

The First-Century Church
"The Church in Philippi -- Joyful and Devout"

Introduction:

1. The New Testament contains a tremendous amount of information that was written "about" as well as "to" various congregations in the first century.
2. By examining this information we can learn the Lord's will for His church today.
3. This lesson is a study of the church in Philippi.
 - a. We read "about" the establishment of this congregation in Acts 16:6-40.
 - b. The apostle Paul wrote a letter "to" this congregation [Philippians].
 - c. We are especially concerned with two characteristics that are emphasized in Acts 16 and Philippians -- "joy" and "devotion."

Discussion:

- I. ACCORDING TO ACTS 16:6-40, "JOY" AND "DEVOTION" WERE EMPHASIZED WHEN THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPI WAS ESTABLISHED
 - A. Paul demonstrated his devotion by allowing the Lord to lead him to Philippi (vs.6-12).
 - B. Lydia and her household demonstrated their devotion when they were converted (vs.13-15).
 - C. Paul and Silas demonstrated their devotion and their joy when they were in prison (vs.16-25).
 - D. The jailer and his household demonstrated their devotion by being converted, and they demonstrated their joy when they became Christians (vs.26-34).
 - E. Paul demonstrated his devotion by comforting the brethren in Lydia's home (vs.35-40).
- II. LATER, PAUL EMPHASIZED "JOY" AND "DEVOTION" IN HIS LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPI [PHILIPPIANS]
 - A. Paul was joyful because of the devotion of the Christians in Philippi.
 1. 1:3-5
 2. 4:10
 - B. Paul encouraged the Christians in Philippi to continue in their devotion.
 1. 1:27-28
 2. 2:12-16
 3. 3:13-15
 4. 4:1
 - C. Paul also encouraged the Christians in Philippi to continue being joyful.
 1. 3:1
 2. 4:4
- III. "JOY" AND "DEVOTION" PLAY KEY ROLES IN CHRISTIANITY
 - A. Many passages emphasize the importance of "joy," including:
 1. John 15:11
 2. Galatians 5:22
 3. 1 John 1:4.
 - B. Many passages also emphasize the importance of "devotion," including:
 1. Matthew 6:33
 2. Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38
 3. Matthew 22:37
 4. Revelation 2:10.