

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

One

In Spirit and Purpose

Lesson Thirteen

Philippians

Rejoice In The Lord!

Lesson Goal: To show students that Christ brings us together for His purpose.

Scriptures: Philippians 2:1, 2

For Memory: “Then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” Philippians 2:2

ONE In Spirit And Purpose

Since beginning our reading in Philippians, we have been hearing Paul talk about unity. He urged the Philippians, in verse 27 of chapter 1 to “stand firm in *one spirit*, contending as *one man*...” Now, he comes to the place where he takes up one very special theme in this letter: church unity. He begins with the powerful words of the first verse, chapter two: “any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion...”*

Think of all the togetherness he lays out for us in that one part of a sentence. First, he wants to know if they are encouraged by their togetherness with Christ. We have talked about the fact that these folks were suffering persecution. They were harassed by their neighbors and the government. They knew about Paul’s suffering and sympathized with him. Yet, in all this, Paul reminds them that they have experienced the presence of Christ in their lives and from that they are encouraged.

Regan, Sally, and Jerry were the best of friends. They went to the same school and had classes together. They really had a good time together and even volunteered for a community project (picking up trash on the street) as a team. There were times when Arthur, a trouble-maker, tried to get them mad at one another or cause problems with the teacher by telling lies about them. Now, their favorite teacher was Mrs. Hart. She knew about their friendship and their teamwork. So, when Arthur tried to get them in trouble, Mrs. Hart asked them to do a special presentation to their class. This presentation was not easy at all, but they were really encouraged that Mrs. Hart had noticed them and wanted them to do something special for her.**

Paul told his friends at Philippi that Jesus had noticed them, and was giving them a special task. He was preparing them for that task the way that only Jesus can. First, He offered them encouragement. They knew that when they ask Jesus to be their Savior and Lord, He came into them and lived with them in the person of God’s Holy Spirit. They were *united* with Christ.

The second thing Paul tells them is that they can find real comfort in His love.

Regan, Sally, and Jerry were encouraged by and comforted by their teacher’s pres-

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and her love. She showed them that she loved them by being involved in their lives and doing good things for them, even when others were not willing to do so. God loves us so much that not only did He make us, and made the world we live in, but He keeps the world going, in spite of all the bad things that humans do to it. He also, and most importantly, sent Jesus to live with us, to die for us, and to overcome death so that we also can live, even after we die. That ought to bring us a lot of comfort.

Paul goes on to ask if the Philippians were experiencing any tenderness and compassion. He is connecting these human feelings with God's presence in their lives. We know that tenderness is kindness, gentleness, affection, sympathy, and mercy. When we live in God's Spirit, we live tenderly. We know that compassion is somewhat the same as tenderness, but also includes an urgency to become involved with the other person in their situation. When we live in God's Spirit, we live with compassion.

So, Paul is saying that the Philippians, because they are together, because they are together in Christ, and because their togetherness in Christ produces tenderness and compassion, they share not only one spirit, but also one purpose.

In our next lesson, we will discuss that purpose.

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.
**Stories in these lessons are original with the author. The teacher should feel free to enlarge or change the story to be more appropriate to his or her purposes.



Teaching Tips:

1. This lesson should be fun to teach. It is about God's loving provision for us.
2. Songs that emphasize telling the Good News, serving God with other Christians, Christian compassion, and living for Christ will be appropriate.
3. Pray with your students thanking God for being present in our lives to encourage and comfort us.
4. Thank God for His involvement in our lives and His blessing of tenderness and compassion to us.
5. Ask your students to think of some situations where the tenderness and compassion of God would make other people's lives better. Jesus showed tenderness and compassion in many ways. Some of the examples can be found in Mark 5:21-42 and Luke 18:35-43. Refer also to I John 3:16-20

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Student Worksheet

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For Memory: “Then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” Philippians 2:2

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=Paul begins with the _____ words of the first verse, chapter two: “any encouragement from being _____ *with Christ*, if any comfort from *His* _____, if any _____ *with the Spirit*, if any *tenderness and* _____...”

=Paul reminds them that they have experienced the presence of _____ in their lives and from that they are _____.

=Paul told his friends at Philippi that Jesus had _____ them, and was giving them a special task. He was preparing them for that task the way that only _____ can.

=The second thing Paul tells them is that they can find real _____ in God’s love.

=He also sent Jesus to _____ with us, to _____ for us, and to overcome death so that we also can _____, even after we die. That ought to bring us a lot of _____.

=When we live in God’s Spirit, we live _____.

=So, Paul is saying that the Philippians, because they are _____, because they are together in _____, and because their togetherness in Christ produces tenderness and _____, they share not only one spirit, but also one _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.