

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians

The city of Philippi was named for Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, who seized the city in 358 B.C. from the Thracians. Later, Octavius (Augustus Caesar) made Philippi a Roman colony. It was a principal city on the great Egnation Way in Macedonia (this highway extended from Rome to Byzantium), and traders from both eastern and western countries stopped there often. This made it a strategic place for the spreading of the gospel.

In the early portion of Paul's second missionary journey, the Lord indicated that He wanted Paul to preach the gospel in Macedonia (Acts 16:9, 10). Apparently there were no synagogues in the city, because on the Sabbath Paul went out of the city and down to the bank of the river where he found Lydia and a number of other women who accepted what he had to say (Acts 16:13, 14). After Lydia and her family had been baptized, she asked Paul and his companions to stay at her house (Acts 16:15). Later, Paul and Silas were imprisoned for casting the unclean spirit out of a slave girl (Acts 16:16-25). This led to the salvation of the jailor and his family (Acts 16:26-34). Paul may have visited them again when he journeyed from Ephesus to Macedonia, because he spent the spring with them (Acts 20:1, 6; 2 Cor. 2:12, 13). The church that Paul established there was probably the first in all of Europe. The Apostle Paul is thought to have written this letter to the Philippians during his first Roman imprisonment (ca. A.D. 60-62).

Paul, who was a tentmaker by trade (Acts 18:3), ordinarily refused to receive any financial assistance from the churches (2 Cor. 11:7-9). However, he did accept gifts from the Philippian brethren when he was in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16, 18). Epaphroditus brought another gift to Paul during his imprisonment in Rome (Phil. 4:18). While Epaphroditus was there, he became severely sick and nearly dies. He did recover, however, and carried this letter back to Philippi (Phil. 2:25-30).

Although there is no development of one particular theme, the concept of the all-sufficiency of Christ is found throughout the book. Christ gives meaning to life and causes people to serve Him even to their death (Phil. 1:20, 21). (Key Word, page 1472)

Chapter 1

1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Deacons 1249, diakonos, dee-ak' -on-os, probably from an obsolete Slakw, diako (to run on errands; compare 1377); an attendant, i.e. (genitive) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); specially a Christian teacher and pastor (technically a deacon or deaconess): -deacon, minister, servant.

2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance (*Or, mention*) of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (*Or, will finish*) it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart (*Or, ye have me in your heart*); inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace (*Or, partakers with me of grace*).

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and *in* all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

Without offence 677, *aproskopos, ap-ros' -kop-os*; from *1* (as a negative particle) and a presumed derivative of 4350; *act, inoffensive, i.e. not leading into sin; passive faultless, i.e. not led into sin: -none (void of, without) offence.*

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Righteousness 1343, *dikaiosune, dik-ah-yos-oo'*; from 1342; *equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification: -righteousness.*

Paul Glories in His Affliction

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other *places*;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Waxing confident, 3982, *peitho, pi-thos'*; a primary verb; *to convince (by argument, true or false); (by analogy) to pacify or conciliate (by other fair means); reflexive or passive to assent (to evidence or authority), to rely (by inward certainty):-agree, assure, believe, have confidence, by (wax) confident, make a friend, obey, persuade, trust, yield.*

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Romans 8:

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

20 According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

2 *Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

John 15:

20 *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

21 *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*

22 *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.*

23 *He that hateth me hateth my Father also.*

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

Chapter 2

Exhortation to Be Like Christ

1 If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Bowels 4698, splanchnon, splangkh'-non; probably strengthened from spleen (the "speen"); an intestine (plural); (figurative) pity or sympathy: -bowels, inward affection, +tender mercy.

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Christ stated in Matthew 11:

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Verses 6-8.

This passage deals with the deity of Jesus Christ, which was evidenced prior to His incarnation and continued even through His death on the cross.

In comparing verse six of this passage with John 10:30, one can note that Christ is equal to God. In addition to this fact, He proved in His incarnation and death that He was still deity. In speaking to His disciples, Jesus said, "My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand. I and m Father are one" (John 10: 29, 30). Because Christ is equal with God, those who would seek to "snath" His true followers out of His hand would also be able to remove them out of God's hand as well.

The Phrase in verse seven, "took upon him the form of a servant," should be understood as "having taken," which denotes that He became as a servant in man's likeness at His incarnation, and that he did not possess that form before that time. His purpose in coming as a

man was to die for the sins of mankind. The key idea to consider is that Christ was and is who He claimed to be – God. He appeared in the form of man so that He could die in order to satisfy the Law’s judgment against man’s sin (1 John 2:2). The fact that He came as a human being did not remove His position in heaven but allowed Him to carry out His Father’s will. Christ was still equal with the Father, even while He was dying on the cross. In fact, Jesus experienced all the feelings that exist in the human body, yet He never allowed those things to block His mindset away from the cross or lead to sin (Heb. 4:15).

The last verse of this passage illustrates true humility in action. It is said of Christ that “he humbled himself and became obedient unto death.” This obedience resulted in the humility that Christ displayed in willingly going to the cross. At that time He was fully God, yet He set aside that glory in order to accomplish the Father’s will. (Key Word, page 1474)

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and no man is able to pluck them out of the Father’s hand

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

“Work Out Your Own Salvation”

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Deuteronomy 32:

3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon (*Greek, poured forth*) the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

19 But (*Or, Moreover*) I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such (*Or, honor such*) in reputation:

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

Chapter 3

Count All Gain As Loss

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Deuteronomy 10:

14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

15 Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.

16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

17 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:
5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;
6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.
8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,
9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;
11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

“The High Calling of God”

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.
17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:
19 Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* *their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)
20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:
21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Chapter 4

“Rejoice in the Lord”

1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.
2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest (*Or, venerable*), whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Contentment

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. (*To the Philippians written from Rome, by Epaphroditus.*)

References

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