

What is Paul's situation as he writes this letter? (v. 13-14; 16; 20-22) Why is he in prison? Does his attitude match his circumstances? List the positive things Paul sees resulting from his imprisonment. (v. 12-13; 14; 18; etc)

Are you able to see God's purposes at work in your difficulties and limitations? Why is that? How could Paul's example enable you to do so?

What hopes and expectations does Paul have for himself? (v. 20-26) What are his hopes for the Philippians? (v. 27) How does that match up with the hopes you have for yourself right now?

REFLECT

Paul wrote that it has been "granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him." What does that mean? Do you see your faith and your life that way? What difference would it make tomorrow if you did?

RESPOND

As you go to sleep and when you wake, say aloud, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." Pray, asking God to conform your life to this affirmation, and to show you one thing you can do to make it so today.



The remainder of the Bible (Acts and the Epistles) covers what could be called **the age of the church**, which includes today.

Acts 1:8
"you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

J.I.Packer
"If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folks from digging into the Bible."

"In Jerusalem..." Acts chapters 1-7

What are we sharing and showing?

"in all Judea and Samaria..." Acts chapters 8-12

Patrick Henry
"The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed"

What has God asked you and I to do that we haven't done?



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“to the ends of the earth...” Acts chapters 13-28

What do we endure for Christ?

2 Corinthians 11:23-28

²³...I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. ²⁴Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own people, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. ²⁷I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. ²⁸Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

Pauline Epistles	1 Thessalonians	James
Romans	2 Thessalonians	1 Peter
1 Corinthians	1 Timothy	2 Peter
2 Corinthians	2 Timothy	1 John
Galatians	Titus	2 John
Ephesians	Philemon	3 John
Philippians	General Epistles	Jude
Colossians	Hebrews	Revelation

What we learn about God:

He's got the whole world in his sights.

What we learn about ourselves:

We're called to adventure and sacrifice.

What we're encouraged to do:

Live the Jesus life.

Charles Dickens
"The New Testament is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world."

NAVIGATING THE BiBLE...Part Six: Church LIFE GROUP STUDY

RELATE

What's the best letter you have ever received?

Have you ever experienced a significant change in your behavior, beliefs, personality, attitudes, or status? How did it come about?

What principle, story, or observation from this week's message was most helpful, new, or challenging to you?

READ

Acts 16; Philippians 1:1-30

Acts 16 describes how Paul started the Philippian church that later received this letter. He wrote to thank them for a gift, and to update and encourage them.

Who were the first converts in the church at Philippi? In what ways were they different from each other? What did they have in common?

How does Paul feel about the people to whom he is writing, and what is the current nature of their relationship (v. 3-11)

Which words best describe the nature and tone of Paul's letter?

Depressed
Desperate
Trapped
Passive

Worried
Confident
Uncertain
Self-absorbed

Triumphant
Needy
Hopeful
Outwardly-focused