

# Jesus our Joy

October 1, 2006

Intro:           What Controls Your Life?           You can choose joy!

## I. The Birth of the Church at Philippi Acts 16

A. Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke – church planters

- In ancient times the site was in a gold mining area. After 400 B.C., Philip II of Macedon seized the mines, fortified the city, and named it for himself. Philippi

B. Lydia – successful businesswoman (upper class)

- First Convert to Christ in Europe
- *One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. Acts 16:14*

C. Slave Girl – demon possessed (Lower class)

- Foretold the future
- *When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. Acts 16:19*

D. Roman Jailer – chose joy over despair (Middle class)

- Joy in action: *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake...” Acts 16:25*
- *The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family. Acts 16:34*

## II. The Book of Philippians in short Outline:

- Chapter 1: Joy in spite of circumstances
- Chapter 2: The right attitude
- Chapter 3: Living with purpose.
- Chapter 4: Living with Peace; deep inner satisfaction

## III. How to choose Joy & cheerfulness?

A. Know who you are.

- “Servants of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:1)

B. Joy filled memories

- “I Thank God in all my remembrances of you” (1:3)

C. A confident Hope:

- “He who began a good work in you will carry it to completion (1:6)

D. A Heart full of love.

- And it is my prayer that your love may abound more... (1:9)

***Our study guide this week helps you learn more about the birth of the church of Philippi. In ancient times the site was in a gold mining area. After 400 B.C., Philip II of Macedon seized the mines, fortified the city, and named it for himself. Philippi, along with the rest of Macedonia, came under Roman control after 200 B.C. In 42 B.C. Philippi was the first church planted in Europe, and allowed for Christianity to jump into Europe and eventually spread to America.***

**Monday** -- Paul first visited Philippi on his second missionary journey in response to his Macedonian vision (*Acts 16:9*). They and his companions sailed from Troas across the Aegean Sea to Neapolis, on the eastern shore of Macedonia (*Acts 16:11*). Then they journeyed a few miles inland to "Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony" (*Acts 16:12*). Read the rest of the chapter to see this fascinating history!

**Tuesday** -- On the Sabbath, Paul went to a prayer meeting on the river bank. When Paul spoke, Lydia and others opened their hearts to the Lord (*Acts 16:13-15*). As a rule, Paul first went to the Jewish synagogue when he came to a new city. The fact that he did not do this in Philippi probably shows that Philippi had no synagogue. The Roman character of the city is apparent from Paul's other experiences in Philippi. He healed a possessed slave girl whose owners charged that Jews troubled the city by teaching customs unlawful for Romans to observe (*Acts 16:20-21*). The city magistrates ordered Paul and Silas to be beaten and turned over to the jailer (*Acts 16:20, 22-23*). After Paul's miraculous deliverance and the jailer's conversion, the magistrates sent the jailer word to release Paul (*Acts 16:35-36*). Paul informed the messengers that he was a Roman citizen. Since he had been beaten and imprisoned unlawfully, Paul insisted that the magistrates themselves come and release him (*Acts 16:37*). The very nervous magistrates went to the jail. They pled with Paul not only to leave the jail but also to leave town (*Acts 16:38-40*).

**Wednesday** -- Lydia was a successful businesswoman in Philippi and became the first European converted to Christ (*Acts 16:12-15*). Her name originally might have been the designation of her home, "a woman of Lydia," since Thyatira was in the province of Lydia. Being a worshiper of God, Lydia could have been a convert to Judaism, although this cannot be stated with certainty. She did know enough about Judaism to converse with Paul about the religion. Lydia hosted Paul and his entourage in Philippi after her conversion.

**Thursday** -- Ten years after Paul planted the church in Philippi, he wrote the "Letter to the Philippians. It is known as his "Book of Joy." 'Joy' is mentioned some 16 times in these four short chapters. (*read verses 3,4*) For a good dose of joy, take time today to prayerfully recall joyous memories of loved ones who have died, and friends still living.

**Friday** -- Read verses 5-7. How do you 'partner' today with other believers in the mission of Jesus Christ? If you aren't actively 'partnering', you are missing a great source of joy and fellowship. Call the church today and inquire about ways to partner with others for Christ's kingdom. It will bring you joy!