

---

# FOREWORD

---

by Tammy Bounds

"Life Distracted" those are the words that have floated through my head as we have put the finishing touches on this study. Life can be very distracting, don't you think? There's so much that begs for our attention, and God, being the strong silent type, seems to get pushed to the back of the line, until our heart feels the absence so deeply that we look for Him in the crowd of things that have flooded in around us. Now is the time to look for Him, Girlfriend. Now is the time to set aside the distractions in life and focus in on what His word has to say to you. This is your Bible study time. Guard it.

"These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete."

1 John 1:4

An apt verse considering that we are about to embark on a study of letter that was written to exhort and encourage a people to have JOY in the LORD. And that is our hearts desire for you as well!

1 John 1 gives great insight into the source of our joy. He writes, "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life - and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us - What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." John and the apostles had witnessed Him firsthand, they had touched Him, they had been with Him. If anyone could attest to the joy of the Lord it was these men. If anyone would know about fellowship with Jesus, it was them.

In fact, John goes on to write, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth," Pretty strong words, but then, this idea of fellowship with God and Jesus is vital.

He goes on to talk about how God cannot have part of sin so He not only sent His Son to be our Savior, but He sent His Spirit to be our helper. God's sole purpose was to reconcile sinful people to Himself and to have a relationship with them. He did that for you, dear one.

Fellowship with God. What a strange and marvelous idea! Seems an impossibility, but God Himself, provided the way. However, we must participate in the process. First, we need to realize we have a need for a Savior.

1 John 1:8 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." In Romans 3:23, the Apostle Paul tells us "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" and we see in Romans 6:23 that the cost of that sin is spiritual death, separation from God. Thank the Lord, it doesn't stop at the cost of our sin, but goes on to say, "but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Christ paid every debt owed for every sin that we have committed, in the process He made life with God a possibility.

Life with God - it's more than just becoming His child. The picture of the Father & child is meant to be a relationship that is rich because of time spent together. Fellowship. When sin enters into the relationship though, it's not a pleasant place to be, and we often hide from Him and our fellowship is broken. That's where He once again provides.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9

As you approach any study of God's word it's important to make sure that His Spirit is free to work in your heart and mind. We're told that the things of God are spiritually discerned and we want to make sure it is His Spirit that is giving us that discernment, so confess any sin that might be hindering Him from speaking to you, and then remember our God is faithful and righteous to forgive and cleanse you from ALL unrighteousness. He's so good to us, His children.

Beyond being in fellowship with God you will also need a few things for this study:

- A Bible. We have used the New American Standard Bible in our study, unless otherwise noted. There are multiple apps and online places to read a Bible.
- Print out of the study, or a notebook for your notes.
- A willing and diligent heart.

It's our prayer that you will be blessed as you go through this study of Philippians, "Finding His Joy" in the process. Life can be distracted, but let's be diligent to stay the course, commit to do the work, and see just what He has for you within its pages.