



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?