

Curriculum



SAMPLE

Philippians: Finding Joy

Gospel First
Selflessness
Passionate Relationships
Mindset

A sample of the Philippians curriculum begins on the following page.



LEARN: Overview

Biblical Business Training (“BBT”) equips people to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and empowers leaders in a small-group Bible study setting to apply Biblical principles at work. Our mission is [Faith for Work](#) – and our vision is [Leadership for Life!](#)

To find out more, visit www.B-B-T.org.



Curriculum: The *BBT 1-2-3™* Format

BBT curriculum is rooted in Scripture and applicable the day you study it. The *BBT 1-2-3™* format enables the group to have a consistent Biblical basis for discussion.



Agenda – Introduces applicable Biblical principles



Group Leader Guide – Facilitates discussion and allows for shared leadership



Recap – Encourages community and application



LIVE: Sample Philippians

How can faith be dressed in everyday work clothes? This 4-part study of Philippians puts lofty truths into practical terms. Topics include:

1. **Gospel First**
2. **Selflessness**
3. **Passionate Relationship**
4. **Mindset.**

No book is needed.



LEAD: Start a small-group Bible study

Start leading today! [Learn more.](#)



PRAYERS



LEARN

Circumstances or Faith

What is the secret to unshakeable joy? How could someone, like the apostle Paul, spend roughly one-quarter of his missionary career in prisons in the manner John McRay describes in Christian History magazine and still have his kind of joy?

“Roman imprisonment was preceded by being stripped naked and then flogged – a humiliating, painful, and bloody ordeal. The bleeding wounds went untreated as prisoners sat in painful leg or wrist chains. Mutilated, bloodstained clothing was not replaced, even in the cold of winter. Most cells were dark, especially the inner cells of a prison, like the one Paul and Silas inhabited in Philippi. Unbearable cold, lack of water, cramped quarters, and sickening stench from few toilets made sleeping difficult and waking hours miserable. Because of the miserable conditions, many prisoners begged for a speedy death. Others simply committed suicide. In settings like this, Paul wrote encouraging, even joyful, letters and continued to speak of Jesus.”¹ We live in a world that constantly offers ways for us to achieve happiness by improving our circumstances. Unfortunately, such happiness is always fleeting, and people never seem to find true joy.

Happiness or Joy

If you had nothing left in the world, what would still make you happy? Philippians is Paul's answer to this question. This book was not written by someone who had it better than you – it was written by a man who had it worse than you but still found joy, not in his circumstances but in his undying faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul retained his joy in the midst of the most difficult circumstances because of four principles. He had gospel-first relationships, goals, desires and conduct. This study will highlight these four principles to help us retain our joy, no matter what we encounter in life.



LIVE

Discussion questions: Read the text and scriptures below, and prepare to answer the questions.

1. Read Philippians 1:1-11. What do these verses say about the shortcomings of all people?
2. Read Philippians 1:12-18. What two positive consequences does Paul mention as a result of his imprisonment?
3. Read Isaiah 55:6-11. How does this passage inspire you to create gospel-first goals?
4. Read Philippians 1:19-26. According to this passage, why was Paul willing to remain in his difficult circumstances?
5. Read Philippians 1:27-30. What does Paul teach us in these verses about gospel-first conduct?

Application Question: Gospel-first goals provide the satisfaction of real achievement and prevent setbacks from stealing our joy. What are your gospel-first goals?



PRAYERS

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer

¹ Elesha Coffman, “Christian History Connection,” Christian History, issue 47



PRAYERS

Opening Prayer & Prayer Requests



LEARN

Before you begin, read the AGENDA LEARN introduction together and review the APPLICATION QUESTION from the previous meeting's RECAP.



LIVE

Discussion Questions: Have someone read each Bible verse aloud and then ask the corresponding question. Be sure everyone has enough time to find the Scripture before the verse is read.

1) **Read Philippians 1:1-11. What do these verses say about the shortcomings of all people?**



Paul says all people share God's grace. As we recognize our own shortcomings and remember we need God's grace, we are more willing to extend that grace to others.



To us, the word partnership (or fellowship) implies shaking hands after a church service, coffee and donuts at Bible study, or eating dessert with your small group. But in Paul's day, it was more commercial – similar to sharing blood, sweat, tears, and cash together in a business enterprise – it took a person's all-out effort. The best relationships come from working toward a common goal. Paul's relationships were gospel driven. He surrounded himself with those who were as passionate about spreading the message of Jesus Christ as he was. This brings a new kind of joy to our lives – knowing we are working together for the glory of God. Minor differences fade into the background when we keep this at the fore of our relationships.



Facilitate a brief discussion. You may want to ask: What would Paul's concept of partnership look like if implemented in your workplace?

Notes:

2) **Read Philippians 1:12-18. What two positive consequences does Paul mention as a result of his imprisonment?**



First, the gospel had been extended to both royalty and criminals. Second, Paul's stand had inspired courage in others.



Paul saw a decidedly positive outcome from his dismal circumstances. Achieving worldly goals can make you happy, but such happiness is fleeting. Have you ever heard these phrases at a funeral? "He rarely scored above a 79 on the golf course." "He led his office in sales for three straight years." "He always kept his lawn nice." Obviously not, because these things do not matter in the long run. In contrast, gospel-first goals are the crowning achievements of life.



Discuss with your group practical ways you have or can take a stand at work to encourage and inspire others?

Notes:

3) **Read Isaiah 55:6-11. How does this passage inspire you to create gospel-first goals?**



A commitment to spreading God's Word was not unique to Paul's writings or the New Testament. He wants us to seek Him now and though we may not be able to fully grasp His wisdom, we are to conform to His will not mold Him into ours.



His Word "will accomplish what He desires and achieve the purpose for which He sent it." (v. 11) That is quite a mission statement for the will of God. He assures us that whatever His endeavors, He will be effective and successful.

Notes:

4) **Read Philippians 1:19-26. According to this passage, why was Paul willing to remain in his difficult circumstances?**



Paul desired to help the Philippians fully experience the joy of serving God.



There is a difference between goals and desires. These verses may sound a little bit clichéd until you remember that Paul was writing them in prison, with the real possibility of execution looming over him. Gospel-first desires help us to multiply joy by promoting it in others, rather than limiting it to ourselves. Paul's overriding concern was the good of others rather than what would make him happiest. In that attitude, he found joy.

Notes:

5) **Read Philippians 1:27-30. What does Paul teach us in these verses about gospel-first conduct?**



We are saved because Jesus suffered on our behalf; we show it by suffering on His behalf.



The language Paul used in these verses tells us a lot. In verse 27, Paul says, "Whatever happens," which means, "This is the bottom line." "Conduct" refers to a political term denoting citizenship – Paul is reminding the Philippians that they are citizens first and foremost of heaven, not Rome or Philippi. Paul also uses athletic language – "stand firm," "contending," and so on – to define conduct worthy of the gospel.



Facilitate a brief discussion. You may want to ask: How can you live as a "citizen of heaven" on a work team that is a team divided, a team that gives in to intimidation or one that is unified in its pursuit?

Notes:



Application Question: Gospel-first goals provide the satisfaction of real achievement and prevent setbacks from stealing our joy. What are your gospel-first goals?



PRAYERS

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer



LEAD

Ask yourself: With whom can I partner in each area of my life (for instance, work, home, church, community) that shares my passion for putting the Gospel first? Talk to them about your Gospel first goals and ask them about theirs.



PRAYERS

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Paul partners with passionate people who care as much about the Gospel as he does. Paul is able to endure imprisonments, the threat of death, and great hardships because he is laboring for an eternal goal. Gospel-first goals multiply joy by sharing it with others. Jesus was passionate enough to suffer for humanity, Christians can endure hardship for Him.

Scripture references for this study: Philippians chapter 1 and Isaiah 55:6-11



LIVE

- Gospel-first Partners
- Gospel-first Profits
- Gospel-first Passions

Application Question: Gospel-first goals provide the satisfaction of real achievement and prevent setbacks from stealing our joy. What are your gospel-first goals?



LEAD

Ask yourself: With whom can I partner in each area of my life (for instance, work, home, church, community) that shares my passion for putting the Gospel first? Talk to them about your Gospel first goals and ask them about theirs.