

# HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

**Philippians**  
Work Book



# Hearing the Word    Philippians    Work Book

Copyright © Nigel Barge 2009 – 2018

Revised Edition, published by Nigel Barge, Torrance, 2017

## Web Edition

(Print version: ISBN 978-1-912209-75-0)

(Matching Leader's Guide Print Ed. ISBN 978-1-912209-74-3)

*First Published, 2011. New Format, 2014, Web version 2020*

*Email:* [info@hearingtheword.org.uk](mailto:info@hearingtheword.org.uk)

*Website:* <https://hearingtheword.org.uk>

The copyright of this booklet, and of the 'Hearing the Word' tool and study materials, rests with the author, Nigel Barge. Unless otherwise indicated, its contents are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International Licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) (CC BY-NC-ND). Please see the full legal terms there by clicking on 'License'.

***Simplified version:*** Under this licence, you may copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format on the condition that: you credit the author, do not use it for commercial purposes and do not distribute modified versions of the work. When re-using or sharing this work, ensure you make the licence terms clear to others by naming the licence and linking to the licence text. Please seek permission from the copyright holder for uses of this work that are not included in this licence or permitted under UK

Copyright Law

## Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Phil and June Malloch, whose tireless editing, reviewing and pulling together of materials has enabled the 'Hearing the Word' resource to be shared with the wider church.

*Nigel Barge, April 2017*

## Scripture Quotations taken from

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc® The International Bible Society. Used by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. A member of the Hodder Headline Plc Group. All rights reserved

"NIV" is a registered trademark of International Bible Society. UK trademark number 1448790

## Resources

*The New Bible Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Inter Varsity Press

*The New Bible Commentary* 21<sup>st</sup> century edition. A one-volume commentary on every book of the Bible. IVP

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

# *Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading*



**LOOK** – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
  - a) What questions does it raise -  
*Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
  - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
  - a) the surrounding text
  - b) the Book of the Bible
  - c) the whole Bible
  - d) the place in the Bible Story



**LEARN** – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



**LISTEN** – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



**LIVE** – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God,  
(Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace\*
  - c) Jesus / his salvation\*\*
- 2) What should I do?

\* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

\*\* The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).



## Table of Contents

<i>Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading</i> .....	1
Reading 'LETTERS' in the Bible .....	1
The letter to the PHILIPPIANS .....	2
Map .....	3
Study 1 A pastor's heart                      Philippians 1:1-11 .....	4
Study 2 To live is Christ                      1:12-26 .....	5
Study 3 Unity in Christ                      1:27 - 2:4 .....	10
Study 4 Work out, while God works in                      2:5-18 .....	13
Study 5 Co-workers                      2:19-30 & 4:2-3 .....	16
Study 6 To know Christ                      3:1-11 .....	19
Study 7 Citizens of heaven                      3:12-21 .....	20
Study 8 Prayer, joy, peace in the Lord                      4:1-9 .....	25
Study 9 True contentment                      4:10-23 .....	28
<i>Sharing the Word</i> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

## Reading 'LETTERS' in the Bible

Whatever we read, we adjust to its style, sometimes without noticing. We don't approach a newspaper, a car manual, a cookery book, a poem, a scientific report, a 'txt msg' and a Shakespeare play in the same way. We take into account the purpose for which it was written and the way in which the writer uses words. Since the Bible also has many styles – law, poetry, history, wisdom, prophecy, letters and visions – we need to allow for the style if we are to discern what God is saying. Philippians is a 'Letter'. To approach it correctly, keep in mind the following principles:

The New Testament contains letters written by the Apostles to various parts of the church of their day. They are part of the Word of God and as such they not only *were* authoritative for the church then, but they *are* authoritative for the church of all time.

Since this part of the Word of God is written *as letters*, in the first instance they must be read as such. We need to take into account that letters are:

a) *Relational*. A letter is addressed to a particular person or group of people and its contents apply to them.

So in the Bible, we must first remember that Paul (or James, Peter, John or Jude) is addressing named individuals or churches in the first century. It is only once we have grasped what they are saying to *them* that we may generalise as to what God might be saying to *us*.

Note well: the two will always be consistent.

b) *Occasional*. Letters are one side of a 'conversation' between two people. They refer to matters in which details of situations and people are assumed to be common knowledge. A third party reading a letter needs to 'read between the lines' to work out the other side of the story.

We have to try and understand the situation to which this Bible letter was written, so as to grasp how the writer was addressing *it*. Only then may we ask how God might apply this Word to our own circumstances.

c) *Dated*. Letters are written at a particular time and place, and within a particular culture. So in the Bible, the letters of the first century are expressed within the habits and traditions of that day. In discerning what God might be saying to us, now, we need to separate any instruction that is 'time-bound' from principles that are *timeless*.

d) *To be read as a whole*. When we open a letter from a friend nowadays, we read the whole thing. We recognise it is a single communication and its contents are thus all related.

So with letters in the Bible; every part must be viewed in the context of the whole letter. Thus, it is best practice to read a Bible letter *right through*, before analysing its parts.

## **The letter to the PHILIPPIANS**

### **The people**

Philippi was in Macedonia (a province in NE Greece, capital: Thessalonica). The town was a Roman colony, full of descendants of Roman soldiers who retired after the Battle of Actium, 31 BC. For them it was like a piece of Italy on Greek soil. The town was rich in Greek culture, drama, literature, architecture and philosophy - but proudly Roman in law, government and trade. See Google Maps: 'Macedonia – Greece', 'Philippi' and 'Via Egnatia', the road that let Roman soldiers march rapidly from the Adriatic Sea on the west to the Aegean Sea and on to Byzantium near the Black Sea on the east. This trade route crossed a north-south one at Philippi.

Acts 16:13 tells us that there was a group of *women* meeting for prayer by the riverside on the *Sabbath*; i.e they offered Jewish prayer but without enough men to constitute a synagogue.

Paul founded the church in Philippi on his 2nd missionary trip (Acts 16:11-40) and visited twice on his third journey (20:1-6). They sent him financial support, and by him, famine relief to Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

### **The Occasion**

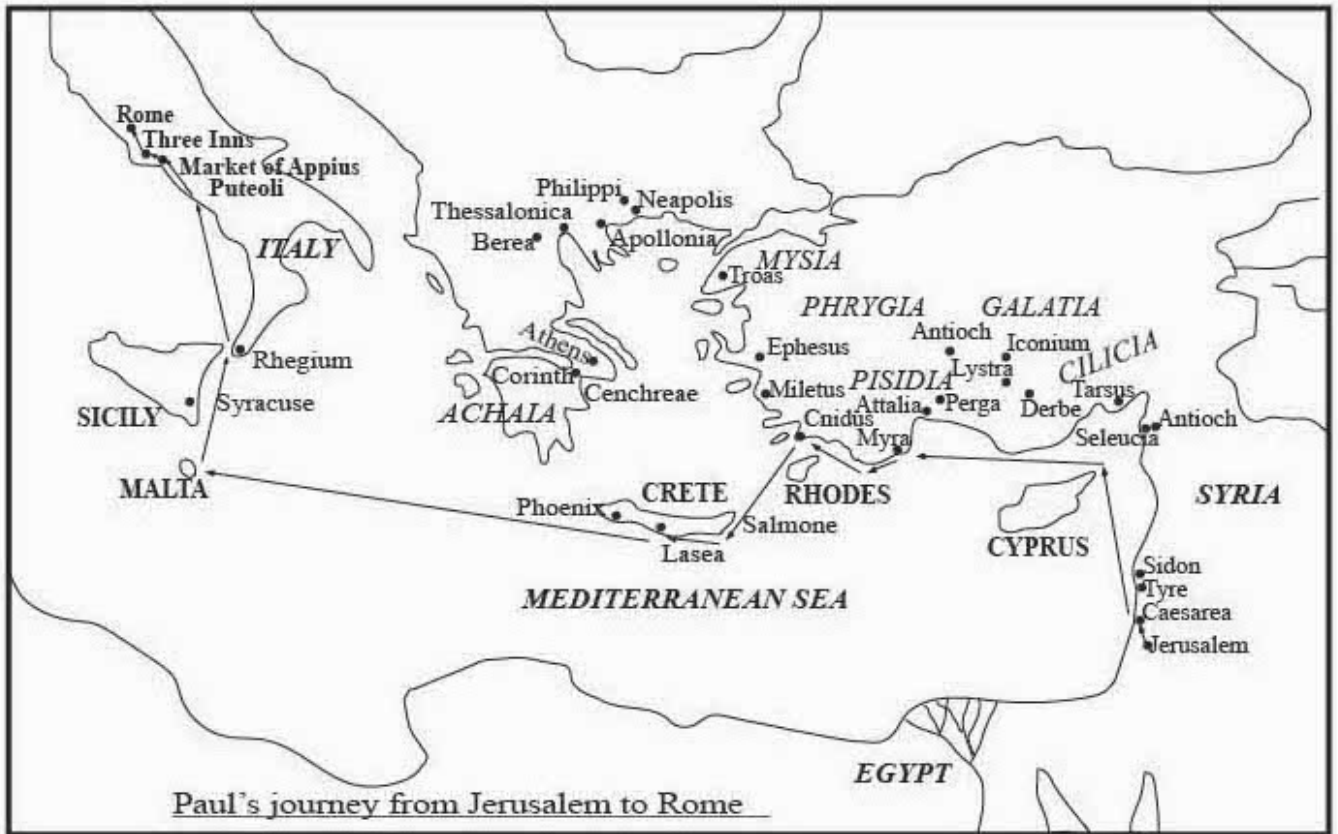
Paul himself is 'in chains' (1:13, probably in Rome, Acts 28:16, under house arrest). Philippians is one of a group of letters written from prison, as are Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon.

Epaphroditus (2:25) had brought gifts to Paul from the church at Philippi. Paul is sending him back with this thank-you letter, commending him and the church for their help (1:5, 4:10,14-18). He had also heard that there was some damaging disunity at Philippi (2:1, 4:2).

This most personal of Paul's letters simply bursts with joy. Paul uses 'joy/rejoice' 12 times. He is utterly unperturbed by the risks he faces.



# Map



## The journey to Rome for Paul as a prisoner Acts 23 – 28:

Paul's advice to spend the winter in Crete was over-ruled; a fierce, 2-week storm shipwrecked them on Malta; they stayed 3 months when *no-one* could sail, came north via Sicily to Puteoli, and overland to Rome. i.e. *no news* on the mainland *for at least 4 months*. When at last the Philippians heard where he was, they sent a gift, and Paul wrote this *thank-you letter*.

## The shape of the letter

James Philip summed up the *sequence of thought* in the 4 chapters

- |      |                                  |   |
|------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1:21 | <i>"To me to live is Christ"</i> | This involves having:   |
| 2:5  | <i>the mind of Christ</i>        | which, in turn, involves sharing:   |
| 3:10 | <i>the sufferings of Christ</i>  | and this issues in:   |
| 4:13 | <i>the victory of Christ</i>     | in terms of love, joy, peace, contentment,<br>power, grace, fellowship, fullness. |

*Each week's study explains matters that would have already been known to the original hearers but not to readers today. The questions in this Leader's Guide are those that other groups asked; they are **not** for leaders to read out. Get your group to ask their own questions!*

# Study 1

# Philippians 1:1-11

## A pastor's heart

**Background** Read pages 2-3 & Acts 28:16, 30. Paul is under house arrest in Rome, awaiting trial. Timothy and others are present; Paul can preach to visitors and, vitally for us, write letters we can still read today.

### Word List

- 1 *Paul* A Jew from Tarsus, a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-29) who believed in Jesus. God had sent him to preach mainly to non-Jews (Acts 9:15, Galatians 2:7-10; but see Romans 1:16). Previously known by his Hebrew name, Saul.
- Timothy* Trainee church leader from Lystra, became co-worker with Paul in Philippi, Acts 16 etc. Later sent to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 4:17, and Ephesus as pastor, (1 Timothy 1:3)
- Jesus* Greek version of Hebrew name, Joshua = Saviour
- Christ* Greek version of Messiah = Anointed One = King
- Saints* Those 'set apart', i.e. all who believe in Jesus.
- 2 *Philippi* City in Macedonia (see map, page 3)
- overseers* = Bishops, term used interchangeably with *Elders* (see Acts 20:17,25; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
- deacons* Servants/administrators (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim 3:8-13)
- 3 *grace* God, in love, giving us what we don't deserve; Gk *charis*
- peace* Spiritual well-being, like Hebrew *Shalom*
- 7 *defending/confirming* could be legal terms from his coming trial
- Gospel* the Good News about Jesus

### Bible Connections

- 1-2 *a standard format for letters* eg Ephesians 1:1-2; Colossians 1:1-2
- 3-6 *Paul's prayers for churches* eg Ephesians 1:15-17; 3:14-21; Col 1:3,9
- 5 *partnership* (Acts 2:42) This single Greek word, *koinonia*, can also be translated *fellowship*, *Communion*, *participation* (1 Corinthians 10:16) *sharing* (Philippians 3:10). Translators tend to use *partnership* where it has a financial or marital connotation. The church at Philippi had sent financial support to Paul before, more than once.
- 6 *God's purposes.* Ps 138:8; Jer 29:11; 1 Cor 1:8; Eph 1:9-10; 1 Tim 2:1-4
- 7 *Paul in chains* v13-14,17; Acts 21:33; 26:29; Ephesians 6:20
- 9-11 *Paul's prayer for them* see note on vv 3-6 above 1 Thessalonians 1:3

# **LOOK**

## **1) The Text**

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## **2) The Context**

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# **LEARN**

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## To live is Christ

**Background** Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem, accused of bringing a Gentile into the part of the Temple reserved for Jews (which he hadn't), and put in chains (Acts 21:33). After several trials he was obliged to use his Roman citizenship to appeal to have his case heard by Caesar, hence the voyage to Rome, where he was still chained when dictating this letter.

Although the Emperor was notoriously cruel, Paul faced the prospect of a trial confident of Christ's victory over death (if it should come to that). Trusting Jesus' promise in Mark 13:11 that he would go through trial in a God-glorifying way, Paul thought he would be set free.

Tradition says Paul met his death in Rome (though the date is not clear) so maybe he did not 'continue with all of you'(1:25). But his courage helped Christians around him to speak the Word of God more fearlessly.

### Word List

12	<i>what has happened to me</i>	Acts 23-28; see also map on p3
13	<i>Palace Guard = Praetorian Guard</i>	elite soldiers who protected Caesar, and guarded imperial prisoners
22	<i>fruitful labour</i>	Winning new converts, building them up in faith
23	<i>depart</i>	Die (2 Timothy 4:6)
	<i>be with Christ</i>	Go to heaven (John 12:26; 14:1-3)

### Bible Connections

13-14	<i>Paul's prison ministries</i>	Acts 16:25; 28:30-31
15-18	<i>motives in preaching</i>	2 Corinthians 4:1-6
18	<i>rejoicing</i>	1:26; 2:17, 29; 4:1,4,10; Psalm 13:5; Rev 19:7
19	<i>power of prayer</i>	2 Corinthians 1:10-11, Romans 15:30-33
	<i>confidence in face of trial/ death</i>	Acts 7:54-8:1; 21:10-14
20	<i>not ashamed</i>	Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:8
	<i>body honours God</i>	1 Corinthians 6:20
21	<i>to live is Christ</i>	Galatians 2:20
	<i>to die is gain</i>	2 Timothy 4:6-8

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 3

**1:27 - 2:4**

# Unity in Christ

**Background** The first person in Philippi to believe in Jesus (Acts 16) was Lydia, who at once provided hospitality. Then Paul and Silas were falsely accused, ‘tried’, beaten and jailed. That was how the next convert heard the gospel – the jailer, who was so changed he washed their wounds. So the church there knew that ‘struggle’ (v30) was not new to Paul. They were now facing it too. And, as the jailer well knew, God could bring good from it.

v27 can be translated, 'live as citizens' of the gospel. These colonists, proud of their citizenship of Rome, were to live also as citizens of Christ the King; this would be shown by Christ-like behaviour.

## Word list

1:27	<i>contending</i>	Sticking up for the gospel
	<i>as one man</i>	As a united group,
	<i>those who oppose you</i>	critics of Christianity, whether Jewish, pagan or Roman
1:28	<i>frightened</i>	Used of uncontrollable stampede of frantic horses; so 28 means, <i>don't fear even under extreme threat</i>
2:1	<i>tenderness, compassion</i>	true care for one another
	<i>the Spirit</i>	The Holy Spirit, third person of the Trinity.

## Bible Connections

1:27	<i>worthy conduct</i>	Ephesians 4:1-4
	<i>stand firm</i>	1 Corinthians 16:13
	<i>contend for the faith</i>	Jude v3
1:29	<i>suffering for Christ</i>	Matthew 5:11,12; 2 Corinthians 11:24-29
1:30	<i>Paul's struggles in Philippi</i>	Acts 16:16-40, 1 Thessalonians 2:2
2:1	<i>unity in Christ</i>	John 17:20-23; Rom 12:5; Ephesians 4:13; Col 3:14
2:1	<i>fellowship in the Spirit</i>	1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:18; 4:3
2:2	<i>make joy complete</i>	John 3:27-30; 15:11
2:3	<i>christian humility -</i>	Acts 20:19; Rom 12:10; Gal 5:26; 1 Pet 5:5-6
2:4	<i>well-being of others</i>	1 Corinthians 10:24



# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 4    **Work out, while God works in**                      **2:5-18**

**Background** Verses 6-11 are often called ‘A hymn to Christ’. Whether Paul composed it, or was quoting an existing hymn, these are some of the finest thoughts about Jesus ever written. We still sing this hymn, e.g. *At the name of Jesus*. This depiction of humility in Jesus, the ‘man going down’, perfectly illustrates his own words in Mark 10:41-45.

It was hugely difficult for a Jew to allow anyone to be equal with God (John 5:18) but after Easter, the first believers could not think of Jesus as anything less than God e.g. Thomas (John 20:28). The Name ‘Lord’ had till then been used by Jews as the only reverent way to refer to God.

### **Word List**

12	<i>work out</i>	Put into practice, live out, apply (Rom 6:8-12)
13	<i>as God works in you</i>	By Christ’s Spirit (Romans 8:9-11; 12:1-3)
15	<i>without blemish</i>	Imagery of a sacrificial lamb
16	<i>run/ labour for nothing</i>	Imagery of running full circuit in stadium, and a piece of cloth rejected as badly woven.
17	<i>poured out</i>	Language of sacrifice and ritual.

### **Bible Connections**

5-11	<i>humility of Christ</i>	Isaiah 53; John 13:12-16
6	<i>Christ’s nature</i> <i>not like the first Adam</i>	Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:3 Genesis 3:15; Romans 5:12
7	<i>Christ as servant</i> <i>Christ as man</i>	Matthew 20:24-28; Is 42:1-4; 49:1f 50:4f; 52:13ff John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14-18
8	<i>Christ’s obedience</i> <i>Christ crucified</i>	Matthew 26:39; John 10:18; Rom 5:19; Heb 5:7,8 Deuteronomy 21:23; Gal 3:13; 1 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 5:21
2:9	<i>Christ’s exaltation</i>	Isaiah 53:11,12; Daniel 7:13,14; Acts 2:32,33; Hebrews 2:9; Rev 1:12-14
10	<i>submission to Christ</i>	Isaiah 45:23; Matt 28:18-20; Rom 14:11
11	<i>Jesus Christ is Lord</i> <i>confessing Christ</i>	Isaiah 45:23 Romans 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3
12	<i>obedience to God</i> <i>obedience to God’s messenger</i>	1 Peter 1:13-16, 22 2 Corinthians 7:15; 10:6
13	<i>God working in us</i>	see above, and Hebrews 4:14-16; 13:21
14-15	<i>corporate witness of the church</i>	John 13:35
16	<i>church as evidence of Paul’s work</i>	1 Thessalonians 2:19

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Co-workers

## Background

*Timothy* came from Lystra in modern-day Turkey and was of mixed parentage (Acts 16:1-3). His mother and grandmother are named in 2 Timothy 1:5. They taught him the Scriptures (i.e. Old Testament) from infancy (2 Timothy 3:14). But his father was Gentile; so before Paul took him on as assistant and helper, he had him circumcised, to save trouble from strict Jews later.

The Philippians knew Timothy because he came with Paul and Silas on the first visit and would have visited Philippi again in connection with the offering to relieve famine in Jerusalem (Acts 19:22). His name means 'Honouring God'. Timothy represented Paul in various churches, e.g. Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3. *See also* p4 and below).

*Epaphroditus* was *from* Philippi, and had worked with Paul, presumably during the early days of the founding of the church there. See p2. The name means 'charming' or 'handsome'. He survived serious illness at some time between leaving Philippi and the writing of this letter.

## Word list

- 2:22,25 *my son/ brother* not literally, but in Christ. *Son* implies Paul was the human means God used to bring Timothy to faith in Christ.
- 22 *served with me*; Paul could have said, served *me* as a slave, but amended it because Paul himself was also a slave of Christ.
- 23 *as soon as I see* i.e. once the trial verdict is known.
- 29 *risking his life* is a term from gambling: he staked his life to serve Christ, caring for Paul on behalf of the Philippian community.
- 4:2,3 *Euodia, Syntyche, Clement* members of the church at Philippi; the first two had fallen out. We don't know whom Paul meant by 'loyal yoke-fellow' – someone well-known for working with Paul.

## Bible Connections

- |      |                           |  |
|------|---------------------------|--|
| 2:19 | <i>Timothy</i>            |  |
|      | Began to travel with Paul | Acts 16:1-3  |
|      | Represented Paul          | 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 16:10;<br>1 Timothy 1:2 |
| 2:25 | <i>Epaphroditus</i>       | Philippians 4:18   |

# **LOOK**

## **1) The Text**

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## **2) The Context**

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# **LEARN**

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.



**Background** *Paul* had been a confirmed Jewish legalist, who had thought the way to get right with God was to try to keep the law. His encounter with the risen Christ on the Damascus road (Acts 9) showed the only way to be saved was by believing what Jesus had done for him on the Cross. This is central to his preaching and writing (Romans 3:21-30).

**Circumcision** Literally: removal of male foreskin. Normally performed when a Jewish boy is one week old, identifying him as a Jew, a member of the Old Covenant (Genesis 17). To a Jew, it was a sign of faith in God's promise to Abraham, committing a man to keep the Mosaic Law. In the NT, Baptism *replaced* it as the sign of the New Covenant (Colossians 2:11,12) thus placing women (Galatians 3:28) and a believer's 'household' (children, slaves) on an equal footing with male believers (Acts 2:39, 16:31). 'Judaisers' said Christian men still had to be circumcised; but Paul's letter to *Galatians* corrected that view and the First Church Council (Acts 15) confirmed he was right.

### Word list

- |     |                          |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--|
| 1   | <i>finally</i>           | Can also be translated: 'to sum up so far'.  |
| 2   | <i>dogs</i>              | 'Judaisers', i.e. Christians who still kept all the Law of Moses.                                    |
| 3-5 | <i>people of Israel</i>  | Covenant name for those chosen by God.   |
|     | <i>tribe of Benjamin</i> | The youngest, best-loved son of Jacob.   |
|     | <i>Hebrew of Hebrews</i> | A Hebrew construction to indicate the superlative; i.e. pure-blooded, could trace his line way back. |
|     | <i>pharisee</i>          | Studied & kept the law meticulously, <i>esp.</i> ethical rules.                                      |
| 9   | <i>righteousness</i>     | Right relationship with God.   |

### Bible Connections

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| 2    | <i>false view of circumcision</i>        | Acts 15:1ff; Galatians 5:2               |
|      | <i>dogs - not allowed in holy city</i>   | Revelation 22:15                         |
|      | <i>- lowest of the low</i>               | 2 Kings 8:1                              |
| 3    | <i>true circumcision</i>                 | Romans 2:25-29; Col 2:11; 1 Pet 2:9-10   |
|      | <i>true worship</i>                      | John 4:24                                |
| 4-14 | <i>Paul's autobiography</i>              | Acts 22; 2 Corinthians 11:22-28          |
| 5    | <i>circumcised on 8<sup>th</sup> day</i> | Leviticus 12:3                           |
| 6    | <i>persecuting the church</i>            | Acts 8:1-3; 9:4-6; 22:4-5; 1 Tim 1:12-13 |
| 7    | <i>gain and loss</i>                     | Mark 8:35-36                             |
| 3:9  | <i>righteousness by faith</i>            | Romans 3:21-26; 4:1-5:1; 9:30            |
| 10   | <i>power of his resurrection</i>         | Ephesians 1:19,20; 2:5                   |
|      | <i>fellowship of his sufferings</i>      | 2 Corinthians 4:10                       |
|      | <i>sharing in his death</i>              | Romans 6: 3-11                           |

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Citizens of heaven

**Background** If the false teachers were Judaisers, then *their god is their stomach* refers to their insistence on keeping Jewish food rules; *their glory is their shame* uses OT words to pair their ‘god’ with Ba’al. If they were Gentile Christians who relaxed the moral law (antinomianism) thinking the body was irrelevant because their minds were redeemed, then *god... stomach* refers to unbridled appetite and lusts, *they mind earthly things* means their sensual pursuits. They needed the corrective of Romans 6 & 1 Corinthians 6:9. (Tyndale commentary Ralph P Martin)

*Citizenship* (v20) refers to one’s capital or native city, where one’s name is on the register of citizens. Philippians had been proud to be citizens of Rome. Christians have a new, deeper allegiance – Christ and heaven!

*A Saviour* Paul rarely uses this of Jesus, as Greeks often used it of their gods. In 48 BC, the people of Ephesus decreed Julius Caesar to be the ‘general saviour of mankind’. *Saviour* became a common title for the ruling Caesar. The Romans greeted each other: ‘Caesar is Lord’ – ‘Yes, the Lord is Caesar’; Christians wanted to reply, ‘No, actually, the Lord is Jesus.’

### Word list

- 13,14 *straining, press on towards goal* Terms from athletics
- 14 *the goal* Athlete sets his eye on a mark
- the prize* Undefined; an upward calling leading us to God
- 15 *mature* Fully developed according to an external standard  
(c.f. 1 Cor 15:20; Ephesians 4:10-16; Heb 5:11-14)
- 18 *enemies of the cross of Christ* c.f. Judaisers (see intro to study 6)

### Bible Connections

- |    |                                 |  |
|----|---------------------------------|--|
| 14 | <i>winning the prize</i>        | Acts 20:24-25; 1 Cor 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:7-8 |
| 17 | <i>following Paul’s example</i> | 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; 4:12  |
| 18 | <i>false teachers</i>           | Gal 6:12; Rom 6:1; 16:17-18; 1 Cor 6:9     |
| 19 | <i>God is their stomach.</i>    | Romans 6:18                                |
|    | <i>mind on earthly things</i>   | Romans 8:5-6                               |
| 20 | <i>heavenly citizenship</i>     | John 17:13-19; 18:36; Ephesians 2:19       |
| 21 | <i>our resurrection body</i>    | 1 Cor 15:42-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18    |

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Prayer, joy, peace in the Lord

### Background

We don't need to know what the two ladies in Philippi disagreed about. They needed to be reconciled. Their dispute was spoiling the unity, joy and peace of the fellowship.

For this or any problem, Paul prescribes a remedy: replacement therapy! Choose to swap the response of *anxiety* with comprehensive, thankful *prayer*, focussing not on the problem but on Christ-like qualities. Paul had lived among them; they knew him; he could say v9 to them, but he was not saying, copy *me*; rather, live out what Christ has already put within you.

### Word list

2	<i>Euodia and Syntyche</i>	Two church members in Philippi
3	<i>loyal Yoke-fellow</i>	An unnamed person who worked with Paul, as closely as two oxen yoked together ploughed the same furrow
	<i>contended</i>	Gk <i>synathleo</i> same word at ' <i>c. as one man</i> ' (1:27)
	<i>Clement</i>	Another church member at Philippi
	<i>Book of Life</i>	Genuine Christians who will go to heaven
5	<i>gentleness</i>	Ethical term for being fair-minded, gracious.
6	<i>being anxious</i>	Same term as used by Jesus in Matthew 6:25-34
	<i>prayer, petition,</i>	Former always addressed to God; the latter could be to God or man, stressing our <i>need</i> eg John 2:3.
	<i>requests</i>	Be explicit and precise in what you ask for.
7	<i>will guard</i>	Army metaphor familiar to Philippians; soldiers protected the safest stronghold, e.g. a castle's 'keep'.

### Bible Connections

1	<i>stand firm</i>	1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Peter 5:8-10)
2	<i>unity of the fellowship -</i>	Ephesians 4:3; Romans 12:3-21)
4	<i>christian rejoicing</i>	Psalms 100; Luke 15:5-7,10; Galatians 5:22
6	<i>no anxiety</i>	Matthew 6:25-34; John 10:28; 14:1; 2 Peter 1:3-4
	<i>.... instead, prayer and thanks</i>	Acts 4:21-31; 16:23-25; 27:21-25
7+9	<i>God / peace</i>	John 14:27; Rom 5:1; Eph 2:13-18; Col 3:15
8	<i>moral transformation</i>	Romans 12:2; 1 Peter 1:13-15; 2 Cor 10:5b

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?



- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## True contentment

### Background

Hospitality was evident in Philippi from the outset: Lydia, the first convert persuaded Paul and his group to stay with her (Acts 16:15). Support to Paul continued even after he moved on.

Paul and the soldiers wintered in Malta; it was too dangerous for *anyone* to sail, so there was no news if Paul was even alive. Once they were back on the mainland of Italy and in contact with Christians, (Acts 28:14) news travelled fast and the Philippians could resume their support.

11 *learned to be content* is in stark contrast with the unlearned instinct to anxiety of verse 6. Paul had faced incredible hardships (2 Cor 11:16-31).

### Word list

23 *Caesar's household* People related to the Emperor? Or (more likely) people who worked directly for him.

### Bible connections

10-18 *support for ministry* 1 Corinthians 9:3-18; 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

11 *Christian contentment* 1 Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5.

15-16 *you sent me aid again and again.* E.g. when Silas and Timothy, who had stayed behind in Macedonia (Acts 17:14) caught up with Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-5) Paul's use of time changed. How?

19 *God will meet your needs* e.g.: When Abraham sacrificed the ram in place of his son, he called the location, 'The Lord Will Provide' Gen 22:14.

*life of Joseph* Genesis 45:4-11;

*manna* Exodus 16 and 17;

*the Lord is my shepherd ... feeds me, keeps me safe* Psalm 23;

*Giving and receiving* 2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:7-11

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## *Sharing the Word*

### **Use**

'Hearing the Word' can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

### **Preparing for a group**

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers \*

### **A format**

If you have 45 mins together, you might like to try dividing it up like this.

(If longer or in a large group, you can extend the times)

- 1) Drink, bite to eat, chat (10 mins)
- 2) A Bible reading (2 mins)
- 3) A Bible study
  - a. Any questions? (Whether answer is known or not!) (2 mins)  
(Don't answer any, till all questions noted!)
  - b. Any relevant cross references? (2 mins)
  - c. Discussion of answers (13 mins)
  - d. Conclusion (10 mins)
    - i. A Key verse and Main Point?
    - ii. What does it show about God / Jesus?
    - iii. What should I do?
- 4) Sharing (Trials and joys – family, work, self) (5 mins)
- 5) Prayer (1 min)

### **Remember!**

As we gather round God's Word

- a) Listen to the views of others
- b) Make room for the novice. They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others' especially, 'seekers' in your sharing together.

\* The **process** is explained and practised in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**'. Email: [office@tpc.org](mailto:office@tpc.org)



## ***“I can read the Bible for myself!”***

To show that the Bible is accessible to all,  
the Rev Nigel Barge, minister of Torrance Parish Church,  
has devised a tool called ‘Hearing the Word’.  
The Manual explains the basic principles of Bible reading,  
teaches them by means of an interactive course,  
and practices them on a single passage, Mark 10:35-45,  
Participants follow in a Workbook: *Hearing the Word - Introduction*,  
which includes the next six passages in Mark,  
so they may follow on for themselves.

As the principles apply equally to all, the course will both  
instruct the novice and refresh the ‘hardened’ Bible student!

Further Study Guides cover various genres of Bible material –  
Narrative, Poetry, Law, Letters, Prophecy etc.  
For the current list of material or to place orders, contact

