

# PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In  
The Lord!

Live Up  
To It

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Lesson Thirty-Six

# Philippians

## Rejoice In The Lord!

**Lesson Goal:** To encourage students to live up to God's calling...His expectations.

**Scriptures:** Philippians 3:15, 16

**For Memory:** "Let us live up to what we have already attained." Philippians 3:16

### Live Up To It

Paul, in verses thirteen and fourteen, said that there was a calling. We said it was to serve God as His witness. He said that the calling was worth our very best effort and that we should strain forward to accomplish every task God gives us. We said that it would require from us determination, discipline, and concentration.

In verse fifteen, the Philippians were told that, as we become mature Christians, this should be our view. Paul challenges the Philippians, and us, to have the same thoughts that he had...thoughts of giving everything that we are and have to please the God who loved us so much that He gave His only Son to die for our sins and to assure us a place with Him forever.\*

What does "mature Christian" mean? It means that you give yourself to God and live up to God's calling and leading in your life. Can you be a mature Christian before you are 18 or 21 years old. Of course! You can be a mature Christian at 12 years old if you try. And, there are some 60 year old Christians who aren't mature.

In I Corinthians 14:20, we have some very clear instruction that relates to this thought. It says, "In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults." When babies need something, they just cry. When adults need something, they go get it. They take responsibility. Mature Christians, whatever their age, get out there and live up to the calling and direction of God for living like Him.

The last part of the fifteenth verse is a little hard to understand. It is probably a clarification for those who have immature thoughts. Paul says that God will help you to see the ways you are wrong, and will clear up any misunderstanding you may have of His will. That "clearing up" from God may be as simple as realizing that we are on the wrong path, but sometimes God just breaks into our lives to set us straight.

Then Paul tells them that they should live up to what they have already accomplished. He gives them credit for growing as Christians. He spoke of their "partnership in the Gospel" and the fact that God had begun a great work in them. We saw that in the fifth and six verses of the first chapter.

In this sixteenth verse, it seems like Paul is saying that they are already in the race. They are already doing well. They are at the front of all the runners. Now, they must

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be careful not to mess up. It is a sad thing for an athlete to do well, maybe even win the race, but to be disqualified for breaking a rule. It happens all the time. A player catches the football and runs for a touchdown. But, the play is called back because he put one foot out of bounds as he was running down the sideline. In II Timothy 2:5, Paul says, “if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules.” It is not what the athlete thinks, or what the fans think, but what the judges or referees think.

You could say something of the same thing about a recipe. If you use all the right ingredients and mix them as instructed, you will get a great cake. However, if you don’t, the cake may fall and taste really bad. God calls us. He leads us to the goals, large and small, in life as we follow His upward call. He gives instructions in His Word, the Bible, that if we follow them we will be successful.

Living up to what God has called us to do and following Paul’s example of pressing on toward that goal is the right thing for Christians. It pleases God, who wants to tell us “well done!”

\*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.



### Teaching Tips:

1. We come across the term mature. In some versions of Scripture it is translated perfect. When Paul applies it to believers he is talking about knowing that the wisdom of this world is not the best wisdom. See I Corinthians 2:6, Colossians 1:28, and Ephesians 4:11-13.
2. Verse 15 points back to the idea that one should refuse to focus on the attainments of the past and place effort on the course that lies ahead. That is maturity.
3. This phrase, “live up to” is used three other times by Paul. Romans 4:12, Galatians 5:22-25, and Galatians 6:15, 16.
4. Songs about God’s call, Christian service, giving our all to Jesus, and serving others are appropriate.
5. Pray with your students: Ask God to lead you and your students to live up to His calling and to focus not on the past but on what God has for you to do now.
6. Living up to expectations is a common theme of life. Your students may be able to list things in their lives. Continue to do a good job on household chores. Continue to make good grades. Continue to do well at work, pleasing the boss.

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### *Student Worksheet*

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=Can you be a mature \_\_\_\_\_ before you are 18 or 21 years old. Of course!

You can be a mature Christian at 12 years old if you \_\_\_\_\_.

=In this sixteenth verse, it seems like Paul is saying that they are already in the \_\_\_\_\_.

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=God calls us. He leads us to the \_\_\_\_\_, large and small, in life as we follow His upward \_\_\_\_\_. He gives instructions in His Word, the \_\_\_\_\_, that if we follow them we will be \_\_\_\_\_.

=Living up to what God has called us to do and following Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ of pressing on toward that goal is the right thing for \_\_\_\_\_.

### 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.