



Philippians: Themes to Shape Our Life & Planning in 2026

1) The Epistle of Joy. 16 times in 4 chapters.

“Joy in Philippians is not positivity or convenience—it is disciplined resilience, a chosen posture of trust in God’s future.”

→ *How can we cultivate DEEP JOYFULNESS in 2026?*

2) Imitation of Christ.

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5), followed by the ancient Christ hymn, which emphasizes that way of Jesus is the way of downward mobility.

→ *How does our programming become formation?*

→ *What can help us become more Christ-like in humility and service?*

3) “Partnership in the Gospel”

Paul constantly thanks the Philippians for their partnership with him. This is his sense of Christian community – more than social, rooted in deep friendship in the Gospel.

→ *What strengthens a sense of belonging within our congregation?*

4) Unity of Purpose, Not Uniformity of Opinion

“Be of the same mind,” (Phil. 2:2, 2:5 and 4:2) – the Greek word for mind is phronein, more mindset, to “mind the same thing.”

→ *How do we stay focused on our shared mission and purpose, not personal preferences or interpretations of Scripture?*

5) The Goal is Spiritual Maturity

Spiritual maturity never arrives. We “press on” (Philippians 3:12-14), always growing and seeking to grow. As Gregory of Nyssa says, we are never satisfied in our desire to see and know more and more of God

→ *Where are we/can we invite people to “press on” in discipleship and ministry?*

6) Paul is Grateful for their Generosity

He commends their generous support, which is rooted in contentment and a deep relationship with him and with Christ.

→ *How do we continue cultivating grateful, generous hearts – in our budget, our preaching and teaching, and our lives?*