Sample Study
Philippians 2:12-18

Women Equipping Women
Fall 2014
Our Goal Is

- Learn about the **PROCESS** of bible study
My Tools:

- ESV Study Bible
- Dictionary
- HCSB online
- Blue Letter Bible tools - online
Initial Observations of Philippians

Author – Paul
Date – AD 62 (2-4 years before he is martyred)
Place of Writing – Rome, in prison
Theme – Paul is writing the letter to encourage the believers there, thank them for their gift and let them know how he was along with Timothy and Epaphroditus.
Recipients of Letter – Believers - Church at Philippi

Genre – Letter – referred to as one of the prison epistles.
Letters

The Epistles are not abstract philosophical or theological essays that explain the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ. In almost every instance they are addressed to specific situations facing churches.

In interpreting the Epistles we should try to understand the specific circumstances that the original readers were facing.

As readers of the Epistles today, we face a disadvantage that the first readers did not have, for they knew firsthand the situation that the letter writer addressed. Our knowledge of the circumstances is partial and incomplete. Reading the letters can be like listening to half of a telephone conversation: we hear only the writer’s response to the situation in a particular church. Still, we trust that God in his goodness has given us all we need to know in order to interpret the Epistles adequately and to apply them faithfully.
When reading letters, read the whole letter in one sitting and THEN go back to chapter 1 and study it incrementally.
Paul - wrote 13 epistles that make up ¼ of the NT.
• Paul is the author or subject of nearly 1/3 of the NT.
• Born Jewish of the tribe of Benjamin.
• Original name was Saul after the first king of Israel – Saul.
• He was a tentmaker. His family was wealthy and Paul enjoyed and benefited from Roman citizenship.
• He grew up in Jerusalem.
• Paul underwent extensive training and teaching in Judaism and was a member of the Pharisees. As a Pharisee Paul persecuted believers in Jesus – locking them up and voting to put them to death.
• Converted on the way to Damascus by the resurrected Christ. Saul immediately surrendered to Christ.
• Soon thereafter Paul begins his ministry of preaching Christ as the Son of God and the Messiah.
• Paul was arrested in AD 57. In AD 59 he is sent to Rome for trial.
• Paul sits in house arrest in Rome for 2 years where he writes Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.
Philippi

I got a lot of political history to this city.

I wanted more socio-cultural information – who were these people? What beliefs were in practice here? Was this a economically depressed city? Rich? What was the cities main industry?

Paul visits this city on his 2\textsuperscript{nd} missionary journey.

Acts 16 talks of this visit. Lydia, seller of purple goods, Philippian Jailer is converted.

This is the \textit{first} church Paul established in Europe.
Outline

Greeting and Prayer (1:1–11)
- Salutation from Paul and Timothy (1:1–2)
- Paul’s thanksgiving and prayer for the Philippians (1:3–11)

Paul’s Reflections on His Imprisonment (1:12–30)
- Paul’s imprisonment has meant progress for the gospel (1:12–18)
- To live is Christ (1:19–26)
- Encouragement to walk worthy of the gospel (1:27–30)

Exhortation to Humble Service (2:1–30)
- Encouragement to unity in the faith and service to one another (2:1–4)
- Christ’s example of humble service (2:5–11)
- Living as lights in the world (2:12–18)
- Timothy as an example of a service-centered life (2:19–24)
- Epaphroditus as another example of service (2:25–30)

- Initial call to rejoice in the Lord (3:1)
- Contrast between the opponents of the gospel and the true people of God (3:2–3)
- Paul’s renunciation of spiritual and ethnic privileges for the sake of knowing Christ (3:4–11)
Outline Continued:

- Paul’s progress in the gospel: through Christ, not the law (3:12–16)
- A call to follow Paul’s example of commitment to Jesus as Lord (3:17–21)

Concluding Exhortations and Thanksgiving (4:1–23)
- Standing together for the gospel (4:1–3)
- Rejoicing in faith (4:4–9)
- Thanksgiving for the Philippians’ gift; Paul’s contentment in God (4:10–20)
- Greetings (4:21–22)
- Benediction (4:23)
Chapter 1

Paul identifies himself and Timothy and shows who the recipients of his letter is. Paul starts off his letter with thanksgiving and prayer for the people of Philippi. Paul shows great care and concern for these people and hopes to see them pure and blameless on the day of Christ (return) (V. 3 – 11)

Paul then gives a report of his circumstances saying that his imprisonment has actually “Served to advance the gospel” among the prison guards. Some brothers are bolder for Christ due to Paul’s imprisonment. Others are preaching Christ out of selfish ambition to hurt Paul in prison but Paul remarks – either way – Christ is preached. (V. 12-18)

Paul states he will rejoice in his deliverance but refers to his death twice citing the conflict he has between wanting to remain alive and help fellow believers or die and be with Christ. He then encourages the believers to live worthy of the gospel united in the faith of the gospel. He reminds them suffering for Christ comes with belief in Christ. (V. 19-30)

What is the flow of thought by the author leading up to our passage of study?
Chapter 1 Summary

- Paul is in prison, thankful for the Philippians, joyful at the proclamation of Christ.
- Wants to go “home” but knows he will not.
- Wants Christ honored in his body – alive or dead.
- Encourages his people to live worthy of the gospel with one spirit and one mind.
Chapter 2

Paul begins with **SO** (*AKA.....therefore*) which means.............as a result or consequently............... or in regard to what I JUST said.

So......

if there is any

- Encouragement in Christ
- Comfort
- Love
- Participation in the spirit
- Affection
- Sympathy

Paul is asking the Philippians – “Are these in you?”
Verses 2 & 3

Be of the same

• Mind
• Love

And do nothing our of selfish ambition or conceit

OPPONETIES!!!

But in humility “count others more significant than yourself.”

We saw that phrase in chapter 1:17

This is consistent with every person who ever lived.
Except Jesus Christ.

This is INconsistent with every person who ever lived.
Except Jesus Christ.
In the next few verses 6-11

Paul describes the example of humility.

The very opposite of “selfish ambition.”

The next few verses are the example by which to DO the previous verses.
Though He was in the form of God........

- Did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped
- Emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant.
- Born in the likeness of men
- Obedient to the point of death – even on a cross.

THEREFORE

- God exalted Him
- Bestowed the name that is above every name

SO THAT

1. Every knee should bow
   In heaven and on earth
2. Every tongue confess

JESUS IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER
Even in His exaltation, Jesus’ work glorifies the Father
Chapter 2: 1-10

• Be of the same mind and love

• Look to Jesus as your example of humility.

• Imitate Jesus’ humility. (count others as more significant than yourself)
You have to follow the flow of the author’s thoughts to the passage you are studying

And beyond.......
Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
• He calls them beloved.
• They must have been obedient in the past.
• He is encouraging them to “DO” something. Actually three things that we’ll look at later.
• What does “work out your own salvation” mean? Sounds “works based”
• He compares (simile) them to shining “lights” in the world
  • What do lights do? Create a picture in your head.

• Paul doesn’t want to run/labor in vain
  • If he runs in vain, that means there was no victory, no profit.
  • What does it mean to Paul to NOT run in vain?
• He wants them to be blameless, innocent and without blemish.
  • That word blemish reminds me of something
  • It reminds me of the sacrifices in the OT that had to be without blemish.
  • It reminds me of Christ.
  • Paul is telling them to be “like Christ” – without blemish.
Observations about Philippians 2:12-18

- What’s a drink offering?
- Even if Paul dies, he rejoices in their faith—— which came from his labor......which is worth his death if need be. Wow.
  - And so should they rejoice.
Did you think of other observations?

I am sure there are more. Again, I am not here to show you an in-depth study of our passage.

I am here to discuss the **PROCESS** of bible study

And tonight...........the process of bible study in the genre of “letters”
Philippians 2: 12-18

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
How do you eat an elephant?
One bite at a time.

How do you study a passage?
One verse at a time.

Observe observe observe
Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Work out your salvation with fear and trembling – I don’t have to go far to start reading what this means.

**ESV:**
They cannot be content with past glories but need to demonstrate their faith day by day as they nurture their relationship with God. But while God’s justice is a cause for sober living (fear and trembling), it is not as though Paul wants the Philippians to be anxious that they can never be good enough to merit God’s favor. Rather it is God’s love and enabling grace that will see them through it.

**HCSB**
Work out means to APPLY salvation, not earn it. Fear and trembling means to have proper respect in response to God’s blessing.

Dictionary – none.
for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

What’s that mean??????

• **MY understanding of what that says:** God *gives us* the will for His good pleasure. God gives us the will to work for His good pleasure.

  • **HCSB** – *Christians are recipients of God’s initiatives of motivation and empowerment.*
  • **ESV** – *These works are a result of God’s work within His people. Even the DESIRE to do what is good comes from God; but He also works in the believer to generate actual choices of good.*

That’s amazing! **DID YOU KNOW THAT?**

Ever think about that???
Do all things without grumbling or disputing,

Us grumble?????? What?!?!?!?!?!!!

Why would we **ever** grumble or dispute?!?!?!?!??! (read with sarcasm)

Hint hint – selfish ambition!

Grumbling and disputing would never happen if we:

1. “humbly counted others more significant than ourselves” (verse 3)

**And**

2. “look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others” (Verse 4)
Verse 2 & 3 are not in our passage but I am taking what I read and learned from the previous passages *WITH ME*...

*INTO*.....

The passage I am studying.
If we were without blemish, we would stick out to the “crooked and twisted generation”.

Kinda like..........

This is a word picture. So PICTURE IT!!!!

Lights – what do lights do? Illuminate darkness. Paul is saying we are illuminators of darkness.

**blemish** – reminds of the sacrificial system where any sacrifice to God has to be without blemish. What is Paul saying? We should be that way too. And Christ is the example in the previous verses.

15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
Lights

Jhn 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Jhn 9:5 "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

Jhn 12:46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

Luk 8:16 "Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light."
What Am I Doing?

THINKING!!!!!!

• Connecting words to other parts of scripture forwards and backwards.

• Asking questions

• Dictionary work

• Cross References

• Study notes
holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

Theses words also cause me create a “word picture” in my head. Can you “see” someone running a race........in vain? First of all it looks exhausting and secondly it looks discouraging.

Who wants to “run in vain”? No one!!

Paul wants his work and efforts to produce spiritual fruit.

Don’t you?

What if you got to the end of your life and realized all your efforts and all your labors in this world were temporal/burnt up/(in vain)?

They produced NO spiritual fruit.

# REGRET  #Wasted Life  # Missed your purpose
Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

**HCSB:** Drink Offering

*Drink offering recalls the OT sacrificial system. Paul was the substance being poured out for these believers.*

**ESV:** Drink Offering

*This type of offering familiar in both the OT and the Greco-Roman culture involved pouring out wine, either onto the ground or on an altar along with an animal or grain sacrifice. It was a vivid illustration of a life “poured out” for God’s service.*

**Dictionary**  Drink Offering

Very little. Disappointing.
17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

Even if I (Paul) pour out my life for you (or even die) for your faith (which I participated in) – I rejoice!

Do you feel that way? Do you value someone else’s faith SOOOOOOOOO much, you would rejoice in your death over it?
Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

You should have the same mindset as I (Paul).

Wow.

Do we?
Paul gives us three things to DO:

- **Work out** (apply) your salvation with fear and trembling
- **Do all things** without grumbling or disputing
- **Hold fast** to the word of life
12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
Verbs say action. Verbs say do. Verbs give instructions.

They’re important.

Notice them.
Paul is telling the Philippians to do three things so that they may serve as lights in a dark world thereby allowing Paul to rejoice in the fruits of his labor.
It is NOT enough to just mine for facts or information.

You have to make sense of it!!!
Given the example of Christ in V. 6-11, Paul is exhorting the Philippians in v. 12-18 to maintain their faith and be obedient to the truths they have been taught so that the “broken” world can “see” their example.

(which is demonstrated in Christ)
Notice how I am incorporating other words or ideas from previous passage to figure out what this passage means!

Take other thoughts, words or concepts INTO the current passage from the previous (or future) passages you have been in.
Here’s a few applications.

Not every application that there could be.

You may come up with different ones.

You may come up with what the Holy Spirit impresses upon you.
Am I “working out” (applying) my salvation? It is very easy and common **not** to.

- Here’s how you know if you are not: is your salvation a “get out of hell free card?”
Am I a light in a crooked and twisted generation?

In order to answer yes, I would have to “be known as a christian” or “illuminate the world in which I live with TRUTH.”

Do I illuminate the parts of my world – work, home, relationships,
1. Do I hold fast to the word of life? Yes!
2. Do I “grumble and complain”? Yes!

**Question**: So why do I grumble and complain if I hold fast to the word of life?

**Answer**: 

1. I am not **OBEYING** the word that I am holding.
2. I am not **APPLYING** my salvation most likely due to lack of “fear and trembling.”
Application

Do I look at the salvation and faith of others like Paul did?

Do I “run and labor” for the kingdom like Paul did?
What do I run and labor for?

Is Christ my model of servant hood?

Humility?  Obedience?

Do ANY of these words characterize you?
YOUR life is a drink offering.

Who or what are you pouring it out for?
I could go on for days.

The *meaning* of the text is one concept. One idea.

The *application* of the text is numerous.
Action Plan

I will *illuminate* my little corner of the world – (work, family, relationships, groups, clubs, sports, whatever) through evangelism, modeling my faith, work ethic,

I will *apply* my salvation by not grumbling and complaining about *fill in the blank*.

I will *hold fast* to the word of life by studying it according to my plan.

I will *pray* for the Lord to give me a desire and a will to pursue Him, obey Him, Love Him.