



family devotionals

March 30 - April 24



Some Encouragement

It is our desire that our church family would use this time at home to begin habits of family and personal worship. Because of the diversity in age, maturity, and familial status in our congregation, writing a devotional that is both simple and profound is quite the challenge. However, what a beautiful thing it would be to have our congregation gathering for family and personal worship three nights out of the week in our homes studying the same Scriptures.

With that in mind, here are some helpful thoughts:

- This devotional isn't just for families with children. Married couples and singles can also work through this study.
- Some questions might seem too difficult for younger children, while at the same time being too simple for teenagers. We would suggest just doing your best to work through it together. Even if younger children don't fully grasp the meaning of the questions, it is still good for them to see your family huddled around God's Word and looking to God's Word for answers. As for teenagers, you might assign them a night of the week where they lead family worship and also encourage them to connect thoughts and ideas from passages of Scripture outside of the one being studied.
- Family worship does not have to last for a long time. So don't feel pressure to answer every question.
- Each families' time of worship will look different. Never feel like you have failed if worship time doesn't go exactly the way you would like. Try to look longterm at the benefits for your children and your family having spent many a night gathered around the Scriptures together.



Introduction to Philippians

Author, Date, and Recipients

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Philippi, probably from Rome c. A.D. 62.

Theme

Paul encourages the Philippians to live as citizens of a heavenly city, growing in their commitment to serve God and one another. Jesus is the supreme example of this way of life. Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus try to be good examples as well.

Purpose

Paul wrote to the Philippians from prison. He had several purposes in mind: (1) to tell them that Epaphroditus had recovered from a serious illness; (2) to encourage them in their faith; (3) to assure them that he was still in good spirits; and (4) to thank them for their continued support.

Key Themes

- Christians need to keep making spiritual progress (1:12, 25; 3:12–16).
- Such progress requires a proper spiritual outlook (1:5–11; 2:1–11; 3:7, 15; 4:7–9).
- Christ is the supreme example for the Christian. Mature Christians can also serve as role models (1:12–26; 2:5–11, 19–30; 3:3–17; 4:9).
- Suffering will come, but Christians can still be joyful (1:12–26; 2:14–15; 4:4, 11–13, 19).
- Prayer is crucial for maintaining a joyful Christian life (1:3–11; 4:5–7).
- Christians can enjoy rich relationships with one another; they can be united in service to promote the gospel (1:4, 7, 24–27; 2:1–4, 19–30; 4:2–4, 14).
- Keeping the law cannot provide a right standing with God; believers are saved only through their faith in Jesus Christ (3:2–10).
- Jesus is fully God and fully man. Because of his suffering on the cross, he is now glorified as Lord and Christ (2:5–11).



Philippians 1:1-11 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Questions to consider:

Where was Paul when he wrote this letter? (1:7)

What are some words that Paul uses to describe the way he feels about the people in Philippi? (1:3, 1:7, 1:8)

Even in uncertain times, what is Paul sure of? (1:6)

What things does Paul pray for concerning the people of Philippi? (1:9-11)

He Will Hold Me Fast

*When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold; He must hold me fast.*

*He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.*

*Those He saves are His delight, Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in his holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost; His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.*

*He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.*

*For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied; He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast
'Till our faith is turned to sight, When He comes at last!*

*He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.*



Philippians 1:12-18 *I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. 14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.*

Questions to consider:

Besides imprisonment, what other ways is Paul being afflicted? (1:15-17)

What good has come out of Paul's suffering? (1:12-13, 1:14)

What is the only thing that matters to Paul? (1:18)

What is Paul's response to Christ being proclaimed? (1:18)

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Philippians 1:18b-26 *Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.*

Questions to consider:

Whether by life or by death, what is Paul's ultimate desire? (1:20)

What does Paul gain by death? (1:21, 1:23)

Why does Paul desire to remain alive? (1:21-22, 1:25)

How does verse 21 and verse 23 comfort our hearts during uncertain times?

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What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

- Heidelberg Catechism



Philippians 1:27-30 *Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.*

Questions to consider:

Despite the future being uncertain because of persecution, what is Paul's command to the Christians in Philippi? (1:27)

How do we still obey this command even in difficult circumstances?

If the Christians in Philippi are obeying this command, what will Paul hear about them? (1:27b-28)

According to verse 29, suffering for the sake of Christ is a gift from God. How can suffering be a gift?

O Lord, My Rock and My Redeemer

*O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer
Greatest treasure of my longing soul
My God, like You there is no other
True delight is found in You alone*

*Your grace, a well too deep to fathom
Your love exceeds the heavens' reach
Your truth, a fount of perfect wisdom
My highest good and my unending need*

*O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer
Strong defender of my weary heart
My sword to fight the cruel deceiver
And my shield against his hateful darts*

*My song when enemies surround me
My hope when tides of sorrow rise
My joy when trials are abounding
Your faithfulness, my refuge in the night*

*O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer
Gracious Savior of my ruined life
My guilt and cross laid on Your shoulders
In my place You suffered bled and died*

*You rose, the grave and death are conquered
You broke my bonds of sin and shame
You rose, the grave and death are conquered
You broke my bonds of sin and shame*

*O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer
May all my days bring glory to Your Name
May all my days bring glory to Your Name*



Philippians 2:1-11 *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Questions to consider:

What brings Paul joy? (2:2)

What is necessary for Christians to be unified? (2:3-4)

Spend a few moments thinking about the life and death of Christ. How does the example of Christ leave no room for pride and selfishness in our lives? (2:5-8)

Jesus Christ is Lord, and one day everyone will recognize that He is. How should this effect our obedience today? (2:9-11)

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Philippians 2:12-18 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.*

Questions to consider:

“*To work out your own salvation*” does not mean we work *for* salvation. Paul is clear later in this letter that our righteousness does not come from our obedience to the law (3:9). According to Ephesians 2:10 and James 2:18, what is the relationship between salvation and works?

If we realize that God is using all things in life to work in us for his good pleasure, how does that change the way we view difficult circumstances in life? (2:13)

Paul connects our attitudes (*grumbling and complaining*), our holiness (*blameless and without blemish*), and our witness (*shine as lights in the world*) to holding fast to the word of life. What does Paul suggest will happen if we don’t hold fast to the word of life? (2:14-16)

How does Paul say we are to respond even when faithful obedience to Christ leads to persecution? (2:17-18)

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Philippians 2:19-30 *I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. 20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. 23 I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, 24 and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also. 25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, 26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, 30 for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.*

Questions to consider:

Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus all genuinely loved the church of Philippi and cared for its well-being. Where do we see that in the text? (2:19, 2:20, 2:24, 2:26)

Do your affections for the local church reflect theirs? Do you find yourself longing to be with the redeemed people of God?

During this time where we cannot be together as a local church, how can we still care for one another?

Paul commands the church to honor men, like Epaphroditus, who give their lives for the work of Christ (2:29-30). How can we better honor such men?

My Worth Is Not In What I Own

*My worth is not in what I own
Not in the strength of flesh and bone
But in the costly wounds of love
At the cross*

*My worth is not in skill or name
In win or lose, in pride or shame
But in the blood of Christ that flowed
At the cross*

*I rejoice in my Redeemer
Greatest Treasure,
Wellspring of my soul
I will trust in Him, no other.
My soul is satisfied in Him alone.*

*As summer flowers we fade and die
Fame, youth and beauty hurry by
But life eternal calls to us
At the cross*

*I will not boast in wealth or might
Or human wisdom's fleeting light
But I will boast in knowing Christ
At the cross*

Chorus

*Two wonders here that I confess
My worth and my unworthiness
My value fixed - my ransom paid
At the cross*

Chorus



Philippians 3:1-11 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh— 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— 4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Questions to consider:

How much confidence should we put in the flesh? (3:3)

If anyone has reason to be confident in all the things they have done in order to make themselves right with God, who would it be? (3:4-6)

When Paul compares knowing Christ to everything else in life, what is his conclusion? (3:8)

What does our righteousness before God depend on? (3:9)

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Chorus

*Two wonders here that I confess
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My value fixed - my ransom paid
At the cross*

Chorus



Philippians 3:12-21 *Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained. 17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

Questions to consider:

What is Paul's motivation to press on to Christlikeness? (3:12)

If we have faith in Jesus, we belong to Jesus. How does this effect every part of our lives?

How does Paul describe people who walk as enemies of the cross of Christ? (3:18-19)

Why is it important that we remind ourselves often that our citizenship is in Heaven? (3:20)

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Philippians 4:1-9 *Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Questions to consider:

When we are tempted to be anxious, what should we do instead? (4:6)

What is the result of taking our requests to God? (4:7)

Rather than letting our minds dwell upon the unknown, what should we spend our time thinking about? (4:8)

How do you handle the concerns of life, and what does that communicate about your belief in God?

Christ Is Mine Forevermore by Cityalight

*Mine are days that God has numbered
I was made to walk with Him
Yet I look for worldly treasure
And forsake the King of kings*

*But mine is hope in my Redeemer
Though I fall, his love is sure
For Christ has paid for every failing
I am His forevermore*

*Mine are tears in times of sorrow
Darkness not yet understood
Through the valley I must travel
Where I see no earthly good*

*But mine is peace that flows from heaven
And the strength in times of need
I know my pain will not be wasted
Christ completes his work in me*

*Mine are days here as a stranger
Pilgrim on a narrow way
One with Christ I will encounter
Harm and hatred for his name*

*But mine is armour for this battle
Strong enough to last the war
And he has said he will deliver
Safely to the golden shore*

*And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
Christ is mine forevermore*

*Come rejoice now, O my soul
For his love is my reward
Fear is gone and hope is sure
Christ is mine forevermore!*

*And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
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Philippians 4:10-13 *I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Questions to consider:

How often do we express our concern for one another, as Christians? How do you respond when fellow brothers and sisters show care and concern for you? (4:10)

Paul has learned to be content in every situation. What other verses in this letter show us Paul's contentment in Christ no matter the situation?

Do you think it is more difficult to be content in Christ when you are abounding or when you are facing need? How so?

What is the secret to facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need? (4:13)

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Philippians 4:14-23 Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. 15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. 18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Questions to consider:

The love and generosity of the Philippian church is again on display in these verses. (4:14-18) What understanding of their resources, financial and otherwise, allow them to be so generous?

How many of our needs will God provide for? (4:19)

What is our greatest need that God has provided for?

Paul's motivation in life is to bring glory to our God and Father. (4:20) Do you live with this same motivation?

Christ Is Mine Forevermore by Cityalight

*Mine are days that God has numbered
I was made to walk with Him
Yet I look for worldly treasure
And forsake the King of kings*

*But mine is hope in my Redeemer
Though I fall, his love is sure
For Christ has paid for every failing
I am His forevermore*

*Mine are tears in times of sorrow
Darkness not yet understood
Through the valley I must travel
Where I see no earthly good*

*But mine is peace that flows from heaven
And the strength in times of need
I know my pain will not be wasted
Christ completes his work in me*

*Mine are days here as a stranger
Pilgrim on a narrow way
One with Christ I will encounter
Harm and hatred for his name*

*But mine is armour for this battle
Strong enough to last the war
And he has said he will deliver
Safely to the golden shore*

*And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
Christ is mine forevermore*

*Come rejoice now, O my soul
For his love is my reward
Fear is gone and hope is sure
Christ is mine forevermore!*

*And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
Christ is mine forevermore*