

WEEK 15

**Philippians discussion and Ephesians background**

**Philippians discussion**

What did you think was the theme of Philippians ?

What picture do you have of the church/believers after reading Philippians ?

How is that the same/ different from our experience today?

Which passages encouraged you? Which passages challenged you?

In 1: 6—will God ever give up on us?

In 1:12, Paul says what has happened to him has advanced the gospel. How?

In the next section, why does he say he wants to die? Why does he want to live?

What is the focus either way? Christ's agenda

Divisiveness was a problem in Philippi. What is Paul's hope for the Philippians, seen

in 1:27? Contending means striving together at the same time, like an athletic team

In ch. 2, whose interests should we be looking after?

In what ways did Jesus humble himself?

Why shouldn't we complain? 2:14-16

I often think of the "work of Christ" as evangelizing or being a missionary, etc.

What was the work of Christ that Epaphras did in 2:25-30 ?

He travelled to see a brother in need, brought him help, and encouraged him.

3:2 Judaizers again!

In 3:3, what are three characteristics of the true people of God?

Worship by the Spirit, glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh

Paul describes some reasons he could put his confidence in the flesh.

What better thing does he throw all that away for? know him, gain him, be found in him,

know his power, share his sufferings, die like him, be raised like him

What are some ways we might put confidence in the flesh?

I can fully agree with what Paul says in 3:10 up until the word “resurrection”. What does it mean, and how willing am I to share in his sufferings?

What can we learn by suffering? **\*\*“If you want me to”\*\***

What good mental health advice in 3:12-14! If I would do this consistently, how much happier and more fruitful I would be!

The Antinomians (who didn’t think Christians had to obey any laws at all) are refuted in 3:18-19. Instead, Paul encourages them to do what in 3:17?

Read 4:4-8. How can we guard our hearts and minds?

4:9 is such a simple, yet powerful statement. I couldn’t always say that to my family!

Contentment is hard to find in our society. What is the secret of being content? 4:12-13

## **Ephesians background**

### Timeline

Epaphras visits Paul in Rome, imprisoned

61 Ephesians ; sent by Tychicus

Who Wrote it? Paul

### About the epistle

Written from prison in Rome.

Paul probably kept in rental quarters at his own expense, or possibly

in or near Praetorian guard barracks

A “circular” letter meant to be a doctrinal treatise in the form of a letter, to the churches in Asia Minor.

Thus doesn’t deal as much with problems of a particular church, or have personal greetings.

### About the church

Paul stopped in Ephesus on his 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey, met Priscilla and Aquila

On his 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary journey, he stayed in Ephesus almost 3 years

Ministry was so effective that Christians (because of their numbers) became a major influence in a very short period of time.

Ephesus was the capital city of Asia, one of the most sophisticated cities of its time.

Very rich, very beautiful, very powerful.

Rich houses even had running water.

Site of the great temple of Artemis, one of 7 wonders of the world

Artemis worship was the heart of the life and the economy. Artemis was a fertility goddess.

Ephesus was responsible for the purity of Artemis worship worldwide.

You could deposit money in the temple like a bank. Money was loaned out at high interest.

Artemis was responsible for their wealth, powerful position, and protection.

When people realized that Paul's truth would undermine Artemis's "truth" and change their whole lifestyle, there was a riot.

Church there suffered many hardships for Christ, but persevered.

Nicolaitans were a sect who advocated a lifestyle unrestrained by morality or law, especially in the area of sexual immorality

### Difficult passages

1:4 chosen by God

1:11 predestined -- God has determined beforehand that those who believe in Christ will be adopted into his family and conformed to His Son

Doesn't remove man's responsibility see 1:13

### After the epistle

Apostle John lived before (60's or 70's) and after his Patmos exile, and died there in Ephesus

He wrote his gospel and epistles from there, and also the book of Revelation.

When Domitian became emperor and demanded worship, the Ephesians wanted to make

Ephesus the center of Domitian worship for the world. They built a giant statue

of him and put it in a place where it could be seen by everyone.

If you didn't swear allegiance, you could be killed. There were small altars throughout the

City where you must swear allegiance yearly

10 years after the death of John, Christians were so numerous that the heathen temples

were practically deserted.