

NOTES AND OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

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I. BACKGROUND. This is one of Paul's prison epistles written probably from Rome around AD 62. The Philippian Church was the first church established in Europe (Macedonia, or Northern Greece). The background of this church's establishment is found in Acts 15:36-16:40. Philippi was a Roman colony and imitated Rome in many ways. There were few Jews there and the city was more cultural than many visited by Paul. Silas, Timothy and Luke assisted Paul in his ministry there. Paul was imprisoned over the slave girl who had a demon which Paul cast out. Of course, the Lord used this to bring the gospel of grace to the jailer and his family. Paul maintained close contact with this church which on two occasions sent gifts to support him while he was in Thessalonica (4:14-16; Acts 17:1-9). His first contact was on the second missionary journey. He went back to Philippi on his third journey (Acts 20:1).

II. PURPOSE OF THE LETTER. When the church heard of Paul's imprisonment, they sent Epaphroditus with a gift and to gain information about Paul (4:10, 14-18). Epaphroditus stayed to assist Paul but became ill (2:25-27,30) and was burdened that the church knew of his illness. When Epaphroditus was better Paul sent him back with the letter - mainly to relieve their anxiety over his imprisonment (1:1-30). It is a book of triumph and joy, especially in the face of tribulation. At least one member of this church, the jailer, knew that Paul was both sincere and accurate in his encouragement to be joyful in all circumstances. This joy and triumph had a basis - Jesus Christ. According to J. S. Baxter, Christ is our life (Ch. 1), our mind (Ch. 2), our goal (Ch. 3), and our strength (Ch. 4).

III. OUTLINE OF THE LETTER: Christ is central to the success of the Church!

1. A Solid Church - Founded on Christ (1:1-30)

Christ is our Source of Life (1:21)

2. A Submissive Church - Following Christ (2:1-30)

Christ is our Sentiment for Life (2:5)

3. A Spiritually Minded Church - In Fellowship with Christ (3:1-21)

Christ is our Standard for Life (3:10-14)

4. A Secure Church - Faithful to Christ (4:1-23)

Christ is our Strength for Life (4:13)