

The background of the page features a dark, moody gradient. In the lower half, there are silhouettes of several people sitting and reading books. The silhouettes are dark against the lighter, hazy background, creating a sense of quiet study and reflection.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY PLAN

# The Letter to the Philippians

Walk Paul's letter of joy chapter by chapter — four discovery studies for established groups, written from a prison cell and overflowing with Christ.

4 Bible Studies by CoMission

# The Letter to the Philippians

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# How a Discovery Bible Study works

**This page is for whoever leads the study. Everyone else only needs the passage.**

A Discovery Bible Study has no teacher. The person leading only asks the questions; the Bible does the teaching. That is what makes it simple enough for anyone to lead — no title, no training, no materials, no money.

## EAT, DIGEST, GROW

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**Eat the Word** — Read the passage aloud, read it again, then close the Bible and have someone retell it in their own words. Reading is the bite, re-reading the chewing, the retelling the swallow. If the group can't retell it, read it once more before going on.

**Digest** — Work through the four questions. This is where the passage turns into faith and obedience — answered from what the text actually says, not from what someone already knew.

**Grow** — Growth is God's part, not yours. One plants, another waters, but God gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7). Do the cycle faithfully and leave the growing to Him.

## THE FOUR QUESTIONS

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*Answer from what the passage actually says — stay in the text.*

- 1. What does this passage show me about God?**
- 2. What does it show me about people — and about myself?**
- 3. What will I obey this week? (a concrete step, with a day)**
- 4. Who will I tell?**

## THE SHAPE OF A MEETING

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**Look back** — What are you thankful for? What is hard right now? How did you obey what we found last time, and who did you tell? Pray briefly for each other.

**Look up** — Read, re-read, retell — then the four questions.

**Look forward** — Each person says their own “I will...” out loud and names one person they will tell. Next time, the group asks about both. Asking is what turns a discussion into obedience.

## THE ONE RULE: DON'T TEACH

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The moment you start explaining, the group stops discovering. If someone says something that is not in the passage, do not correct them — ask, kindly, “Where do you see that in this passage?” and let them look. The text and the group sort it out. This is the rule that lets someone who has been in two studies lead the third.

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Four to fifteen people. About an hour, once a week. Nothing else required.

## How to use this plan

### Who this is for

- **Established groups of committed disciples — not new believers.** The readings are whole chapters, much longer than the short passages in the starter plans. A group should already have the DBS habits — reading, retelling, the four questions, an “I will...” — before taking on a whole book.
- **The point is still faith, not knowledge.** A whole-book study is not a Bible-survey course. Resist the pull toward commentary, background trivia, and “covering material.” The same simple question drives every study: *what is God showing us, and what will we obey?*

### How to use it

- **One chapter per study, the DBS way.** Read the chapter (aloud, in sections, if that helps), **retell it in your own words**, then work the four questions. Because chapters are long, it’s fine for the retelling to trace the chapter’s main movements rather than every detail.
- **Let the follow-up prompts serve, not steer.** Each study’s extra prompts under the four questions point at one thread in the chapter. If the group discovers a different thread, follow the group — the prompts are a help, never the agenda.
- **End every study in obedience.** An honest “I will...” and **one person you’ll tell** — the same discipline as every other plan. Longer readings never excuse skipping the response.
- **Pace to the group, not the calendar.** One chapter a week finishes Philippians in a month — short enough to walk twice. Linger where a chapter opens up — especially the hymn of chapter 2 — and let a group that finishes hungry go straight into another whole book.
- **Facilitate, don’t teach.** With more text on the table the temptation to lecture grows. Keep asking, “Where do you see that in the chapter?” *Don’t chew their food for them.*

# Philippians 1 — To live is Christ

## Philippians 1

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### 1 Eat

Read the passage slowly, read it again, then retell it in your own words. If you can't retell it, read it once more.

☐ Read ☐ Reread ☐ Retell

### 2 Digest

Answer from what the passage actually says — stay in the text.

#### 1. What does this passage show me about God?

*What has happened to Paul, and how does he keep describing his chains — as a setback, or as something else? (vv. 12–18)*

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#### 2. What does it show me about people — and about myself?

*Paul says 'to live is Christ, and death is gain' (v. 21). What would have to change for that sentence to be true of you?*

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#### 3. What will I obey this week? (a concrete step, with a day)

*Paul prays that their love 'may abound more and more in real knowledge and depth of insight' (v. 9). Who will you pray that prayer for, by name, every day this week?*

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#### 4. Who will I tell?

*Because of Paul's chains, others 'dare all the more to proclaim the word of God without fear' (v. 14). Whose courage could your story stir — and who will you tell it to this week?*

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### 3 Grow

Growth is God's part, not yours. Do the cycle faithfully and trust Him to give the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7).

### ★ Pray

*Jesus, you began a good work in me and you will carry it on to completion by your day. Teach me to say with Paul that to live is Christ — whatever my circumstances.*



This study online

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**NEXT STUDY** Philippians 2 — The mind of Christ

[comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/02/](https://comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/02/)

# Philippians 2 — The mind of Christ

## Philippians 2

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### 1 Eat

Read the passage slowly, read it again, then retell it in your own words. If you can't retell it, read it once more.

☐ Read ☐ Reread ☐ Retell

### 2 Digest

Answer from what the passage actually says — stay in the text.

#### 1. What does this passage show me about God?

*Trace the downward and upward movement of vv. 6–11. What does Jesus let go of, how low does he go, and how does God respond?*

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#### 2. What does it show me about people — and about myself?

*'In humility value others as more important than yourselves' (v. 3). Where are selfish ambition or empty conceit hiding in your life right now?*

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#### 3. What will I obey this week? (a concrete step, with a day)

*'Do everything without complaining or grumbling' (v. 14). In which one situation will you obey that this week — and how will anyone notice you shining 'like stars in the sky'?*

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#### 4. Who will I tell?

*Paul points to Timothy and Epaphroditus as living examples. Who gets to watch your life up close — and who will you invite closer this week?*

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### 3 Grow

Growth is God's part, not yours. Do the cycle faithfully and trust Him to give the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7).

### ★ Pray

*Lord Jesus, you emptied yourself, took the form of a servant, and humbled yourself to death on a cross. Give me that same mindset — a heart that values others as more important than myself.*



This study online

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**NEXT STUDY** Philippians 3 — Knowing Christ is worth everything

[comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/03/](https://comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/03/)

# Philippians 3 — Knowing Christ is worth everything

## Philippians 3

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### 1 Eat

Read the passage slowly, read it again, then retell it in your own words. If you can't retell it, read it once more.

☐ Read ☐ Reread ☐ Retell

### 2 Digest

Answer from what the passage actually says — stay in the text.

#### 1. What does this passage show me about God?

*What is on Paul's list of credentials (vv. 4–6), and what does he now call all of it? What made the difference?*

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#### 2. What does it show me about people — and about myself?

*Paul's one ambition is 'to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings' (v. 10). Said honestly, what is your one ambition?*

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#### 3. What will I obey this week? (a concrete step, with a day)

*'Forgetting what lies behind and striving towards what is ahead' (v. 13). What from your past — a failure or an achievement — will you leave behind this week to keep running?*

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#### 4. Who will I tell?

*'Our true home is in heaven' (v. 20). Who around you lives without that hope, and how could they see the pattern you follow (v. 17)?*

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### 3 Grow

Growth is God's part, not yours. Do the cycle faithfully and trust Him to give the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7).

### Pray

*Christ Jesus, you took hold of me. Teach me to count everything as loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing you, and to press on toward the goal, forgetting what lies behind.*



This study online

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**NEXT STUDY** Philippians 4 — Joy, peace, and contentment

[comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/04/](https://comission.cc/en/study/whole-book-philippians/04/)

# Philippians 4 — Joy, peace, and contentment

## Philippians 4

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### 1 Eat

Read the passage slowly, read it again, then retell it in your own words. If you can't retell it, read it once more.

☐ Read ☐ Reread ☐ Retell

### 2 Digest

Answer from what the passage actually says — stay in the text.

#### 1. What does this passage show me about God?

*What does Paul say to do with anxiety (vv. 6–7), and what does he promise will protect our hearts and minds?*

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#### 2. What does it show me about people — and about myself?

*Paul 'learned the secret of being content in any and every situation' (v. 12). Where is discontent loudest in your life, and what would contentment look like there?*

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#### 3. What will I obey this week? (a concrete step, with a day)

*'Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put these into practice' (v. 9). Which one thing from this letter will you put into practice this week?*

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#### 4. Who will I tell?

*The Philippians partnered in the gospel 'from the very first day' (1:5), giving so it could travel. Whose gospel work will you tangibly support — and who needs to hear from you this week?*

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### 3 Grow

Growth is God's part, not yours. Do the cycle faithfully and trust Him to give the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7).

### ★ Pray

*Father, teach me to find joy in you always, to bring you every request with thanksgiving, and to be content in any circumstance through him who gives me strength.*



This study online

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