

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Lesson 2-February 15, 2026

**Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES
An Online Christian Church Teaching the Word of God
RORY CLARK
Pastor-Teacher**

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries, an online Christian Church teaching the Word of God verse-by-verse to the hearers the Lord provides. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. No matter where you are in the world, thanks for listening to this Bible lesson!

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON Philippians is a Message to the Human Race About Joy

LESSON INTRODUCTION

You heard Him whisper to you about one second after you were born.

The whisper was inaudible to everyone else, but it was at full volume within you. It was the Lord, your Creator, communicating the first message you would hear as you began your time on earth. What the Lord said to you is revealed in John, Chapter 15, Verse 11 (the Rory Translation Bible) ...

JOHN 15:11 (Rory Translation)

These things I (the Lord Jesus Christ) am speaking to you...I have placed My joy in you...and I want you to be full of joy.

It has always been the Lord's intention that you would live a joyful life. But what IS a joyful life, in light of the fact that life has ample doses of tribulation? In today's lesson we continue our introduction to Paul's letter to the Philippians, a letter from the Lord to the human race communicating the true meaning of JOY.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's hear some music! When we listen to music, often the music fills us with joy. For composer Ludwig von Beethoven, who was quite a dreamer, poetry filled him with joy, so he set a poem by Friedrich Schiller to music. With Beethoven's ninth

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symphony came *Ode to Joy*, a song dedicated to freedom, justice and human happiness. Here's Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*.

MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

ODE TO JOY

Chorale

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

We're grateful to You Heavenly Father for providing us with the absolute truth of the Word of God...

Thank you Father for the joy you have set before us by breathing into us the breath of lives...thank you for the people you have given us to love who bring us joy...thank you for all the joy that comes as we work through the difficulties of life with the right attitude...

...as we begin the study of another New Testament letter, give us the insight into Your messages to us and give us the discernment to make the same decisions You would make with the information we learn...help us to experience this life the way You want us to...

...we ask these things through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ's name...Amen.

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Philippians is a Message to the Human Race About Joy

We continue our study of the New Testament verse-by-verse. As we know from Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 16...

SECOND TIMOTHY 3:16

All Scripture is God breathed and is profitable for teaching...for reproof...for correction and for training in righteousness...

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We study the Bible because we know we are learning the Lord's EXACT THINKING. Imagine if our focus always was on the Lord and His Word rather than on the world. We wouldn't be talking about how messed up Satan's kingdom is...instead, we'd remember, as believers in Christ, that we already have the victory in the spiritual realm. We'd laugh about all the counterfeit substitutes people are hoping these will bring them joy. We'd remember the encouragement from Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2...

ROMANS 12:2a

...do not be conformed to this world (by Satan, by his cosmic system of thought, and by the flesh resident in you) ... instead, keep on being transformed by God the Holy Spirit through the renewing of your mind (as you study the Word of God) ...

ROMANS 12:2b

...so that you may see clearly...through the testing of experience...what the will of God is...and the will of God is that which is good for you, that which is acceptable to Him, and that which is perfect in result.

In our last lesson we began the study of Paul's letter to the believers in Christ at Philippi, an ancient city in northeastern Greece. It's the apostle Paul's first church planted in Europe.

Paul's letter to the Philippians has four chapters with one hundred and four verses. The subject matter of the letter can be summarized in a word...JOY.

It's a letter in which Paul communicates his JOY despite his unlawful confinement in Rome. The letter is an encouragement to the Philippian believers, exhorting them to remain steadfast in their faith in Christ and to be joyful because of their union with Christ, REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES. Are you joyful regardless of circumstances?

It was always God's intention, even in eternity past before He created us, that we would have lives filled with JOY. Is your life filled with joy?

You'll probably admit it is not. As human beings we tend to think our lives are joyful when things are going well, and we think our lives are miserable when things aren't going well. We wrongfully judge life based on what we think is good and what we think is bad.

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The apostle Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. It would be easy to conclude his life was bad since he was in jail. Yet Paul writes a letter about how joyful life is, even when he's in prison. Paul was content. He says in Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 11...

PHILIPPIANS 4:11b

I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

That's JOY...and JOY can be learned.

JOY is an attitude. One of the main messages the Lord sends us in this letter is captured in Philippians, Chapter 2, Verses 5 to 8. Paul exhorts believers in Christ to look at JOY the way the Lord looked at JOY...

PHILIPPIANS 2:5

Have this attitude in yourselves, believers in Christ, which was also the attitude in Christ Jesus...

PHILIPPIANS 2:6

...who, although He had the exact same essence as God the Father (He is fully God...co-equal...co-infinite...and co-eternal just like God the Father and God the Holy Spirit)...He did not regard equality with God the Father as a thing to be seized and held onto...

PHILIPPIANS 2:7

...instead, He emptied Himself...taking on the form of a bond-servant...and being made in the likeness of men.

PHILIPPIANS 2:8

Being found in appearance as a man, He humiliated Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a Cross.

“He emptied Himself” means the Lord deprived Himself of the rightful privileges of Deity for a period of time so He could accomplish the work of our salvation. “He humiliated Himself” means taking on human form was degrading to the Lord.

Imagine the Sovereign God of the Universe finding it joyful to leave all the comforts of heaven, to come to earth, to take on human form, and to voluntarily be

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crucified to bail the human race out of a situation they could not get out of themselves...SIN. Hebrews, Chapter 12, Verses 1 and 2...

HEBREWS 12:1b

...let us believers in Christ run with endurance the race of our lives that is set before us by God...

HEBREWS 12:2a

...and let us fix our eyes on Jesus (not on the world) ...Jesus...who is the pioneer and perfecter of faith...who FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM (at the request of God the Father) ...

HEBREWS 12:2b

...endured the Cross... disregarding the shame of the Cross...and has now sat down at the right hand of the throne of God the Father.

Some questions for reflection as we undertake this study...

What is joy? The opposite of joy is misery. How do I live a life filled with joy? Why would a person imprisoned in Rome under the worst ruler in the history of mankind consider it joyful? What does it mean to rejoice? What does it mean to enjoy? What is the source of your joy? Who wants to steal your joy? What steals your joy? What are you like when everything is against you?

It would be great for you to sit down this week, write down these questions, and answer them for yourselves. The alternative is to hear the questions, feel bad about yourself, then forget you ever heard them. God wants us to assess these things, and that's why He sent us the letter to the Philippians.

So as we reflect, what are the spiritual principles we learn in Paul's letter to the Philippians? What are God's messages to believers in Christ in Paul's letter to the Philippians? What is environment? We live in the environment called Satan's Kingdom. What role does environment play in our joy? What are circumstances? There is adversity and there is prosperity. What role do circumstances play in our joy?

<PERSONAL EXAMPLE

How can I be joyful when I am advanced in years if I am obsessing with death?>

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Paul was nearing the time of his death. Yet he was joyful about it. Paul encourages us not to obsess about death in Philippians, Chapter 1, Verse 21...

PHILIPPIANS 1:21

For to me (Paul)...to live is occupation with Christ and to die is profitable.

If dying is profitable then we must embrace physical death with JOY knowing it only affects part of us...our “earthly tent.” There is the temporal us and there is the eternal us. Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 1...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:1a

For we believers in Christ know that if the earthly tent (our current physical body) which is the current house (for our soul and spirit) is torn down (by physical death)...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:1b

...we have a building from God the Father (a resurrection body to house our soul and spirit)...a house not made with human hands...but a house that is eternal in the heavens.

Our JOY comes from a SOURCE...our union with the Lord.

We are JOYFUL knowing that nothing happens in this life without God's permission. So if something happens to us, we know God allowed it for our benefit. Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 28 says...

ROMANS 8:28

And we believers in Christ know that God the Father causes all things to work together for good to those who love God the Father (that's us believers in Christ) ...to those who are called according to God the Father's purpose.

If we evaluate life based on what we think is good and what we think is bad, then we may say, for example, my relationship with my spouse is good, but my relationship with the rest of my family is bad. What if we knew each of these things is the JOY the Lord set before us...a Lord who wants us to be joyful regardless of circumstances?

How was the Lord described in Isaiah, Chapter 53, Verses 3 to 6...

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ISAIAH 53:3

Jesus was despised and forsaken of men...a man of sorrows...acquainted with grief...and like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised...and we did not esteem Him.

ISAIAH 53:4

Surely Jesus Himself bore our griefs...and our sorrows He carried...yet we ourselves esteemed Him as stricken...smitten by God...and afflicted.

ISAIAH 53:5

Jesus was pierced through for our transgressions...He was crushed for our iniquities...the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him...and by His scourging we are healed.

ISAIAH 53:6

All of us like sheep have gone astray...each of us has turned to his own way...but the Lord (God the Son) has caused the iniquity of all of us to fall on Jesus.

The secret to having a life filled with JOY is attitude.

QUOTE FROM ZIG ZIGLAR

It's not your aptitude...it's your attitude...
that determines your altitude.

Your outlook determines your outcomes. Proverbs 23, Verse 7...

PROVERBS 23:7

For as a man thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.

Paul's letter to the Philippians, like all the letters of the Bible, challenges you to think differently. The result of having the right mindset? JOY! When we return from the break, we'll request an offering and then we'll answer the final five questions we answer at the beginning of every Biblical letter.

FIVE-MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

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TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Philippians is a Message to the Human Race About Joy

OFFERING INTRODUCTION

True ministry involves giving, not receiving. Yet it's an equal pleasure being given to in return. In Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 17, the apostle Paul says...

PHILIPPIANS 4:17

Not that I seek the gift (for myself...even though I appreciate it) ... but I seek for the profit which increases to your account (from God when you give).

You're invited to make giving to Barah Ministries part of your weekly routine. God blesses your giving and makes it have impact in places all over the world with people you know nothing about. Simultaneously, God gives abundant credit back to your account. If you listen to Barah Ministries, we appreciate it when you give to Barah Ministries. No amount is too small. Since we have become an online only ministry, we really need the financial help

Let's listen to Deacon Denny Goodall present one of his always inspiring offering messages.

THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

ROMANS 12:1

Therefore, I (Paul) beg you believers in Christ)...as you keep on being persuaded because of the many mercies of God...TO PRESENT YOUR BODIES (by choice, not by command...as) A LIVING AND HOLY SACRIFICE... acceptable to God the Father...which is your spiritual service...worship.

OFFERING SONG

ODE TO JOY

Instrumental Version

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At Barah Ministries, as those who study with us know, we begin the study of a Biblical letter by answering ten questions. We answered five of those questions in the last lesson. Here are the answers to the final five of questions.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

6

Where was the author when he wrote the letter?

Paul was in prison in Rome. Unknown to him early on in his imprisonment, he was about to be executed. Later, the Lord made it clear to him.

Nero, the worst emperor of Roman times, was famous for hating Christians. He saw no need to follow the law. He created his own laws in the mistreatment of Roman citizens. Our Lord in heaven was eager to help a man who killed his own mother. Nero rejected a relationship with the Lord. I wonder how he feels about his decision now?!

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

7

What was God's purpose in getting Paul to write the letter?

The Lord wants all of us to have lives of JOY. As He always does, the Lord gave us an example of a human being who is joyful in a horrible situation.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

8

What does God want the author to communicate to the letter's intended audience?

Paul's message of JOY to the Philippians is, "It makes no difference what happens to me as long as Christ is glorified and the gospel is advanced through sharing it with those who need it."

Another message we heard earlier, "I (Paul) have learned to be content regardless of my circumstances." What Paul communicates in the letter in the need for single mindedness...FOCUS...the key to a life of JOY.

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QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

9

What is the central message of the letter?

We know it is JOY, articulated this way in Philippians, Chapter 3, Verse 1...

PHILIPPIANS 3:1a

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in union with the Lord.

Not only are we to have JOY, we are to REJOICE...feeling great delight again and again is at the center of the Christian Way of Living.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

10

What relevance does the letter have to our lives today?

There are so many things we allow to rob us of JOY. Isn't it time to make an assessment of those things so we can change them?

Let's learn how to live lives of JOY as the Lord intended for us.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race

The final ten minutes of this lesson could be the ten most important minutes of your life. You'll be introduced to the good news concerning how you can spend all eternity in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. We want you to know that...

GOD WANTS YOU!

He Wants You Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

...and what He wants for you is that you make the most important decision of your life.

If you are an atheist, this gospel message is for you.

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Atheism is the rejection of the existence of deities. This gospel message is the hope that if you are atheist, which is your choice, you haven't stopped looking for evidence of the existence of God. The God who created you wants a relationship with you.

It is unlikely you would think of yourself as a fool. But in Psalm 14, Verse 1, the Lord says...

PSALM 14:1

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

Atheists say there is no God. The Lord thinks that's foolish. So is there a God? That's a question everyone who comes to the earth must answer. Answering questions requires research to find evidence that reveals the truth. Beliefs are only true to the degree that they are the same as the truth.

Christians have done the research. Our faith in God is not blind. Our faith is not a set of beliefs. Faith is what anyone has after doing research to uncover evidence of what is true. I have faith that an American Airlines pilot knows how to get a plane off the ground and land it safely in any destination, because I have flown over ten million miles with American. I have first-hand knowledge of their competence. When I book a flight with them, I have faith they will get me to my destination.

There are many sources of evidence about God's existence, and the Bible is one of them. The Bible suggests an answer to the question, "Is there a God?" But there are other things you need to know.

Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 12 illuminates a problem for the whole human race including you...

ROMANS 5:12

...through one man...Adam...sin entered into the world...and spiritual death entered the world through his sin...so spiritual death spread to all men...because all men were considered by God to have sinned when Adam sinned.

You were born in a state of sin. Just so you don't blame Adam for your plight, you commit personal sins as well according to Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23...

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ROMANS 3:23

...all creatures have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 10 says...

ROMANS 3:10

...it is written, "There is no creature who is righteous (free from sin)...not even one..."

Your spiritually dead condition at physical birth IS NOT YOUR FAULT, but it is your circumstance.

Because you are born spiritually dead, you require spiritual life. The only Being who can gift you with spiritual life is God.

So where do you get your evidence about the existence of God? Who are your guides? Famous atheist Bertrand Russell says, "There can't be a practical reason for believing what isn't true." He applied this to Christianity, but it applies to atheism as well.

Christians aren't guided by atheists, or any group of people, or beliefs. Christians are guided by truth. The Lord says in Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 16...

SECOND TIMOTHY 3:16a

All Scripture is God breathed...

In other words, the Lord says the human writers of Scripture wrote down exactly what He wanted them to write, revealing His thoughts to the human race. If what the Lord is thinking and saying is true, then we can grasp the other truths He articulates in writing for our benefit.

What is God's plan for the human race? First Timothy, Chapter 2, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST TIMOTHY 2:3

This is what is good and acceptable in the sight of the God who is our Savior (the Lord Jesus Christ)...

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FIRST TIMOTHY 2:4

...who wants all men to be saved and who wants all men to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Here's the truth from the Lord Himself. The ONE WAY...the ONLY WAY to get to heaven is through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ...John, Chapter 14, Verse 6...

JOHN 14:6

Jesus said to the doubting apostle, Thomas, "I am the way (to salvation) ...and I am the truth (through the gospel message in the Word of God) ...and I am the resurrection life ...and no one comes to God the Father (in heaven) but through believing in Me."

Who is this God who saves you? The apostle Paul describes the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:3

For I (Paul) delivered to all of you as of primary importance the gospel message I also received from God...that it was Jesus Christ who died for our sins according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:4

...and that He was buried...and that He was raised from the dead on the third day...according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

RIGHT WHERE YOU SIT...RIGHT NOW...you can go from atheist to believer in Christ with a single, simple thought...Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved by God...you and everyone in your household who also believes."

To BELIEVE means to accept God's word for what it takes to be saved. So, accept the invitation and heed the warning in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

JOHN 3:36

"He who believes in the Son has the resurrection life right at that moment...but he who does not obey the command to believe in the Son will not see the resurrection

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life...instead, the wrath of God (the Lake of Fire) abides on him.”

The Lord wants a RELATIONSHIP with you because He doesn't want ANYONE, not even atheists, to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9 says...

SECOND PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation as some accuse Him of... instead, He is patient toward unbelievers...not wishing for any of you to perish (in the Lake of Fire) ... but for all of you to come to repentance (a change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

So if you're an atheist, keep on doing the research. You will find overwhelming evidence there is a God. He's the designer who designed the heavens, and the earth, and the moon, and the stars, and YOU! Keep on looking until you find your God!

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race

CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's close with music! Joy is a feeling of great pleasure and happiness. Let's listen to a song that explains the wonder of being JOYFUL.

MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

JOYFUL, JOYFUL

St. Francois Choir with Lauryn Hill, Ryan Toby, and Others

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Almighty God and Father...

Thank you for giving us lives filled with JOY! May we live in JOY regardless of circumstances and may we spread YOUR joy to everyone we meet, especially in

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those times when there is no reason to be joyful, so others can see YOU through us.

...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ's name...Amen.

GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS OR WANT US TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE?

Ask the Pastor
pastor@barahministries.com

KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD DAILY!

Thanks for watching!
Thanks for listening!

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