

LESSON 1

PARTNERS

Philippians 1:1–11



1 Think of your closest friends. Why are you thankful for each one?



Read the introductory material to Philippians 1:1–11 and the following notes:

☐ 1:1 ☐ 1:4 ☐ 1:4, 5 ☐ 1:6 ☐ 1:7 ☐ 1:7, 8 ☐ 1:10

2 Describe Paul's special relationship with the believers at Philippi. How did this relationship develop?

3 What is the “good work” that was begun in these believers?

4 How do love and knowledge work together to produce growth in the life of a believer?

5 Describe the different partnerships mentioned or implied in this section.



Partnership summarizes an important facet of Paul's view of the church. Paul was filled with joy as he thought about those who prayed for, encouraged, and supported him in Philippi. He had helped them just a few years earlier, and now they were helping him. It was a two-way relationship—there was mutual love and support. Partnership should characterize the church today. In fact, this is what it means to function as the body of Christ, helping and supporting your church and other believers you know.

6 What can a local congregation do to promote and nurture supportive relationships within the church?

7 How can your church partner with believers from other congregations?

8 Reflect on your growth in faith over the years—who encouraged you most and brought out the best in you? How did they do this?



9 Whom might you be able to encourage and support? Which of that person's needs might you be able to meet?

10 What are you doing to further caring relationships in your church or among your circle of friends? What opportunities do you have to do this?



11 Name at least one person who has helped you grow as a Christian, and then thank him or her for that encouragement by visit, phone, or letter.

12 Identify someone around you who needs encouragement today. Ask God to help you understand his or her circumstances and needs. What can you do to show you care and want to help that person grow?

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A Given Philippi's strategic location, what kind of city would you expect it to be? What unique resources and opportunities would be there? What typical problems and barriers for the church would you expect to find?

B What kinds of problems was the church in Philippi having? What did Paul advise? What similar kinds of problems do churches have today?

C How might the influence of Greek and Roman thought affect Paul's message

and approach to the Philippian believers? How should our culture affect the way we communicate God's Word?

D What do these opening verses suggest regarding Paul's personal circumstances and his attitude toward them?

E Why was Timothy with Paul at this time?

F To whom was the greeting "to all of God's people" (1:1) directed? What does this suggest about the nature of the church? What were the roles and responsibilities of the elders and deacons in the early church?

G What fruit of salvation (1:11) should we expect to see in our life? How does the cultivation of this fruit depend on Jesus?

H What gives us happiness? What robs us of happiness? What gives us joy?