

**Adult Study Guide for February 7, 2021**  
***The Birth of a New Church in the Bible and What It Means for the Church Today***  
**Acts 16 and Philippians 1:1-6**

Goal: To learn from the growth of the early Church how to become partners in the gospel.

Key Verses: *In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.* – Philippians 1:4-6 (NIV2011)

1. Review the story in Acts 16 of how Paul and Timothy started working together and how they were led by the Holy Spirit to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of the district of Macedonia. What two events gave birth to the church in Philippi? How did the Holy Spirit work through each household to add to the number of believers in Jesus Christ?
2. Read Philippians 1:1. When Paul wrote this letter, he was under house arrest in Rome. When the believers in Philippi heard about Paul's imprisonment, they sent Epaphroditus to visit and encourage him with a financial gift from the church. What can we learn about Paul's and Timothy's relationship with the church from this letter?
3. Read Philippians 1:2. Paul used "grace and peace" as a standard greeting in all his letters. *Grace* is God's unmerited favor, and *peace* is an inner assurance we find in Jesus Christ. Read John 14:27. How do these two gifts compare with what the world offers us? What can you do to unwrap these gifts in this week?
4. Read Philippians 1:3-4. Paul expresses his deep love and appreciation for the Philippians by saying that he remembers them in his prayers (with thanksgiving), and he is filled with joy when he prays for them. How can your memory of other people in your life be a stimulus for prayer? What would help you make this a regular practice?
5. Read Philippians 1:5. Paul says that one of the sources of his joy was the Philippians' partnership (*koinonia*) in the gospel. The Philippians supported Paul's ministry for 12 years, even when he was in prison. (Philippians 4:4-19) What is the benefit of a long-term commitment to supporting the work of the gospel?
6. Read Philippians 1:6. Paul trusted fully in God's continued work to transform the lives of the Philippian believers, and that God would bring it to completion. Read Philippians 1:9-11, Romans 8:28-29, and Ephesians 1:13-14. How did Paul describe this work of God? How would you describe the work that God is doing in your life? How does it help to remember that God won't give up on you?