

## JOY IN THE ALL SUFFICIENT CHRIST – A Study of Philippians Lesson 3

### PHILIPPIANS 2:1-16

*Paul continues to teach the Philippians how to live joyously amidst trials and how to have impact on a hostile world.*

1. A. In verse 1 Paul lists some blessings Christians enjoy as God's children. What are they? *Note: the word "if" is better translated "since."*
  
1. B. **CHALLENGE:** In what sense have Christians been united with Christ? Why is our unity such a great encouragement? See Romans 6:1-14 and Galatians 2:20 for a clue.
  
1. C. **SHARE:** Can you remember a specific time when you experienced and enjoyed any of these blessings? Please relate that experience with your group.
  
2. A. Paul asks the Philippians to do something in response to God's wonderful blessings. What will complete Paul's joy? See verse 2 and refer back to Philippians 1:27. How do you think God feels when His people accomplish this?
  
2. B. Disunity, dissension and disharmony can destroy a church, family, community or nation. Per verses 3 and 4, what does Paul advise as an antidote?

2. C. **SHARE:** It is difficult for people to live a life of self-sacrifice as they “consider others better” than themselves? What are some ways you have observed people looking out for the best interest of others? Describe a time when you were able to do this. How would our world and your life be different if this was common practice?
3. A. As we continue in this great chapter, Paul paints a picture of the Person who best exemplifies this kind of life: Jesus Christ. From the following verses who is Christ Jesus? See Philippians 2:6a, with John 1:1-3, and verse 14, Colossians 1:15, and Hebrews 1:2-3. What are we commanded to do in Philippians 2:5?
3. B. According to Philippians 2:6, what is Jesus’ right and privilege? What was His attitude toward this privilege? Also look at Hebrews 12:2. Was this attitude voluntary or forced?
4. A. What is one thing in verse 7 that Jesus did when he “emptied himself” or “made himself nothing?” Also see Luke 2:11-12. What else did He do in verse 8?
4. B. In Luke 9:23 we are encouraged to “deny ourselves; take up our cross and follow Jesus.” What do you think this means? What is your “cross?” When have you denied yourself or given up your rights? Describe what happened when you chose to do this.
5. Back in Philippians, what was the Father’s response to this supreme example of humility and self-sacrifice in verses 9-11?

6. A. In verse 12 and 13 Paul interweaves the mystery of God’s indwelling enablement with man’s free will. *Note: The Philippians were not to work “for” salvation but work “out” the salvation they already possessed.* For what does Paul praise the Philippians? As we “work out our salvation” what part do we play? What part does God play?
6. B. **OPTIONAL SHARE:** As we work out our salvation God is fulfilling His purposes in us. Specifically, what is God doing “according to His good purpose” in your life right now? How can you more fully cooperate with Him?
7. A. In review, Paul exhorts the Philippians to a spirit of unity which is only possible through an attitude of self-sacrifice as they cooperate with God who is enabling them to be Christ-like. Unity is possible, but what else will foster disunity and disharmony in verse 14?
7. B. **SHARE:** Relate a time when you saw complaining and arguing destroy unity? AGAIN, NO NAMES ☺ Do you struggle with complaining and arguing? What steps can you take to break that pattern?
8. A. If the Philippians take Paul’s commands to heart, what two things will result? How does the first affect the second? See verse 15-16a. What do you think it means to “shine like the stars in the universe” and to “hold out the word of life?” See Matthew 5:14-16 and 2 Peter 1:19 for some help.
8. B. Why do you think it’s vital for the church to be mature, unified and “shining” in our world?