

Leaders Notes

Philippians

A Friendly Note of Thanks

*Five studies for use
by groups studying together*

Marvin D. Van Fossen

VJ Press

Reynoldsburg, Ohio

Printed on 8/19/07

Leaders Notes

These notes include my answers to the questions included in the Lessons. They are provided to give an idea of what I had in mind when I formulated the questions. Answers are just my answers, not necessarily the correct answers.

Comments are welcome. You may E-mail them to me at:
mvanfossen@insight.rr.com.

Lesson 1. Chapter 1.

1. They were Gentile believers who had been taught by Paul.
2. They were providing support for Paul as he lived and worked to spread the Gospel.
3. Since the purpose for the letter was to thank the people for their support to Paul, I think he was referring to the way the Philippian people had been supporting him in his missionary work.
4. Paul considers the Philippians as his teammates in the ministry he was doing.
5. Perhaps we should focus more on prayers for spiritual growth and less in asking God to solve all our problems.
6. Yes. It is a case of God working what seems like a bad situation into something good. But in Paul's case it might have been more than this.
7. I don't really know. I think that Paul was chained to a guard but still had considerable freedom to move around so I presume he had the chance to interact with a lot of people, especially the guards. He must have been visible to people passing through any area where he was.
8. We should listen carefully to what the message is saying and not be distracted by the attitude or assumed motives of the

Philippians Bible Study Guide-Leaders Notes

speaker. Evaluate the message on its own merits not on the merits of the speaker.

9. Listen carefully to see if he is presenting the GOSPEL message: Christ born of a virgin—died on the cross—resurrected on the third day—and seated at the right hand of God.

10. As long as he continued to live he would serve Christ here on earth but that he personally would be better off in heaven.

11. Meditate on the fact that we, right now, have eternal life and that it will be in heaven. We don't know a lot about how it will be but we know that it will be good—ininitely better than what we have now.

12. It sounds like our life should exhibit those qualities that are typified by Christ—like loving our brother and exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit. First learn them, then do them.

Lesson 2. Chapter 2.

1. This would be the people demonstrating their love for one-another as they served God. They would work together without fighting or competing.

2. We are truly humble when we can honestly interact with others in a manner that considers them before ourselves.

3. There are probably some situations where it is not possible. This might be a case where following the teachings of Christ

Philippians Bible Study Guide-Leaders Notes

thinking about how you can use him as a model for you.

8. Paul is primarily addressing being content even when in personal need. Don't twist the meaning of this verse.

9. Yes. But the promise is surely tied to just how close we are walking to the Lord.

10. It sounds like when they supported Paul they were, in fact, serving God. We can surely consider ourselves as serving God when we support God's workers. Another positive reason to support missionaries.

11. Paul was speaking to people who had given sacrificially to the support of a Christian worker, Paul. I would think that this is a conditional promise, but one that we can claim today when taken along with the conditions.

12. We should support missionaries and in doing so serve God. All in all this book seems to say a lot about supporting missionaries.

Lesson 5. Summary.

(Use your own personal answers to the individual chapter questions.)

women who were not getting along with each other. Unity among the brethren is important! Each of the women should practice humility and each woman should consider the other better than herself.

2. By not losing your cool when you are in a group situation with responsibilities and things are not going right. By not yelling at your kids, even at home.

3. Pray and petition God. Do it with thanksgiving.

4. This answer might be significant. We are not promised here that our prayers will be answered but that we will have the peace of God which goes way beyond understanding. And when you think about it, that might just be the bottom line. We don't know always what we should be praying for but we do know that if we have the peace of God we will be OK.

5. For me, the beauty and complexity of the created world lifts me up. So I try to think of the sky on a dark starry night, a beautiful wildflower, etc. etc. God's love. Christ's sacrifice. Family members that you love. Successes in your life. The fruit of the Spirit.

6. It's difficult for most of us to hold very many contrasting thoughts in our head at the same time. So we just let the good thoughts crowd out the worrisome ones.

7. Paul was bold, he was concerned about the people back in Philippi, he did not fear his death, etc. Look over his life as expressed in all his letters and keep

requires hard sacrifice. How can you look out for the interests of the person who wants your job and is willing to make questionable compromises to get it? Don't let the students off too easy by claiming that doing the right thing will result in success in the world. It doesn't always work that way in real life—read Eccl.

4. He could have claimed the highest position of being equal to God and yet He didn't. Actually he claimed the position of a man—even a condemned criminal.

5. I think it means to live as commanded to by God. Love God and one-another and always realize how weak I am. Compare myself to Jesus and not to others. Always be willing to step down. Success in this world is not the bottom line.

6. Be aware of what you have received from Christ, eternal life and forgiveness, and do your level best to behave accordingly.

7. Yes. To desire means to choose and to act means to do it. My sin nature will cause me to choose wrong and even if I choose correctly then, left to myself, I will not be able to do it.

8. Complaining is not being satisfied with what I have and arguing is not demonstrating the humility that I should. These are such common traits in our world that we will stand out if we refrain from practicing them.

9. I think it means that Paul thought he might be killed for his stand for Christ.

Philippians Bible Study Guide-Leaders Notes

In fact, the New Living Translation Bible translates it this way.

10. That Christ should come before ourselves.

11. Yes. But not the traditional type that goes and preaches to people. Paul did that. Epaphroditus helped Paul. Those who go today to provide support for the traditional missionaries like flying airplanes, fixing vehicles, supplying food, etc. are equally missionaries along with those doing the preaching.

Lesson 3. Chapter 3.

1. They were false teachers who were telling the people that it was necessary to follow the Jewish rite of circumcision in order to be saved. That faith in Christ alone was not sufficient. They were introducing serious error into the teaching of how to become a Christian.

2. Maybe it was strong speech but not necessarily harsh. We should take a strong stand against those who teach a false doctrine, but still do it without harshness.

3. Paul excelled in all the attributes of a Jewish leader: birth, education, zeal and courage.

4. His faith in Christ; not in the Law.

5. Eternal life with Christ in heaven.

6. Lots. Among other things, he presided over the killing of Stephen by stoning.

Philippians Bible Study Guide-Leaders Notes

7. Don't fret over the past. If we stumbled then stop thinking about it and think about what you want to accomplish.

8. Established in the faith, a record of striving to order our life according to God's standards.

9. I'm not sure. It might mean that since we have received salvation from God we should be living like a child of God.

10. Yes. We should be following Christ. And Paul was a man with problems with his sinful nature (See Romans 7:14-25). But Paul was such a special Christian that he could advise people to watch him to see what to do. Still I think that Paul would expect us to realize that Christ is the supreme example.

11. Perhaps there was a special meaning to this phrase in that culture. But for us it would seem to imply that the person is more interested in sensual pleasures like eating than in following God. In other words he is putting his own desires before God.

12. If I have citizenship, even now, in heaven then I, even now, have eternal life. The awful finality of physical death should not frighten me as something to be dreaded because it is really just entering another phase of my eternal life. Perhaps this is why Paul could say that he actually preferred death in Chapter 1:23.

Lesson 4. Chapter 4.

1. Paul devoted a paragraph in this short letter to dealing with the problem of two