things do you think we could be doing to increase our partnership in the gospel with others? (think locally, nationally and globally)
10. How does Paul's prayer challenge the way we should pray for other Christians?



The book of Acts records in more depth the history of the early church, and in particular Paul and his imprisonment.

1. Read Acts 21:10–16 and discuss how you would have felt as a Christian at the time listening to the prophecy and Paul's response
2. Read Acts 26 and explain how you think the Christians at the time may have responded to Paul's imprisonment.



For Sunday's Bible talk and next week's study read Philippians 1:12-30. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.

# 2. Courage



*Have courage and put the gospel first in all your relationships so that Christ may be exalted regardless of persecution.*



You're stopped in the street by a TV reporter who asks for your opinion on religions being engaged in proselytising, what do you say? OR do you think you are becoming more or less courageous? Why?



**Read Philippians 1:12-30**

1. What does Paul's imprisonment do to help advance the gospel? (v12-14)

2. Who are the two types of people who preach the gospel? (v15-18)

3. What are Paul's desires for himself? (v18-26)

4. What are Paul's desires for the Philippians? (v27-30)



5. How might Paul's aspirations challenge our own aspirations? (refer back to Q3)

6. What factors enable Paul to turn difficult circumstances into joyful, Christ-exalting opportunities?

7. What hinders us from turning difficult circumstances into joyful, Christ-exalting opportunities?

8. What is the sign that they will be destroyed? (v28)



# 3. Humility



*The Christian community is replicated by passing on what they have received which has its roots based in the example of Jesus' servant hearted humility.*



Who are you are most similar to? Why?



**Read Philippians 2:1-11**

1. How does the If/then statement work in verses 1-4? Put it in your own words.

2. How might selfish ambition and vain conceit (v3) destroy the oneness (v2)?

3. How would you define humility from verses 3-4?

4. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?



5. What does it mean for us to have the same mindset as Christ Jesus (v5-11)

6. What stops us from serving like Jesus did?

7. What should motivate us to humbly value others above ourselves?

8. What opportunities do you have to serve others?



**Read Matthew 23:1–12**

In the study we investigated humility. Read Matthew 23:1-12 and reflect on how you should view and treat each other at church.



**Read ahead**

For Sunday's Bible talk and next week's study read Philippians 2:12-30. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.

# 4. Distinction



*As God works in us, and as we work out our salvation, we will shine like stars among a warped and crooked generation. (The talk may focus more on v19-30 and the topic of honour).*



How does being a Christian make a difference to who you are as a person?



**Read Philippians 2:12-30**

1. What do we do and what does God do? (v12-13)

2. How can we work out our salvation? (v12, Titus 2:11–14)

3. Can God's sovereignty be separated from human will? Why/Why not? (Phil 2:12-13)



8. Why do you think Philippians 1:10 & 2:15-16 both contain the words “pure and blameless” and “the day of Christ”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. With regards to being pure and blameless, what is the danger of thinking we have “arrived spiritually”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What things do you desire to work on in order to stand out as a follower of Jesus?



### **Shining like the stars**

**What is our work and God’s work in the following verses?**

1 Thessalonians 4:3–8

Titus 2:11–14

2 Corinthians 3:18

Romans 12:1–2



### **Read ahead**

For Sunday’s Bible talk and next week’s study read Philippians 3:1-11. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.

# 5. Confidence



*We put no confidence in the flesh or anything else, but boast in the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ our Lord who is our righteousness by faith.*



Have you ever thought anything was the genuine article/product, and then later discovered it was a fake?



**Read Philippians 3:1-11**

1. Looking at the entire passage: What does Paul consider to be garbage (fake), and what does he consider to be valuable (real)?
2. Why is Paul so against the circumcision group? (Optional: Romans 2:25-29)
3. How do we serve God by his Spirit? (v3)
4. What things have we lost and gained by being a Christian?

5. What does it mean to have “a righteousness”?

6. What does it mean to have faith in Jesus?



7. Do you think it is easier to focus on internal transformation or outward signs and accomplishments? Why? (consider individually, as a life group, and as a church)

8. How are we tempted to fall into legalistic righteousness?

9. How does this passage challenge your understanding of what it means to know Christ? (v8, 10)

10. Jesus was Paul's greatest treasure (v8). What things stop Jesus from being your greatest treasure?

11. What reasons do we have to rejoice in the Lord (v1)?



**Read Romans 3:11-4:5**

What does this passage tell us about righteousness?



**Read ahead**

For Sunday's Bible talk and next week's study read Philippians 3:12-4:1. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.

# 6. Perseverance



*Continue to grow by following others who are also continuing to grow, and who have their minds set on heaven, and eagerly await their saviour.*



What Christian disciplines/behaviours have you caught from someone else?  
What bad behaviours have caught from someone else?



**Read Philippians 3:12-4:1**

1. What race is Paul trying to win? (v12-14)

2. Why do you think Paul is keen to stress that he has not already arrived or achieved his goal? (Phil 3:12-14)

3. What is the problem of looking behind?

4. What type of person should we keep our eyes on as an example?



5. In Phil 4:1 Paul calls the Philippians his joy and crown. If you consider someone to be your joy and crown, how does it change your attitudes and actions towards them?

6. Who are the enemies of the cross that Paul is talking about?

7. What is distinctive about true Christians?

8. Why might you be tempted to follow the enemies of the cross?

9. What causes you to eagerly await a Saviour from heaven?

10. Paul asks us to “stand firm in the Lord in this way”. What does this mean and how might we need to change the way we are standing?



#### **Why does the Bible place such an emphasis on example?**

John 13:15, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Phil 3:17, 1 Thess 1:7, 2 Thess 3:7-9, 1 Tim 1:16, 1 Tim 4:12, Titus 2:7, Jas 5:10, 1 Pet 2:21, 1 Peter 5:3,

#### **What examples are we to avoid?**

1 Corinthians 10:6, Heb 4:11, 2 Peter 2:6.



#### **Read ahead**

For Sunday’s Bible talk and next week’s study read Philippians 4:2-9. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.

# 7. Peace



*Let the peace of God guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The talk title is "Joy" which has a different focus to this study.*



Share a story of when you or someone you know has panicked about something and made the situation worse.



**Read Philippians 4:2-9**

1. What things stand out from the passage?

2. Who were Euodia and Syntyche and what was their problem? (Phil 4:2-3)

3. How would you "help" someone in such a situation?

4. How would applying Phil 2:2-3 prevent such a situation?



10. Why do our hearts and minds need guarding?

11. What can we do to look after our hearts and minds?



**Skim through Philippians answering the following questions:**

List all the difficulties Paul went through:

What were some of the difficult situations Paul was able to be positive in one way or another?

How can we find joy in difficult life situations?



**Read ahead**

For Sunday's Bible talk and next week's study read Philippians 4:10-23. Prepare for the next Bible study as agreed by your Bible group on page 2.





