

Author: Saul of Tarsus (Paul)

Date: 60-64 AD From prison in Rome

#### Philippians

Recipient: Philippians, a city in Greek Macedonia – originally named Crenides, renamed for King Philip II of Macedonia who conquered it in 335 BC – there were gold mines in the vicinity – in the first century BC it became a place where the Roman army garrisoned soldiers – in 42 BC the forces of Mark Anthony and Octavian (later Caesar Augustus) defeated the Republican armies of Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus who were responsible for the murder of Julius Caesar – this battle is described in Shakespeare’s play “Julius Caesar” – Paul founded a church here on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:11-40) – this church was noted in Paul’s writings for their poverty and their generosity (4:15-16; II Cor. 8:1-2) – the church there seemed to remain loyal to Paul – it is the most personal, least theological of the Pauline epistles

Letter carrier: Epaphroditus (2:25)

Theme: How to live a life of joy and peace regardless of the outward circumstances

Occasion: Strife between two prominent women in the church (4:2), and a thank you note for their financial aid (4:10, 15-16)

1:1-11 Introduction – typical of most Pauline epistles

1:1-2 Salutation

1:3-11 Thanksgiving – Paul’s prayers for the Philippian Christians was (1) thanksgiving for their partnership in the Gospel from the beginning (1:3-8) and (2) that they would grow in love, knowledge, discernment, and the fruits of righteousness (1:9-11)

1:12-30 Paul’s encouragement to the Philippian church

1:12-18 His imprisonment (“chain,” vs.7, 13, 14; 4:3, 18; palace guard, v.13) has had good side effect, the advancement of the gospel – even though some preachers have done so for the wrong motives (v.16)

1:19-26 His death will be gain for him – he wants for Christ to be “magnified in my body, whether by life or death” (v.20) – his personal desire is “to depart and be with Christ” (v.23) but it is better for the church for him to remain alive (v.24) – “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (v.21) – he believes he will live and return to Philippi for another visit (vs.25-26), but he never does

1:27-30 He challenges the Philippians to remain faithful whether he returns or not (v.27) or whether they have to suffer or not (v.29)

2:1-11 Paul encourages unity through humility – Paul urges them to have the same mind that was in Jesus (vs. 2,5) which was characterized by humble, self-giving love – Jesus regarded others before he thought of himself (v.3), looked to what was best for others (v.4), and practiced humble service – Jesus was unlike Adam who grasped for godness, was disobedient, and ended up being humbled (Gen. 3:1-24) – Jesus emptied himself of godness, became obedient as a humble servant, and was exalted by God (2:6-11) –

2:5-11 was probably a primitive

Christian hymn sung in the church

2:12-18 Paul encourages them to be light bearers

2:12-13 “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” – salvation is wholeness – 1:6 “... He who began a good work in you will complete it”

2:14-18 Don’t have a critical spirit – do not grumble or argue (v.14) – “shine as lights in the world” which is “crooked and perverse” (v.15)

2:19-30 Pauline commendations

2:19-24 Paul commends Timothy, his “son... in the gospel” (v.22)

2:25-30 Paul commends Epaphroditus, his brother, co-worker, fellow soldier, messenger, minister (v.25) – “he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life (v.30) – he had been ill (vs. 26-27)

### 3:1-4:3 Paul's warnings and appeals

3:1-3 Against the Judaisers who demanded circumcision of the Gentile Christians – He calls them “dogs” and “evil workers” (v.2)

3:4-9 Interesting autobiographical facts about Paul – he considers the things he had previously boasted about as “dung” so that he might gain Christ (v.8)

3:10-11 Paul's greatest desire: “to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and to share in his resurrection” (v.10) in order to “attain the resurrection of the dead” (v.11)

3:12-14 Paul has not yet attained this but he is straining, pressing for it

3:15-4:1 Paul wants the Philippians to do the same – He urges them to follow his example (v.17; I Cor. 4:16; 11:1) – “our citizenship is in heaven” (v.20) – in the resurrection of the dead God “will transform our lowly body to his glorious body” (v.21)

4:2-3 Paul urges the two women in conflict, Euodia and Syntyche, to be true companions – their names are in “the Book of Life” (v.3)

### 4:4-9 How to pray and meditate

4:4-7 How to pray – substitute prayer for worry

4:8-9 How to meditate – feed your mind with the things on Paul's list (v.8) and put in practice the things you're learning from Paul (v.9)

### 4:10-19 Thank you for the Philippian generosity

4:10, 15-18 Thanks for your help again

4:11-12 Contentment is learned

4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

4:19 “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

### 4:20-22 Farewell and benedictions – “Saints in Caesar's household” (v.22) – Nero was the emperor, era of persecution

## Colossians

Recipient: Colossae, 100 miles east of Ephesus – triangle of towns in the Lycus Valley: Colassae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis (4:13) 2 letters to Colossae, Colossians and Philemon – Paul never visited this church – he sent Epaphras to preach and he founded the church there (1:7; 4:12-13; Philemon 22)

Letter carrier: Tychicus (4:7)

Theme: The preeminence of Christ – Christ is the visible image of God (1:15), the agent of creation (1:16), the glue that holds the universe together (1:17), and Lord of the church (1:18) – by far the most Christological of Paul's letters

Occasion: The church is being threatened by an Eastern philosophy/religion called “Gnosticism” – its syncretistic form was condemned by the early church as “Docetism” – basic tenets:

- 2 gods: evil and good – bad god created matter, good god created spirit – matter corrupts the spirit world – these two gods are of equal power and they war against one another
- There are good and bad emanations of these gods in the world: angels and demons – angels help humans to live the life of the spirit even though they are trapped in physical bodies – they do this by bringing them knowledge (“gnosis”) – salvation, liberation from the physical world, comes through knowledge – demons try to manipulate you to live a life dominated by flesh
- Jesus Christ was the greatest of these emanations – he did not really have a physical body – he was the brightest ray from the good God – phantom: You could not touch him; he left no foot prints; no death on the cross
- The spirit life is an ascetic life – you must punish the body so that it will free the spirit from your flesh – austerity includes fasting, self- flagellation, cutting

### 1:1-14 Introduction

1:1-2 Salutation

1:3-14 Thanksgiving – Paul prays that they “may be filled with the knowledge of God's will” (v.9), that they “may have a walk worthy of the Lord” (v.10), and that they may be “fruitful in every good work” (v.10) – he considers that they have been “rescued... from the power of darkness and transferred... into the Kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the

forgiveness of sin.” (vs.13-14)

- 1:15-23 The supremacy of Christ – Christ’s supremacy is displayed in creation (vs.15-17), in the church (v.18) and in our reconciliation to God through Christ’s death on the cross (v.19-23) – Christ is referred to as “firstborn” (vs.15, 18) – “in him all things hold together” (v.17) – the universe is made up of tiny atoms consisting of electrons rotating around a nucleus – Why doesn’t centrifugal force cause the orbiting electrons to fly apart? What causes the universe to hold together? No one knows, except Paul!
- 1:24-29 Paul’s sacrificial service on behalf of the great mystery – “in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions” (v.24) – Paul is not saying his suffering adds merit to the cross – we make the crucifixion real to others by modeling identification – the mystery: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v.27; Rm. 3:23)
- 2:1-8 Paul offers not philosophy but Christ
- 2:8-23 Christ’s supremacy is defended
- 2:8-15 Against false philosophy – baptism is parallel to circumcision (vs.12-13) – in the cross Christ “erased the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it” (vs. 14-15) -
- 2:16-17 Against legalism – food, drink, special days (v.16)
- 2:18-19 Against angel worship
- 2:20-23 Against asceticism
- 3:1-3:17 The new life in Christ demands holy living
- 3:1-4 You have experienced death/resurrection
- 3:5-10 Therefore put old habits to death, put off the old self
- 3:11 Cultural distinctions have passed away (Gal. 3:28)
- 3:12-17 What the new life we are to put on looks like (READ)
- 3:18-4:1 How the new life affects our relationships
- 3:18-19 Husband – wife relationships
- 3:20-21 Child-parent relationships
- 3:22-4:1 Employee – employer relationships
- Principle: If you are in submission to Christ, then submission to others is no problem – if you have problem with submission, you are going to have authority problems your whole life
- 4:2-6 Further instructions – additions to 3:12-17 (READ)
- 4:7-18 Final greetings – v.11 “Jesus, who is called Justus” – Jesus (Greek), Justus (Latin), Joshua (Hebrew) – v. 15 “the church which is in his house” – v.18 “this salutation by my own hand – Paul” – dictated letter, signed by Paul

Next week: I and II Thessalonians

Schedule of Daily readings:

	<u>Option One</u>	<u>Option Two</u>
Monday	I Thessalonians 1	
Tuesday	I Thessalonians 2 & 3	2:17-3:13
Wednesday	I Thessalonians 4	
Thursday	I Thessalonians 5	
Friday	II Thessalonians 1	
Saturday	II Thessalonians 2	
Sunday	II Thessalonians 3	