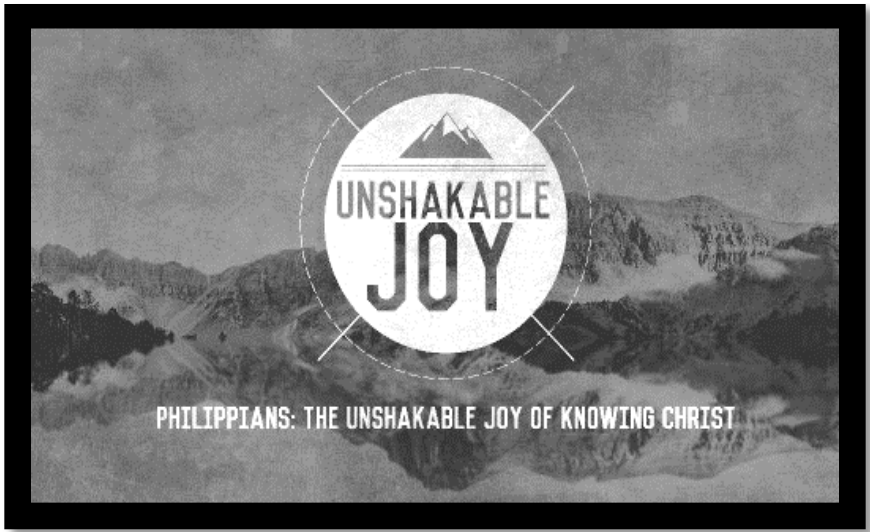


Philippians:  
Unshakable Joy  
Companion Devotional



Redeemer Baptist Church  
at Romeo

Week 2:  
January 3-9, 2022



## **WHY USE THIS GUIDE?**

We are going to be covering a very rich letter by Paul in just four weeks. That means that there will be details that will not be covered from the pulpit, but we want you to walk away from this study with an understanding of the book of Philippians as a whole and the tools to feel confident to study the Bible on your own or with your family.

Try to stay on track with the readings because they will build to the message on Sunday. If you do this preparation, you will be in the best place to hear and understand all that is going on as we open the text together in corporate worship.

## **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: FIVE STEPS**

1. Before you do anything, pray. This isn't some magical incantation to utter, it is a recognition that we are not in the right frame of mind and attitude often when we come to Scripture. Prayer helps us to humble ourselves to be teachable by the Holy Spirit.
2. Read the day's introduction then take your time reading the assigned passage. These are usually short passages, so read them more than once or write it down in a journal to help grasp what Paul is saying.
3. Remember that Paul is writing to a real group of people in a real time and place. Ask yourself, "What did Paul's words mean to the people that originally heard it?" Put yourself in their shoes. What is the theme, and what encouragement or criticism is being offered in this passage?
4. Work through the questions in the booklet. Ask yourself what this passage is teaching you about Jesus or about yourself. Although Paul was writing to those people in Philippi, the Holy Spirit intended this passage for you here and now.
5. Pray again. Ask God to help you live out the teachings and truths that you have learned. These could be things about the character of God in Christ, the ministry and zeal of Paul, the situation of the Philippians, or something else that God has impressed upon your heart.

## Monday, January 3 – Week 2 – Day 1

In this passage, Paul shifts his attention from himself and makes his plea to the Philippians. He calls on them as citizens, not of the Roman empire but the Kingdom of Heaven, to live lives that are worthy of the gospel. Lives that make much of Jesus.

*Philippians 1:27-30*

What does it mean in your context to live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ?

Paul continues to press the concept of unity in verse 27. In your own words, what does it look like to strive for the faith of the gospel? How do we do this together?

How is not being frightened a clear sign to your opponents of their destruction (v. 28)?

We readily talk about the fact that our belief in Christ is something that has been granted to us (v. 29), but why is it that we very rarely discuss the idea that suffering for his sake is something that has also been granted to us?

Paul's claim that suffering is a gift can easily be misunderstood to mean that suffering itself is good. A misinterpretation of Paul's discussion of suffering here and elsewhere has led some Christians to seek suffering or to inflict it upon themselves, under the impression that suffering itself somehow purifies them of sin or is, for other reasons, pleasing to God. It has caused others who suffer to view God as a cruel tyrant, one who gives gifts that nobody wants.

When Paul speaks of suffering as a gift, he does not mean that God is its author. The pagans of Philippi who persecuted their newly converted neighbors were sinning, and God is not the author of sin. But Paul can describe this suffering as a gift from God because God in his sovereignty used this suffering to serve his own good purposes. See Genesis 50:20.

## Tuesday, January 4 – Week 2 – Day 2

As we enter chapter 2, Paul argues that for the Philippians to stand against those that oppose them from the outside they must commit themselves to unity through humility. Paul says that it is this kind of unity that will complete his joy.

*Read Philippians 2:1-4*

In what sense does Paul use the word “if” in 2:1?

Why does Paul choose these particular blessings? How do they encourage unity and humility?

Encouragement in Christ?

Comfort from love?

Participation in the Spirit?

Affection and sympathy?

Philippians 2:3-4 is an excellent verse to memorize. Write it below.

This is Paul’s summary of how believers should follow Christ’s example in humility. We’ll look more at Christ’s example tomorrow.

## Wednesday, January 5 – Week 2 – Day 3

It is possible that today's verses were a hymn for the early church. It is very poetic in nature, and it contains some words that Paul didn't use anywhere else. However, it does flow with Paul's argument and none of the early church authors mentioned it as a hymn. It's a good thing that whether it was written by Paul, or before him, it is still inspired and beneficial.

*Read Philippians 2:5-11.*

What does it mean to have a mind "among yourselves?" How does it relate to Paul's exhortation towards unity?

As we read of Jesus emptying himself, is there any mention of him ceasing to be equal with God?

Paul describes this emptying in the end of verse 7 and 8. What things are a part of Christ's humiliation?

Christ became an obedient servant, and this is the point of Paul's exhortation in verse 5. Why does Paul include the description of Paul's exaltation?

How should knowing that Christ has been exalted above all affect the way we worship him and behave?

How can looking forward to the hope of eternity encourage you today?

## Thursday, January 6 – Week 2 – Day 4

In today's reading, Paul applies the story of Christ's humiliation and exaltation specifically to the Philippian situation.

*Read Philippians 2:12-18 and compare with Philippians 1:27-30*

He is concerned in both passages that the Philippians live out the implications of their trust in the gospel, and that they do this whether Paul is among them or absent from them. What other connections do you see between these passages?

Who are the Philippians supposed to obey?

What does it look like to work out your salvation with fear and trembling? Does that mean it's not all of grace? Why that attitude?

How do we reconcile this working with verse 13 that says that it's really God who works in you?

What is it that makes us shine as lights in the world (v. 15)?

How is the obedience of the Philippians tied to Paul's joy? Have you ever thought about joy in Christ as a corporate endeavor?

## Friday, January 7 – Week 2 – Day 5

After the theologically rich language of 2:5–18, we are surprised to suddenly encounter two paragraphs that are seemingly focused on the travel plans of Paul and his coworkers.

*Read Philippians 2:19-24.*

Was Paul planning to conclude the letter here but then decided to add more teaching or is there a deeper reason for the inclusion of this information here?

Timothy is a man who exhibits the attitude of Jesus himself. We would do well to imitate and become more like him as we pursue obedience and Christlikeness. What qualities can we imitate from Timothy as an example to follow?

Why did Paul want to send Timothy?

How do you make plans? How can trusting in God's sovereignty help you when plans don't go as expected?

Is your life and work characterized by the service of the gospel?

Do you have partners in the gospel work like Paul considers Timothy?



## Saturday, January 8 – Week 2 – Day 6

Paul's second companion is the one that actually carried Paul's letter to the Philippians from Rome. Epaphroditus had come from Philippi and brought correspondence but also gifts to support him in his imprisonment (4:18).

*Read Philippians 2:25-30.*

The Philippians must have been surprised to see Epaphroditus again. They had sent him to deliver a gift and to stay with him and minister to his other needs (2:25), which was something they could not do themselves from such a distance (2:30).

Why was Epaphroditus back so soon despite Paul's continued imprisonment?

In verse 25, Paul introduces Epaphroditus with a litany of complimentary language. By doing this, he leaves no doubt in the minds of the Philippians that their messenger is returning with the apostle's blessing. Why do you think this important for Paul to express?

Seeing Christ as your example, does it ever get discouraging to think that you could never be like him? I mean he's God.

Can you see why Paul included these two human examples as tangible evidence that the ethical principles implied in the gospel do not ask more than God gives the power to obey?

Do you know any servants of the Lord like Timothy and Epaphroditus? Does it seem like they are in short supply? Will you be one?





