

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI

{*The city of Philippi was located in Northern Greece, along the important Roman East - West highway called The Egnatian Way. The city was named after Philip of Macedon in the 4th century B.C. Philippi was given unique privileges of citizenship and was heralded as a miniature Rome. Many retired soldiers resided there. It's inhabitants prided themselves in their Roman prerogatives. cf. Acts 16:21. This was the first European city to receive the Good News. It was located along the shore of the Aegean Sea in a portion of Greece that is still called Macedonia.*}

CHAPTER I SALUTATION

<Philippians 1:1-2>

¹ Paul and Timothy, <*The name Paul means "little". The name Timothy means "honorer of God".*> servants (or, slaves) of Christ Jesus to all the believers (*literally, God's people, or, the saints*) in Christ Jesus in Philippi, along with the overseers (or, bishops) and church leaders (or, deacons): ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ.

PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE PHILIPPIANS

<Philippians 1:3-11>

³ Whenever I think of you I thank my God because of your remembrance of me. ⁴ In every prayer (*literally, at all times praying. The Greek word "δευσις" denotes supplication. It differs from the usual word for prayer. Cf. Kittel II, pp. 40 & 806.*) ⁵ there is always joy because of the way in which you have been partners in furthering the Good News from the very first day until now. I am certain of this, ⁶ that it was God who began a good work in you and God is the one who will bring it to completion at the time when Christ Jesus comes. ⁷ It is appropriate for me to feel this way for I have you in mind (*literally, in my heart*) constantly. This is because you are my partners in the work given me to carry out God's grace. I do this whether I am imprisoned or free to testify to the truth of the Good News. ⁸ God knows that my longing for you is actually a deep yearning since this yearning has been brought about by the tender mercy (or, affection.) <*The Greek word σπλαγχνον really means the intestines or entrails. Thus it becomes a figure for the seat of the emotions i.e. "tender mercy" or "love". The Greeks felt that the seat of the emotions was in the entrails.*> of Christ Jesus (or, as Christ Jesus loves you.) ⁹ This is my prayer for you: that your love might overflow with increasing knowledge and understanding <*With the idea of discernment and judiciousness. cf. Kittel Vol. 1, p.186*> of those things which are truly important, ¹⁰ so that you might be flawless and blameless when the Day of Christ comes. ¹¹ I desire that your lives may be able to reap (*i.e. be filled with*) a good harvest of righteousness which comes only from Jesus Christ, to the [glory and praise (or, commendation) of God.] ¹

1 {C} So: Aleph, A, B, C, D in the third corrective hand, I, K, P, Psi, many minuscules, Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac, Sahidic, Bohairic & Fayyumic Coptic & Armenian. "and the praise of Christ" D in the original hand & 1962. "Glory of God, and praise of me" P46. F & G omit "God" and simply say, "in praise of me". Other minor variants occur.

TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST

<Philippians 1:12-30>

12 I desire that you know, my friends (*literally, brothers*), that in spite of what might have been expected, that which has happened to me has turned out in favor and not against the Good News. 13 Because of this in the entire Imperial (*literally, Praetorian*) guard, <*This guard was comprised of 9,000 men or nine cohorts of 1,000 men each.*> and wherever my imprisonment (*i.e. shackles*) has become known, it is recognized that I am a servant of Christ. 14 More and more our fellow Christians have become encouraged in their faith in the Lord and as a result have become more fearless, [to preach the Christian Message.]²

15 There are some who are preaching Christ because of a jealous and controversial spirit. 16 Others proclaim Him out of goodwill. It is because of what I have received as my responsibility (*or, calling*) that some of those who proclaim Him out of good will preach Christ because they know that God has given me a task of preaching Christ even though I am presently imprisoned because of the Good News and am in this situation because of defending the Good News. 17 There are those who are filled with personal rivalry (*or, jealousy, however, not in a holy, pure way*) in order to make my imprisonment a greater difficulty.

18 What difference does it make? In either case, because of a pure motive or not, Christ is preached and because of this I rejoice. 19 I will keep on being happy for I am certain that this will turn out for my own welfare (*or, my release*) through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 20 My earnest desire and hope is that I should never be ashamed but that at this moment and always I will speak courageously and freely that all might honor Christ, whether I live or die. 21 Living means Christ to me and dying means obtaining a greater life (*or, gain*).

22 If, however, my continuing to live means that I should be able to carry on some useful work, the choice is a different one. 23 I am feeling pressure on both sides (*or, the decision is a difficult one*). I am anxious to leave this world and be with Christ, since that is far better. 24 However, for your sakes, it is more important that I remain alive (*or, in the body*). 25 Because of my conviction about this, I am certain that I will remain alive to help you move forward in Christian living 26 so that you can enjoy your faith even more! 27 In this way, when we are together again you will have even more reason for joy in Christ Jesus.

It is more important that you make sure your daily life as citizens is such that it is worthy of the Good News of Christ. I am anxious that you live in such a way that, if I see you again, or if I do not see you again, I will hear that you are standing fast in one spirit and one mind for you are united in battling <*The Greek word συναθλεω would be used to describe a contest.*> for the faith of the Good News 28 and not fearful (*or, do not tremble because*) of our opponents. The fact that they are opponents is a sign of their destruction and that assures you that you will receive deliverance (*or, be victorious*) which comes from God. 29 You have been granted the privilege that you not only believe in Christ but also have suffered for Him. 30 You must fight exactly the same battle that you have seen me fight in the past and one about which you hear (*i.e. Paul's imprisonment in Rome*) that I am still fighting.

2 {D} So: P46, D in the third corrective hand, K & several minuscules. "to preach the message of God" Aleph, A, B, P, Psi, many minuscules, Old Latin, Peshitta, Harclean (with *) Syriac, Sahidic, Bohairic & Fayyumic Coptic, Armenian & Ethiopic. In an alternate form also in D in the original hand.

CHAPTER II
CHRISTIAN HUMILITY AND CHRIST'S HUMANITY

<Philippians 2:1-11>

¹ If, with Christ there is any encouragement, if there is any comfort in love, if there is any sharing together with the Spirit, if there is any feeling of tenderness and sympathy toward one another, ² then make my joy complete by being [of a harmonious mind,] ³ sharing the same love, being united in soul and mind, ³ by not doing anything because of selfish motives for divisiveness or because of a feeling of superiority but let everyone (*or, all believers*) deal with one another in humility, each considering the other to be superior to yourself. ⁴ No one dare look out for personal interests but also for the [interests of others! ⁵ The attitude] ⁴ you ought to have (*literally, contemplate this within yourselves*) is the same attitude had by Christ Jesus.

⁶ He always possessed the true nature of God.

He did not feel this equality with God
(*or, existence in a manner equal to God*)

to be something he needed to seize.

⁷ No, He emptied Himself (*cf. Kittel Vol. III, p. 661*)

being in the form of a slave (*or, servant*)

when He took to Himself

being in the form of a human being.

⁸ In this human form which all could recognize

He humbled Himself and lived obediently,

ready to die the ultimate death on the cross.

⁹ That is why God has raised Him to the heights

and conferred upon Him the name

that is greater than every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus everything,

be it in heaven or on earth or under the earth,

should bend the knee and that every

¹¹ tongue should declare

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

bringing glory to God the Father.

<Verses 6-11 possibly are lines quoted from a hymn that was known in the early Church.>

SHINING AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

<Philippians 2:12-18>

¹² Because of this, my dear friends, who have always been obedient to my will when I was present with you, [not only] ⁵ it is even more important now that I am absent from you, to work out your own salvation (*or, cultivate your own salvation*) with fear and trepidation ¹³ for God is the one working within you to implant in you the will and the desire to fulfill God's gracious design. ¹⁴ Do all this without complaint or argument. ¹⁵ If so, no one will dare to question your morals in the midst of a crooked and distorted generation. You must be shining examples as God's perfect children as you

3 {B} Minor variants occur.

4 {B} Minor variants occur.

5 {B} The words "not only" are inserted by P46, Aleph, A, C, D, G, K, P, Psi, many minuscule, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic, Armenian & Ethiopic. It is omitted by the other major manuscripts.

offer them the Word of Life. ¹⁶ If you do that, on the day when Christ comes I will be pleased that I have not lost the race nor have I labored in vain. ¹⁷ Really, even if my blood is poured out as a sacrifice (*or, libation*) to help you in your faith, I am happy to do so ¹⁸ and likewise you must be happy and rejoice with me!!

TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS

<Philippians 2:19-30>

¹⁹ I hope, based on my faith in the Lord Jesus, that I will soon be sending Timothy to you to cheer my heart when I receive news as to how things are going with you. ²⁰ I know of no one else whose heart and mind are so well attuned to mine. The Lord will have a genuine interest (*or, concern about*) in your affairs. ²¹ Others are self centered, having no genuine interest. They ought to be centered in Jesus Christ! ²² You know the sterling worth of Timothy. He is as a son to me, helping with the spreading of the Good News as if it were father and son who are proclaiming the Good News.

²³ Because of this I hope to send him, when I have finished attending to some personal affairs. ²⁴ I do have confidence, however, that I also will be coming to see you in the near future.

²⁵ I felt it was important to return Epaphroditus, <*The name means "charming". He was a valued Macedonian Christian.*> our brother, fellow laborer and fellow soldier of the faith to you. You sent him to minister to my need. ²⁶ [He became homesick and distressed to know that you worried] ⁶ because he had been ill. ²⁷ He was truly ill, in fact, on the verge of death. Yet, God took pity on him but not only on him but also on me for he thereby spared me from having additional grief. ²⁸ This makes me even more anxious to send him, for by sending him I am giving you joy; the joy of seeing him again, thereby relieving my own anxiety <*i.e. for me as well as for Epaphroditus*>. ²⁹ Welcome him then as one who is a believer for it was because of [Christ's] ⁷ work that he nearly died. ³⁰ So honor him for he endangered his life to do the work you yourselves were unable to do for me.

CHAPTER III

THE TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS

<Philippians 3:1-11>

¹ Finally, my friends (*literally, brothers*), rejoice in the Lord. To write the same thing as has already been written is no trouble and doing so will help keep you on a safe course. ² Be on guard for those dogs, the workers of evil ³ who insist on mutilation. It is we, not they, who are truly circumcised. <*In Greek there is a play on words using the words translated as "mutilation" κατατομη and the word translated "circumcised" περιτομη*>. We who worship [God's] ⁸ Spirit have pride in Christ Jesus, placing no confidence in external ceremonies. ⁴ I do, however, have some reason for confidence in such outward matters. If anyone imagines being able to rely on physical marks and human accomplishments, I have an even greater claim. ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day, a native Israelite. I belong to the tribe of Benjamin. <*Benjamin was the last son of Jacob and Rachel, named thus because his mother, dying of child birth, said, "Ben-oni" "h1!&1w" meaning "son of my sorrow" Genesis 35:18. He was then called Benjamin, "1b/b1w" meaning, "son of the*

⁶ {C} Minor variants occur.

⁷ {C} So: P46, B, G & several minuscules. "the Christ" D, K, several minuscule, & in a variant form, Old Latin, Peshitta Syriac & Sahidic Coptic. "Lord" Aleph, A, P, Psi, several minuscules, Harclean Syriac, Bohairic Coptic, Armenian & Ethiopic. "the God" minuscule 1985.

⁸ {C} Minor variants occur.

right hand." *His descendants formed the tribe of Benjamin. Scholars are not clear, from the Biblical record, where the exact boundaries of the land allotted to the tribe of Benjamin were located. The tribe remained loyal to Judah, thus it was looked upon with favor in later generations because of its loyalty to the Southern Kingdom as well as its loyalty to Jerusalem as a place of worship.*> I am a true Hebrew (*or, Hebrew of the Hebrews.*) *<i.e. a Hebrew speaking Jew even though he was born in the Diaspora. cf. Strack-Billerbeck Vol. 3, p. 622.>* As far as the law is concerned, a Pharisee.⁶ To the extent that zeal is an issue, I was a persecutor of the Christian Church. As to legal righteousness no one could criticize me. I was without any fault.

⁷ However, whatever achievements I accomplished in my life I consider *<The Greek words include the concept: "I am still considering".>* these as ⁸ a total loss because of Christ, in comparison with the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord! Because of Him I have abandoned everything I ever valued and regard these things as rubbish in order to gain Christ⁹ and to be united with Him. I abandoned (*literally, not having*) my own righteousness based on the law, so that through faith in Christ, I might receive the righteousness that comes from God,¹⁰ based only on faith in Christ and the power of the resurrection and share with Him in His sufferings.¹¹ It is my purpose to die the death He died so that I might possibly be able to achieve the resurrection from the dead.

PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK

<Philippians 3:12-4:1>

¹² Don't get the feeling that [I have already arrived]⁹ at this point, or that I have reached perfection. *<The Greek word denotes a continuous state.>* I press on, always trying to lay hold, because of the fact that I have already been laid hold of by Jesus Christ.¹³ I do [not]¹⁰ think of myself as having already taken hold of the prize. I have only one aim in life! Forgetting, *<i.e. not dwelling on>* what was past and reaching forward to what lies ahead,¹⁴ I push on to the goal, to get the prize of God's heavenly summons which is available to those who are believers in Christ Jesus.¹⁵ All of us who are mature in the faith must keep this in mind. If there are some who feel differently, God will make this clear to them.¹⁶ However, let us keep going in the same direction, [maintaining the standards]¹¹ *<i.e. not lowering the standards of Christian faith.>* to which we have attained!

¹⁷ My friends (*literally, brothers*), unite with one another. Follow my example. We *<i.e. Paul and the Christians>* have set the correct example. Pay attention!¹⁸ Many are living who, as I have often told you, and about whom I now speak with tears, who are the enemies of the cross of Christ.¹⁹ Their end is destruction! Their god is their stomach! Their pride is their shame! They center their interests on earthly things!²⁰ Our citizenship, of which we are a part, is in heaven. It is from there that we expect the Lord Jesus Christ as our Deliverer (*or, Savior*).²¹ He will change the fashion of this humbled body so that it resembles (*or, is conformed to*) His glorified body as He exerts His power, enabling Him to subject all things to Himself.

9 {B} So: P61, Aleph, A, B, D in the third corrective hand, K, P, Psi, many minuscules, Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic & Armenian. "and have become perfect" is inserted in P46, D in the original hand, E, F & G.

10 {C} So: P46, B, D in the third corrective hand, G, K, Psi, many minuscules, Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac, Bohairic Coptic & Armenian. "not yet" Aleph, A, D in the original hand, many minuscules, Harclean Syriac (with *) & Ethiopic.

11 {B} This is inserted by D in the third corrective hand and in a variant form by Aleph in the third corrective hand, K, P, Psi, a number of late minuscules, & Old Latin. It is omitted by P16, P46, Aleph in the original hand, A, B and several minuscules. Other minor variants occur.

CHAPTER IV

¹ Now then, my friends (*literally, brothers*), you whom I love and miss, you are my joy and will be my crown of victory. In the light of all this, stand firm in the Lord, my dear friends. ¹²

EXHORTATION

<Philippians 4:2-9>

² I call on Euodia <*The name means "fragrance".*> and Syntyche, <*The name means "coincidence" or "success".*> to agree with one another in the Lord. ³ I beg you also my loyal Suzygos <*The name means, "yokefellow" or "comrade" cf. Westcott and Hort margin; Nestle-Ahland 26th Edition margin; Zurich & Jerusalem (Latin) Bible translations. See Karl Barth in his commentary, Philippenerbrief.*> to assist these women as those who work (*so, literally*) on behalf of the Good News for they have struggled a great deal along with me and with Clement <*From the Latin name, "Clemens". The name means, "mild" or "merciful".*> [also as well as the rest of my fellow workers.] ¹³ whose names are recorded in the Book of Life.

⁴ Always be joyful in the Lord. <*The Greek word for "joyful", "χαρετε" in Paul's day, would be used as a greeting, in wishing that someone had a good day.*> I will repeat, be joyful! <*Circumstances do not determine joy. To be "in the Lord" the believer must rejoice under any circumstances.*> ⁵ Show your gentle spirit toward everyone. The Lord is near! ⁶ Do not worry about anything, instead, no matter what the circumstance, place your requests before God through prayer and entreaty along with thanksgiving. ⁷ God's peace which is beyond all comprehension will keep on guarding your hearts and your thoughts (*or, your entire being*), providing safety in Christ Jesus.

⁸ To conclude, dear friends (*literally, brothers*), fill up your minds with whatever is (*or, as many things as are*) true, whatever brings respect, whatever displays a gracious spirit. If there is any excellence, if there is anything that deserves praise, keep these qualities in mind! ⁹ Also, whatever you have learned, whatever you have mastered, heard and seen in me, let these things be the basis for your conduct. God, the one who gives peace, will be on your side!

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PHILIPPIANS GIFT

<Philippians 4:10-20>

¹⁰ I am deeply grateful, rejoicing in the Lord, that you now, after a long time, have again taken the opportunity to show your concern for me. I do not wish to imply that you have not been concerned. You have not had an opportunity to demonstrate that concern. ¹¹ My comment is not because of a feeling of neglect for I have learned not to think about my own desires, for as far as I am concerned, I am content in whatever circumstances there might be. ¹² I have learned how to live in need and know how to live in abundance. I am acquainted with how to deal with all circumstances of life. I have learned the secret of living with an ample supply of food and of hunger, of plenty and of want. ¹³ I have the strength, through the Lord, for every circumstance for it is [He] ¹⁴ who gives me power.

¹⁴ I am thankful for your kindness in sharing in my troubles as would a faithful companion. ¹⁵ You Philippians know as well as I that when the Good News was first preached and after I left Macedonia, you were the only church that became a partner when it came to financial matters.

¹² {D} Very minor variants occur at the close of this verse.

¹³ {B} The word order varies in the manuscripts.

¹⁴ {C} So: Aleph, A, B & D. "Christ" E, F, G, K, L & P.

¹⁶ Why, when I was still in Thessalonica you sent more than enough (*literally, several times*) [to supply my needs.] ¹⁵ ¹⁷ It was not that I looked anxiously to receive your gift, but this one thing I am anxious about: namely, the results that will come and will be credited to your account. <Paul uses terms here that might be used in the accounting department of a store.> ¹⁸ I have sufficient and more than is required.

I have received what you sent along with Epaphroditus. This is an offering that gives off a pleasant aroma in itself, a gift that provides an appropriate sacrifice that certainly pleases God. ¹⁹ My God's wealth is abundant (*or, in ample supply*) and provides for every need you will, who are united with Christ Jesus will have. ²⁰ To our God and Father be eternal glory. Amen.

FINAL GREETINGS

<Philippians 4:21-22>

²¹ I send greetings to each one of God's people who is a believer in Christ Jesus. The friends (*literally, brothers*) who are here with me send greetings to you. ²² All those who believe (*literally, saints*) send their best wishes, especially those who are in Caesar's household.

²³ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ protect (*or, be with*) your spirit. [Amen.] ¹⁶

SUBSCRIPTION

{*"To the Philippians" Aleph, B in the original hand, Psi & 33. Minor variants occur in D, F & G. "To the Philippians, written from Rome" B in the first corrective hand, D in the original hand & 06 (a 6th century manuscript). "To the Philippians from Paul, delivered by Epaphroditus" 075, 1739, 1881 & the Majority Text. There are minor alternate readings in P46, 365, 629, 630, 1505 & 2464. 945 adds "from Athens"*}

¹⁵ {B} Minor variants occur.

¹⁶ {C} "Amen" is added by P46, Aleph, A, D, K, P, Psi & many minuscules. It is omitted by B, G, 1739 & 1881.