

Phlipping Marvellous Bible Teaching Script

Learning aim: We have a reason to rejoice

Bible reading: Philippians 1:1-2

Props needed: Rack of clothes showing chosen retailer's logo, purple shawl or top, other purple items (including some funny ones!), boy's cap/cape, large key, cardboard "cell bars", plastic sword, YouTube videos or similar (see below), parcel containing gifts (some silly!), smiley face emoji on card, Nobo board, paper/marker pen, chains/padlock/blindfold/bucket.

Paul loved going on journeys to tell people about Jesus. In fact he went on 4 really long ones, hundreds of miles each. They were really dangerous as he often had to cross the seas and his boats weren't very safe. He was even shipwrecked.

On his second missionary journey Paul went to a place called Philippi which is in Greece. He saw a vision from God telling him that he should go there. Silas and Timothy went with him.

What sort of place was Philippi? It was quite a trendy place. It even had its own "Primark" (or similar) *[have a small rack of clothes with the Primark logo showing and ask one of the girls to put on a purple shawl or top].* "Primark" Philippi was run by a lady called Lydia *[introduce girl]* who loved purple clothes. In fact she loved purple so much that lots of her things were purple *[show some other purple items, funny if possible!]*. You see, purple clothes in Philippi were regarded as very expensive and posh. Now Paul went into "Primark" and met Lydia and when Paul started speaking about Jesus, Lydia realised that Jesus was more important than all the purple things in the world *[girl throws down her purple things and kneels down]*. She became a Christian and was baptised along with all members of her family. She even invited Paul to stay at her house. *[Girl sits on the side of the stage]*

Some of the people in Philippi didn't like Paul being there. He was stopping them from making some money. So Paul and Silas were thrown into jail. *[Dress up a boy in a cap and maybe a cape, give him a big key and some cardboard cell bars. Have him hold up the bars in front of an imaginary Paul and Silas and pretend to lock the door].* That night

there was a big earthquake and the bars of the cell broke apart *[boy throws down bars and key]*. The jailer thought that all his prisoners were going to escape and he would be in big trouble with his boss so he thought he would kill himself *[boy draws plastic sword]*. But Paul and Silas hadn't escaped and they told him they were still there. They shouted to the jailer not to hurt himself *[boy throws down his sword]*. He was so amazed that Paul and Silas hadn't tried to escape that he asked Paul how he could become a Christian. He and all his family were baptised and he was so happy. *[Boy goes to sit with girl on side of stage]. [If you don't want to act this out, show one of the videos on YouTube on Paul and Silas in Prison].*

So Lydia and the jailer were some of the first people to be in the church at Philippi *[boy and girl to sit down]*. They were called Philippians, people from Philippi, and that's how we get the name of the book we are looking at this term – the book of Philippians.

Now Paul had lots more scrapes and about 10 years later he ended up in another prison, this time in Rome.

If you were in prison what would you like to get?

Invite responses until someone says "a visitor" or "a gift". *[Prepare a parcel with some gift items in it eg after shave, chocolates, marmite, socks, something silly!]*

What sort of things would you want if you were in prison? Ask a child to open the parcel. Would these things be really important to Paul? Maybe, but the most important thing for Paul was that, 10 years after he was last in Philippi, the Philippians were still thinking about him and wanted to cheer him up because he was in prison. In fact they had sent Epaphroditus, one of their members, over 800 miles to deliver the gifts. This made Paul really happy and he wanted to write a thank you letter to the Philippians.

What sort of things would you want to put in a thank you letter.

[Have a Nobo board with some paper on it and ask an older child to write a short "Dear Philippians" letter and ask the children for some ideas – eg Hope you are well? What's the weather like? Where are you going on holiday? What football team do you support? Etc].



But Paul's letter wasn't like the sort of letters we write. He doesn't start by writing "Dear Philippians" and then asking them about unimportant things. No, this is what he writes in verses 1 and 2 of chapter 1 – listen carefully and tell me how many times he mentions Jesus:

Read Philippians 1:1-2

Ask the children how many times does Paul mention Jesus – 3 times out of 36 words! So I think Jesus is going to be a really important part of this letter. What if you wrote a letter to your mum and dad that started:

Mum and Dad, providers of chocolate. To both my parents who like to buy me chocolate together with my brothers and sisters. Grace and peace to you at bedtime if you give me lots of chocolate.

What are you saying to your parents about what is important to you? Yes, that you want some chocolate; that you really, really want some chocolate – you mentioned the word 3 times in 36 words! So for Paul it was really important that he mentioned the word "Jesus" lots of times at the start of his letter because the letter IS all about Jesus.

What he is saying to the Philippians is that they are all followers of Jesus Christ together. We might use the word "partner" to describe their relationship. But what is their partnership about?

1. They are partners in a shared future hope – Jesus has saved them from their sin by faith and promised them a future in heaven with him that will go on forever. They are all waiting for the return of Jesus. Wow, it's not just about being friends for a while and then drifting apart. It's about being friends or partners in something that will go on forever!
2. They are partners in following Jesus. They are to be like Jesus in what they do, how they behave. This what it says a bit later in Philippians:

Read 2:5-7

In other parts of the Bible it talks about Jesus being the King but now Paul says that Jesus is the servant. How does that work? Who is more important – a king or a servant? *[invite responses]*. Normally a king would have servants who look after him, not be a servant himself. We'll look at this more as we go through Philippians but, for the moment, Paul is telling us that we need to be like Jesus by serving each other. It's more important to be a servant of other people than a king over them.

3. They are partners in joy. What does joy mean? Maybe it's a bit like happiness so I wonder if it's going round with a smiley face *[show a smiley face emoji on some card]*. Or is it like laughing all the time? Hearing funny jokes like – why does a giraffe have a long neck? Because his feet stink. Why did the toilet paper roll down the hill? To get to the bottom. When you laugh at a joke is that joy? Or maybe joy is dancing and singing when you've got everything you need? A bit like these people *[if time show some of Baloo and Mowgli – Bare Necessities]* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08NlhjpVFsU>

Now it's good to be happy, to laugh, to dance and sing and be content with what you've got (like Baloo and Mowgli) but it's not what Paul means by joy in the letter to the Philippians. Because Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter and, although the Bible tells us he sang praises to God in prison, it's probably not the best place to have a good time. *[Ask a child to come to the front]* He would have had chains on *[put chains or a padlock on the child]*. It would have been dark *[put blindfold on child]*. It probably didn't have a proper toilet *[sit child on bucket]*. So there's not much to laugh about when you're in prison but Paul says in Philippians:

Read 1:18b (last line)-19

What he means is that even though Paul suffers, Jesus is still his Saviour and, even if he dies, he can be joyful because he will be with God forever. He is also joyful because the Philippians are partners with him in this journey and are prepared to suffer with him and help him in his work. *[Child to sit down]*

The Philippians also give joy to Paul, even when he is in prison, when they are like Jesus:

Read 2:2-3

Joy is also about knowing Jesus is your Saviour and, when you know that, it is more important than anything else. In fact Paul says that everything else is rubbish in comparison.

So joy is about knowing God for yourself and being part of a group who think the same way and encourage each other. My prayer is that kids' group will be like that – that we can be like the Philippians, being joyful in our lives, whatever happens, and working together to know and love God better. So I hope you'll come to kids' group lots of times this term as we learn what it means to rejoice as Christians.



Let me say a prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you that whatever happens in our lives
we can still rejoice because you have saved us
through Jesus. We are sorry that we don't always
follow you as we should and pray that you will
please help us to be partners with kids' group and
our church in being joyful for all that you have
done for us. Amen

PREVIEW ONLY

PLEASE PURCHASE TO
REMOVE WATERMARK



Phlipping Marvellous Drama Script

WEEK
1

Props: A rat puppet is required in all episodes. Phil is mentioned but doesn't have a speaking part so doesn't need to appear although he could be seen in the background at suitable points. Postbag, letter, sea weed (or similar), props for port and town square, beer barrel or similar, rubbish, postman and guard outfits, cloak

[Voice comes over the ship's PA system as Pete steps off the boat with his SPQR postbag, looking very wet and exhausted. He is covered in sea weed and his hair is a mess]

Announcer: Thank you for choosing to travel with Roman Cruises. We hope you enjoyed your journey today.

Pete: Enjoyed! I thought I was going to drown, and I spent the first 10 days throwing up.

Roman Guard: Passport Control, Sir. Are you a Roman Citizen or visitor?

Pete: Yes, I'm actually from Rome which makes me a Roman Citizen. You might have heard of me – I'm Postman Petros but everyone calls me Pete. You know – *[singing to the theme tune of Postman Pat]* Postman Pete, Postman Pete, Postman Pete and his two smelly feet...

Roman Guard: All right, it's not an audition for Philippi's Got Talent. We'll need to see your papers then.

Pete: *[Patting himself down]* I think I must have lost them in that massive storm we had at sea.

Roman Guard: Well I'm afraid you're not coming in then.

Pete: But I'm Postman Pete... I have travelled hundreds of miles over land and sea to deliver this letter and I'm not about to quit now. *[Showing his feet]* My feet really are smelly, see. *[Showing bag]* Look I've got an SPQR postbag too.

Roman Guard: So you're a liar and a thief too.

[Realising he is about to be arrested, Pete bonks the guard on the head and runs]

Roman Guard: Ooo, ouch....hey come back!

[Guard pursues Pete]

[Cut to Romulus the rat puppet, talking directly to audience from behind a beer barrel or similar in a market place]

Rat: The letter he's talking about is a letter in the Bible we now call the book of Philippians. Though the Bible doesn't tell us exactly how this letter was delivered, or who delivered it, it is true that Philippi was a city that was ruled by the Romans. It was treated the same as Italy and those who were born there would be Roman citizens.

[Pete runs into town square]



Phlipping Marvellous Drama Script

WEEK
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Pete: I think I've lost them. Now, where has this letter got to be delivered to.

[Examining the letter]

"Paul and Timothy, Servants of Christ Jesus."

Hang on. I thought this was a letter from Paul and Timothy.

Rat: It's true that instead of starting a letter with who they are writing to, they started with who was sending it. This letter of the Bible was written by Paul and Timothy.

Pete: Ah, here we are. "To all God's Holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons."

Right.....that doesn't exactly give me an address does it?

Rat: In those days, the only way to get a message to anyone was to send someone with the message over land and sea. It would have taken days and days for this letter to get from Paul and Timothy to the church in Philippi.

[Pete looks around for someone to ask, then he sees a man sitting having a drink. The man has a cloak on, disguising the fact that it is the Roman Guard he was chased by earlier]

Pete: *[Talking to Guard]* Excuse me Sir, you don't happen to know where I would find 'God's Holy people', do you?

[Guard turns around and they instantly recognise one another]

Roman Guard: You!

Pete: Yikes! Not you again.

[Guard chases Pete around until Pete hides behind the barrel next to Rat]

Rat: Hey, hey, hey! Get out of here! Scram! That's my piece of garbage! I saw it first.

Pete: *[Gesturing to keep the noise down]* Sorry. I wasn't trying to eat your rubbish, honestly. I'm trying to hide from the guards there. I've lost my papers and might have clonked one of them on the head to get past them.

Rat: Well I think you're safe now. They've gone.

Pete: Thanks. My name's Postman Petros but everyone calls me Pete.

Rat: I'm Romulus Rattus and I'm the smartest rat in all of this city of Philippi.



Phlipping Marvellous Drama Script

WEEK
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Pete: O good, well maybe you could help me.

Rat: Is this your first visit to the city of Philippi? Well I'd be happy to tell you all about it. What brings you to Philippi?

Pete: Well, because this famous preacher guy in prison called Paul was like no-one else I'd seen before. He kept on talking and writing about a man called Jesus and even though he was in prison, he seemed so joyful. He had hope in something bigger. And he wanted to share his joy with everyone, even though he was in chains. And he needed to deliver this letter to the church in Philippi. So here I am.

Rat: I can see why you'd be amazed at that. Not many people would be joyful while they are in prison. What is the letter about?

Pete: Well, so far, I know it's from Paul and Timothy to the church in Philippi. Then it says "Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Rat: Well I've heard that name before.

Pete: What Paul and Timothy?

Rat: No, – Jesus... Yeah. You see those two humans over there. They are Phil and Philippa. I keep an eye on what these humans get up to and I can tell you that something strange has happened to them lately. They seem to have changed and now there are more of those pesky humans meeting in their home. I think they must be Christians. They are always talking about Jesus. They seem to have the same joy that Paul had in prison. You ought to ask them. They would probably know where you should deliver your letter.

Pete: Yes I will. Thank you Romulus Rattus.

[The Guard re-enters and Pete quickly hides again]

Pete: But maybe not quite yet!

[The Guard spots Pete]

Roman Guard: Oi! You. Come here.

[A chase ensues – knocking over and jumping over street furniture]

Rat: Well, that went well.

Isn't it amazing that a letter written all those years ago to a church in a city called Philippi is still being read today. Paul's personal letter is in our Bibles and it has something to teach us today too. Why don't you take a closer look at it now, and I'll get back to finishing my snack.

[He goes back to eating his rubbish]



Phlipping Marvellous Discussion Notes

WEEK
1

Open up your Bible at Philippians 1:1-2

We are learning today: We have a reason to rejoice

Key verse

Rejoice in the Lord always.
I will say it again: Rejoice!
(Philippians 4:4)

Discussion Questions

1. GR _ C _ _ ND P _ _ C _ T _
Y _ _ FR _ M G _ D _ _ R
F _ TH _ R _ ND
TH _ L _ RD J _ S _ S
CHR _ ST

Put the vowels (AEIOU) in the right place. Look at Philippians chapter 1 v 2 if you need help.

2. In the talk we looked at what happiness was like. Can you remember some of the ideas?

3. In Philippians the word REJOICE is mentioned lots of times. See if you can find one of the places. If you are in a group try and find a different place to the others. Read out the verse to the rest of the group.

4. How is JOY (REJOICING) different to happiness? Look at Philippians 1:18b-19, 2:2-3, 3:8 and ask your leader to help you understand.

5. What can you REJOICE about in your lives? Write some ideas below.

6. Why is it better to do things with other people (partners) than by ourselves?

So JOY in the Bible is about knowing God is with you even if bad things happen; serving God in everything you do; believing that nothing is more important than knowing Jesus is your Saviour. When you have partners (friends like at kids' group) helping you to know these things it makes your JOY even better.

Pray

Pray that God will help us to REJOICE in this world and forever.



Take this sheet home with you so you can tell your family and friends about what you learned today. Remember, you can bring in your drawings, jokes, prayers and questions.



Phlipping Marvellous Parents Notes

WEEK
1

To discuss with your child

Today we've had a look at: Philippians 1:1-2

Rejoice in the Lord always. I
will say it again: Rejoice!
Philippians 4:4

About the passage

This term we are looking at Paul's letter to the Philippians. Paul had started the church in Philippi on his second missionary journey. Now, 10 years later, he is in prison in Rome and receives a messenger and gift from the Philippians. He is very encouraged by this and is thrilled that the Philippians are going on with their faith.

So he writes a letter to them thanking them for their partnership in his work and encouraging them to carry on rejoicing as Christians. He mentions the word "rejoice" at least 13 times in the letter.

One of the things we have been exploring today with the children is the difference between happiness and joy. We will be looking at this some more over the coming weeks. We think of happiness as a smiley face, laughing at a joke or singing and dancing. Maybe we even think of it as being content with what we have got.

But is joy something different? Each chapter in Philippians explores a different way in which we can experience joy. However we are feeling, whatever we are going through, we can experience the joy of knowing Christ as our Saviour.

Questions

To answer the questions, you could open the bible with your children .

Philippians 1:17-19. How is it possible to rejoice when you are suffering?

How can we show our joy in Christ to others? – see Philippians 2:3-4

What is the future hope that gives us great joy? – see Philippians 3:12-14

PRAY that God helps you to rejoice in the hope we have in Jesus



THE CHURCH

PHILLIPI

Paul is writing a letter to a church a long way away. Imagine you were writing a letter to a church. Circle the words you want to use in your letter (you must choose at least one each time). We'll be seeing what Paul wrote about in his letter—is it the same as yours? Decorate your letter with some drawings of the things you have circled in your letter

Dear Phil/Philippa/Philomena,

I hope the weather is good in Philippi. The weather here is sunny/
rainy/hadn't noticed. What do you like doing in Philippi? I like
hanging out with mates/playing sport/doing homework/wearing
stinky socks. What do you eat in Philippi? I like pizza with custard/
fish finger pie/peanut butter sandwiches/sausages with ice
cream. Do you have brothers and sisters? I have a brother/sister
aged _____. They are really cute/annoying/smelly. I have a pet dog/
cat/goldfish/rat/snake/crocodile/duck.

What are your parents like? Mine are old/always telling me off/
don't understand me. My favourite clothes are brown slippers/
orange pants/pink pyjamas/blue hoodie.

As you are a church, maybe I should tell you something about
Scooby Doo/Mickey Mouse/Jesus/Peppa Pig but perhaps I'll leave
that to next time when I understand what you **do** put in a letter
to a church. :)

Love

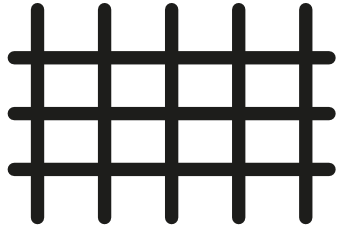
FROM _____

Phlipping Marvellous – Context Map

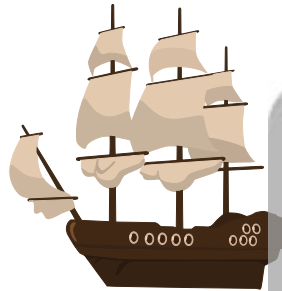
Philippians 1:1–2. Turn over for instructions.

WEEK
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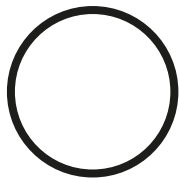
Paul was in Prison in Rome. Find Rome on the map and draw some prison bars with Paul behind.



Paul would send Timothy and Epaphroditus from Rome to Philippi. Draw a dotted line on the map to show the route they may have taken and cut out this boat to stick on the line. Draw some fish in the sea.



Paul's letter was to the church in Philippi. Find Philippi on the map and draw a church symbol or a cross.



BONUS ACTIVITY: Can you see other place names that look like books from the Bible. Put a circle around them.

