



IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
SERIES: TOGETHER FOR THE GOSPEL
SCRIPTURE: SUMMARY OF PHILIPPIANS
DATE: JULY 26, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Today, we are wrapping up our series through Philippians entitled “Together for the Gospel.” In our final lesson, we will look back at some common themes throughout the letter. Before we touch on those themes, we first wanted to provide a quick review of sorts.

We thought we would provide a “pop quiz” from some of the more famous verses from Philippians. Can you fill in the blanks from the verses below?

1. "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21)
2. "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6)
3. "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Philippians 1:27)
4. "Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind." (Philippians 2:2)

5. "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)
6. "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)
7. "Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name." (Philippians 2:9)
8. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Philippians 2:12)
9. "Do all things without grumbling or disputing." (Philippians 2:14)
10. "Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:20)
11. "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ." (Philippians 3:7)
12. "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Philippians 3:8)
13. "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on..." (Philippians 3:12)
14. "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead." (Philippians 3:13)
15. "Rejoice in the Lord always." (Philippians 4:4)
16. "Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand." (Philippians 4:5)
17. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6)
18. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely..." (Philippians 4:8)
19. "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." (Philippians 4:11)
20. "And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Explanation

Major Themes in Philippians

The Gospel

Above all else, Philippians is a letter about the gospel. Paul states its message most clearly in Philippians 3:9: "Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith." Paul leaves no room for

misunderstanding. A right standing before God is received through faith in Jesus Christ, not earned by our own works or righteousness.

Paul makes it abundantly clear that salvation is not based on our religious background, family heritage, or personal achievements. No one deserves credit for saving themselves. Our only hope is to place our complete trust in Christ alone. In an earlier sermon, Pastor Kyler summarized this truth well: "Jesus + nothing = everything; Jesus + anything = nothing." Paul expresses the same conviction in Philippians 3:7–8 when he writes, "Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ." Everything he once trusted had become worthless compared to knowing Christ. The gospel calls every believer to abandon confidence in themselves and rest entirely in the finished work of Jesus.

Partnership in the Gospel

Because Paul was convinced that the gospel alone brings salvation, he devoted his entire life to making Christ known. The gospel was not simply a message Paul believed; it became the defining purpose of his life. Rather than fitting the gospel into his plans, Paul organized his entire life around the gospel.

Paul expected the Philippians to live with that same commitment. He urged them to "let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1:27). No doubt he expected them to make Christ known to others, stay true to the gospel message against those who would try to distort it, and embrace its implications for joy and peace.

With the gospel message being primary, Paul repeated thanks the Philippians for their partnership in the gospel. From the very beginning of their relationship, they faithfully supported his ministry. Paul thanked God for their "partnership in the gospel" (1:5), reminded them that no other church had entered into the same partnership of "giving and receiving" (4:15), and recalled how they repeatedly met his needs (4:16). Their latest gift, delivered by Epaphroditus at great personal risk (2:25–30), demonstrated that gospel partnership involves more than financial support—it is a shared commitment to advancing the mission of Christ. Their generosity flowed from hearts that had first been transformed by the gospel itself.

Joy

Joy is one of the defining themes of Philippians. Throughout the letter, Paul repeatedly speaks of rejoicing, even while writing from a Roman prison. His joy was not rooted in favorable circumstances but in his relationship with Christ.

Paul frequently expresses his joy for the Philippians. He thanks God for them with joy (1:4), longs for his joy to be made complete as they walk in unity (2:2), and describes them as his "joy and crown" (4:1). He even invites them to share in that joy, saying, "I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me" (2:17–18).

Just as importantly, Paul models joyful living. Though imprisoned and uncertain whether he would live or die, he rejoices because Christ is being proclaimed (1:18). He learns to be content whether he has abundance or need because Christ strengthens him (4:11–13). Finally, Paul calls the Philippians to cultivate that same joy by rejoicing in the Lord (3:1; 4:4), replacing anxiety with thankful prayer (4:6–7), and filling their minds with what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (4:8–9).

Unity and Humility

Although Paul commends the Philippians throughout the letter, he also recognizes the importance of protecting the church's unity. Most notably, he addresses the disagreement between Euodia and Syntyche, two faithful women who had labored alongside him in the gospel. While the nature of their conflict is unknown, Paul urges them to agree in the Lord and calls upon the church to help restore unity.

Throughout Philippians, Paul teaches that genuine unity is impossible without humility. He encourages believers to strive together for the faith of the gospel (1:27) and to be "of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind" (2:2). Such unity requires believers to reject selfish ambition and instead "count others more significant than yourselves" (2:3–4).

Paul provides several living examples of this humility. He himself was willing to delay the joy of being with Christ so that he could continue serving the Philippians (1:23–25). Timothy genuinely sought the welfare of others rather

than his own interests (2:20–22). Epaphroditus risked his life to minister to Paul (2:25–30). Yet all of these examples ultimately point to Christ, who humbled Himself by taking the form of a servant and becoming obedient to death on a cross. Because of His perfect humility, God has highly exalted Him above every name (2:6–11).

Human Responsibility and God's Sovereign Work

Finally, Philippians beautifully holds together two biblical truths that must never be separated: believers are called to active obedience, and God is the One who empowers that obedience.

Throughout the letter, Paul repeatedly calls the Philippians to action. They are to live worthy of the gospel (1:27), reject selfish ambition (2:3), work out their salvation with fear and trembling (2:12), do everything without grumbling or disputing (2:14), press on toward the goal (3:13–14), stand firm in the Lord (4:1), and practice the truths they have learned from him (4:9). The Christian life requires intentional obedience and perseverance.

Yet Paul never leaves the impression that believers accomplish these things by their own strength. He reminds them that "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion" (1:6). Even their suffering for Christ has been graciously granted to them (1:29). Most importantly, after commanding them to work out their salvation, Paul immediately explains why they can do so: "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (2:13). Paul himself recognized that he can do all things through Christ who *strengthens* him (4:13). The Christian life is therefore one of faithful obedience empowered by God's gracious work within us. We strive because God is already at work, giving us both the desire and the ability to live for His glory.

Discussion Questions

- Has there been a particular application point from this series that has stuck with you?
- How is Immanuel similar or dissimilar to the Philippians church?
- Do you have a favorite verse from Philippians? If so, what and why?
- Is there an additional verse or two that would be profitable for you to memorize?
- Do you have any lingering questions from the series?

Conclusions or Applications

TOGETHER FOR THE GOSPEL

People unite around all kinds of causes. Some come together to fight poverty or hunger. Others work toward social reform, racial reconciliation, disaster relief, education, or countless other worthy efforts. These are important needs, and as Christians, we should care deeply about the well-being of those around us.

Yet the church is unique because what ultimately unites us is the gospel of Jesus Christ. While Christians should seek to love their neighbors and serve their communities, our greatest mission is to proclaim the good news that sinners can be forgiven and reconciled to God through faith in Christ. Every other ministry of the church flows from that central mission rather than replacing it.

For this reason, many conservative theologians have cautioned against what has been called the "social gospel." The concern is not with serving people or meeting practical needs—Scripture clearly calls us to do both. Rather, the concern is that the church might become so focused on improving earthly circumstances that it neglects its primary calling to proclaim the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Lasting hope is found not only in changed circumstances but in changed hearts.

This conviction shapes the way we seek to minister at Immanuel. When we operate our food pantry, we do more than provide groceries. Every guest has the opportunity to meet with a trained volunteer who will listen, pray, and share the hope of the gospel. The same commitment guides our dental clinic ministry. Likewise, our basketball leagues and camps are about more than developing athletic ability. We want every child and family to hear the good news of Jesus Christ through relationships built on the court. Even our Go Trips are intentionally centered around partnering with faithful church planters who are committed to advancing the gospel in their communities.

This is also reflected in our mission statement: "For the Gospel, for the City, and for the World." The order of those phrases is intentional. We are first and foremost *for the gospel*, because we believe the gospel is God's power to save and transform lives. It is precisely because we are for the gospel that we are also for our city and for the world. The gospel compels us to love our neighbors, care for those in need, and serve our communities with

compassion. Our desire is not simply to improve lives for a moment but to point people to the lasting hope that is found in Jesus Christ. As we give ourselves first to the gospel, God uses us to bring both spiritual and practical blessing to the world around us.