

THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

LESSON FIVE = *The Church in Philippi*
Bible Class Series by Ray Reynolds (1/19/11)

Introduction: Each of the congregations in the New Testament had unique features and characteristics. They all had qualities we can learn from and use to better our own congregations today. In this lesson we are going to consider the church in Philippi. Let's study together

Discussion:

I. The Geography of Philippi

The city of Philippi was located on the eastern border of Macedonia.

The western part of the city had a view of the Pangaeus Mountains.

The city itself was actually on a steep hill that bordered a marshy lake.

The city was ten miles southeast of the Aegean Sea (port city of Neapolis).

This is where Paul and his companions set off for their evangelistic mission to Europe (**Acts 16:11**).

II. The History of Philippi

The city had great commerce and was a well-known military route.

The city was along the eastern road of the Roman Empire, the Egnatian Road.

The city would have been considered old even during the days of Paul.

* The original name was Crenedies ("well" or "spring") and changed by Philip of Macedonia.

Philippi became Roman property in 168 BC and in 42 BC it was the location of an important battle.

* Cassius and Brutus were defeated here by Mark Antony and Octavian.

Military veterans of that campaign retired in Philippi (**Philippians 3:20, Acts 16:12**).

III. The Beginning of the Church in Philippi

The origins of the church are recorded in **Acts 16**.

The church began because of the work of Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke (**Acts 16:10**).

* Paul received a vision of a man pleading for help (Macedonian call).

The company has success with a ladies prayer group outside the city.

* It was probably the Sabbath day when they went outside the river to pray (**Acts 16:12-13**).

* Paul strayed from his usual custom of going to the synagogue first (**Acts 13:14, 17:1-2**). Why?

The Jews were not embraced in Macedonia.

* Some Roman cities restricted worship to outside the city gates (**Acts 16:20-21**).

* It is interesting that no Jewish men are mentioned from this city (maybe no synagogue).

IV. The Work of the Church in Philippi

The relatively unsuccessful evangelistic campaign in Philippi.

The conversion of Lydia. - What do we know about Lydia?

The conversion of the Philippian jailer. - What do we know about the jailer?

The church was founded and then Paul left to travel to Thessalonica.

* It is interesting that the "we" passages cease in **Acts 16:17**, so Luke may have stayed behind.

Paul felt a close enough connection to the brethren to write to them.

V. ***The Letter to the Church in Philippi***

The following outline has been adapted from Warren W. Weirsbe:

- I. The Single Mind - Chapter 1
 - A. The Fellowship of the Gospel (1:1-11)
 - B. The furtherance of the Gospel (1:12-26)-
 - C. The faith of the Gospel (1:27-30)
- II. The Submissive Mind - Chapter 2
 - A. The example of Christ (2:1-11)
 - B. The example of Paul (2:12-18)
 - C. The example of Timothy (2:19-24)
 - D. The example of Epaphroditus (2:25-30)
- III. The Spiritual Mind - Chapter 3
 - A. Paul's past (3:1-11)
 - B. Paul's present (3:12-16)
 - C. Paul's future (3:17-21)
- IV. The Secure Mind - Chapter 4
 - A. God's Peace (4:1-9)
 - B. God's Power (4:10-13)
 - C. God's Provision (4:14-23)

This letter is considered one of the most loving, warm, and personal of all that Paul wrote.

* The church seems to have a spirit of love and generosity (**II Corinthians 8:1-5**).

There are several great points to make in this book.

Anyone have a favorite verse from Philippians they want to share?

VI. ***The Dilemmas of the Church in Philippi***

The church in Philippi was under some persecution (**Philippians 1:19-26**).

The church in Philippi was afraid of temptation (**Philippians 1:27-2:11**).

The church in Philippi had some in house squabbling between two sisters (**Philippians 4:1-2**).

The church in Philippi was handling the Gentile vs. Jew issue (**Philippians 3:2-3:4**).

The church in Philippi struggled with materialism (**Philippians 3:18-19, I Corinthians 5:2-6**).

VII. ***The Maturity of the Church in Philippi***

The church matured quickly.

* Paul identifies that the church now has elders and deacons (**Philippians 1:1**).

The church did well on their own.

The church was very giving (**Philippians 4:10-20**).

The church abounded in faith, hope, and love.

* Paul hoped they would see their lives as light to the world (**Philippians 2:12-18**)

The church benefited spiritually from their trials.

Conclusion: God clearly blessed the church in Philippi. We can see that history shows the wisdom and providence of God throughout the New Testament. We should trust Him to provide direction for the church today. It is my prayer that by studying about these wonderful congregations of the Lord's people that we will see our place in the kingdom. Next week we will study about the church in Thessalonica.