

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

In His Heart

Lesson Four

Philippians

Rejoice In The Lord!

Lesson Goal: To show students God's love through the Apostle Paul and the church.

Scriptures: Philippians 1:7; I John 3:14; Ephesians 3:1

For Memory: "God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:8

In His Heart

The Apostle Paul was not a unique character, but he was different from a lot of people. He lived his life totally for God. He didn't let anyone or anything get in the way of that. And, when someone wanted to join him, he was open to and willing to share his mission with them.

This was the case with the church at Philippi. They couldn't leave home and join Paul as he traveled the world, but they could support him in various ways.* He has, as we studied in the last lesson, been praying for them with joy because of their partnership. He continues in the seventh verse to assure them that his prayer of joy is right and that it is right to feel the way he does about them.

And, just in case they haven't got it, he said that they were in his heart. Now, when you take it seriously, that is a strong statement. When one says that someone else is in their heart, it places them at the very source of life. Because, as we know, when the heart stops, life ends. So, saying that they are in his heart, means that they are as close as life itself.

It is easy to say something like that to another person. However, it is much harder to live like that with another person. Andrea was friends with Dana, who lived just down the street from her. Dana was a shy girl and didn't have a lot of friends. That meant that the friendship with Andrea was very important to her. One day Dana was walking home from school with Andrea and, talking about some classmates, said, "You wouldn't treat me like that would you?" Andrea replied, "Dana, you are my friend, you are in my heart. I could never talk like that about you."

A few days later, another girl in her class told Dana that Andrea had been telling bad stories about Dana and making fun of her. Dana responded, "I don't believe it. Andrea is my friend and she said I am in her heart. That is just about as close as anyone can get. So, I know that she would not talk that way about me."**

When Paul told the Philippians that they were in his heart, he was telling them that they could always trust him and that he fully trusted them. He continued thanking them by saying that they had stuck with him, and supported him when he was in

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prison, when he was arguing with those who didn't like the truth about Jesus, and when he was doing his mission work: telling everyone he met about Jesus and how Jesus could save their lives.

When he said that they “share” God’s grace with him, he is using the word for partnership like he did in verse four. This partnership was a “heart” partnership. When Paul was in prison, they felt pain for him. When he was debating with those who wanted to destroy Christianity, they stood by him. When he was busy telling others about Jesus, they were praying for him and being witnesses for Christ in Philippi.

We can be like the Philippians. We can stand by, and stand with, our Christian friends in whatever their situation is...in whatever ministry they involve themselves.

Then, Paul says that he misses them and that he loves them with a love like Jesus’ love. His missing them and loving them is not ordinary at all. He loves them. I John 3:14 says, “We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers.” He loves them because of what God had done for him. And his love, he says, is the kind that Jesus Christ has for us. It is a self-sacrificial love. In another place, Ephesians 3:1, he says, “...Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles.”

*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

**Stories in these lessons are original with the author. The teacher should feel free to enlarge or change the story to be more appropriate to his or her purposes.



Teaching Tips:

1. There are several good subjects in this short scripture text. You may want to emphasize one or more that suit your class better. For instance: defending the gospel or Paul’s longing for them...missing them.
2. Songs that emphasize God’s love, sharing of our heart with others, and sharing the Gospel...missions...from our hearts will be appropriate.
3. Pray with your students about being on mission and about partnering with others who are on mission.
4. Emphasis should certainly be given to our loyalty to those who share the good news.
5. The Greeks in Paul’s day used a word which we translate “heart” that referred to the heart, liver, and lungs. This is where they thought that emotion and affection resided in humans. Paul talks about holding them close in all his life giving organs.

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Student Worksheet

For Memory: “God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:8

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=The church at Philippi couldn't leave _____ and join Paul as he traveled the world, but they could _____ him in various ways.

=When one says that someone else is in their heart, it places them at the very _____ of life.

=When Paul told the Philippians that they were in his _____, he was telling them that they could always _____ him and that he fully trusted them.

=When he said that they share God's _____ with him, he is using the word for partnership like he did in verse four. This partnership was a _____ partnership.

=We can _____, and stand _____, our Christian friends in whatever their _____ is... in whatever ministry they involve themselves.

=Paul says that he misses them and that he _____ them with a love like Jesus' love.

=It is a self-sacrificial _____: In another place, Ephesians 3:1, he says, “...Paul, the prisoner of _____ Jesus for the sake of you _____.”

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.