

Young Adults-Teachers Handbook

Lesson 1

Explain briefly the three missionary journey of Paul.

- A. The Church at Philippi: Paul visited Philippi in around A.D 52, upon the request of a believer in Macedonia.
- B. Unique Traits: a) The Epistle to the Philippians is a prison letter.
b) The letter was written in Rome
c) The letter was written sometime between A.D 63 and A.D 64
- C. The learners must find the circumstances that led to the Epistle to the Philippians, after reading the given Bible portions carefully.
- D. A brief hint of the contents of the Epistle (Page 5) is given below:
(However, the teacher must ask the students to read the Bible portions and write the answers on their own. Should they have any trouble in finding or expressing the answers, the teacher must step in)

1: 1-4 Greetings, Felicitations and Expressing Gratitude.

1: 12-26 Paul's experiences in Prison and his attitude to death.

1:27- 2:16 Christological Hymn

2:17- 3:1(a) Missionary plans

3:1 (b)- 4:1 Warning against False Teachers/Prophets

4:2- 4:9 Unity, joy and Higher Vision

4:10-20 The generosity of the Philippians

4: 21-23 Final exhortations and greetings. Benediction

Homework: For Lesson 2, ask students to formulate questions for a quiz, based on Philippians 1: 1-27.

Lesson 2

- A. Divide the class into two and conduct the quiz as instructed in the previous day's homework.
- B. Paul and the Philippians enter into a good sharing relationship. On many occasions, Philippians helped Paul (Phil 4: 15,16)

Sending Epaphroditus to assist Paul was proof of how loyal and submissive the Philippians were to Paul. That can be seen in his strong worded remarks as seen in Phil. 1: 7,8, 4:1. Paul took pride in the Philippians. They were very dear to Paul. Moreover, they were 'joint-heirs' of God's grace, and defenders of the Gospel.

- C. Paul found joy in praying for the fruits of justification. He also continuously prayed for the newly formed Church at Philippi. The content of the prayer is rich in thoughts. The prayer was not for worldly riches or material blessings. Instead, the prayer was for the Philippian Church to spread the word of God. The contents of the prayer can be understood by the following method. Ask the students to read Phil. 1: 9-11 carefully, and ask them to write at least four hints/clues that one gets from the prayer.
- D. Paul's outlook about prison life (1:12-27)
Paul was imprisoned for Christ. Therefore his imprisonment became a reason for the spreading of the gospel. Paul's time in prison did not break him, but it gave him a more positive attitude. He did not look at his imprisonment as a curse or a loss, instead he looked at it as his gain. This made the other believers strong especially during the times of their imprisonment or punishment. Paul's testimony proved to be an example for others who were persecuted for Christ's sake, to consider it all a part of life.
- E. Glorifying God through our Bodies
Body is a very important entity according to Paul. For him, body is not the seat of evil but a wonderful means to worship God. Body is temple of the living God. It is place where Holy Spirit dwells and works. We must submit our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. Paul did not testify Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection through his words alone, but by his life as well. Paul also believes that, we, leading a life- pleasing to God is not enough. We must glorify God even in our deaths. In life or death- Glorify God.
- F. Life and Death
Paul, who was in jail, was not sure how long he could live, or when his death would be. For Paul, life and death made no difference. For him, to live meant that- the gospel would be spread and flourished. Death was a pathway to the communion with Christ. So It was a means to enter the presence of God.

Lesson 3

Philippians 2: 6-11 is considered to be a 'Christological Hymn' by biblical scholars. Meaning to say that the song comprises the life and work of Jesus Christ.

Phil. 2: 3,4- Putting on Christ's attitude is the only remedy to the divisions that plague the Church. This is one of the most powerful descriptions that Paul has written about Jesus. He exhorts the Philippians to expunge hatred, jealousy, personal grudges and to learn the humility and the servant-like attitude of Jesus.

The meaning of Christ is- Master, Owner. The emperor of Rome used to take the formal name Kurios. Later it came to be known as the name for Gentile gods. This was the Greek word used for the Hebrew word- Yahweh. Therefore, when we address Jesus as the Christ, it means that he is the Lord and Master of our lives. Jesus is the King of Kings. He is from above. He is our Lord and God.

Lesson 4

A. Salvation is God's gift. Humanity attains salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Salvation is also God's plan for eternal life, made possible through human participation also. However, Salvation cannot be gained by human efforts alone. It comprises of God's favour and grace. Ephesians 2:8 reads, 'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God'

B. Work towards Salvation

Paul commands the believers to 'work towards your salvation'. This reveals that our faith must incarnate. It should not remain in words or beliefs alone, but must take flesh. Our faith in Christ must be reflected in our day to day lives. Phil. 1:27 says, 'Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel'

We must strive for salvation continuously. For that, we must live a life pleasing to God. We should be careful of how we conduct ourselves. Forsaking selfish gains, believers must as a community strive towards the salvation of the entire world.

Lesson 5

A- Circumcision

This is a customary practice for the Jews. It was God's commandment to circumcise all Israelite boys. The Israelites who were redeemed from the slavery in Egypt, found their identity in religious practices such as these. Every circumcised Israelite was considered to be the custodian of God's covenant. They were to- be enthusiastic in worship, maintain good relations with others, respect nature and life as a whole. But eventually, covenant became a sort of ritual. However, God establishes a new covenant through his son Jesus Christ. Therefore, salvation was not gained as a result of a mere ritualistic practice like circumcision, but faith in Christ Jesus was most important. This is the divine circumcision.

B- To Gain Christ

In Phil. 3:7-8, we see Paul challenging believers to consider every worldly riches and pleasures as nothing, for Christ. In I Corinthians 4:11-13, Paul reminds us that he had lost so much once he began to follow Christ. Paul also reminds the Philippians to expunge all their bitter rivalries, jealousy, revenge and selfishness and requests them to clothe themselves with humility and servanthood like Jesus.

He says that for him it was profitable, for all that he has lost, as he came to know Jesus. To know Christ and to gain Christ are not two different thoughts, but they are one of the same coin. To gain Christ is:

- To experience the justification through faith in God.
- To know the power of the resurrection of Christ
- To join with Christ in his death, and to know his persecution and suffering
- Not just to bear his persecution and pain, but to actualize resurrection from death.

Lesson 6

To imitate Christ

In Phil. 3:17, he beseeches them to imitate him and the others. Like how he had imitated Christ, others had to do the same. Through the epistles, we can see Paul's relentless faith in Christ and his willingness to be part of his ministry. Paul's main goal was to live for the Gospel. Therefore, Paul reminds the believers:

- Live through every experience worthy of the Gospel.
- Stand united with one spirit.
- Not be unsure/unsteady in any circumstance
- Be prepared to suffer for Christ

Paul also discusses two ways/states that can be seen in our lives:

- Citizen of Heaven.
- Enemy of the Cross.

Citizen of Heaven:

Paul reminds us that we are pilgrims on earth. We journey towards a particular destination. But that does not mean we do not need to do anything while we live on earth. We need to fulfill God's will on earth. Since we are pilgrims, our inheritance is in Heaven. Paul reminds us of our special responsibilities in I Peter 2: 9-12. Like how the Romans take pride in their citizenship of Rome, we need to be proud of our citizenship in heaven.

Enemy of the Cross:

We can evaluate the enemies of the cross by the following thoughts:

- Those who live a very lazy life, not knowing the fruits of their works/deeds
In II Thessalonians 1: 7-9, we see that the end of such people are disastrous.
- Their God is their stomachs or food. They only crave for what is of the flesh. They are worldly.
- They take pride in being ashamed.
- They have set their minds on all what is worldly.

Lesson 7

Help the children to find the 6 great things that can be found in Christ, by reading the given portions. V. 2,4,5,6,8

Have one mind in Christ

The disunity in the Philippian church had tormented Paul so much. In Phil 4:2, we see Paul asking Eudia and Syntyche 'to agree with each other in the Lord'. Without Christ, there can be no Unity. Although Paul congratulates them for their struggle for the Gospel, he also makes it clear that Unity is inevitable. If we strive to have one mind in Christ Jesus, we can be united.

Three reasons why Paul could have been anxious:

- The disunity of the Philippian Church
- The accusations and hatred that was leveled against Paul by some preachers in Rome (Phil. 1:15)
- The possibility of him being put to house arrest, tried and persecuted.

Peace that passes all human understanding

In John 14:27, 16:33, we see that Peace is not of the world, but a gift from God. Peace of God must guard our minds and hearts. Only then can joy be experienced. However, persecutions and suffering cannot harm peace because:

- It is the faith and confidence that we have within
- It is a place that cannot be stolen or invaded by any exterior forces.

Lesson 8

The meaning of Sufficiency

It means contentment. Paul uses this word in the sense that, we must free ourselves from circumstances and not to be a slave to circumstances.

The secret of his contentment was the grace of Christ that was in him. The three reasons for Paul's sufficiency:

- The power that Christ gives (Phil. 4:13)
- Christ is the one who makes him sufficient in hunger and prosperity.
- Paul's faith