

The Book of Philippians | Week 1 - Pledge Your Allegiance to Jesus

Message Big Idea

Our allegiance is to Jesus and his Kingdom, and we aim to continually mature in our faith as his followers.

Scripture

Philippians 1:1-30

Points to Keep In Mind

1. The book of Philippians is a letter the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi. (Acts 16:9) In the book of Acts – a history of the early church written by the doctor and historian, Luke, we're told that Paul had a vision of a man in the district of Macedonia asking for help. And Paul believed that this vision was telling him he was to go and share the good news of Jesus with the people in that region. Philippi was a leading city in the district of Macedonia. And as a Roman colony, the citizens of Philippi were expected to adopt the customs, values, and practices of the Roman Empire.
2. The following commentary, "Philippians for Everyone," helps fill out the first-century context. "The Philippian colonists were proud of being Romans, and would do their best to order their civic life so that it matched the way things were done in Rome. The most recent innovation down that line was, of course, the establishment of the imperial cult: Caesar, the emperor, was to be worshipped as saviour and Lord." -NT Wright
3. When Paul began sharing the good news that Jesus is King and inviting people to live as Jesus' Kingdom Community, his message faced strong resistance from those loyal to Rome. It would be a little like someone dressed in a White Sox uniform walking into Wrigley Field and trying to convince fans to switch teams. Paul was calling people in this Roman colony to citizenship in a different kingdom. And people had to decide if their ultimate allegiance would be to the Roman Emperor or Jesus; whether they would follow the Roman or the Kingdom way.
4. The original word for faith in the New Testament is *pistis*, (pee-stees) and it has a much broader range of meaning than cognitive agreement. While it can mean believing something to be true, it can also mean (add) "fidelity, faithfulness, commitment, and pledged loyalty." (Matthew W. Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, p. 3).
5. Paul calls us to maintain our allegiance to Christ, not to a political party, denomination, tradition, flag, or a particular cause. Maintain your allegiance to Jesus, Paul says, so that if I get to see you in person or hear about you from someone else, I will know that you are standing together for the gospel, which is the good news of Jesus and his transforming love and grace. We are constantly being pulled in different directions. We may disagree on many subjects, but our church is centered on our allegiance to the mission and way of Jesus.

Next Steps

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your YOU+ journey? Check out communitychristian.org/you
3. Have you considered getting baptized? Learn more at communitychristian.org/baptism
4. Would you commit to reading Philippians every day through the Community Daily? communitychristian.org/daily