

INTRODUCTION TO THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

How do you account for the sin, evil, and misery that is in the world??? Earth would be a wilderness, if it were not cultivated with great care! It grows weeds and poisonous plants as it is, and natural disasters destroy crops and take lives! Many of the human race are wicked to excess, and their evil brings misery and suffering upon themselves and others. Besides all this, mankind is subject to a variety of painful diseases and to death!

Many theories have been invented to account for this. Some have said that this universe was created by an *evil god*, who fights against the true God. Some have said humans are being punished here for sins done in a previous life. Some have said that there is no reason and no sense to any of it, and that it has always been just like it is with no change at all. The Epicureans taught a theory much like modern *evolution*.

But into this darkness has come the light of Christ! There is but one first Cause, who is both infinitely powerful and infinitely good!!! Every being in the universe derive their existence from Him, absolutely depend upon Him, and are under His rule!!! Whatever evil exists, grows out of the freedom of will which God originally gave His rational creatures, and which made them moral, and responsible for their own actions!!! Adam and Eve, our first parents, abused their freedom of will by one act of disobedience, and brought God's curse down upon this earth. You wouldn't have done this??? But you did!!! You came into this world as pure and innocent as Adam, and you abused your free will just as he did.

What is the answer to all this??? You cannot save yourself!!! But what you cannot do, God already did!!! He ACTED in Christ!!! God's purpose for this was to set man free from: (1) the power of sin; (2) the guilt and punishment of sin. God chose to make faith the basis of receiving the

benefits of this finished work in Christ. *MacKnight* says of this action of God: "But that, for remedying these evils, God was graciously pleased, in his original plan, to appoint the mediation of his Son, whereby the penal consequences of sin are so far prevented, that they do not take place in all cases; for as many of mankind as are delivered by him from the power of sin, shall at length be also delivered from its punishment, and be raised to a degree of perfection and happiness, greater than if they never had sinned."

Paul planted this church on his second tour of missions, around 50 A.D. See *Acts ch 16*. It is generally thought that this Letter was written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, between 60-62 A.D.

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

1 From Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus—

To all God's people living in Philippi who are in union with Christ Jesus, and to the church leaders and helpers:

²May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul's Prayer for His Readers

³I thank my God for you every time I think of you; ⁴and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy, ⁵because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel, from the very first day until now. ⁶And so I am sure of this: that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished in the Day of Christ Jesus. ⁷You are always in my heart! And so it is only right for me to feel this way about you. For you have all shared with me in this privilege that God has given me, both now that I am in prison and also while I was free to defend and firmly

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

I thank my God every 3 time I remember you. In all 4 my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because 5 of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of 6 this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share

1. **From Paul and Timothy.** This is more like an ordinary letter. Paul does not assert his apostleship, but gives a friendly greeting from himself and Timothy. Timothy is described in the Introduction to First Timothy. **To all God's people.** Christians are God's people! [*Saints:* see note on 1 Cor. 6:11.] **Church leaders.** Titus 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:1. **Church helpers.** 1 Tim. 3:8.

2. **May God.** See note on Rom. 1:7.

3. **I thank my God.** See note on Rom. 1:8. Paul, imprisoned, has much to thank his God for!!!

4. **I pray with joy.** The faith of these Christians at Philippi made him jubilant!!!

5. **Because of the way.** Paul is probably thinking of the money and gifts which they sent him at different times (*Phil.* 2:25; 4:10, 18). But it goes even deeper than this because they share a common faith in the One Lord!!!

6. **And so.** "I have no doubt about your faith, and I know you will go on to the end!!!" **That God.** God began this work by sending Paul to them. Paul sees God's work in all that is done, but he also sees God and man as partners in the Christian life (*Phil.* 2:12-16; 1 Cor. 3:6).

7. **You are always!** "You are especially dear to me in Christ!!!" **For you.** They all share a common grace in Christ, but Paul probably means the way they shared with him in sending Epaphroditus with gifts to help him while he is imprisoned and cannot work to help himself (*Phil.* 2:25-30; 4:18). They also helped finance his work at other times (*Phil.* 4:15-16).

establish the gospel. ⁸God knows that I tell the truth when I say that my deep feeling for you all comes from the heart of Christ Jesus himself.

⁹This is my prayer for you: I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more, together with true knowledge and perfect judgment, ¹⁰so that you will be able to choose what is best. Then you will be free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ. ¹¹Your lives will be filled with the truly good qualities which Jesus Christ alone can produce, for the glory and praise of God.

To Live Is Christ

¹²I want you to know, my brothers, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the gospel. ¹³As a result, the whole palace guard and all the others here know that I am in prison because I am a servant of Christ. ¹⁴And my being in prison has given most of the brothers more confidence in the Lord, so that they grow bolder all the time in preaching the message without fear.

in God's grace with me. God ⁸
can testify how I long for all
of you with the affection of
Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: ⁹
that your love may abound
more and more in know-
ledge and depth of insight,
so that you may be able to ¹⁰
discern what is best and may
be pure and blameless until
the day of Christ, filled with ¹¹
the fruit of righteousness
that comes through Jesus
Christ—to the glory and
praise of God.

Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel

Now I want you to know, ¹²
brothers, that what has hap-
pened to me has really ser-
ved to advance the gospel.
As a result, it has become ¹³
clear throughout the whole
palace guard and to every-
one else that I am in chains
for Christ. Because of my ¹⁴
chains, most of the brothers
in the Lord have been en-
couraged to speak the word
of God more courageously
and fearlessly.

8. **God knows.** "As God himself knows, my deep feeling for you is the same as the deep feeling Christ has for you!!!" Compare *Eph. 5:21* and note.

9. **I pray that your love.** "I pray that your love of Christ and your fellow man will continue to grow and grow, as you gain more true knowledge and perfect judgment through your study and practice of God's word!!!"

10. **Able to choose.** "I want you to be able to examine all things in the light of God's truth, so that you can choose what is best (*1 Thess. 5:21-22*)."
There was danger from the *circumcision party* who distorted the gospel (see *Acts ch 15*), and it is vitally important that they be able to recognize what is true!!
Then you will be. Day of Christ = Judgment. The ultimate test of their Christian life is that they are free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ!!!

11. **Will be filled.** "And then, like trees of righteousness planted by the Lord, you will be filled with the fruit of righteousness, to the praise of God!!!" Compare *Gal. 5:22-23*.

12. **I want you to know.** "I don't want you to be sad or discouraged because I am now imprisoned and suffering! I want you to see these things in their true light! All this has really helped to spread the gospel of Christ!"

13. **As a result.** "It is common knowledge that I have been imprisoned because of my religion, and this makes people curious!" See note on *Acts 28:16*.

14. **Has given.** "My courage at this time has set an example which has made most of the brothers more confident as they preach the message!!!" See *Phil. 4:22* and note for some of the results of this.

¹⁵Of course some of them preach Christ because they are jealous and quarrelsome, but others preach him with all good will. ¹⁶These do so from love, because they know that God has given me the work of defending the gospel. ¹⁷The others do not proclaim Christ sincerely, but from a spirit of selfish ambition; they think that they will make more trouble for me while I am in prison.

¹⁸It does not matter! I am happy about it—just so Christ is preached in every way possible, whether from wrong or right motives. And I will

It is true that some preach 15 Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. The latter do so in love, 16 knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ 17 out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But 18 what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to

15. **Of course some.** How do we fit this in with our *idea* of the early church??? The truth is, of course, that the early church faced every problem that the church is facing today!!! Technology does not change the basic problems, which grow out of human relationships. *Robert Rainy* says: "Mixture of motive has haunted the work even of those who strove to keep their motives pure. And men in whom lower motive and worse motive had a strong influence have struck into the work alongside of the nobler and purer laborers. So it has pleased God to permit; that even in this sacred field men might be tried and manifested before the judgment of the great day; and that it might be more plain that the effectual blessing and the true increase come from Himself." See *verse 17*.

16. **These do so from love.** Those who preach Christ with all good will. These viewed Paul's imprisonment in the light of truth - *as a defence of the gospel!!!*

17. **The others.** *Robert Rainy* says: "There were, as we all know, in the Church of those days powerful sections of professed believers, who contested Paul's apostleship, questioned his teaching, and wholly disliked the effects of his work. Perhaps by this time the strain of that conflict had become a little less severe, but it had not wholly passed away. We call these persons the Judaizers [circumcision party]. They were men who looked to Jesus Christ as the Messiah, who owned the authority of His teaching, and claimed an interest in His promises. But they insisted on linking Christianity to Jewish forms, and rules, and conditions of law-keeping, which were on various grounds dear and sacred to them . . . Possibly there might even be a Christian congregation in the city in which this type prevailed." Compare *Acts 21:20; John 19:15* and notes. They probably preached Christ as *king*, hoping to *stir up* the Roman authorities against Paul.

18. **It does not matter!** *Robert Rainy* says: "It is not true that the preaching of Christ serves no purpose and yields no fruits, in cases where it is not carried on in the right or the best spirit . . . Now the Apostle, looking at this, is glad of it. He is not glad that any men, professing Christ, give way to evil and unchristian tempers. But he is glad that Christ is preached. There were cases in which he vehemently contended with such persons - when they strove to poison and pervert Christians who had learned the better way. But now he is thinking of the outside world; and it was good that the making known of Christ should gather strength, and volume, and extension. And the Apostle knew that the Lord could bless His own message, imperfectly delivered perhaps, to bring thirsty souls to Himself, and would not fail in His unsearchable wisdom to care for those who came, and to lead them in the ways He thought best. Let Christ be preached. The converts do not belong to the denominations, but first of all to Christ. Neither is it appointed that the denominations shall permanently hold those whom they bring in; but Christ can hold them, and can order their future in ways we cannot foretell. . . . But God is not tied up to give *no success* to men acting under wrong motives: at least, if we are not to say He gives the success to them, yet in connection with them He is well able to take success to Himself. Through strange channels He can send blessings to souls, whatever He gives or denies to the unworthy workmen. Souls truly gathered in will soon get beyond their teaching."

continue to be happy, ¹⁹because I know that by means of your prayers and the help which comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, I shall be set free.

²⁰My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail my duty, but that at all times, and especially right now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. ²¹For what is life? To me, it is Christ. Death, then, will bring more.

²²But if by living on I can do more worthwhile work, then I am not sure which I should choose.

²³I am caught from both sides. I want very much to leave this life and be with Christ, which is a far better thing; ²⁴but it is much more important, for your sake, that I remain alive. ²⁵I am sure of this, and so I know that I will stay. I will stay on with you all, to add to your progress and joy in the faith. ²⁶So when I am with you again you will have even more reason to be proud of me, in your life in Christ Jesus.

rejoice, for I know that ¹⁹through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly ²⁰expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ ²¹and to die is gain. If I am to ²²go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet, what shall I choose? I do not know! I am ²³torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary ²⁴for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I ²⁵know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my ²⁶being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

19. **Because I know.** Paul's enemies see his imprisonment as a source of shame and possible danger. But Paul sees *God's hand* at work in all this! Compare *Acts 23:11* and note. Paul says with confidence: *I shall be set free!* Compare *2 Tim. 4:18*.

20. **That I shall never fall.** *Johnson* says: "There is no anxiety about himself, only that he may glorify Christ."

21. **For what is life?** Paul's main thought is whether Christ will be honored by his life or his death. Compare *Acts 21:11-13* and notes. Death would bring more to him personally, as he would escape from suffering into Paradise!!!

22. **But if by living on.** Paul shows that his desire to stay and work for Christ in this world is equally as strong as his desire to go to his heavenly home!!!

23. **I am caught.** Note Paul views death as leading to a more complete life!!! See notes on *Luke 16:27-31*.

24. **For your sake.** He feels a deep obligation for the Philippians and all the Gentile Christians! Compare *2 Thess. 2:7* and note.

25. **I am sure.** Some think God told Paul this in a vision. Paul expects to stay in his earthly body a few more years, to add to their progress in the faith and their increased joy in Christ!!! See notes on *Acts 28:30-31*.

26. **So when.** "My release will show I have successfully defended the gospel before my judges, and I will have a further opportunity to teach you!"

²⁷Now, the important thing is that your manner of life be as the gospel of Christ requires, so that, whether or not I am able to go to see you, I will hear that you stand firm with one common purpose, and fight together, with only one wish, for the faith of the gospel. ²⁸Don't be afraid of your enemies; always be courageous, and this will prove to them that they will lose, and that you will win, because it is God who gives you the victory. ²⁹For you have been given the privilege of serving Christ, not only by believing in him, but also by suffering for him. ³⁰Now you can take part with me in the fight. It is the same one you saw me fighting in the past and the same one I am still fighting, as you hear.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Christ's Humility and Greatness

2 Does your life in Christ make you strong? Does his love comfort you? Do you have fellowship with the Spirit? Do you feel kindness and compassion for one another? ¹I urge you, then, make me completely happy by having the same thoughts, sharing the same love, and being

Imitating Christ's Humility

2 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

27. **Now, the important thing.** "You must stand firm for the truth and fight together against the circumcision party who want to make you slaves to The Law, and against the heathens who try to force you back into idolatry!"

28. **Don't be afraid.** Both the TEV and NIV follow the corrected Greek text. "Your courage in the face of persecution will prove to your enemies that they must lose and that you will win!" Compare 2 Thess. 1:4-5 and notes.

29. **The privilege.** "Super-saints" look for some gift to set them apart from other Christians - every gift, that is, except the one that is offered to all (Phil. 3:10-11).

30. **Now you can take part.** "This is the very same fight you saw me fighting in your own city, and that I am now fighting in Rome! You must expect such things yourself, and face these with courage and endurance!"

1. **Does?** Paul bases his encouragement to them on things they know to be true! Robert Rainy says: "Deeds are the true profession of our faith; they are the verification of our religious experience. And in this practical form we must overcome, not the temptations of other people or other ages, but our own. There is no more dangerous working of unbelief than that in which it never questions the doctrinal theory, but renders our Christianity cold and slack, and leads us to indulge a preference for a religion that goes easy."

2. **I urge you, then.** "Because you know all these things I just mentioned are true, I ask you just one thing more. Make my joy complete by really being one in Christ!" What Paul describes in this verse is a messianic community with a life style which finds its main expression in love and respect, and a common goal!

one in soul and mind. ³Don't do anything from selfish ambition, or from a cheap desire to boast; but be humble toward each other, never thinking you are better than others. ⁴And look out for each other's interests, not just for your own. ⁵The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had:

⁶He always had the very nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to become equal with God.

⁷Instead, of his own free will he gave it all up, and took the nature of a servant.

He became like man, and appeared in human likeness.

⁸He was humble and walked the path of obedience to death—his death on the cross.

Do nothing out of selfish **3**
ambition or vain conceit, but
in humility consider others
better than yourselves. Each **4**
of you should look not only
to your own interests, but
also to the interests of
others.

Your attitude should be **5**
the same as that of Christ
Jesus:

Who, being in very nature **6**
God, did not consider
equality with God some-
thing to be grasped, **7**
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature
of a servant, being made
in human likeness.

And being found in ap- **8**
pearance as a man, he
humbled himself and
became obedient to
death—even death on a
cross!

3. **Don't do anything.** Selfish ambition or a cheap desire to boast, would destroy the *spirit of community!!!* Christians must work together, not compete!!! **But be humble.** When each tries to seize the honor and glory for himself, no one is honored! But when each gives the honor and glory to the other person, all are honored!!!

4. **And look out for.** See *1 Cor. 10:24, 33* and notes.

5. **The attitude.** "Let me show you the example which Christ set for us!" There was a real threat of division in the Philippian church, and it was of vital importance that they develop a *spirit of community!* They must *relate to each other* through their reverence for Christ (*Eph. 5:21 and note*).

6. **He always had.** *Ernst Lohmeyer* has expanded the meaning of this section of verses. He says this is a very early Christian hymn, originally written in Aramaic (the Judean dialect of Hebrew), and sung in connection with the Lord's Supper (Holy Meal). But in studying this, note that Paul uses it to emphasize *Christian ethics*, not theology. **The very nature of God.** Compare *John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:3*. **But he did not think.** "He always had the very nature of God, even when he was in human form, but while in the flesh, he did not have an attitude of selfish ambition and try to make himself equal with God by force, even though he could have done it!" The next verse explains.

7. **Instead.** "The Son, who is the Eternal Logos, of his own free will gave up his *rank* (but not his divine nature) to take the nature of a servant and become what we are - a *human being*, with a human nature (*Rom. 8:3*) and be tempted as we are (*Heb. 4:15*)."

8. **He was humble.** The pagan world thought of *humility* as we think of *humiliation!* **Obedience.** Remember Paul is stressing the Christian ethic!!! Christ set the example by his obedience!!! **His death on the cross.** This is the ultimate humiliation!!! Note: (1) He always (even in human form) had the very nature of God, and also the *rank*. (2) He gave up his rank and the glory of heaven. (3) He took a servant's nature and became like us. (4) He shared our human nature completely, by also experiencing death. (5) He was completely humiliated in the shame of the Cross!

⁹For this reason God raised him to the highest place above, and gave him the name that is greater than any other name.
¹⁰And so, in honor of the name of Jesus, all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees,
¹¹and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Lights in the World

¹²So then, dear friends, as you always obeyed me when I was with you, it is even more important that you obey me now, while I am away from you. Keep on working, with fear and trembling,

Therefore God exalted ⁹ him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus ¹⁰ every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess ¹¹ that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Stars

Therefore, my dear ¹² friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with

9. **God.** The first part of this hymn tells what Christ did. The second part shows God's response. "God raised him from the dead and took him up to the highest place above, in his crucified body! This is how God rewarded Christ for his humility and obedience! I show you this as an example." And gave him the name. Names, to the ancient people, showed character and status. Being given a new name, then, shows Christ being raised to high rank and great honor! The question arises: "If Christ always had the very nature of God, is it possible that he is now higher than he was before???" Robert Rainy answers: "A line of contemplation, hard to follow yet inspiring, opens up in considering the Incarnation of our Lord as permanent. No day is coming in which that shall have to be looked upon as gone away into the past. This is suggestive as to the tie between Creator and creature, as to the bridge between Infinite and finite, to be evermore found in Him. But it may suffice here to have indicated the topic." Compare Psalm 8; Heb. 9:24-28.

10. **And so, in honor.** In honor to the authority that the name "Lord" represents, all Creation and even his enemies, fall on their knees in praise and submission to him!!! Angels, men, and even the dead!!!

11. **Proclaim.** It is the beings mentioned in verse 10 who proclaim this. The symbolism is of subjects swearing loyalty to their king. Johnson says: "All the universe is called to confess him as Lord, and thus glorify God. All will yet confess him, either in joy or shame."

12. **So then.** Now Paul draws some needed lessons from this example of Christ he showed them in verses 6-11. As you always obeyed me. "Even though I cannot be with you in person, it is more important than ever that you show the attitude of humility and obedience that Christ had!!!" Keep on working. The Philippian church will not always have Paul available to them in person. It is very important that they be able to take care of themselves. It is necessary that they keep on working to complete their salvation!!! They do this by imitating the attitude and obedience which Christ demonstrated. Johnson says: "While Christ is our Savior, and the author of our salvation, we must accept him and work together with him . . . Unless we do our part Christ cannot save us." We must reach out through faith to seize Christ, and then continue to hold firmly to him! Fear and trembling. This is a favorite expression of Paul, and means: "reverence and awe."

to complete your salvation, ¹³because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose.

¹⁴Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may be innocent and pure, as God's perfect children who live in a world of corrupt and sinful people. You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky, ¹⁶as you offer them the message of life. If you do so, I shall have reason to be proud of you on the Day of Christ, because it will show that all my effort and work have not been wasted.

¹⁷Perhaps my life's blood is to be poured out like an offering on the sacrifice that your faith offers to God. If that is so, I am glad, and share my joy with you all. ¹⁸In the same way, you too must be glad and share your joy with me.

fear and trembling, for it is ¹³ God who works in you to will and do what pleases him.

Do everything without ¹⁴ complaining or arguing, so ¹⁵ that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as ¹⁶ you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. But even if I am ¹⁷ being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you ¹⁸ too should be glad and rejoice with me.

13. **Because God.** After stressing personal responsibility in verse 12, Paul shows God at work in us. *Johnson* says: "God works in the converted person by his word and Spirit. His Spirit is a helper. He does not destroy our free will, for we may resist him (*1 Thess. 5:19*)."
To make you willing and able. *Robert Rainy* says: "All efforts to divide the ground between God and man go astray. In the inward process of salvation, and especially in this 'willing and doing,' God does all, and also man does all. But God takes precedence. For it is He that quickeneth [makes alive] the dead, and calleth things that are not as though they were. Here we may say, as the Apostle does in another case, 'This is a great mystery.' Let us recognize it as a mystery bound up with any hope we ourselves have of proving to be children of God. And under the sense of it, with fear and trembling let us work, for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do."

14. **Without.** "Do not be like restive slaves, who complain about everything they are asked to do; nor like disobedient children, who argue with their parents about everything they are asked to do!"

15. **Innocent and pure.** If they do as Paul urges them, they will be innocent and pure. **As God's perfect children.** Compare *Eph. 5:8* and note. **You must shine.** Compare *Matt. 5:16* and note.

16. **As you offer them.** *Johnson* says: "Always preaching Christ in word, in life, and in deed. That was their work. Unless they did this they were a failure."
Reason to be proud of you. Compare *1 Thess. 2:19-20* and notes.

17. **Perhaps my life's blood.** Paul viewed his service to Christ as an offering for the Gentiles. In *Phil. 1:25* he seems confident he will not die just yet. Perhaps here he looks into the future to the time his life's blood will be poured out as an offering - poured over the sacrifice of the Gentile Christian's faith. Paul was beheaded in Rome, either 67 or 68 A.D.

18. **In the same way.** "You must have this same attitude and be glad when you suffer and even die for the gospel! In this way you will share your joy in Christ with me!"

Timothy and Epaphroditus

¹⁹I trust in the Lord Jesus that I will be able to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may be encouraged by news of you. ²⁰He is the only one who shares my feelings, and who really cares about you. ²¹Everyone else is concerned only about his own affairs, not about the cause of Jesus Christ. ²²And you yourselves know how he has proved his worth, how he and I, like a son and his father, have worked together for the sake of the gospel. ²³I hope to send him to you, then, as soon as I know how things are going to turn out for me. ²⁴And I trust in the Lord that I myself will be able to come to you soon.

²⁵I have thought it necessary to send you our brother Epaphroditus, who has worked and fought by my side, and who has served as your messenger in helping me. ²⁶He is anxious to see you all, and is very upset because you heard that

Timothy and Epaphroditus

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard

19. **To send Timothy.** "Through the help of the Lord Jesus, I hope to send Timothy to you soon. He can tell you about me, and he can bring back the good news of what you are doing!"

20. **He is.** *Robert Rainy* says: "Notice the importance which may justly attach to human instrumentalities. One is not as good as another. Some are far more fit for use than others are. The Apostle thought earnestly on the point who was fittest to go, and he was glad he had a man like Timothy to send. It is true that the supreme source of success in gospel work is God Himself; and sometimes He gives unexpected success to unlikely instruments. But yet, as a rule, much depends on men being adapted to their work. When God prepares fresh blessing for His Church, He commonly raises up men fitted for the service to be rendered. Therefore we do well to pray earnestly for men eminently qualified to do the Lord's work."

21. **Everyone else.** Paul does not mean his associates, if any are with him. *MacKnight* says: "For all the teachers here seek their own pleasure and profit, and not the things belonging to Christ Jesus."

22. **And you yourselves know.** They knew Timothy well (*Acts 16:3, 12*). Paul speaks like a proud father! Timothy played an important part in the spread of Christianity!

23. **As soon as I know.** The fact that Paul is inspired, does not mean the future is an open book to him! He feels the need to keep Timothy with him until he hears the Emperor's verdict!

24. **And I trust.** Paul has great confidence in the Lord, and may have had a vision about this, yet he knows he cannot place an obligation on the Lord. Compare *Phil. 1:25-26* and notes.

25. **Epaphroditus.** This is the messenger which the Philippian church sent to Paul. Now Paul is going to send him back to them immediately, with this Letter.

26. **He is anxious.** Epaphroditus has stayed at Rome much longer than he had intended to do. He is eager to get home, and is upset because he knows they have worried about him!

he was sick. ²⁷Indeed he was sick, and almost died. But God had pity on him, and not only on him but on me, too, and spared me even greater sorrow. ²⁸I am all the more eager, then, to send him to you, so that you will be glad again when you see him, and my own sorrow will disappear. ²⁹Receive him, then, with all joy, as a brother in the Lord. Show respect to all such men as he, ³⁰because he risked his life and nearly died, for the sake of the work of Christ, in order to give me the help that you yourselves could not give.

he was ill. Indeed he was ill, ²⁷ and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, ²⁸ so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, because he almost ²⁹ died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me. ³⁰

The True Righteousness

3 In conclusion, my brothers, may the Lord give you much joy. It doesn't bother me to repeat what I have written before, and it will add to your safety. ²Watch out for those who do evil things, those dogs, men who insist on

No Confidence in the Flesh

3 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those

27. **Almost died.** This makes some ask: "Why didn't Paul use his power to heal this man???" *MacKnight* says: "Those who possessed the power of miracles could not exercise it according to their own pleasure, but according to the direction of the Holy Spirit; otherwise Paul would have most certainly have healed Epaphroditus, who, as implied in *verse 30*, had fallen into this dangerous sickness through fatigue which he underwent in assisting the apostle. Miracles of healing were generally wrought for convincing unbelievers." **But God.** Paul implies that Epaphroditus' recovery was God's response to their earnest prayers!

28. **So that you.** "I could use his help here, but I send him back to you, so that your own happiness will make me happy too!"

29. **With all joy.** This is a genuine praise for one who had demonstrated his willingness to *lay down his life* for the Good News!!! **Show respect.** It is right and proper to show respect and give honor to all who show themselves worthy of it!!!

30. **Because.** "He risked his life and nearly died! He thought no price was too high to pay, to spread the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free!!! He was your *proxy* to me!"

1. **May the Lord.** Joy from the Lord = joy in the Lord. "Be jubilant in your knowledge of the Good News of God's finished work in Christ!!!" **To repeat.** Paul had written many letters to oppose the false teaching of the *circumcision party*. Since these false teachers adapted their *sales talk* to the prejudices of the people, Paul had to expose it in a different way in each case. The Philippians have certainly read the things he has already written. Now he repeats himself to expose the *circumcision party* in a way especially adapted to them! If members of the *circumcision party* were not already there at Philippi, they would soon be coming!!! *Forewarned is forearmed!!!*

2. **Watch out.** Compare *2 Cor. 11:13-15*. Paul calls them: "those who do evil things," and "dogs." In ancient times, dogs were not "man's best friend," but vicious scavengers who snarled and snapped!!! **Who insist on cutting.** Compare *Gal. 5:12* and note.

cutting the body. ³For we, not they, are the ones who have received the true circumcision, because we worship God by his Spirit, and rejoice in our life in Christ Jesus. We do not put any trust in external ceremonies. ⁴I could, of course, put my trust in such things. If anyone thinks he can trust in external ceremonies, I have even more reason to feel that way. ⁵I was circumcised when I was a week old. I am an Israelite by birth, of the tribe of Benjamin, a pure-blooded Hebrew. So far as keeping the Jewish Law is concerned, I was a Pharisee, ⁶and I was so zealous that I persecuted the church. So far as a man can be righteous by obeying the commands of the Law, I was without fault. ⁷But all those things that I might count as profit I now reckon as loss, for Christ's sake. ⁸Not only those things; I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have thrown everything away; I consider it all as mere gar-

mulators of the flesh. For ³ it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on ⁵ the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

But whatever was to my ⁷ profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything ⁸ a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

3. For we, not they. Compare *Rom. 2:29; 4:12* and notes. By his Spirit. Both the TEV and NIV follow the corrected Greek Text. The fact that a person is a Jew by nationality and has been circumcised, does not give him the right to worship God. Because Christians have the Spirit (*Rom. 8:15*), they worship God as sons and daughters!!! To renounce Christ, they had to renounce the Spirit also (*Heb. 10:29* and note). In external ceremonies. Compare *Col. 2:11-13* and notes.

4. I could, of course. "If salvation came by these things, I could trust in them just as much as anyone, as I will now show you."

5. I was circumcised. Week old = on the eighth day. "I am no Gentile converted to Judaism! My circumcision when a week old proves it! Neither were my parents and ancestors Gentiles converted to Judaism, as I show you by telling you I am of the tribe of Benjamin, a pure-blooded Hebrew!" I was a Pharisee. A member of the strictest of the Jewish sects. It was Pharisaism at its worst, not its best, that caused its disgrace.

6. So zealous. Because he had seen Christianity as a heresy, his zeal had driven him to try to destroy this new thing! Certainly he never forgot what he had done in ignorance (*1 Tim. 1:13-16*)! So far as. Paul says all this to show that by Jewish standards, he was as good a Jew as any who ever lived (except Christ), and that his Jewish credentials were much better than those of the circumcision party.

7. But all those things. "I could be very proud of my ancestors and my Jewish background. But now they are just things to be thrown away, because they have no value in Christ!" Johnson says: "Instead of saving him, a trust in them would have been eternal ruin."

8. Not only. "Not only my Jewish heritage, but everything which men are so proud of, and by which they try to save themselves - all of this I gladly throw away for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord!!!"

bage, so that I might gain Christ, ⁹and be completely united with him. No longer do I have a righteousness of my own, the kind to be gained by obeying the Law. I now have the righteousness that is given through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God, and is based on faith. ¹⁰All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection; to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, ¹¹in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life.

Running toward the Goal

¹²I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep going on to try to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. ¹³Of course, brothers, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is

and be found in him, not ⁹ having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I ¹⁰ want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and ¹¹ so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Pressing on Toward the Goal

Not that I have already ¹² obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I ¹³ do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining

9. **And be.** Compare *Rom. 8:1-4* and notes. **No longer.** Compare *Rom. 10:3* and note. **That is given through faith.** Compare *Rom. 4:3* and note. We reach out through faith to seize Christ and make ourselves part of Him!!! Compare what Paul says in *Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17* and notes.

10. **All I want.** *Robert Rainy* says: "The Christ of Paul is the Lord who met him by the way (*Acts 9:5*). It is Christ dead, risen, and ascended; it is Christ with the reason and the result of His finished work made plain, and with the relation unveiled which He sustains to men who live by Him; it is Christ with the significance of His wonderful history for believers shining out from Him - Christ *VESTITUS EVANGELIO*."

11. **In the hope.** Union with Christ opens up Eternity!!! Some think Paul says *in the hope*, because the false teachers were saying the Resurrection was already past (compare *2 Tim. 2:17-18* and notes). They claimed to already be perfect and to have the blessings of Eternity! This heresy has *popped up* again and again over the centuries.

12. **I do not claim.** Evidently the false teachers claimed they were righteous because they obeyed The Law, and that they had already been raised from death. Paul makes no such claim!!! The prize still is in the future for him (compare *Heb. 11:40*). **Perfect.** This word means the perfection that comes with the end of time and the coming of Eternity. The false teachers probably claimed to be like the angels, spiritually perfect, and they may have said this excused them from all moral laws! In contrast, Paul says: **I keep going on.** Paul keeps on reaching out through faith, trying to win the prize of life for which Christ has already won him (at Paul's conversion).

13. **Of course, brothers.** "I was a better Jew than these false teachers, but I do not think I am as good a Christian as they *claim* to be. That is, I do not claim to have already won the prize." **The one thing I do.** "I forget everything in the past and all the progress I have already made! I do my best to cover the part of the race that is still ahead so that I can reach the prize!!!" Paul will not allow the past to dominate the present, and as he *lets go* the past, he can more easily reach ahead to the future.

ahead. ¹⁴So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

¹⁵All of us who are spiritually mature should have this same attitude. If, however, some of you have a different attitude, God will make this clear to you. ¹⁶However that may be, let us go forward according to the same rules we have followed until now.

¹⁷Keep on imitating me, my brothers. We have set the right example for you, so pay attention to those who follow it. ¹⁸I have told you this many times before, and now I repeat it, with tears: there are many whose lives make them enemies of Christ's death on the cross. ¹⁹They are going to end up in hell, because their god is their bodily desires, they are proud of what they should be

toward what is ahead, I ¹⁴press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

All of us who are mature ¹⁵should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to ¹⁶what we have already attained.

Join with others in follow- ¹⁷ing my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For, as I have ¹⁸often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their ¹⁹destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and

14. **So I run straight toward.** The goal marks the end of the race. Paul must complete his race and reach the goal in order to be given the prize. The prize is God's call to life above, that is, to Eternity. Compare the language in *Rev. 11:12*.

15. **Who are spiritually mature.** This is a play on words: he is not *perfect*, he is *mature*. Those who are *mature* should have this attitude: forget the past; run straight toward the goal. **If, however.** It may be that the false teachers who claimed to be *perfect*, also claimed God spoke directly to them. "If you have a different attitude, the God who speaks to you will make this clear!" We can also understand it: "If you really want to be perfect, God, in his word, will make this clear to you!"

16. **However.** "You have already run part of the race! Even though some of you have a different attitude than I have, let us run straight toward the goal using the same rules we have followed until now!"

17. **Imitating me.** *Robert Rainy* says: "Do not mistake the whole nature of Christianity; do not altogether miss the path in which God's children go. It is one Spirit that dwells in the Church; let not your walk forsake the fellowship of that Spirit. Christians are not bound to any human authority: Christ is their Master." **We have set.** Paul and the other servants of Christ have set the right example *by following Christ!* The Philippians are to pay attention to see who is following this right example, and also follow them!

18. **I have told you.** Again and again Paul has warned about those who would refuse to follow the fellowship of the Spirit. Compare *Acts 20:29-31*. **Whose lives make them enemies.** They are enemies of Christ's death because: of their sinful lives (*verse 19*); their teaching about The Law (*verse 9*); their refusal to suffer with Christ for the truth (*verse 10*). **On the cross.** Christ-on-the-cross is the source of salvation (*1 Cor. 1:23*). By teaching forgiveness through the sacrifices of The Law, the *circumcision party* in effect preached a cross-less Christ and destroyed the very foundation of the Good News!!! Compare *Heb. 10:29* and note.

19. **To end up in hell.** *APOLEIA*. See note on *Acts 8:20*. *Robert Rainy* says: "Probably, as was said, the Apostle is speaking of a class of men whose faults were gross, so that at least an Apostolic eye could not hesitate to read the verdict that must be passed upon them. But then we must consider that his object in doing this was to address a warning to men to whom he imputed no such gross failings; concerning

ashamed of, and they think only of things that belong to this world. ²⁰We, however, are citizens of heaven, and we eagerly wait for our Savior to come from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will change our weak mortal bodies and make them like his own glorious body, using that power by which he is able to bring all things under his rule.

Instructions

4 So, then, my brothers—and how dear you are to me, and how I miss you! how happy you make me, and how proud I am of you!—this, dear brothers, is how you should stand firm in your life in the Lord.

²Euodia and Syntyche, please, I beg you, try

their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship ²⁰ is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, ²¹ by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

4 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!

Exhortations

I plead with Euodia and I ² plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord.

whom, indeed, he was persuaded for other things, even things that accompany salvation; but whom he knew to be exposed to influences tending in the same direction, and whom he expected to see preserved only in the way of vigilance and diligence."

20. We, however. In contrast to those who think only of worldly things, Paul and all who imitate his example are CITIZENS OF HEAVEN! Christians are foreigners and refugees, living in this world only until they can go on to their heavenly home!!! For this reason, the world is no longer important to them (although people are important). **We eagerly wait.** The false teachers said that sin and death had already been conquered! Paul shows that we as Christians eagerly wait for our Savior to come! Not until then will our salvation be complete, as he shows in *verse 21*. Christ's **SECOND COMING** will signal the defeat of death (*1 Cor. 15:25-26*)!

21. He will change. Our bodies are not vile, but weak and mortal. All that will change when Christ comes!!! *Robert Rainy* says: "How decisive the change is which Christ completes at His coming - how distinctive, therefore, and unworldly, that citizenship which takes its type from heaven where He is, and from the hope of His appearing - is last of all set forth. . . . In our body we carry about with us what seems to mock the idea of an ethereal and ideal life. And when we die, the corruption of the grave speaks of anything but hope. Here, then, in this very point the salvation of Christ shall complete its triumph, saving us all over and all through." Compare *1 John 3:1-3* and notes.

1. So then, my brothers. This *burst of praise* for the Philippian Christians forms the link between the closing verses of chapter 3, and the instructions he is about to give. **You should stand firm.** *Robert Rainy* says: "How the Apostle longed to see this victory achieved in the case of all these Philippians, who were the treasure and the fruit of his life and labor! Be decided about this, be clear about it, cast every other way of it from you."

2. Euodia and Syntyche. Macedonian women were given an unusual amount of freedom. Women were more than usually active in the Philippian church. Lydia was the first convert, and her house became a meetingplace (*Acts ch 16*). These two Philippian women had a difference of opinion, and we see in them the slight dissension which Paul hints at in places. What it was all about, we have no way of knowing. From the whole tone of this Letter, it cannot have gotten seriously out of hand as yet. *Schinz* says: "In such a pure church, even slight bickerings would make a great impression." Paul begs each of them individually, wanting to treat each one exactly the same.

to agree as sisters in the Lord. ³And you too, my faithful partner, I want you to help these women; for they have worked hard with me to spread the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers, whose names are in God's book of the living.

⁴May you always be joyful in your life in the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!

⁵Show a gentle attitude toward all. The Lord is coming soon. ⁶Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. ⁷And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe, in union with Christ Jesus.

⁸In conclusion, my brothers, fill your minds with those things that are good and deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure,

Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always. ⁴
I will say it again: Rejoice!
Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁵
Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁷

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think a- ⁸

3. **My faithful partner.** Paul asks a third party to help these two settle their differences. Who this faithful partner was, we have no way of knowing. **Have worked hard.** Paul certainly refers to Euodia and Syntyche. **Together with Clement.** These together had worked hard to spread the gospel. Some connect this Clement with the celebrated bishop of Rome, but others think this cannot be so! **All my other fellow workers.** History gives no record of the many who helped spread Christianity! Only important, is the fact that their names are in *God's book of the living* (see note on *Rev. 20:14-15*).

4. **Always be joyful! Rejoice!** expresses the mood of this Letter. "Instead of being sad about the evils to which you are exposed, may you always be joyful in your life in the Lord. And because this attitude is very important to Christians, I say it again: rejoice!"

5. **Show a gentle attitude.** Gentleness and kindness are characteristics of Christ! See *2 Cor. 10:1* and note. **Coming soon.** Christians live in a "last hour" situation. See *1 John 2:18* and note.

6. **Don't worry about anything.** See *Matt. 6:25-34* and notes. **Ask God.** "Instead of worrying, you should put yourselves in God's hands! Let your prayer grow out of a thankful heart! Ask God for everything you need, and he will either give it to you, or give you the strength to be patient and endure whatever problems God allows to come your way!" See note on *Rom. 8:26*.

7. **And God's peace.** Paul describes this *peace which God gives* in terms of "one who stands guard duty to secure the area." **In union.** God's peace is available only to those who are united with Christ and are in his fellowship.

8. **In conclusion. Verse 6** shows that the Christian must actively reach out to God to receive God's peace. Paul's conclusion further explains this reaching out. **Fill your minds.** The Christian is constantly faced with choices, and because he is *new* (*2 Cor. 5:17*), he must purposely fill his (or her) mind with those things that are good and deserve praise!!! Most of these are familiar enough to need no further explanation. **Noble** = of good character, worthy, respectable. **Lovely** = those things whose grace attracts, things which produce love as a response. Greeks would not view this list of virtues (ethical qualities) as religious, but Paul does - in the context of the *last hour situation* (*verse 5*).

lovely, and honorable. ⁹Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my deeds. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

Thanks for the Gift

¹⁰How great is the joy I have in my life in the Lord! After so long a time, you once more had the chance of showing that you care for me. I don't mean that you had quit caring for me—you did not have a chance to show it. ¹¹And I am not saying this because I feel neglected; for I have learned to be satisfied with what I have. ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret, so that anywhere, at any time, I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. ¹³I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me.

¹⁴But it was very good of you to help me in my

about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Thanks for the Gifts

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstance. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Yet it was good of you to 14

9. **Put into practice.** Paul is saying for them to imitate the complete example which he set for them by following Christ! Compare *Phil. 3:17* and note. **And the God.** Faith becomes perfect through action (*James 2:22*). As you reach out through faith, both *God's peace* and the *God who gives us peace* will be yours!!!

10. **How great is the joy!** "I praise God as the source of all blessings, and I want you to know how happy I was when Epaphroditus came to me with your gift!" Paul was always very sensitive about money, because of the slander against him (*1 Thess. 2:5; 1 Cor. 9:3-18; 2 Cor. 11:8-9*). Note that Paul is *not* scolding them for taking so long, but rather praising their generosity when his circumstances gave them one more opportunity to help!

11. **And I am not. Neglected** is probably the better translation. Would Paul be in actual need, when there were so many Christians in Rome??? If he was, it would be due to the influence of the *circumcision party* (*Phil. 1:17*). Probably it is not the gift itself, but the fact that they used this opportunity to show their great love for him, that gives him such joy! Paul had learned the hard way, to be satisfied with what he had, whether material things or companionship!

12. **I know what it is.** This explains the "I have learned to be satisfied" of *verse 11*. Compare *2 Cor. 6:4-10* and notes.

13. **By the power.** This sums it all up: *by the power that Christ gives me*. The Stoics taught that a man ought to be self-sufficient and completely independent! Paul knows he has not done it alone! Compare *2 Cor. 9:8*.

14. **But it was very good of you.** "Even though I could have survived, by the power that Christ gives me, I want you to know how much I appreciate what you did! It was very good of you to help me in my troubles!"

troubles. ¹⁵You Philippians yourselves know very well that when I left Macedonia, in the early days of preaching the Good News, you were the only church to help me; you were the only ones who shared my profits and losses. ¹⁶More than once, when I needed help in Thessalonica, you sent it to me. ¹⁷It is not that I just want to receive gifts; rather, I want to see profit added to your account. ¹⁸Here, then, is my receipt for everything you have given me—and it has been more than enough! I have all I need, now that Epaphroditus has brought me all your gifts. These are like a sweet-smelling offering to God, a sacrifice which is acceptable and pleasing to him. ¹⁹And my God, with all his abundant wealth in Christ Jesus, will supply all your needs. ²⁰To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

share in my troubles. More- 15
over, as you Philippians
know, in the early days of
your acquaintance with the
gospel, when I set out from
Macedonia, not one church
shared with me in the matter
of giving and receiving, ex-
cept you only; for even when 16
I was in Thessalonica, you
sent me aid again and again
when I was in need. Not that 17
I am looking for a gift, but
I am looking for what may
be credited to your account.
I have received full payment 18
and even more; I am amply
supplied, now that I have
received from Epaphroditus
the gifts you sent. They are
a fragrant offering, an ac-
ceptable sacrifice, pleasing
to God. And my God will 19
meet all your needs accord-
ing to his glorious riches in
Christ Jesus.

To our God and Father be 20
glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

15. You Philippians. Paul looks back to their actions in the past. *Kennedy* has Paul say: "But this is no new thing, for you have always been generous. You know this as well as I do." **Profits and losses.** Paul had given them priceless spiritual gifts! It was only *squaring the account* for them to share their material things with him! *Robert Rainy* says: "In this connection it is fit we should remember that the view we take of money, and the use we make of it, are referred to with extraordinary frequency in the New Testament, as a decisive test of Christian sincerity. This feature of Bible teaching is very faintly realized by many. The other point noteworthy in relation to this Philippian gift is the assurance that it shall be recompensed (rewarded). God will not be unfaithful to reward their work and labor of love, in that they have ministered to His servant. We are not to shrink from the doctrine of reward [just] because it has been perverted."

16. More than once. Even though Thessalonica was a larger and richer city, Paul would not allow the people there to support him (*1 Thess. 2:5; 2 Thess. 3:8*). Some think the "more than once" also includes other places, such as Corinth.

17. It is not. Again Paul's sensitivity about money shows through. "I mention all this about your great help in the past, not because I just want to receive gifts, but I want to see your good actions credited to your account." See *Acts 20:35* and note.

18. Here, then. "I write *paid in full* on any obligation you might have to me! Your generous gift through Epaphroditus has more than paid any debt you might have to me! I have all I need!" **A sweet smelling offering.** Compare *Rom. 12:1-2* and notes. Their good actions are praise to God (compare *James 1:27* and note).

19. And my God. "Since you did not forget my needs, God will not forget yours!" Compare *2 Cor. 9:8* and note.

20. To our God and Father. "Let us join in praise to our God and Father who has given us this abundant wealth in Christ Jesus, so that everything belongs to us (*1 Cor. 3:21-23*) through his great love!!!"

Final Greetings

²¹Greetings to all God's people who belong to Christ Jesus. The brothers here with me send you their greetings. ²²All God's people here send greetings, especially those who belong to the Emperor's palace.

²³May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Final Greetings

Greet all the saints in 21 Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings. All the saints send you 22 greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

The grace of the Lord 23 Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

21. **Greetings.** "Greetings to all in your city who are now God's people because they belong to Christ!" The brothers here. This shows that Paul was not completely alone.

22. **All God's people here.** He expands this greeting to include all the Christians at Rome. [*Saints*: see note on *1 Cor. 6:11*.] **The Emperor's Palace.** The *Expositor's Greek Testament* says: "SH. point out that a number of the names mentioned for salutation in *Rom. 16* occur in the *Corpus* of Latin Inscriptions as members of the Imperial household, which seems to have been one of the chief centers of the Christian community at Rome. In the first century A.D. most of the Emperor's household servants came from the East. Under Claudius and Nero they were people of real importance. And we find, from history, that Christian slaves had great influence over their masters." Traditional history links Seneca, brother of Gallio (*Acts 18:12*), with Paul. *Josephus* identifies Nero's wife Poppaea as a Gentile converted to Judaism (proselyte of the gate), and some think she might have become a Christian. We have no way of knowing for sure about this, but Paul cites the Christians in the Emperor's Palace as evidence of his success in his service to Christ.

23. **May the grace.** This is his benediction as an apostle. Spirit = human spirit = you all (as persons).