

THE BOOK OF

# Philippians

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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CREATED BY STEVE CASE

# Everything's Going Great!

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## OPENING QUESTION

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On the optimist-pessimist scale, put an “X” where you see yourself; put an “√” where you would place Paul, the author of Philippians.

**Optimist** **Pessimist**

10      9      8      7      6      5      4      3      2      1

## READ Philippians 1:1–30.

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**1. Finish this sentence from your perspective: Every time I think of you, I:**

- A. Rejoice.
- B. Weep.
- C. Thank God.
- D. Gossip.
- E. Worry.
- F. Feel jealous.
- G. Pray.
- H. Other.

**2. Who have been your partners in spreading the Good News about Christ?**

- A. I primarily work solo.
- B. Fellow church members.
- C. My friends.
- D. Hardly anybody.
- E. Someone in my family.
- F. People I connect with on social media.
- G. I don't really do much to spread the Good News.
- H. Other.

**3. How does your love for others overflow more and more (vs. 9)?**

- A. It doesn't.
- B. I just pass on the love God has given me.
- C. If others show me some love, they are more likely to get some love.
- D. It's like the seasons—wet, dry, cold, warm (it varies).
- E. It takes a lot of discipline and purposeful planning on my part.
- F. I pick and choose who I love; and who I love in an overflowing way.
- G. I need to get more love in order for it to overflow more and more.
- H. Other.

**4. According to Paul, getting out the word about Christ is what matters, not the motives. What motives have you sensed for people who share Christ?**

- A. Love for Christ.
- B. Love for others.
- C. Personal recognition.
- D. Driven by guilt.
- E. Just going through the motions.
- F. Ego.
- G. Make Christianity look bad.
- H. Other.

**5. What are examples of your experiences of suffering for Christ?**

- A. I haven't.
- B. Nobody knows the trouble I've seen!
- C. Torture or prison.
- D. Financial insecurity.
- E. Loss of reputation.
- F. Feelings of rejection.
- G. When someone sits in my spot at church and I have to sit elsewhere.
- H. Other.

**6. Paul identified several reasons for joy/rejoicing. Which ones are also true for you?**

- A. Partnership in sharing Christ.
- B. Received God's blessings while in prison.
- C. Received God's blessings defending the truth of the Gospel.
- D. The message of Jesus is preached from pure motives.
- E. The message of Jesus is preached from impure motives.
- F. Anticipation that Christ will provide deliverance from prison.
- G. People around me turn to Christ.
- H. Other.

**7. What has God already done in your life? What is God still working on in your life (vs. 6)?**

**8. How would you explain Paul's statement in vs. 21: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"?**

# Going Down or Moving Up?

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## OPENING QUESTION

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Compared to most of your friends, when it comes to humility, are you in the upper half or the lower half?

### **READ Philippians 2:1–30.**

#### **1. Why do people “look to their own interests” rather than to “the interests of others”**

*(vs. 4)?*

- A. Humans are naturally selfish.
- B. Jesus isn't in their hearts.
- C. Jesus might be in their hearts, but he might not get out of their hearts.
- D. They don't have someone to check up on them (see *vs. 19-21*).
- E. Lots of practice.
- F. Early experiences of scarcity and fear perpetuate selfishness.
- G. It's easier to see and be aware of our own interests.
- H. Sometimes it's hard to figure out the interests of others.
- I. Other.

#### **2. How would you describe “the mind of Christ” *(vs. 5)*?**

- A. Humble.
- B. Confident.
- C. Very, very smart.
- D. Sacrificial.
- E. Obedient.
- F. Ready to teach someone a lesson.
- G. Unselfish.
- H. Full of hope.
- I. Other.

#### **3. When does every knee bow and every tongue confess Jesus is Lord?**

- A. At Christ's Second Coming.
- B. At Christ's Third Coming—after the Millennium.
- C. Whenever a person accepts Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- D. It has already happened.
- E. It will never happen.
- F. When Christ died on the cross.
- G. Not until Satan gets fully exposed for who he is.
- H. In a moment of Christ's overwhelming power.
- I. Other.

**4. What does Paul mean: “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (vs. 12)?**

- A. It's up to each person to work out their own salvation.
- B. Trying to obtain salvation is a scary enterprise.
- C. Our only work is to trust Christ.
- D. It's not all Christ; we have a part to play.
- E. Salvation is a lot of work for somebody.
- F. This verse always confuses me.
- G. Fear and trembling about salvation is something to work through.
- H. Other.

**5. What does vs. 13 (KJV) mean: God works in you to will and to do his good pleasure?**

- A. God works in the lives of his people.
- B. Not really having control of what God does in your life.
- C. You need the power of God to do what needs to be done in your life.
- D. If God doesn't work in you, something is wrong.
- E. God takes great pleasure in transforming his people.
- F. Some changes shouldn't be attributed to God.
- G. God has a fulltime job.
- H. Other.

**6. Is it really possible to do everything without grumbling or arguing (vs. 14)?**

- A. Yes.
- B. No.
- C. By the grace of God.
- D. It requires “selective memory.”
- E. It's possible more than half the time.
- F. It depends on what happens to a person.
- G. It's not possible as long as \_\_\_\_\_ is in my life.
- H. Other.

**7. What have you done or where have you gone that would be considered a great risk for the sake of Christ?**

**8. What do verses 10-11 mean to you?**

# Looking Good

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## OPENING QUESTION

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Which is your better side: Front or back? Left or right? Inside or outside?

## READ **Philippians 3:1–21.**

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### **1. What does “rejoice in the Lord” (vs. 1) look like to you?**

- A. Happiness.
- B. Praise.
- C. Lots of jumping, hugging, high-fiving, etc.
- D. Loud—singing, shouting, maybe even screaming.
- E. Worship.
- F. Somewhat forced when people say, “You need to rejoice.”
- G. Remembering what God has done.
- H. A safeguard to focus on Christ’s goodness.
- I. Other.

### **2. Who (or what) do you need to watch out for, as a follower of Jesus?**

- A. Mutilators of the flesh.
- B. Legalists.
- C. Libertines (anything goes because Jesus forgives).
- D. Static spirituality.
- E. Comparing others to you.
- F. Forgetting where you came from.
- G. Forgetting where you’re going.
- H. Forgetting what you’re doing.
- I. Forgetting why you’re here.
- J. Other.

### **3. Why might you have confidence in the flesh?**

- A. You’re doing pretty well.
- B. Lots of people look to you as a good example or role model.
- C. Those despicable bad things—that’s not you, at all.
- D. God’s actions in your life in the past.
- E. A high level of church involvement.
- F. Spiritual heritage or accomplishments.
- G. A consistent devotional life.
- H. The talents or spiritual gifts you’ve been given.
- I. Other.

**4. What is the righteousness that comes from the law?**

- A. Obedience.
- B. Being born into a Jewish or Christian family.
- C. Following what God has said.
- D. Being sensitive to the prodding of the Holy Spirit.
- E. Living up to the light you've been given.
- F. Relying on the grace only God can give.
- G. People will know you're a Christian just by looking at you.
- H. Other.

**5. What is the righteousness that comes from faith?**

- A. Obedience.
- B. Believing that God exists, and he rewards those who follow him.
- C. Simply trusting Jesus.
- D. Living proactively for Jesus, expecting God to guide and direct.
- E. Talking a lot about Jesus.
- F. Serving others without expecting a payback.
- G. More and more information.
- H. Increasing faith, hope, and love.
- I. Other.

**6. If people model their lives to be like yours (vs. 17), what would it look like?**

- A. They would fit it really well at my church.
- B. There would be conflict if they came to my church.
- C. They would fit in with people outside of church.
- D. Their life would be on a pathway to destruction.
- E. It would be like a roller coaster.
- F. Lots of rejoicing.
- G. Ugly.
- H. Lovely.
- I. Other.

**7. What have you let go of (including even good things) in order to fully grip only Jesus?**

**8. Where is your citizenship? How do you know?**

# Doing Great

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## OPENING QUESTION

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What do you do when you need peace? When do you need joy?

### READ **Philippians 4:1–23.**

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#### **1. How can you “stand firm in the Lord” (vs. 1)?**

- A. Never ever change.
- B. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
- C. Be part of a community of faith.
- D. Have an accountability partner.
- E. Continue to invest in your relationship with the Lord.
- F. Make your lifestyle a “standing firm in the Lord” lifestyle.
- G. Be stubborn.
- H. Be willing to release childish things so you can grow.
- I. Other.

#### **2. How often do you rejoice in the Lord?**

- A. All the time.
- B. Daily.
- C. Weekly.
- D. Weakly.
- E. Whenever I think about it.
- F. Not very often.
- G. When I’m reminded.
- H. Not since \_\_\_\_\_.
- I. When I think about Jesus.
- J. Other.

#### **3. What brings peace to your heart and mind?**

- A. When \_\_\_\_\_ isn’t around.
- B. Handing over my cares to the Lord.
- C. Prayer.
- D. Forgiving others.
- E. Feeling forgiven myself.
- F. Focusing on Jesus rather than being distracted by \_\_\_\_\_.
- G. Practicing what I believe God wants me to do.
- H. Completing my “to do” list for the day.
- I. Other.



**4. Rank these in the order (1-8) that you think about them ( 1 = most frequent; 2 = next most frequent... ).**

**Whatever is:**

\_\_\_\_\_ *True*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Right*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Lovely*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Excellent*  
\_\_\_\_\_ *Noble*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Pure*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Admirable*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Praiseworthy*

**5. What makes you content?**

- A. Quietness.
- B. When everyone close to me is safe.
- C. When everyone close to me is happy.
- D. When everyone close to me is connected to God.
- E. When all the bills are paid.
- F. Family gatherings (before, during, or after?)
- G. Feeling secure because I'm in God's care.
- H. Having everything I need.
- I. Having everything I want.
- J. Other.

**6. To what extent has “My God will meet all your needs” (vs. 19) been true for you?**

- A. Always.
- B. Once in a while.
- C. So far: Never.
- D. True spiritually.
- E. True physically.
- F. True emotionally.
- G. Most true in the (choose one): past, present, future.
- H. Other.

**7. What is the most important thing you want to pass on to others? How do you live this out yourself?**

**8. When do you need to recite vs. 13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”?**

