

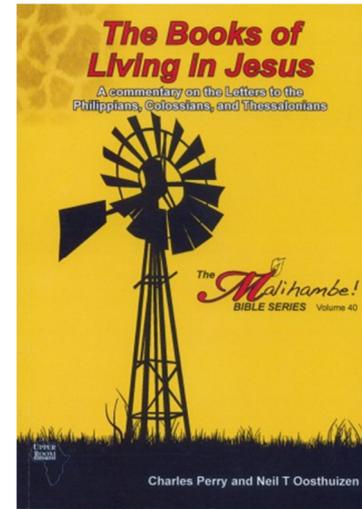
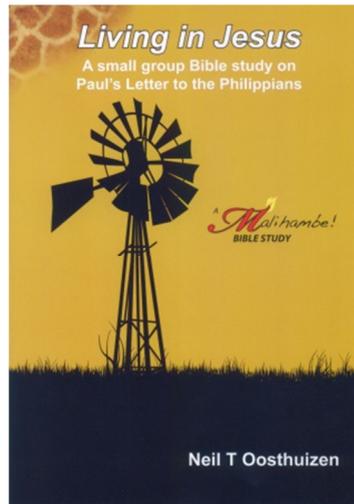
*Living in*  
**JESUS**

• A study through the book of Philippians •

Small Group Booklet  
July / August 2015

# LIVING IN JESUS

This booklet is a re-formatted copy of Rev Dr Neil T Oosthuizen's "**Living in Jesus: A small group Bible study on Paul's Letter to the Philippians**". You are encouraged to purchase his and Charles Perry's commentary as an accompaniment to the small group booklet as it will give you greater detail and in-depth background on every week's Bible study: "**The Books of Living in Jesus: A commentary on the Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians**".



In this 8 week series we will be studying the book of Philippians in a traditional Bible study format, applying biblical truths to our everyday lives, so that we grow in our knowledge and love of God (2 Thessalonian 1:3).

John Wesley the founder of the Methodist Church proudly declared himself "a man of one book", and that book was the Bible. He read, studied, preached and taught the Bible throughout his life, and he encouraged others through his ministry to do the same.

For Wesley, reading the Bible took place in four ways:

1. Reading a small section of the Bible prayerfully and carefully each day;
2. Setting time aside to meditate at more length on passages you feel God is calling you to grow in;
3. Through studying it as part of a small group; and
4. Experiencing Bible-centered preaching in worship.

The New Testament apostle, evangelist, teacher and pastor, Paul, would have agreed. Whilst his letters range from heavy theology to personal letters, Philippians has always been experienced as a letter that fits neither. It encourages the reader to simply live in Jesus,

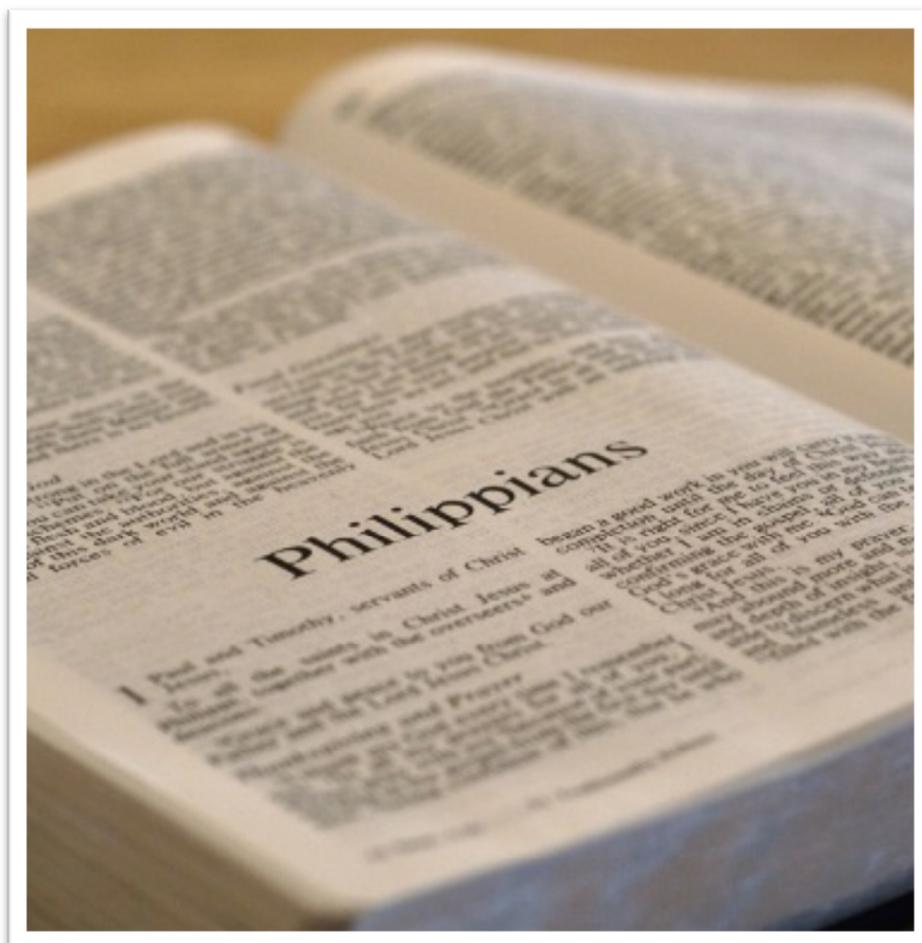
knowing the joy and peace that is ours in Him. This means it is a letter for you, and for me, today.

The small group is taken through the Letters to the Philippians in eight weekly studies: In week one “The apostle Paul and the Philippians” we focus on the background to the author, the recipients and the letter. Weeks 2-7 take us through the text in detail, encouraging us to grow in our understanding and to practice living in Jesus. Week 8 invites us to reflect on our journey, how it has transformed our life, and what God wants us to do in response to having experienced His Word.

May this Bible Study enable you to hear God’s word afresh as He addresses your life through the ancient text; and to know the Holy Spirit’s power as He enables you to more fully live in Jesus each day.

**Neil T Oosthuizen**

*& Nadja Atkinson*



# WEEK 1:

## LIVING IN JESUS

### JESUS, PAUL, THE PHILIPPIANS... AND US



Before continuing with this Lesson, read the Letter to the Philippians through from beginning to end.

#### WHEN, WHERE AND BY WHOM WAS THE LETTER WRITTEN?

The Letter to the Philippians is just that – a letter. It was written to the people of God at Philippi, and later copied and distributed to neighbouring churches. It was sent by the apostle Paul to a group of Christians whose love and support he appreciated. He wrote it in response to the financial support given to him in his mission (4:15-19), and the gifts given for the relief of the church in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

*All Paul's letters follow a clear structure. Page through the Letter to the Philippians. Can you identify a clear structure? What is it? How could this be helpful?*

#### PAUL THE APOSTLE

Saul was a devout Jew and a citizen of Rome, having come from the Roman colony of Tarsus. As a Pharisee, a deeply religious branch of Judaism in his day, he kept strictly to the Law of Moses (3:4b-6), and was intent on persecuting the new Christian “sect” that was spreading across the Jewish world (Galatians 1:13-14). He was converted on a journey to the ancient Syrian capital Damascus, to persecute the Christians in that city (Acts 9:1-31).

With various companions, Paul embarked on three missionary journeys:

- The first journey was with Barnabas. They began their trip by visiting Barnabas' home country of Cyprus. It was here that Saul started using his Roman name Paul (Acts 13:9). They then journeyed to the province of Galatia. There they ministered in the towns of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra (where Paul was stoned and left for dead), and Derbe. They then returned to Antioch, travelling back through the same towns (Acts 13:1 – 14:28);

- Paul was accompanied by Silas on his second journey. Having stopped for a few days in Antioch, they travelled through Galatia, visiting some of the churches he had started on his first missionary journey. They were joined by Timothy in Lystra, and went on to Troas, where Luke joined their group. They crossed over into Macedonia, starting their work there at Philippi. Having been beaten and imprisoned, they went to Thessalonica, where there was another upheaval. They then ministered in Berea, before arriving in Athens. Having spent some time in Corinth, they returned to Ephesus in Galatia (where there was another riot, Acts 16:6 – 19:41);
- Paul's third journey took him, Timothy, and several others, from Ephesus through Macedonia, and on to Corinth. After spending three months in Corinth they returned to Troas and Ephesus via Philippi, and then sailed to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1 – 21:19).



In 64CE Rome suffered a huge fire and many of the poorer areas were destroyed. Soon after the fire the emperor Nero started clearing the ruins to rebuild the city. Rumours soon spread that Nero had started the fire to give him an excuse to rebuild the less desirable suburbs and had, in fact, been seen watching the fire from the balcony of his palace, playing the violin. As these rumours gained momentum Nero needed to find a scapegoat to blame and turned on a new Jewish sect – the Christians. Nero accused them of not acknowledging Caesar as their lord (as they refused to bow to the emperor when he passed by) and of eating human flesh (obviously referring to the sacrament of Communion). The Christians in Rome were subjected to the most horrendous persecution and torture. Whole families were rounded up and crucified, children were thrown to wild animals in the

arena and hundreds were coated in tar and burnt alive to light up Nero's palace. It was during this persecution that Paul (and Simon Peter) were arrested and eventually martyred. According to tradition Paul was beheaded.

*What is your response to the story of Paul's life, and death? How do you think this information will help you in understanding his Letter to the Philippians?*



## **PHILIPPI AND THE PHILIPPIANS**

Philippi was a Macedonian town in the plains east of Mount Pangaeus. The original name was Krenides. It was captured by Philip, father of Alexander the Great, in 360BCE, who renamed it in honour of himself. The city was built on the *Via Egnatia*, a military road linking Asia with Rome. This not only meant that Philippi was strategically important from a military point of view, but the road was also a major trade route. Philip developed several gold mines in the area, and even struck coins for the city. The marshes surrounding the city were drained and agriculture flourished. There was also a famous school of medicine in Philippi. Philippi was annexed by the Romans in 168BCE. It eventually became the "capital city" of the area. Although it was a Roman city, and its people were Roman citizens, they were more Greek in their customs, language and dress. The city was occupied by the Goths in 473CE. Over the next ten centuries it survived invasion by a number of different groups, including the Turks. It appears to have been abandoned in the fifteenth century. Extensive archaeological excavation has uncovered a large city, including an impressive palace and three basilicas.

## **PAUL AND THE PHILIPPIANS**

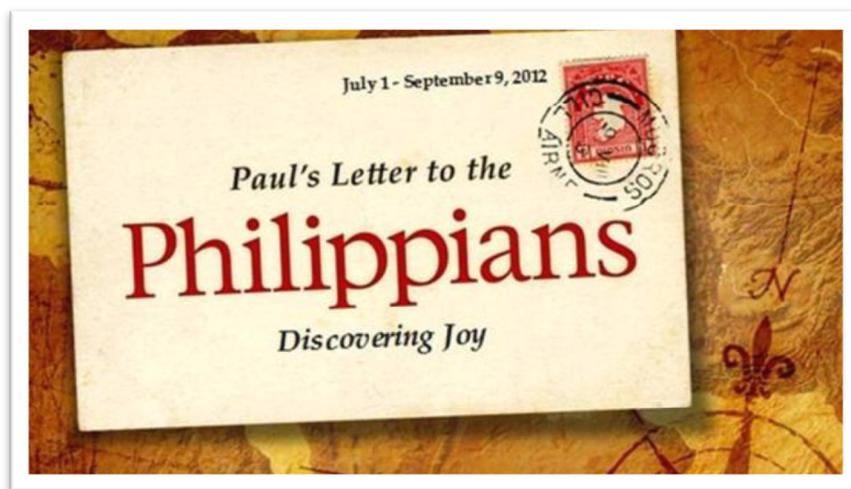
The apostle visited the Philippians on two occasions. During the first visit Paul was accompanied by Silas. A wealthy woman named Lydia became a follower of Jesus. Paul and Silas were accosted by a woman who was enslaved by her owners as a prophetess. Paul called upon the power of Jesus and she was healed. This led to him and Silas being imprisoned, and then dramatically released (Acts 16:11-40). The apostle's second visit was during his last missionary journey, when he spent some time during Easter in Philippi (Acts

20:6). However, the partnership between Paul and the Philippians was ongoing. Though poor, the Philippian church continued to assist the apostle with monetary gifts to help in his mission (4:15-18; 2 Corinthians 11:8-9). They also contributed to the relief of the Jerusalem church, probably because of a serious famine that hit all of Judea (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

*Do you know anything about the little Church in Philippi? What?*

## PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

It is generally agreed that the letter to the Philippians was written while Paul was in prison in Rome. In the letter the apostle refers to the “*Imperial Guard*” (1:13), an elite unit established to be the emperor’s bodyguards, and to the “*emperor’s household*” (4:22), a reference to the official staff of the emperor’s palace. As a Roman citizen, while awaiting trial, Paul would have been under “house arrest”. This meant that he stayed in his own house, or that of a family member or friend, permanently chained to a Roman guard. Of course, this meant that he had to feed himself, and the guard, and yet was under arrest, and so could not work to earn money. He, therefore, was reliant on the generosity and support of friends. The Philippian Church had proved to be one such “*friend*”, and had sent him a gift, brought by Epaphroditus. He writes to thank them, and address several concerns he has about the Church. Accepting that the letter was written from Rome it would have been written towards the end of Paul’s life (i.e. 62-64CE).



*Skim through the Letter to the Philippians. What are the main themes and subjects addressed by Paul? Which of them, in your opinion, apply to your context today?*

# THE LETTER OF JOY

The apostle writes of joy and rejoicing in some of his other letters (2 Corinthians 7:4; 1 Thessalonians 3:9), but it is in his letter to the Philippians that he really expresses that joy. There are nineteen instances of joy being expressed in this letter. Paul writes of his prayers always being filled with joy (1:4). He refers to the Philippian Christians as his “joy and crown” (4:1). From beginning to end the letter overflows with joy. Despite his sufferings Paul can still rejoice in the Lord, and find joy in the faith, and faithfulness, of the Philippians.

*What do you understand by the word “joy”? Is joy evident in your life? How? Why? Why not? What would it mean for you to be called God’s “joy and crown”?*



## PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:

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**Preparation for next week: Read Philippians 1:1-26.**



## WEEK 2:

# “TO LIVE IS CHRIST” (1:1-26)

## THE CENTRE OF OUR LIVING TODAY



Read Philippians 1:1-26, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group.

### INTRODUCTION: READING GOD’S WORD

*We begin our Lesson by acknowledging that we have read God’s Word.*

How did you respond to the reading set for this Lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?

### 1:1-8 GREETINGS AND THANKSGIVING

*Paul begins his letter as he does all his letters, with a greeting and blessing, and then a prayer of thanksgiving for those he is writing to.*

**1:1-2** Paul refers to the Christians at Philippi as “*saints*”. What does this word mean to you? What, do you think, Paul’s understanding is?

What does it mean, to you, that you are a “*saint*”?

**1:3-6** What did Paul mean when he said that “*He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion*”?

How is God doing this in your life?

**1:7-8** What does Paul mean when he said that the Philippians “*share in God’s grace*” with him?

What does this phrase mean in your life?

## **1:9-11 A PRAYER FOR THE PHILIPPIANS**

*Having greeted his readers and given thanks to God for them, he now lifts his readers to God in prayer.*

**1:9** What did Paul mean when he prayed that their love may “*abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight*”? Why is this prayer so important?

What does it mean for you to grow in this way?

**1:10** What did Paul mean by “*pure and blameless*”?

What does it mean, for you, to be “*pure and blameless*”?

**1:11** What did Paul mean when he asked that his readers be “*filled with the fruit of righteousness*”? How does one “grow” this fruit?

How is the “*fruit of righteousness*” growing in your life? How can you make sure it continues to grow each day?



## **1:12-26 PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AND HIS MINISTRY**

*The Philippians must have expressed concern that Paul was in prison, not only for him, but for his ministry. Why would God allow him to be locked up in a prison cell when he had so much work to do? Paul replies with all the vision and grace of a pastor.*

**1:12-14** In what way was the Gospel “advanced” through Paul’s imprisonment?

Has God ever taken something “bad” in your life and used it for His good? What? When? How? How did you respond at the time? Looking back now, how should you have responded at the time?

**1:15-18a** What did Paul mean when he said that he rejoices because “*Christ is preached*”?

How is Christ “preached” today in your community? And in your life? How can you, as a Christ-follower and a part of your Church Family, “preach Christ” more?

**1:18b-26** What do you think Paul meant by verse 21?

What does this phrase mean in your life?

**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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**Preparation for next week: Read *Philippians 1:27-2:13*.**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

The Bible is the “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17). But a sword is useless unless you know how to use it, and have it with you. The only way to do this is to memorise passages of Scripture. Over the next few weeks memorise *Philippians 1:21*.

**Philippians 1:21 (New Life Version)**

To me, living means having Christ. To die means that I would have more of Him.

# WEEK 3:

## JESUS – LIVING FREE (1:27-2:13)

### WHO DO YOU REMIND PEOPLE OF?



Read Philippians 1:27 – 2:13, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

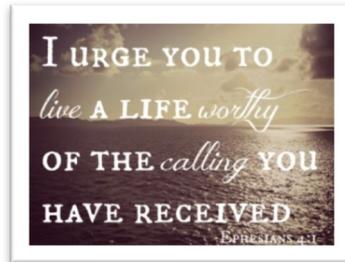
*We begin our Lesson by acknowledging that we have read God’s Word.*

How did you respond to the reading set for this lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?



### 1:27-2:4 A CALL FOR FAITH AND UNITY

*Paul instructs the Philippians to live out God’s calling in their lives in such a way that He is glorified in them.*

**1:27-28** What did Paul mean when he said the Philippians must conduct themselves in a manner “worthy” of the Gospel?

Do you do the same? How? How can you do so better today?

**1:29-30** What did Paul mean when he said that it had been granted to the Philippians “*also to suffer for Him?*” Is it a privilege to suffer for Christ? Why?

Have you ever suffered for your faith? When? Why? How did you respond? How could you have responded more positively?

**2.1-4** What does Paul mean when he says that the Philippians must be “*like-minded*”?

Are you “*like-minded*” as a Small Group? As a Church family? How? Why not? How can you grow in this important area?

## **2:5-11 THE EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY SET BY JESUS**

*To grow as Christ-followers, and as His family, our lives need to be characterized by humility and sacrificial love, as Jesus’ life was.*

**2:5-11** What is your response to the early hymn? Why?

What does it mean for you to have an attitude in life that is “*the same as that of Christ Jesus*”?

What do you understand by verse 10?

How do you respond to the statement that every person who has ever lived will eventually proclaim Jesus as “*Lord*”?

## **2:12-13 WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION**

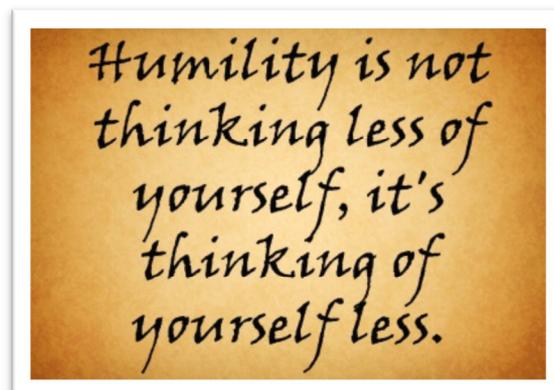
*Acknowledging Jesus as our “Lord” means that we are continually growing in His perfect love.*

**2.12** What did Paul mean when he said that the Philippians must “*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*”?

How are you working out your own salvation? How can you do so more consciously?

**2.13** What is “*God’s good purpose*”? How is He at work in the world to bring it to fruition?

What is “*God’s good purpose*” for your life? How is He at work in you to make it a reality? Is there anything you can “do” to make it happen more quickly?



**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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**Preparation for next week: Read *Philippians 2:14-3:11*.**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

**Philippians 1:21 (New Life Version)**

To me, living means having Christ. To die means that I would have more of Him.

# WEEK 4:

## “SHINE LIKE STARS” (2:14-3:11)

### STARS, BLACK HOLES AND YOU



Read Philippians 2:14-3:11, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

#### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

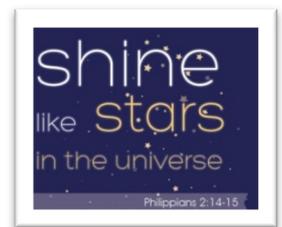
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How did you respond to the reading set for this lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?



#### 2:14-18 SHINE LIKE STARS

Paul encourages his readers to live a positive, loving life, so that their lives will shine in the darkness of a broken world.

**2:14-18** How often is your Church characterised by “*complaining and arguing*”? How often are you involved in it? Why? What could you rather do?

What did Paul mean when he said the Philippians “*shine like stars in the universe*”?

How does your Church “*shine*” in this way? If not, why not? What can you do to enable every member to “*shine*” for Jesus?

Do you “*shine like a star*”? How? Why not? What can you do about it?

What does Paul mean when he says that the Philippians “*hold out*” or “*hold onto*” the “*word of life*”?

What does this mean in your life, as an individual and a part of God’s family?

## 2:19-30 GOD'S FAITHFUL SERVANTS

*Paul now discusses two young men, both servants of God. Timothy had travelled with Paul from Lystra, while Epaphroditus was from Philippi, and had brought their gift to the imprisoned apostle.*

**2:19-21** Paul praises Timothy because he really cares for the Church, and doesn't want what's best for himself. Would Paul say the same thing about you today? Why? Why not?

**2:22-24** How are you involved in the "work of the Gospel"? How can you be more involved this week?

**2:25-30** Paul asks the Philippians to "welcome" and "honour" all those who serve as Epaphroditus does. Do you, as an individual and a Church, "honour" those who serve among you? How? How can you better do so?



## 3:1-11 KNOWING CHRIST

*Paul encourages his readers to rejoice in Jesus, for all of their life is in Him. Everything else in life, both from a faith and a wider perspective, counts for nothing. All that matters is knowing Jesus as our Saviour and Lord.*

**3:1-7** Who was Paul referring to when he warned about the "dogs"? What did they want the Philippians to do? Why did Paul consider this so negatively?

What things do people want to "add on" to faith in Jesus in the Church today? Why? What would Paul have said about them?

What have you "added on" in faith that Paul would have condemned? What would he tell you to do about it?

**3:8-9** What did Paul mean by wanting to "gain Christ, and be found in Him"?

What do these words mean in your life?

**3:10-11** Paul's desire was to "know Christ", to experience the "power of His resurrection", and to be a part of the "fellowship of sharing in His sufferings"?

What did he mean with each of these phrases? What does each one mean in your life?



**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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**Preparation for next week: Read *Philippians 3:12-4:3*.**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

**Philippians 4:4 (New Life Version)**

Be full of joy always because you belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of Joy!

## WEEK 5:

# “GROWING UP IN JESUS” (3:12-4:3)

## SAVED TO...?



Read Philippians 3:12-4:3, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

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How did you respond to the reading set for this Lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?



### 3:12-19 STRIVING AFTER PERFECTION

*Paul sees all of life as a journey towards perfection in Jesus. He, therefore, challenges the Philippians to follow his example as they walk their life journey in Christ. They are not to follow those around them, but to be different, because they are different.*

**3:12-14** Paul suggests that the “goal” of our Christian life is Christian perfection. What did he mean?

What does it mean for you to be “perfect”? How are you growing in God’s perfection? What can you do to ensure you are journeying towards the right goal in your life?

**3:15-16** What do you think Paul meant by us being “mature”?

Do you “live up to” your “maturity” as a child of God? Explain.

**3:17-19** What does Paul mean with the phrase “their glory is their shame”?

What do Christians in your Church and community do that they think is glorious, but is actually shameful in the eyes of God and others? Is there anything you do that would fall into this category? What? Why? What can you do about it?

### **3:20-4:1 HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP**

*Paul now gives a startling reason for why Christians are different: it is because we are citizens of heaven.*

**3:20-21** What did Paul mean when he stated that his readers are “*citizens of heaven*”?

How does your “*citizenship in heaven*” affect how you live as a citizen of your country and community?

What was Paul talking about when he said that God “*will transform our lowly bodies*”?

Does this knowledge impact the way you live in your body now? How? Why not?

**4:1** How should we “*stand firm in the Lord*”?



### **4:2-3 LIVING AS FAMILY**

*For Paul, our living as citizens of heaven starts in the Family of the Church.*

**4:2-3** Why, do you think, Paul was so worried about two people not agreeing with one another?

Are there any disagreements in your Church? How are they affecting those involved? And the rest of the church?

Paul asks one of the local leaders to make sure that two of them come to harmony. What can you do to help bring about peace in the situation you have just described?



**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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*Preparation for next week: Read Philippians 4:4-9.*

**MEMORY VERSE:**

**Philippians 4:13(New Life Version)**

I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength.

# WEEK 6:

## LIVING IN JESUS TODAY? (4:4-9)

OK... SO HOW?



Read Philippians 4:4-9, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

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How did you respond to the reading set for this Lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?



### 4:4-6 PRACTICAL STEPS TO LIVING IN JESUS

*As in each of his letters, Paul draws towards the ending by offering practical guidance in living the Christian life.*

**4:4** What, do you think, Paul meant by the word “rejoice”? Why is it so important that Christians live a life of rejoicing?

Do you know the joy of God in your life? How do you experience it? Why not? What does it mean for you to “rejoice” today?

**4:5** While the world applauds the people who are forceful and get what they want, Paul tells his readers that they should be exactly the opposite. What is meant by “gentleness”? Why is it so important?

Do others experience you as “gentle”? How? Why not? What can you do today to become more “gentle”?

**4:6** What does Paul mean by the three words he uses in this verse: “prayer”, “petition” and “thanksgiving”?

Do your prayers include all three parts discussed above?

What are you anxious about? What two things, according to Paul, should you do about it? How can you make them a part of your daily life?



## 4:7 THE PEACE OF GOD

*Paul knew that in rejoicing, living in God’s grace and relationship-prayer, the Christian will experience the peace and wholeness of God.*

**4:7** What did Paul mean when he promised his readers “the peace of God”?

Have you ever experienced God’s peace? When? Why? Do you experience it now? How? What can you do to grow in His peace?

Why did he say it would “guard our hearts and minds”?

How does this promise apply to your life today?



## 4:8-9 THE ORIGINS OF LIVING IN JESUS

*Paul knew that everything that happens in our lives, both good and evil, begins as a thought in our mind. Therefore, for him, it was absolutely vital that the Christian be in control of his or her thoughts. Good, grace-filled thoughts result in life-giving actions, while selfish destructive thoughts become sin and sadness.*

**4:8** Go through Paul’s list carefully. What do you understand by each phrase? How do they apply in your life?

**4:9** For Paul, peace is not just something that God pours into our lives, but the grace of God that grows in us as we live in Him. How can you, as a group, encourage and enable each other to grow in His peace?

**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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**Preparation for next week: Read *Philippians 4:10-23*.**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

**Philippians 4:13 (New Life Version)**

I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength.

# WEEK 7:

## CONTENTED IN JESUS (4:10-23)

### WHY DO I ALWAYS WANT MORE?



Read Philippians 4:10-23, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

#### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

*We begin our Lesson by acknowledging that we have read God’s Word.*

How did you respond to the reading set for this Lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?

#### 4:10-13 CONTENTED IN JESUS

*Paul begins to draw his letter to a close as he thanks the Philippians for their gift to him. Of course, being Paul, he couldn’t miss an opportunity to teach a truth about living in Jesus.*

**4:10-12** What do you think, was Paul’s secret to being content “*in any and every situation*”?

How content are you in life right now? What would Paul have said in response to your answer? How can you become more like Paul in your attitude towards life?

**4:13** The “secret” to Paul’s contentment – living in Jesus! Can you make the same statement? If not, why not?



Have you memorized this verse yet? See if you can write it down from memory:

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**4:14-20 CARING FOR GOD’S SERVANTS**

*Paul thanks the Philippians for their practical care for him, in the past and now that he is in jail. He is happier, though, that God is glorified in their generosity.*

**4:14-17** How do you, as an individual and Church, care for those who serve among you? Is there a specific need you can meet?

**4:18** The Philippian’s gifts to Paul not only met his needs, and enabled him to continue in his ministry, but were pleasing to God. How do you understand his reference to an offering and a sacrifice?

Do you see yourself caring for God’s servants as Paul did?

**4:19** How does this promise apply to your life today?

**4:21-23 CLOSING GREETINGS**

*Paul closes his letter off as he always does, with final greetings and a blessing.*

**4:21-11** For Paul, the Philippians and Roman Christians were all one family. What does this mean in the relationships between your Church and neighbouring Churches?

**4:23** Why do you think Paul closed all his letters with this blessing?

Does your church close off each service with the benediction? Why? What do you mean when you say the blessing at the close of a service?

**CONCLUSION – LIVING IN JESUS THIS WEEK**

Spend a few moments in prayer, reflecting on the Scripture read, and the discussion and new understanding it gave rise to during this session. What struck you the most today?

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This week I heard God say to me:

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**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THIS WEEK:**



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**Preparation for next week:**

**Read through *Philippians* one more time.**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

Can you repeat all three? Freshen up on them for next week.

**Philippians 1:21 (New Life Version)**

To me, living means having Christ. To die means that I would have more of Him.

**Philippians 4:4 (New Life Version)**

Be full of joy always because you belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of Joy!

**Philippians 4:13 (New Life Version)**

I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength.

# WEEK 8:

## LIVING IN JESUS TODAY!

LIVE... SHINE... SHOW!



Read right through the Letter to the Philippians, either in preparation for the Lesson, or as a group at the start of the lesson.

### INTRODUCTION – READING GOD’S WORD

*We begin our Lesson by acknowledging that we have read God’s Word.*

How did you respond to the reading set for this Lesson?

Did anything strike you? What? Why?

Did you struggle to understand anything? What? Why do you think it is not clear to you?

How did others in the group understand the same passage? Is their understanding helpful?



### READING THE LETTER

Thinking back through the reading you did for this study, what struck you the most when reading the text?

Is there a section of the text or a certain subject addressed by the text that you need to investigate and study further? How and when are you going to do this?

### LIVING IN JESUS

What is the one thing that you have learned during this study? How has it affected your life?

What do you need to do in the near future so that you can more effectively live in Jesus (NB. Be practical!)?

**LIVING IN JESUS IN YOUR CHURCH**

What challenged you the most about your Church, and your ministry as a member, during the study?

What does God want you to do in your Church in response to this new understanding (NB. Be practical!)?

**LIVING IN JESUS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, COUNTRY AND WORLD**

What does this Book say into your life as you live as part of your community, your country, and the world?

How can you make sure that you are living in Jesus in each of these areas of your life?

**MEMORY VERSES:**

Write out Philippians 1:21 from memory:

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Write out Philippians 4:4 from memory:

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.....

Write out Philippians 4:13 from memory:

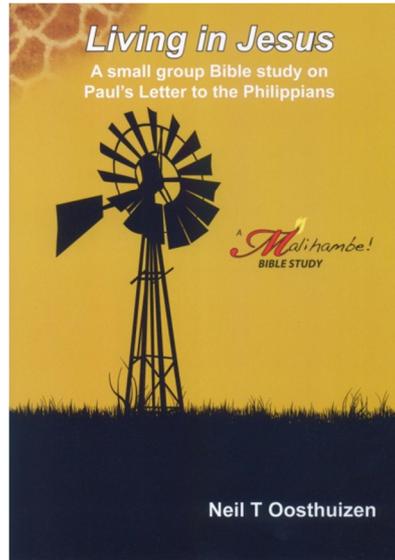
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**SPECIFIC PRAYER NEEDS FOR THE GROUP:**



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## RESOURCES USED IN THIS MATERIAL:



**Thanks so much to Rev Dr Neil Oosthuizen for giving us his permission to use this amazing book for this Series!**

*Images: Google Images*

This book was produced and printed by the **Grace of God** and with contributions from: Neil Oosthuizen, Kerry Wetton, Carol Roodt and Shakes Mashinini.

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR GROUP AS YOU MAKE USE OF THIS BOOKLET!**

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