

Philippians: “To call for the Philippians to live joyfully as citizens of God’s kingdom in a manner worthy of the gospel even in the face of internal and external pressures.”
– Matthew Harmon

Paul’s affection for the Philippians is rooted in grace.

Pt. 1 The Messengers of Grace (vs. 1a)

- Acts 7-9
- Philippians 3:5-6

Pt. 2 The Recipients of Grace (vs. 1b)

- Acts 16

Pt. 3 The Means of Grace (vs. 2)

- Psalm 121:1

The question of identity is as old as human history. It is vital that we know who we are. Philippians 1:1-2 provides us with at least a partial answer.

As believers, we are servants of Jesus Christ, meaning that we belong to Him and we are at His disposal.

We are saints, meaning that we are set apart for God’s special purposes in this world.

We are in Christ Jesus, which means that we are now under His control and authority.

We are recipients of God’s matchless grace, meaning that we possess that which we do not deserve.

We are recipients of God’s peace, meaning that we are no longer under His wrath and condemnation but rather in a right relationship with Him.

We are sons and daughters of God, meaning that we are part of a new spiritual family that transcends even the bonds of our earthly families.

Is this how you view yourself?

Is this how you view fellow believers?

(Matthew Harmon - *Philippians: A Mentor Commentary*)

Questions for Reflection:

1. Go back and read Acts 16:6-40. What do you find most encouraging in that chapter? What do you find most challenging?
2. Do you find it difficult to share the gospel with people? What encouragement can you find in Acts 16 regarding personal evangelism?
3. What are some common themes in Philippians? Which theme strikes you as being especially relevant for your life?
4. How do you hope our church will benefit from studying Philippians?
5. Philippians talks a lot about joy. Compare the joy Paul talks about to common references to joy in our culture.
6. Philippians is one of the most memory-versed books of the Bible. Identify some verses or passages that you want to memorize as a part of our study series.
7. What do you find most encouraging in Paul's greeting?
8. What does it mean to be *in Christ*? What impact does that have on your life?

Adapted from *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Philippians* by Tony Merida & Francis Chan