

# PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In  
The Lord!

## A Good Reason For Getting Along

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Lesson Forty-One

# Philippians

## Rejoice In The Lord!

**Lesson Goal:** To encourage students to be helpers when there is disagreement.

**Scriptures:** Philippians 4:2, 3

**For Memory:** “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:3

### A Good Reason For Getting Along

Our Scripture lesson today tells us a very brief story about two women who had been disagreeing with one another. We don't know what they had disagreed about, and that is really unimportant. We do know that it was upsetting to Paul and most likely to the church at Philippi.\*

We should point out here that in many of the churches of that day, women had little to say and not much leadership at all. The Greek and Jewish cultures placed women in as invisible a role as was possible. Women were not allowed to speak in public, they were not to call attention to themselves in any way, and it even went so far that in some places women occupied a different part of the house than the men.

In Philippi, however, the culture was significantly different. Women were not only allowed significantly more freedom, but they led in many things. In Acts 16:13, we have record of Paul going to the riverside near Philippi to a prayer meeting of women. There he shared the Gospel with them, and Lydia became a believer. It is obvious from the rest of that chapter that Lydia was a wealthy business woman and a leader. Her home was referred to as Lydia's house. It is evident that in Macedonia, where Philippi was located, women had a leading role in the churches.

The names of the two women who had been disagreeing with one another were Euodia (u-O'-dee-uh) and Syntyche (Sin'-tI-che). Paul was concerned about their dispute and, in this letter, tried to help. Now, these women were important to Paul. He referred to them as persons who worked closely with him in sharing the Gospel. He pictured them as persons who were hard workers and who had made a big difference in the success of the church at Philippi. The fact that these two strong Christian women got into an argument just reminds us that we must always be on our guard. We should not let Satan get us into things that will slow us down in our Christian ministry.

Also, Paul relates these women to a man named Clement and “the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. We don't know who Clement was, but we do know that the phrase “names are in the book of life,” refers to people who have done very well for the Lord on earth and are noted as such in God's book of life.

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Paul called on someone in the church to help Euodia and Syntyche to agree with one another. That person was someone Paul trusted and who Paul felt could negotiate with them. That alone is a great compliment to this “yokefellow.” The fact that Paul doesn’t call this person by name could mean that he (or she) was a recognized leader in the church. There are those who can do a good job of guiding people in dealing with their disagreements. God uses them in His churches.

Paul urges Euodia and Syntyche to “agree with each other in the Lord.” His intent here might have been to call their attention back to chapter 2, verse 2. There he calls on the church at Philippi to make his joy complete “by being like minded (same word for agreeing with each other), having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” Also, in calling their attention to doing this “in the Lord,” Paul is using a phrase he has repeated several times in this letter. We discussed this in our last lesson.

What we should learn from this lesson is that Paul thought that the unity of the church was very important. He was willing to call the names of those who were causing disagreement, and urge the church leaders to help work it out. When we read the prayer of Jesus for His followers in John 17, we see how very important the unity of the church is to Jesus. If the church is not unified...if Christians are not really together...they aren’t like Jesus. A church divided is not a church in which Jesus can do all that He wants to do. Christians ought to try to help when there is disagreement.

\*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. The idea of a book of life is repeated in Scripture. See: Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; Revelation 3:5. Paul mixed correction with commendation: See our text today and I Corinthians 1:4-7, I Thessalonians 1:2-10, and Philemon 5. For additional references to the phrase “in the Lord,” see Philippians 2:19, 20; 3:1; 4:4; 2:29.
2. Can you think of a “peacemaker” in the church as an example?
3. Songs about faithfulness, unity, the witness of the church, and peacemaking are appropriate. “We Are One in the Spirit.”
4. Pray with your students: Thank God for people who will try to get along so that there can be unity in the church. Thank God for peacemakers. Thank God for standing with us to bring unity in Christian relationships.
5. Since the “book of life” is mentioned containing strong believers who helped Paul, you or your class members might want to list a few “heroes” of the faith.

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### *Student Worksheet*

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=In Philippi the \_\_\_\_\_ was significantly different. \_\_\_\_\_ were not only allowed significantly more freedom, but they \_\_\_\_\_ in many things.

=The names of the two women who had been disagreeing with one another were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Paul pictured them as persons who were hard \_\_\_\_\_ and who had made a big \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church at Philippi.

=There are those who can do a good job of \_\_\_\_\_ people in dealing with their disagreements. God uses them in His \_\_\_\_\_.

=What we should learn from this lesson is that Paul thought that the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church was very important. If the church is not unified...if Christians are not really \_\_\_\_\_...they aren't like \_\_\_\_\_.

### 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.