

FOR A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP IN CHRIST

PHILIPPIANS: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND: Please read the fourth footnote in the Life Application Study Bible for **Philippians 1:1**. **Acts 16** gives the historical account of the founding of the Philippian church. See **Acts 16:12** and the footnote. We will study the following important themes in more detail in future lessons.

WITH INCREDIBLE JOY—Philippians demonstrates that we can have joy even when living in very harsh conditions. Paul, the author of the letter to the Philippians, though he was in prison and probably chained to a Roman guard twenty-four hours a day, enjoyed the companionship of the Holy Spirit, whose presence filled his heart with joy. The experience of the Holy Spirit's presence in us helps to give us assurance that Jesus is living in us. When we, like Paul, trust in the continuous presence of the Holy Spirit and what His presence means in our lives, we experience joy and a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. (**Philippians 1:1-4, fn 1:1[1st], fn 1:4, Philippians 4:4-5, fn 4:4-5, fn 4:4, Romans 15:13, fn 15:13, John 15:11, fn 15:11, Ephesians 5:18, fn 5:18-21**) *How is it possible for you to have joy in your life and what will you do about it?*

WITH ABOUNDING LOVE—The basic condition for love is accepting people just as Christ has accepted us. Because the Lord has accepted us and poured His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, we have no excuse not to love and accept others. Our love for other believers promotes unity (the answer to Christ's prayer for us in John 17), and it causes us to experience a deeper relationship with Jesus. (**Philippians 1:8-11, fn 1:7-8, fn 1:9, Romans 5:5, fn 5:5-6, Romans 15:7, I Thessalonians 3:12, fn 3:12, I Corinthians 13:1-13, fn 13:1-13**) *What do you need to do to abound in love?*

WITH CHRIST'S MINDSET—As we set our minds on Christ, we realize in a deeper way our unworthiness to receive His grace, and we desire and *are enabled* to seek a deeper relationship with Him. His grace causes us to desire to value others above ourselves and even gives us the ability to suffer through our pain as Paul did. (**Philippians 2:1-4, fn 2:3, Philippians 2:5-11, fn 2:5, I Peter 2:20-25, fn 2:21-22, II Corinthians 12:7-10, fn 12:7-8**) *Do you desire deeper intimacy with Jesus and if so, how could you have Christ's mindset?*

Are you taking time to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Living Word teaching you and giving you His joy, His love, and His peace?