

# Bible Studies for Life: October 6

*Purpose Exemplified • Philippians 1:1-11*

*By Bobby McKay*



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When studying the life of the Apostle Paul, you would think that if anyone had succumbed to bitterness or a gloomy outlook, it would have been him. He endured repeated hardships, imprisonments, slander, physical abuse, desertion, and many more difficulties. Instead, he persevered for Christ. In a country consisting of churches where its members quit when they get their feelings hurt or offended, we can learn a great deal about genuine joy from the book of Philippians and its author.

### **Philippians 1:1-5**

Writing from the confines of a prison cell, Paul pens words that express thanksgiving, joy, affection, and gratitude. The church at Philippi was not perfect (no church is), but he was grateful for their gospel witness. Some are waiting for their

church to be perfect and without difficulties. We know they will be waiting forever because it is not possible. Paul's maturity in Christ provided the means to celebrate no matter the situation. Too many times, people tie their joy to other people. When someone does that, they will be perpetually disappointed. But when our faith is in Jesus, we can truly know abiding joy in every season of life we encounter, a joy that transcends circumstances and transforms our outlook.

### **Philippians 1:6-8**

Paul shared, "he had them in his heart." This beautiful language reveals a caring individual with the heart of a pastor. Paul had two great hopes: God be glorified, and people come to know Him. These should also be the desires of each believer. Paul wanted the best from each church he ministered to and was prayerful for their continued commitment to the gospel. He encouraged them and went as far as to say he knew they would be faithful in the days ahead. This type of commitment is only possible because of Jesus' grace and long-suffering. He is our guide and our daily purpose. If you are tempted to give up on Jesus, remember He has never once given up on you! In verse eight, Paul tells them he misses them. As you minister with one another in your local church, a bond of Christian affection will occur.

### **Philippians 1:9-11**

No church leader should ever be satisfied with the state of their local church. Christ compels us to continue maturity and growth. There are always areas and opportunities for improvement within us and the church. A growing Christian is a knowing Christian. He/she knows of his/her need for Christ each day. They know joy and contentment are only found in Jesus. They know that situations around them can be unsettling, but they are committed to following Christ no matter what. The goal for each Christian to be more like Jesus will never change. We have the Holy Spirit to guide us in this

journey. Some in our churches have lost their joy and become antagonistic, angry, and bitter. Could it be they have taken their eyes off Jesus? If Paul could have genuine, lasting joy from prison, there is no reason for us not to have joy in our pews. Rejoice, Jesus loves you!

*McKay is pastor of New Liberty Baptist Church, Morton.*