

**Hope and Joy in the Midst of Adversity**  
**The University of Adversity: God's Classroom for Transformation**  
**Philippians 1:1-30 (page 53)**

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**Adversity brings greater opportunity...**

• **To pray and be thankful for people in my life (vs 1-11)**

- √ I am reminded to be thankful for those who have partnered with me in life and ministry (v 4-8)
- √ Adversity reminds me to pray for their continued growth in the faith (vs 9-11)
- √ *Key perspective:* Remember God's faithfulness!

• **To declare the Good News of Jesus (vs 12-18)**

- √ Hardships do not impede the ministry, they serve to advance it.
  - I gain access to people I never would have had (vs 12-13)
  - It encourages others who are reluctant about speaking of Jesus (v 14)
  - Regardless of motives, Jesus is proclaimed (vs 15-18)

√ *Key perspective:* There are no accidents with God!

• **To sharpen the focus of my priorities (vs 19-26)**

- √ No matter what hardship I face, God is able to deliver me (vs 19-21)
- √ I no longer make decisions based on my pleasure or what is easiest for me, but what is best (vs 22-26)
- √ *Key perspective:* My future is secure with God!

• **For others to see Jesus in my life (vs 27-30)**

- √ Whatever the circumstances, I am to live consistent with the message of Jesus (v 27)
- √ The truth of Jesus is evident in my life as I:
  - live in unity with other believers (v 27)
  - live courageously toward opponents of Jesus (v 28)
- √ *Key perspective:* God's purposes will prevail!

***The lesson from God's "classroom"...***

Whatever adversity I encounter, I can really have hope and joy as I look to Christ and believe His promises.

## Philippians

### Theme:

Joy is a dominant theme of the Letter to the Philippians.

The word "joy" or "rejoicing" is used 16 times in these four chapters.

### Author/Date and Setting:

Paul the apostle wrote the letter from house arrest in Rome approximately AD 61.

### Audience:

The believers in Philippi, a Macedonian city (today, northern Greece) named after the father of Alexander the Great. It became part of the Roman Empire in 167 BC and had one of the leading schools of medicine at that time.

Paul visited Philippi on his second missionary journey in AD 51 about ten years prior to writing this letter. Acts 16:9-40 tells how the church was founded in Philippi. Acts 16:14-34 reveals two of the first converts in that city – Lydia, a businesswoman and a Roman jailer. We are also told that when Lydia and the jailer responded to Paul's message, so did the members of their households.

### Occasion of the Letter:

Paul was arrested in Jerusalem after completing his 3rd missionary journey (Acts 21-22). He spent two years in a prison in Caesarea prior to making his appeal to the emperor and being sent to Rome (Acts 23-28). The time is approximately AD 59 or 60. It appears that the Philippian church heard of Paul's imprisonment in Rome and wanting more information about his condition and wanting to help, they dispatched Epaphroditus to Rome with a large monetary gift

Epaphroditus brought news of the church in Philippi – Judaizers were causing trouble with their teachings and issues of discord. Paul intended to dispatch Timothy to them to help address the issues, but he could not come immediately (Phil 2:19-23). Additionally, while in Rome, Epaphroditus became seriously ill, nearly dying (Phil 2:25-30) but God healed him and Paul was sending him back to the Philippians soon.

