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Study Notes (Biblica)

Philippians 1:1–11

Paul was the first person to tell people in Philippi about Jesus. The story about this is recorded in Acts chapter 16.

After Paul left Philippi, other leaders and deacons continued helping the church.

Paul's prayers for the Philippian believers were full of joy. He remained very close friends with them. They were partners with him in spreading the good news about Jesus.

God worked in the hearts of the believers and did good through them. Paul prayed for them to continue living the way Jesus had taught people to live. Then they would be ready for Jesus' return.

Philippians 1:12–30

Paul hadn't done anything wrong but he had been put in prison. This was a time of suffering and struggle for him. Yet he was full of joy because the truth about Jesus was being made known.

Paul preached to everyone around him. This included his prison guards. Other believers were encouraged by Paul's example. While Paul was in prison, they spread the message about Jesus more boldly.

Paul didn't know what would happen to him in prison. Whether he lived or died wasn't what mattered to Paul. What mattered to Paul was Christ receiving glory through his life.

Paul believed that he would be set free from prison. He talked about visiting the Philippians again. He encouraged the church to keep working together as one. They were being opposed in their city as they preached the good news about Jesus. Following Jesus as Lord led to suffering and struggle. Paul reminded them that the Holy Spirit gave them the strength they needed.

Philippians 2:1–18

Belonging to Jesus brought many spiritual blessings into the lives of the Philippian believers.

Paul explained how believers should treat one another because of these blessings. Believers must treat others the way that Jesus treated people.

Jesus has always been Lord and God. But when he was on earth, Jesus made himself humble. He was a leader who served. He was willing to suffer and be put to death. He did all of this because he loved people and wanted to save them.

In the future all that God created will recognise who the Lord Jesus Christ is. This is God's good purpose for the world. God wants believers to be a part of fulfilling his purpose. They do this by following Jesus' example. They mustn't complain and argue. They are to serve one another and others who aren't believers. This sets them apart like stars that shine brightly in the night sky.

Paul was glad and joyful that this was happening among the Philippians.

Philippians 2:19–30

Paul wanted to visit the Philippian church again. Paul was humble when he made plans. He knew that what he hoped for would only happen if the Lord allowed it.

He planned to send Timothy and Epaphroditus to encourage the Philippians. These men were examples of believers who thought and acted like Jesus. Serving Jesus faithfully was what mattered most in both of their lives.

Paul loved Timothy and Epaphroditus deeply. They were like a son and a brother to him. This showed the close relationship believers can have with one another in God's family.

Philippians 3:1–21

The Philippian believers could be full of joy because they belonged to the Lord. Yet some people taught that Gentile believers had to be circumcised to belong to Jesus.

Paul explained that people shouldn't trust in circumcision or anything else that humans can do. Nothing that human beings do can make them right with God. Paul had done many things that made him look like an important Jew. But those things didn't save him.

God saves people when they believe that Jesus is Lord and Christ. Paul had joy while he was alive because he knew Christ. He was already living as a citizen of heaven. His goal for the future was to be with Jesus for ever.

Jesus will return to earth from heaven. He will bring everything on earth under his control. God will raise Jesus' followers from the dead. At the resurrection they will have new bodies like Jesus has. Paul longed for this. He wanted the Philippians to follow his example and have that goal too.

Philippians 4:1-9

Paul had a very close relationship with the Philippian believers. Many of them had worked together with him to share the good news about Jesus.

Two women were having a disagreement. Paul urged them to continue working together. What would make this possible was the truth that they all belonged to the Lord. That is what Paul meant about the Book of life.

Earlier, Paul had told the Philippian believers to think and act as Jesus did (Philippians 2:5). Here he explained that this includes being full of joy and praying about everything. It also includes thinking about what is true, noble and lovely. Doing these things and thinking about these things leads to having God's peace. This helps believers in every area of their lives.

Philippians 4:10-23

Several times the Philippian believers shared what they had with Paul. Their gifts of money helped him to continue his work as an apostle.

The way they gave so freely was like a gift they gave to God. It was an offering that pleased God. It also made Paul happy.

Paul went through many good times and he also went through many difficult times. He learnt how to be content when he had everything he needed. He also learnt to be content when he didn't have what he needed. Christ gave him the strength to be content no matter what was happening to him.

Paul and the Philippians belonged to the same Lord. So Paul knew that God would make sure that the Philippians also had what they needed. God shares his wonderful riches with all who belong to Christ. Paul was talking about spiritual blessings. God's people give him glory because of the wonderful gifts he shares with them.