

Auckland Chinese Baptist Church
(English Sunday School, 18-10-2015, 1200-1245)
New Testament Survey: Philippians (11/27)

Author
Paul

Date :
Probably around A.D. 61-63, some years after Paul had found the church in Philippi (the first one in Europe; see Ac. 16).

Theme
The joy of knowing Jesus

Historical Background

- 1 Paul was likely in prison when he wrote this letter. (Acts 28:11-31).
- 2 The possible four motives to write this letter:
A A thank you note to them for their love and partnership in the gospel (1:5; 4:10-19).
- 2 A report of his situation (1:12-26; 4:10-19). He wanted them to know that though he was in prison, he was not discouraged.
- 3 Urge them to stand firm against the errors of false teachers (2:27-28; 3:2-4; 18-19).
- 4 Paul was concerned about a serious clash between two women in the church whose disagreement was apparently affecting the unity of the whole body (4:2-3).

Characteristics

- 1 Paul's joy, even though he is in prison, flows from his awareness of the presence of Jesus (1:21-24).
- 2 His concern is that the Philippians reflect these same attitudes which were to be demonstrated through a lifestyle of mutual service (1:27-2:11), steadfastness in the truth (3:2-4:1), and dedication to the things of Christ (4:4-9).

Outline

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| 1:1-11 | Partners in Christ's gospel |
| 1:12-30 | Suffering for Christ's Sake |
| 2:1-11 | Imitating Christ's Humility |
| 2:12-30 | Examples of Christ's Examples |
| 3:1-11 | Knowing Christ's Sufferings |
| 3:12-4:1 | Pursuing Christ's Call |
| 4:2-9 | Joy in Christ's Nearness |
| 4:10-23 | Receiving Christ's Riches |

Open

- 1 What has given you the most joy last week?

Dig

1 From Acts 16.11-40, what can you discover about the first members of this church and their potential for growth and conflict?

2 Paul's prayers often give strong clues as to what his letter is about (see 1.9-11). What issues might he be concerned about for this church?

3 Paul's prison report can be seen in 1.12-14, 20-26; 2.27; 4.14-18. What are Paul's situations? His future prospects? His Morale?

Reflection

1 If you had to grade a church's success, what criteria would you use to judge: Size? Growth rate? Doctrine? Size?

