

NOTES: Philippians

03/25/2017

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Interesting Facts About Philippians

AUTHOR: Paul

TIME WRITTEN: In A.D. 60-61 from Rome during 1st Roman imprisonment

POSITION IN THE BIBLE: 50th Book in the Bible
11th Book in the New Testament
6th of 21 Epistle Books (Romans - Jude)
10th of Paul's 13 books
16 Books to follow it.



CHAPTERS: 4

VERSES: 104

WORDS: 2,002

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PHILIPPIANS:

- Philippians is the most unusual letter Paul wrote. Instead of writing to correct doctrinal matters, he writes a thank you letter to the church at Philippi that had been so generous in supporting him over the years.
- Paul, Timothy, Luke, and Silas first came to Philippi in A.D. 51, eleven years before he wrote the Book of Philippians.
- The words joy, and rejoice occur some 16 times in the Book of Philippians.
- Epaphroditus carried the Philippian letter from Rome back to Philippi.
- Paul's Macedonian Call in Troas during his 2nd missionary journey led him to his work in Philippi.
- The Book of Ephesians is one of four Prison Epistles, so titled because they were written by the apostle while he was a Roman prisoner in Rome at the time they were written. The four Prison Epistles are:

Ephesians	Colossians
Philippians	Philemon

PHILIPPIANS


- Macedonia was in northern Greece.
- The first converts on the continent of Europe were Lydia and her household.
- The church at Philippi was the first congregation Paul established on the continent of Europe.
- Paul visited Philippi again on his 3rd missionary journey.
- The city of Philippi:
 - In 356 B.C. King Philippi of Macedonia (father of Alexander the Great) took the city and renamed it Philippi.
 - The Romans captured it in 168 B.C.
 - Octavian turned Philippi into:
 - A Roman colony.
 - A military outpost.
- Philippians has four chapters, and each chapter has a major theme, and each theme has a specific text.
 - Chapter 1 - Christ is our LIFE. 1:21
 - Chapter 2 - Christ is our EXAMPLE. 2:5
 - Chapter 3 - Christ is our HOPE. 3:7
 - Chapter 4 - Christ is our STRENGTH AND SOURCE OF SUPPLY. 4:13



I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

Barnes Bible Charts



	CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3	CHAPTER 4
SUBJECT	1:21 Christ Is My Life	2:5 Christ Is My Example	3:8 Christ Is My Reward	4:13 Christ Is Enough
SPIRIT	1:19 His Provision	2:1 His Participation	3:3 His Worship	4:7 His Peace
CHAPTER BREAKDOWN	:1-2 Salutation :3-11 Thanks :12-20 Endurance :21-30 Suffering	:1-4 Humility :5-11 Christology :12-18 Obedience :19-30 The Team	:1-11 Rejoice :12-21 Progress	:1 Position :2-20 Encouragement :21-23 Benediction
THEME	:4 Relationship Brought Joy :18 Proclaiming Christ Caused Rejoicing :25 Continuing in Ministry Brought Joy	:2 Unity Brought Joy :17 A Life Poured Out for the Gospel Brought Joy :18 The Shared Experience Brought Joy :28 The Return of Their Pastor Caused Rejoicing	:1 Rejoice in the Lord	:1 The People Were His Joy :4 Rejoice in the Lord, Again, Rejoice :10 Their Concern for Him Brought Joy
KEY WORDS	REJOICE • JOY • GLAD • BOAST • MIND			
KEY VERSES	:21	:12-13	:13-14	:6-7

<http://thewellcommunity.org/bible-charts>

PHILIPPIANS

	Joy in Living for Christ Even when we don't get what we want <u>In spite of circumstances</u> <u>Even with conflicts</u> CHAPTER 1	Joy in Serving Christ in Unity Starts with right attitude <u>Maintained through right theology</u> <u>Encouraged by right models</u> CHAPTER 2	Joy in Knowing Christ A warning <u>A testimony</u> <u>A goal</u> <u>A command</u> CHAPTER 3	Joy in Resting in Christ <u>Unity</u> <u>Peace</u> <u>Final predictions</u> CHAPTER 4
Christ	... my Life	... my Model	... my Goal	... my Contentment
Spirit	His provision (1:19)	His fellowship (2:1)	His worship (3:3)	His peace (4:7)
Positive Reaction	To difficulty: "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel." (1:12)	To others: "Do all things without grumbling or disputing." (2:14)	To the past: "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize." (3:13–14)	To the "unchangeables": "Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." (4:11)
Tone	Warm, encouraging, affirming			
Key Words	"Rejoice," "Christ," "Mind," "Act"			
Uniqueness	No major problem passages. "Joy" is found in each chapter. Not one quotation from the Old Testament. Christ mentioned over forty times. Most positive of all Paul's letters, yet written while he was chained to a Roman guard.			
Theme	By centering our lives around Christ, we can experience true joy.			
Key Verse	1:21			
Christ in Philippians	Jesus is the Son of God from heaven, who humbled Himself by becoming human, who suffered for us, and who was exalted to heaven (2:5–11).			

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<https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-pauline-epistles/philippians>

The Epistle to the Philippians

2:5-11

*Living the Christian Life Enables the Believer to be
Triumphant in Suffering, Service, in Christ, & in Anxiety*

A.D. 61-62

<p>Encouragement for Living the Christian Life: 1:1-30</p> <p>Praise of the saints (1:1-8):</p> <p><i>Constant Witness, 1:3-6</i> <i>Concern for the Gospel, 1:7</i> <i>By his love for them, 1:8</i></p> <p>Paul's Prayer for the Saints at Philippi (1:1b-2b):</p> <p><i>Prayer for love, 1:9-10</i> <i>Prayer for fruit of righteousness, 1:11</i></p> <p>Paul's Presentation of himself to the saints (1:12-30)</p>	<p>Examples for Living the Christian life: 2:1-30</p> <p>The Son of God whose attitude the believer is to share (2:1-18):</p> <p><i>Declaration, 2:1</i> <i>Exhortations, 2:2-4</i> <i>Humiliation of Christ, 2:5-8</i> <i>Exaltation of Christ, 2:9-11</i></p> <p>Servants of God whose Manner of Life the Believer is to follow: (2:19-30):</p> <p><i>Timothy & Paul, 2:19-24</i> <i>Epaphroditus & Paul, 2:25-30</i></p>	<p>Exhortations for Living the Christian Life: 3:1-21</p> <p>Have no confidence in the flesh (3:1-14):</p> <p><i>Exhortation, 3:1</i> <i>Example to be avoided, 3:2-3</i> <i>Example to be followed, 3:4-14</i></p> <p>Have a walk that pleases God (3:15-21):</p> <p><i>Maturity, 3:15-16</i> <i>Watchfulness, 3:17-19</i> <i>Completed, 3:20-21</i></p>	<p>Enablement for Living the Christian Life: 4:1-23</p> <p>Christ at the center (4:1-7):</p> <p><i>Standing fast in Him, 4:1-3</i> <i>Rejoicing in Him, 4:4</i> <i>Living in the light of His presence, 4:5-7</i></p> <p>God's presence with believers (4:8-9):</p> <p><i>Thinking worthy thoughts, 4:8</i> <i>Doing worthy deeds, 4:9</i></p> <p>God's supply of human needs (4:10-13):</p> <p><i>Contentment, 4:14-20</i> <i>Blessing of giving & receiving, 4:21-23</i></p>	<p>Conclusion 4:21-23</p> <p><i>TO LIVE IS CHRIST:</i></p> <p><i>Triumph in Suffering, Chapter 1</i></p> <p><i>Triumph in Service, Chapter 2</i></p> <p><i>Triumph in Christ, Chapter 3</i></p> <p><i>Triumph in Anxiety, Chapter 4</i></p>
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The singular focus of Philippians is Jesus Christ. He calls us to bear & share in His likeness in every possible way. Knowing Christ, now and forever, is the passion that drives everything in the spiritual life. To know Christ is to know God, "to live is Christ and to die is [to] gain [Christ]. The greatest theological contribution of Philippians is its revelation of the mind of Christ expressed in His self-humbling incarnation (2:5-11; kenosis). This emphasis provides the basis for all Paul wrote regarding Christian conduct. To spiritually become mature we must conform to Christ in every aspect. Selah.

http://pk.b5z.net/i/u/2167316/i/Chart_of_Philippians.pdf

Philippians Book Chart**Kevin Dodge, Box 767, 12-8-2004**

Joyful Selflessness Glorifies God									
Glorifying God				Knowing Christ Brings Joyful Pressing On					
Proclaiming Himself through Believers Glorifies God		Selfless Standing Firm To Glorify God		Blameless Serving Brings Joy		Knowing Christ Produces Focused Pressing On		Peaceful Rejoicing in God's Enabling Strength	
God glorifies Himself through perfecting believers	Christ's proclamation exaltation is preeminent	Fostering standing firm to glorify Christ	Selfless living for God's glory	Blameless through God brings joy	Kindred workers give all in service	Knowing Christ	Focused pressing on in heavenly citizenship	God with us unto peace	God's enabling strength allows supernatural living
Paul Joyfully prays for faithful Philippians	Being faithful in adversity produces Courage	Remaining Alive for others benefit	Unity: W/brethren through Christ	Man's Responsibility through God's provision	Kindred workers very profitable in ministry	Confidence in Christ Vs. Flesh	Focused pressing on	Standing firm with each other	Contentment through God's strengthening begets rejoicing
God will perfect Paul's beloved Phil.	Preaching motivated by love or selfishness	Fostering standing firm for Christ	Selflessness : Towards each other	Living blameless ly cause for glorying	Elevating those giving all for Christ	Surpassing value of knowing Christ	Following Godly example in heavenly citizenship	Living in light of Lord's nearness	Giving through God's supplying benefits all
Abounding love glorifies God	Rejoicing in G's proclamation exaltation		Example: Jesus' selflessness	Rejoicing believers sharing joy				Dwelling on to practice	Greetings and Salutations
1:1-11	1:12- 20	1:21-30	2:1-11	2:12-18	2:19-30	3:1-11	3:12-21	4:1-9	4:10-23

<https://meditatetherein.com/2007/12/27/philippians-book-chart/>

<p>A KEY VERSE 1:21</p> <p>KEY WORDS:</p> <p>Day of Christ</p> <p>In Christ</p> <p>Rejoice</p> <p>Gospel</p> <p>Spirit</p> <p>Mind</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Joy</p> <p>All</p>	TESTIMONY	EXAMPLES		EXHORTATIONS	KEY VERSES
	1:1 [despite imprisonment] For to me to live is Christ; and to die is gain (1:21).	1:27 Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (1:27). Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus (2:5-11).	3:1 More than that I count all things to be lost (3:8). That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection (3:10). Forgetting what lies behind, I press toward the goal (3:13, 14). Citizenship in heaven (3:20).	4:2 Have no anxiety about anything (4:6-7). I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am (4:11). I can do all things (4:13). My God shall supply all your needs (4:19).	
	Christ our LIFE	Christ our PATTERN	Christ our GOAL	Christ our SUFFICIENCY	
	GLORIFY CHRIST (1:20)	BE LIKE CHRIST (1:27)	GAIN CHRIST (3:8)	BE CONTENT IN CHRIST (4:11)	
	SUPPLY of the SPIRIT 1:19	FELLOWSHIP in the SPIRIT 2:1	WORSHIP by the SPIRIT 3:3	GRACE through the SPIRIT 4:23	
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE — AN ABIDING JOY (2:17-18)					JOY
REJOICE:	in fellowship of saints (1:3-11)	in the ministry for the saints (2:1-18).	that your hopes are in Jesus (3:2-16).	always over all things (4:4-9).	
	over afflictions (1:12-30)	in fellowship of Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30).	that your citizenship is in heaven (3:20).	in bounties of God's people (4:10-19).	

LIFE IN CHRIST

Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

http://www.preceptaustin.org/philippians_commentaries

See Expanded View on Next Page...

A KEY VERSE 1:21		KEY WORDS:		A KEY VERSE 1:21	
TESTIMONY		EXAMPLES		EXHORTATIONS	
<p>For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (1:21). [despite imprisonment]</p> <p>1:1</p>	<p>1:27</p> <p>Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (1:27). Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus (2:5-11).</p> <p>3:1</p> <p>More than that, I count all things to be loss (3:8). That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection (3:10). Forgetting what lies behind, I press toward the goal (3:13, 14). Citizenship in heaven (3:20).</p> <p>4:2</p> <p>Have no anxiety about anything (4:6-7). I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am (4:11). I can do all things (4:13). My God shall supply all your needs (4:19).</p> <p>4:23</p>	<p>KEY VERSES</p>	<p>Life in Christ</p>	<p>Motives</p>	<p>Spirit</p>
Christ our LIFE	Christ our PATTERN	Christ our GOAL	Christ our SUFFICIENCY		
GLORIFY CHRIST (1:20)	BE LIKE CHRIST (1:27)	GAIN CHRIST (3:8)	BE CONTENT IN CHRIST (4:11)		
SUPPLY of the SPIRIT 1:19	FELLOWSHIP in the SPIRIT 2:1	WORSHIP by the SPIRIT 3:3	GRACE through the SPIRIT 4:23		
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE — AN ABIDING JOY (2:17-18)					
REJOICE: in fellowship of saints (1:3-11) over afflictions (1:12-30)	REJOICE: in the ministry for the saints (2:1-18). in fellowship of Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30).	REJOICE: that your hopes are in Jesus (3:2-16). that your citizenship is in heaven (3:20).	REJOICE: always over all things (4:4-9). in bounties of God's people (4:10-19).	JOY	

Philippians Pre-study Paragraph Chart

New Paragraph Title	Greetings	Salutation	Sharing Christ	Christian Life, Part 1	Christian Examples	Christian Confidence	Christian Life, Part 2	Christian Sharing	Benediction & Closing
Paragraph	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Verses	1:1-2	1:3 - 1:11	1:12- 1:26	1:27- 2:18	2:19- 2:30	3:1- 4:1	4:2- 4:9	4:10- 4:19	4:20- 4:23
Chapter	Chapter 1			Chapter 2		Chapter 3	Chapter 4		
Theme	From Paul & Timothy to Christians	Pray that others will grow in Christ	God's word can spread in any circumstance	Serve others without complaint	Concern for others and for the Gospel	Christ died for us and will return for us	Live in harmony, rejoice and keep good thoughts	Remember other Christians	We are in the family of God
Focus	Philippians	Paul	Christ	Philippians	Timothy and Epaphroditus	Christ	Philippians	Philippians, Paul	God, Philippians
Key Thoughts	Laymen and church leaders are included in the same grouping	remember, pray, God is in control, growth in Christ	imprisonment, all can share, God provides	Personal conduct, humility, service, joy, death, opponents, conflict, suffering	Service, loyalty	Confidence in Christ not in the Law, Confidence in Christ's return	Harmony, rejoice, good thoughts	God provides, God uses people, God honors sharing	Christians are a growing family
Repeated Words	Jesus	Prayer, Christ, God	imprisonment, rejoice, death	Joy, Jesus, love	Fellow, brother	Confidence, Jesus,	Rejoice	Concern	Jesus
OT Refs?									
Questions				2:6 equality to be grasped, 2:12 work out salvation	2:27 sorrow on sorrow vs joy 2:30 deficient in service	3:20 wait for a Savior that has already come		4:10 at last you have revived your concern	
Title	Joy of the Christian								
	Philippians								

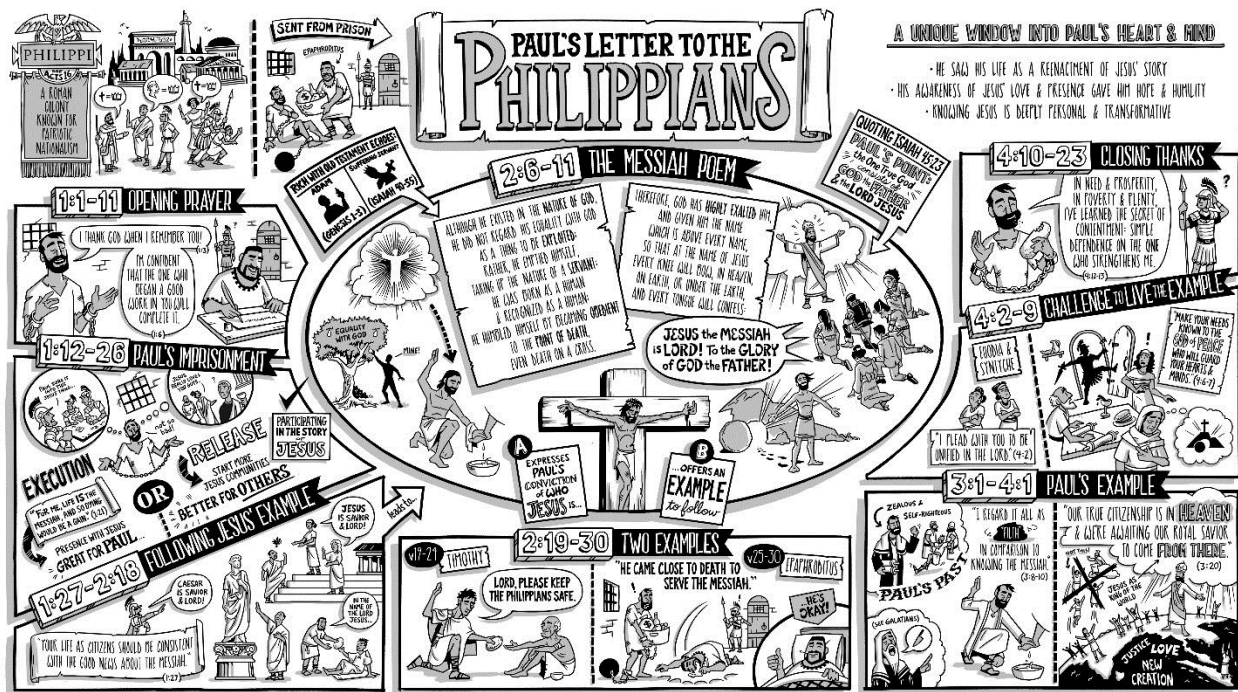
http://www.tomulrichconsulting.com/phil/Init_Overview/W02_Phil_Chart_Gary.pdf

Gut Trip Analysis											May/June 2007												
LIVING THE MATURE AND PURPOSEFUL LIFE											The Purpose of the Philippiian letter: Summary Chart of Paul's Letter to the Philippians												
IHOP Bible Study											Guide: Dr. William Salmon												
Christ Is Our Example Of Living The Purposeful Life											Defining The Life and Word Of Those Who Are Mature In Christ												
Philippian Ministry Founded In Christ		Living The Christian Ethic Is To Follow Paul's Example and Purpose Of Comparing Ourselves To Christ									Personal Recommendations and Special Issues			Paul's Resume					Characteristics of Those Who, Like Paul, Know The Secret				
Greetings IN God and Christ	Partnership fulfilled IN the Gospel of Christ Jesus	Expectations for living IN the Christ ethic	Paul's example and situation is purposeful	Mixed motivations for preaching	Paul's example is to live the Christian ethic	Paul's purpose is to remain an example to believe in Christ	Your purpose is to be an example for others on behalf of Christ	Be like-minded	Compare yourselves to Christ Jesus	Develop an attitude of gratitude following Paul's example	Sending Timothy to demonstrate for you living for the interests of others	Epaphroditus, who almost died in the service to Christ, is sent back to the Philippians	Warnings about circumstances	Paul better qualified to be a Jew	Paul lives for Christ alone	Paul not perfected in Christ, but that is the goal	Sign of maturity	Enemies of Christ	But Christ will conquer	Characteristics of those who stand like Christ	Paul has the secret to live by	Testimony to suffering and how God meets our needs	Final Greetings
1:1-3	1:4-8	1:9-11	1:12-14	1:15-18	1:19-22	1:23-26	1:27-30	2:1-2	2:3-11	2:12-18	2:19-24	2:25-30	3:1-3	3:4-7	3:8-11	3:12-14	3:15-17	3:18-19	3:19-21	4:1-9	4:10-13	4:14-20	4:21-23

<http://triumc.org/web1/biblestudy/philippians/Chart%20of%20the%20Philippians%20Letter.pdf> [PDF]

See Expanded View on Next Page...

The Purpose of the Philippiian letter: MATURE AND PURPOSEFUL LIFE												May/June 2007											
LIVING THE PURPOSEFUL LIFE																							
Summary Chart of Paul's Letter to the Philippians																							
Christ Is Our Example Of Living The Purposeful Life												Defining The Life and Word Of Those Who Are Mature In Christ											
Living The Christian Ethic Is To Follow Paul's Example and Purpose Of Comparing Ourselves To Christ												Personal Recommendations and Special Issues				Paul's Resume				Characteristics Of Those Who, Like Paul, Know The Secret			
Philippian Ministry Founded In Christ	Expectations for living in the Christ ethic	Paul's example and situation is purposeful	Mixed motivations for preaching	Paul's example is to live in the Christian ethic	Paul's purpose is to remain an example for others on behalf of Christ	Your purpose is to be an example for others on behalf of Christ	Be like-minded	Compare your-selves to Christ Jesus	Develop an attitude of gratitude following Paul's example	Sending Timothy to demonstrate for the living interests of others	Epaphroditus, who almost died in the service to Christ, is sent back to the Philippians	Warnings about circumstances	Paul better qualified for the Jew	Paul lives for Christ alone	Paul not perfect for Christ but that is the goal	Sign of maturity	Enemies of Christ	But Christ will conquer	Characteristics of those who stand like Christ	Paul has the secret to live by	Testimony to suffering and how God meets our needs	Final Greetings	
1:1-3	1:9-11	1:12-14	1:15-18	1:19-22	1:23-26	1:27-30	2:1-2	2:3-11	2:12-18	2:19-24	2:25-30	3:1-3	3:4-7	3:8-	3:12-14	3:15-	3:18-	3:19-	4:1-9	4:10-	4:14-20	4:21-23	



created by the Bible Project

Source: <https://thebibleproject.com>

See Expanded View on Next Page...

A Synoptic Study Chart of Philippians

PHILIPPIANS																
Believers ought to live righteously based on the example of Christ, by staying in harmony with each other, enduring suffering, and focusing on the righteousness we all have.																
Outline	GREETINGS, LIFE PURPOSE, AND GOAL FOR BELIEVERS (1)				THE CHRISTIAN LIFE YOU SHOULD HAVE (2)				PAUL & FUTURE GOAL FOR CHRISTIANS (3)				PUTTING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE TOGETHER (4)			
	Paul's Introduction (1-11)	Joy of Christ Preached (12-18)	Paul's Life for Christ (20-26)	Live as Citizens of Heaven (27-30)	Focus on Others (2:1-4)	Have the Same Attitude as Christ (2:5-11)	Shine Brightly for Christ (2:12-18)	Applause for Timothy (2:19-24)	Applause for Epaphroditus (2:25-30)	Paul's Heritage & Confidence (3:1-6)	Righteousness thru Christ (3:7-9)	Perfection Not Yet Reached (3:12-16)	Living as Citizens of Heaven (3:17-21)	Harmony & Joy Among Believers (4:1-5)	Instructions for Christians (4:6-9)	Paul's Gratefulness for the Little He Had (4:10-17)
	<i>Greetings from Paul (1-4)</i> <i>Paul's thanksgiving and prayer (5-11)</i>	<i>Paul's imprisonment had been fruitful to spread the good news (12-14)</i> <i>Some people were preaching without pure motives (15-17)</i> <i>But, Paul didn't care about motives (18)</i> <i>Paul would never be ashamed because he lived for Christ (20-21)</i> <i>Paul was torn between living and dying, but he wanted to live for the sake of the Philippians (22-24)</i> <i>Paul remained to help the Philippians and take joy in what Christ was doing through him (25-26)</i> <i>Live as citizens of heaven as one body and don't be intimidated by enemies (27-29)</i> <i>A struggle given to share which they were in the midst of (29-30)</i>	<i>What is the result of Christ's work (1-2)?</i> <i>Be humble and look out for others (3-4)</i> <i>Have the same attitude as Christ (5)</i> <i>He used God (6-7)</i> <i>He was also human (8)</i> <i>God elevated Jesus back up high for others to worship him (9-11)</i> <i>Work hard for God is working in you (12-13)</i> <i>Don't complain, live clearly, shine bright, and hold on to the best of life (14-16)</i> <i>Paul rejoiced because of his life poured out for others (17-18)</i> <i>If God allowed, Paul hoped to send Timothy to Philippi (19-20)</i> <i>Others cared only for themselves but Timothy served others (21-22)</i> <i>Paul hoped to also visit Philippi (23-24)</i> <i>Paul would send Epaphroditus to Philippi (25-27)</i> <i>Paul would send Epaphroditus cause he had risked his life (28-30)</i> <i>Replace in the Lord because of Christ's Work (1-3)</i> <i>Paul's Heritage and Strong Self-Confidence (4-6)</i> <i>Righteousness based on faith (7-9)</i> <i>Paul wanted to share in Christ's suffering and death (10-11)</i> <i>Perfection not reached, but Paul continued on (12-14)</i> <i>Held to the progress already made (15-16)</i> <i>Pattern your life after Paul's life (17-21)</i> <i>Stay true to the LORD (1)</i> <i>Evils & Sufferings must settle disagreements (2-3)</i> <i>Always be full of joy and let others see it (4-5)</i> <i>Don't worry, pray and have peace (6-7)</i> <i>Focus your thoughts on excellent things worthy of praise (8-9)</i> <i>Paul's gratitude for Philippians' concern for him (10)</i> <i>Paul learned to be content with what little he had (11-12)</i> <i>Paul could live without anything; yet still was grateful (13-14)</i> <i>Paul wanted the Philippians to receive a reward for their kindness to him (4:15-17)</i> <i>Paul had all that he needed (18-19)</i> <i>All glory was to the Father (20)</i> <i>A final Greetings (21-23)</i>	<i>What is the result of Christ's work (1-2)?</i> <i>Be humble and look out for others (3-4)</i> <i>Have the same attitude as Christ (5)</i> <i>He used God (6-7)</i> <i>He was also human (8)</i> <i>God elevated Jesus back up high for others to worship him (9-11)</i> <i>Work hard for God is working in you (12-13)</i> <i>Don't complain, live clearly, shine bright, and hold on to the best of life (14-16)</i> <i>Paul rejoiced because of his life poured out for others (17-18)</i> <i>If God allowed, Paul hoped to send Timothy to Philippi (19-20)</i> <i>Others cared only for themselves but Timothy served others (21-22)</i> <i>Paul hoped to also visit Philippi (23-24)</i> <i>Paul would send Epaphroditus to Philippi (25-27)</i> <i>Paul would send Epaphroditus cause he had risked his life (28-30)</i> <i>Replace in the Lord because of Christ's Work (1-3)</i> <i>Paul's Heritage and Strong Self-Confidence (4-6)</i> <i>Righteousness based on faith (7-9)</i> <i>Paul wanted to share in Christ's suffering and death (10-11)</i> <i>Perfection not reached, but Paul continued on (12-14)</i> <i>Held to the progress already made (15-16)</i> <i>Pattern your life after Paul's life (17-21)</i> <i>Stay true to the LORD (1)</i> <i>Evils & Sufferings must settle disagreements (2-3)</i> <i>Always be full of joy and let others see it (4-5)</i> <i>Don't worry, pray and have peace (6-7)</i> <i>Focus your thoughts on excellent things worthy of praise (8-9)</i> <i>Paul's gratitude for Philippians' concern for him (10)</i> <i>Paul learned to be content with what little he had (11-12)</i> <i>Paul could live without anything; 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Themes	<p>The Work & Result of Christ: One of the messages about Christ in Philippians is that he will return again (1:6, 10; 3:20; 4:5). Additionally, Christ produces a righteous character seen as the fruit of salvation (1:11). Christ was the reason for the suffering of Paul and the Philippians (1:13, 29). Living should mean living for Christ by doing fruitful work (1:21-22, 27). The attitude of Christ was used as an example for what type of attitude the Philippians believers should have had. While Christ was God he did not hold on to it (2:6), but he gave up his divine privileges, took the position of a slave, and was born of a human being (2:7). In order to do the work God wanted him to do, he died a criminal's death on the cross (2:8). In that act, God elevated Jesus and gave him the name above all other names (2:9) in that every knee should bow and tongue should confess in heaven, on earth, and below earth would bow to him (2:10-11). Paul later explained that believers no longer rely on the Law and works for their righteousness, but instead they rely on what Christ has done (3:3, 7-9).</p> <p>Sanctification: God began a good work in the Philippians and Paul said that work would continue (1:6). Paul wrote that he wanted Philippians to live pure and blameless lives until Christ's return (1:10) because righteous character brings glory and praise to God (1:11). Furthermore, the people of Philippi were supposed to live as citizens of heaven conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the good news of Christ (1:27). Several clear goals of sanctification are laid out in this letter: don't be selfish or try to impress others; be humble by thinking of others as better, don't look out for your own interests, but take interest in others too (2:3-4). Part of the work of sanctification is serving others for Christ (2:16) just as Timothy (2:21) and Epaphroditus (2:30) did. Paul no longer counted his own righteousness by obeying the Law, but instead counted himself as righteous by faith in Christ (3:9). With that said, Paul said he had not yet reached perfection, because he was reaching forward to that perfection (3:12). Paul encouraged the Philippians to pattern their lives after his (3:17). As citizens of heaven Christ would take the Philippians weak mortal bodies and make them into glorious bodies like Jesus' body (3:21). Paul's emphasis on sanctification continued into chapter four where he urged the Philippians to fix their thoughts on what was true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, and admirable (4:8).</p> <p>Paul's Imprisonment: Paul started his letter to the Philippians stating that he and Timothy were slaves of Christ Jesus (1:1). Then, he told the Philippians that they held a special place in his heart because they shared in his imprisonment (1:7). Paul attributed all the things that happened to him to helping to spread the good news (1:12). Everyone knew that Paul was in chains because of Christ (1:13). Paul wanted the readers to know that believers gained confidence and boldly spoke God's message without fear because of Paul's imprisonment (1:14). Paul referenced that he was in the middle of his struggle and suffering (1:29-30).</p> <p>Suffering Because of Ministry: The Philippians had a special place in Paul's heart because they shared with Paul in his imprisonment (1:7). Paul wrote that he was in chains (1:13) and prison (1:14) because of Christ. Later Paul said that him and the Philippians been given the privilege of knowing Christ and suffering for him (1:29). And, that suffering was a struggle which Paul and the Philippians both had knowledge of (1:30). In addition to the suffering Paul and the Philippians were encountering, Paul mentioned that Epaphroditus had risked his life for the work of Christ to the point of death (2:30). Nearing the end of Paul's letter he wrote that he wanted to suffer with Jesus sharing in Jesus' death (3:10) and that the Philippians were sharing with Paul (in some way) with his present difficulty (4:14).</p>															

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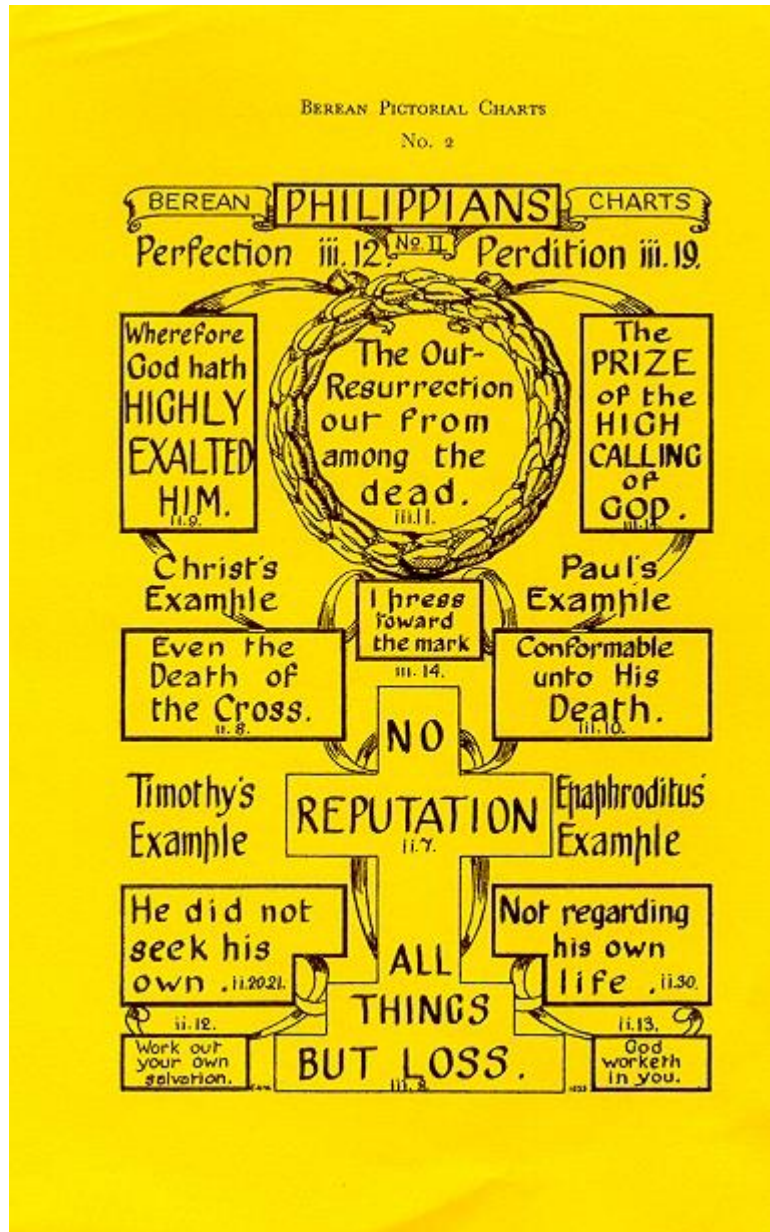
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PHILIPPIANS																																																																																					
Believers ought to live righteously based on the example of Christ, by staying in harmony with each other, enduring suffering, and focusing on the righteousness we all have.																																																																																					
Outline		GREETINGS, LIFE PURPOSE, AND GOAL FOR BELIEVERS (1)				THE CHRISTIAN LIFE YOU SHOULD HAVE (2)				PAUL & FUTURE GOAL FOR CHRISTIANS (3)				PUTTING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE TOGETHER (4)																																																																							
Paul's Introduction (1-11)	Joy of Christ Preached (12-18)	Paul's Life for Christ (20-26)	Live as Citizens of Heaven (27-30)	Focus on Others (2:1-4)	Have the Same Attitude as Christ (2:5-11)	Shine Brightly for Christ (2:12-18)	Applause for Timothy (2:19-24)	Applause for Epaphroditus (2:25-30)	Paul's Righteousness & Confidence (3:1-6)	Perfection Not Yet Reached (3:12-16)	Living as Citizens of Heaven (3:17-21)	Harmony and Joy Among Believers (4:1-5)	Instructions for Little Christians Life (4:6-9)	Paul's Gratefulness for the Little He Had (4:10-17)	Sacrifices and Security (4:18-23)																																																																						
Greetings from Paul (1-4)		Paul's thanksgiving and prayer (5-11)		Paul's imprisonment had been fruitful to spread the good news (12-14)		Some people were preaching without pure motives (15-17)		But, Paul didn't care about motives (18)		Paul would never be ashamed because he lived for Christ (20-21)		Paul was torn between living and dying, but he wanted to live for the sake of the Philippians (22-24)		Paul remained to help the Philippians and take joy in what Christ was doing through him (25-26)		Live as citizens of heaven as one body and don't be intimidated by enemies (27-28)		A struggle given to share which they were in the midst of (29-30)		What is the result of Christ's work (1:2-2:7)		Be humble and look out for others (3-4)		Have the same attitude as Christ (5)		He was God (6-7)		He was also human (8)		God elevated Jesus back up high for others to worship him (9-11)		Work hard for God is working in you (12-13)		Don't complain, live cleanly, shine bright, and hold on to the word of life (14-16)		Paul rejoiced because of his life poured out for others (17-18)		If God allowed, Paul hoped to send Timothy to Philippi (19-20)		Others cared only for themselves but Timothy served others (21-22)		Paul hoped to also visit Philippi (23-24)		Paul would send Epaphroditus to Philippi (25-27)		Paul would send Epaphroditus cause he had risked his life (28-30)		Rejoice in the Lord Because of Christ's Work (1-3)		Paul's Heritage and Strong Self-Confidence (4-6)		Righteousness based on faith (7-9)		Paul wanted to share in Christ's suffering and death (10-11)		Perfection not reached, but Paul continued on (12-14)		Hold to the progress already made (15-16)		Pattern your life after Paul's life (17-21)		Stay true to the LORD (1)		Eudokia & Syntyche must settle disagreements (2-3)		Always be full of joy and let others see it (4-5)		Don't worry; pray and have peace (6-7)		Focus your thoughts on excellent things worthy of praise (8-9)		Paul's gratitude for Philippians' concern for him (10)		Paul learned to be content with what little he had (11-12)		Paul could live without anything; yet still was grateful (13-14)		Paul wanted the Philippians to receive a reward for their kindness to him (4:15-17)		Paul had all that he needed (18-19)		All glory was to the Father (20)		A Final Greetings (21-23)	
Themes		<p>The Work & Result of Christ: One of the messages about Christ in Philippians is that he will return again (1:6, 10; 3:20; 4:5). Additionally, Christ produces a righteous character seen as the fruit of salvation (1:11). Christ was the reason for the suffering of Paul and the Philippians (1:13, 29). Living should mean living for Christ by doing fruitful work (1:21-22, 27). The attitude of Christ was used as an example for what type of attitude the Philippians believers should have had. While Christ was God he did not hold on to it (2:6), but he gave up his divine privileges, took the position of a slave, and was born of a human being (2:7). In order to do the work God wanted him to do, he died a criminal's death on the cross (2:8). In that act, God elevated Jesus and gave him the name above all other names (2:9) in that every knee should bow and tongue should confess in heaven, on earth, and below earth which explained that believers no longer rely on the Law and works for their righteousness, but instead they rely on what Christ has done (3:3, 7-9).</p> <p>Sanctification: God began a good work in the Philippians and Paul said that work would continue (1:6). Paul wrote that he wanted Philippians to live pure and blameless lives until Christ's return (1:10) because righteous character brings glory and praise to God (1:11). Furthermore, the people of Philippi were supposed to live as citizens of heaven conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the good news of Christ (1:27). Several clear goals of sanctification are laid out in this letter: don't be selfish or try to impress others, be humble by thinking of others as better, don't look out for your own interests, but take interest in others too (2:3-4). Part of the work of sanctification is serving others for Christ (2:16) just as Timothy (2:21) and Epaphroditus (2:30) did. Paul no longer counted his own righteousness by obeying the Law, but instead counted himself as righteous by faith in Christ (3:9). With that said, Paul said he had not yet reached perfection, because he was reaching forward to that perfection (3:12). Paul encouraged the Philippians to pattern their lives after his (3:17). As citizens of heaven Christ would take the Philippians weak mortal bodies and make them into glorious bodies like Jesus' body (3:21). Paul's emphasis on sanctification continued into chapter four where he urged the Philippians to fix their thoughts on what was true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, and admirable (4:8).</p> <p>Paul's Imprisonment: Paul started his letter to the Philippians stating that he and Timothy were slaves of Christ Jesus (1:1). Then, he told the Philippians that they held a special place in his heart because they shared in his imprisonment (1:7). Paul attributed all the things that happened to him to helping to spread the good news (1:12). Everyone knew that Paul was in chains because of Christ (1:13). Paul wanted the readers to know that believers gained confidence and boldly spoke God's message without fear because of Paul's imprisonment (1:14). Paul referenced that he was in the middle of his struggle and suffering (1:29-30).</p> <p>Suffering Because of Ministry: The Philippians had a special place in Paul's heart because they shared with Paul in his imprisonment (1:7). Paul wrote that he was in chains (1:13) and prison (1:14) because of Christ. Later Paul said that him and the Philippians been given the privilege of knowing of Christ and suffering for him (1:29). And, that suffering was a struggle which Paul and the Philippians both had knowledge of (1:30). In addition to the suffering Paul and the Philippians were encountering, Paul mentioned that Epaphroditus had risked his life for the work of Christ to the point of death (2:30). Nearing the end of Paul's letter he wrote that he wanted to suffer with Jesus sharing in Jesus' death (3:10) and that the Philippians were sharing with Paul (in some way) with his present difficulty (4:14).</p>																																																																																			

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Philippians



There are two words that are of importance in studying Philippians, viz., "perfection" and "perdition." The latter word is rendered "destruction" in Phil. 3:19, "perdition" in Heb. 10:39, and "waste" in Matt. 26:8.

The atmosphere of Philippians is that of the arena; a prize is in view, which is specially associated with "the out resurrection" (Phil. 3:11). Four examples are given to encourage the believer to stay the course. First that of the Lord Himself (Phil. 2:5-11), then that of the Apostle

(Phil. 3:4-10). In these examples, the death of the cross is indicated as the deepest depth to which it is possible to descend, followed, however, in each case by a most wonderful exaltation and glory. The two examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus indicate the spirit that must characterize all who would run this race, and suggest that where these things are lacking, small hope can be entertained of attaining the prize.

We sought to avoid the actual use of a cross in the Chart, but found it impossible. We trust that no one will be offended by this symbol, for the cross is essential to the crown. The Apostle, in 1 Cor. 9:24-27, supplies us with a full commentary upon the nature of a prize, and gives examples from Israel's history (as he does also in Heb. 3) to enforce the fact that all who are redeemed do not necessarily attain the prize.

The festoons that appear in the Chart are not for mere ornament, but are intended to suggest that the prize of the high calling is vitally linked with the teaching given under the various headings. It is not a matter of qualifying for salvation or for membership of the one body-that is all of grace, and can neither be won nor lost. Philippians is addressed to those who have believed, and urges them to "work out" the salvation which is theirs. They are assured that as they do so, it is God's good pleasure to "work in" all needed grace and strength.

https://levendwater.org/berean_pictorial_charts/chart_no_02_philippians.htm

Joy in Philippians

Look at the table below. The word "*joy*" occurs six times in the Book of Philippians and the word "*rejoice*" eight times. From looking at each occurrence given below, what are three things the Philippians told to do with joy, and what 4 causes are the Philippians given to rejoice or be joyful?

Ch	Vs	Scripture
1	4	In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy
1	18	But 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 rejoice,
1	25	Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith,
1	26	so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.
2	2	then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.
2	17	But even if I am 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.
2	18	So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.
2	29	Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him,
3	1	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.
4	1	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!
4	4	Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
4	10	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.

Excerpt from:

<http://www.free-online-bible-study.com/support-files/philippians-4w.pdf>

Inductive Bible Study – Introduction to Philippians

Outline

I. Greetings (1:1-2)	
II. Thanksgiving and Prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11)	
III. Paul's Personal Circumstances (1:12-26)	
IV. Exhortations (1:27-2:18)	A. Living a Life Worthy of the Gospel (1:27-30) B. Following the Servant Attitude of Christ (2:1-18)
V. Paul's Associates in the Gospel (2:19-30)	A. Timothy (2:19-24) B. Epaphroditus (2:25-30)
VI. Warnings against Judaizers and Antinomians (3:1-4:1)	A. Against Judaizers or Legalists (3:1-16) B. Against Antinomians or Libertines (3:17-4:1)
VII. Final Exhortations, Thanks and Conclusion (4:2-23)	A. Exhortations concerning Various Aspects of the Christian Life (4:2-9) B. Concluding Testimony and Repeated Thank (4:10-20) C. Final Greetings and Benediction (4:21-23)

<http://inductive.indubiblia.org/philippians-1>

PHILIPPIANS

FOCUS	ACCOUNT OF CIRCUMSTANCES	THE MIND OF CHRIST	THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST	THE PEACE OF CHRIST
REFERENCE	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1 4:23
DIVISION	PARTAKE OF CHRIST	PEOPLE OF CHRIST	PURSUIT OF CHRIST	POWER OF CHRIST
TOPIC	SUFFERING	SUBMISSION	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION
	EXPERIENCE	EXAMPLES	EXHORTATION	
LOCATION	ROME			
TIME	c. A.D. 62			

The Historical Background of Philippians**Philippi**

- Philippi
 - Is located in Macedonia (a Roman Province), about 13 km inland from Aegean Sea, and the port town of Neapolis, on a plain enclosed by mountains.
 - Three things helped it to be a fairly important city in ancient times:
 1. Located in very fertile plains
 2. Gold mines in the mountains to the north
 3. It was strategically placed on the ancient military and commercial route that led from Rome to the East. This was known as the Egnatian Way (or Via Egnatia), and it went right through the city. This road was a major artery for communication, and also helped the spread of the gospel because there were so many people traveling on it.
 - Was a Roman Colony. Acts 16:12 (NIV) reads “...*Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia.*”
- Some history on how it became a Roman colony
 - First people known to be living there were Thasians (Thyracians) who were from the nearby island of Thasos. They were apparently pretty fierce people. They built

a little settlement (on the site of what would later be Philippi) and called it “The Springs”.

- 358-357BC Philip of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great) saw that it had some strategic value and took it from fierce Thasians, and enlarged and fortified it, and named it “Philippi” after himself!
 - 168BC After the Battle of Pydna, the Macedonians lost Philippi and it became part of the Roman Republic.
 - 146BC Rome completely defeated Macedonia and divided it up into 4 districts, with Philippi being in the first district.
 - 42BC There was a significant battle fought at Philippi with Antony and Octavian against Brutus and Cassius. The Octavian side won (who were the avengers of Julius Caesar) and it was from this battle that Roman Republic became an Empire. The small settlement at this stage was enlarged more. By Antony’s order, some Roman soldiers were settled there, and he had the town marked out as a Roman colony.
 - 31BC The battle of Actium, was where Octavian defeated the forces of Antony and Cleopatra and took control of the political and military affairs of Rome. Destroyed by wars, Philippi was rebuilt by Octavian who established it as a military outpost, populated it with veterans of his wars, made it a Roman colony and gave it the *ius italicum*, the highest privilege obtainable by a provincial municipality. It meant that the colonists, as citizens of Rome, enjoyed the same rights and privileges as if their land were part of Italian soil. So the citizens of Philippi could buy and sell property, were exempt from land tax and the poll tax and were entitled to protection by Roman law.
- So who lived in Philippi?
- A mixture of peoples: Thasians who were indigenous to the area, Greeks descended from the settlers brought by Philip, and Romans introduced as colonists by Antony and Octavian were probably the largest group.
 - There was no synagogue in the city. Luke records in Acts 16:13 that on the Sabbath, Paul and Silas went to the riverside. Why? But in the next town (Thessalonica) they went to the synagogue “as his custom was” (Acts 17:2). No synagogue probably suggests that there were only a few, if any Jews in the city.
- Because of this history
- The citizens of Philippi were very patriotic! They were proud of their city, proud of their ties with Rome, proud to observe Roman customs and obey Roman laws, proud to be Roman citizens.
 - Being a Roman citizen was a big deal. It was so big that the city was laid out as a miniature of Rome.
 - There have been many inscriptions unearthed there and most of them are written in Latin. Latin was a Roman language and this could be to make sure that the city would keep its identity and so the Greek culture would not take over.
 - We see this patriotism a bit in Acts 16:21 when Paul and Silas were dragged to the city authorities because Paul had cast a demon of divination out of a slave girl.

The girl's owners said, *"These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."* In Acts 16:37-39, Paul said that he and Silas were Roman citizens and did not deserve to be treated in a bad way (beaten and thrown into prison) and the magistrates were afraid and apologized.

A Bit about Jewish Mindset

Jewish tradition really started with the covenant set between God and Abraham in Genesis. Of course, it took on further definition when the Law was given to Moses several hundred years later (about 645 years according to Genesis 12:4; 21:5; 25:26; 47:9; Exodus 12:40, around 1446 BC). For well over 2,100 years the covenantal practice of circumcision had been taking place for all males born of Jewish descent. And for over 1,500 of those years, the ideal of godly living was obedience to the Mosaic law.

All through the Old Testament time period, when people were obedient, there was blessing and acceptance from God. When people continually disobeyed for years on end, judgment was always the result – probably the most memorable judgment occurring between 722 and 531 BC. This is the time period where all of Israel suffered numerous foreign invasions, ending in a 70 year captivity/exile of the Southern Kingdom. Prior to this, however, the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes) were totally overrun and dispersed (The Diaspora). Only the Southern Kingdom (two tribes of Judah and Benjamin) remained intact and were permitted to return to Israel to rebuild. However, they remained captives in their own land from then on.

This was a nasty awakening to a nation who'd strongly held as their own Abraham's promise that through him God would make a great nation (Gen. 12:1-3) and that all the nations would be blessed (Gen 22:17-18). And circumcision was the covenantal sign (Gen. 17:1-11, etc.). Therefore, all Jews lived for centuries with the mindset of traditionalism and the promise of a King/Redeemer/Deliverer to bring a healing and restoration to the nation (Is. 11, especially vs. 10-16). They looked, however, for this to be a physical restoration and physical king who would overthrow those who oppressed Israel (in N.T. times, the Roman Government).

It did take a lot for the average Jew to accept that the King and His kingdom were Christ and His Spiritual Kingdom. But even beyond that, it was terribly hard to also accept that the traditions of the law were now moot. To them, holiness was synonymous with fulfilling the law and making regular sacrifices to cover sin. Even if they accepted Christ as the Supreme Sacrifice, they didn't have an understanding of His fulfillment of the law – that He was both perfection and payment in mankind's place. As well, Paul points out specifically in Galatians that Abraham was not justified through the act of circumcision,

he was justified because he had faith in God and obeyed. He was making it clear that circumcision was a mere physical symbol of the covenant, not the covenant itself. And now Christ had come to be the New Covenant (Gal. 3). Some actually didn't understand (Like the Apostle Paul prior to his conversion). Other simply rejected the gospel totally (Those who Paul later condemned).

- Circumcision

The Hebrew came to take great pride in circumcision; in fact, it became a badge of their spiritual and national superiority. A daily prayer of strict Jewish males was to thank God that he was neither a woman, a Samaritan, nor a Gentile. Gentiles came to be regarded by the Jews as "the uncircumcision", a term of disrespect implying that non-Jewish peoples were outside the circle of God's love.

In the New Testament circumcision was faithfully practiced by devout Jews as recognition of God's continuing covenant with Israel. But controversy over circumcision divided the early church (Eph 2:11), which included believers from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds.

A crisis erupted in the church at Antioch when believers from Judea (known as Judaizers) taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1-2). A council of apostles and elders was convened in Jerusalem to resolve the issue (Acts 15:6-29). Among those attending were Paul, Barnabas, Simon Peter, and James, pastor of the Jerusalem church. To insist on circumcision for the Gentiles, Peter argued, would amount to a burdensome yoke (Acts 15:10, 19). This was the decision handed down by the council, and the church broke away from the binding legalism of Judaism.

Sources: Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible New Bible Dictionary
Dictionary of Paul and His Letters – IVP Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible
Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary

<http://inductive.indubiblia.org/philippians-1>

Why Study the Book of Philippians?



by Ryan Kelly, author of [Philippians: A 12-Week Study](#) in Crossway's [Knowing the Bible](#) series. This post is part of our [Why Study the Book](#) blog series.

More Than Food and Fun

When I was child growing up in church, I heard the word “fellowship” quite a lot. In our context, it seemed to mean “Christians getting together with food.” Adults would talk about “stuff” while they ate, and the kids would try to find something fun to do.

Now, there’s certainly nothing wrong with Christians getting together to eat, chat, and/or play. But this is far from the “fellowship” that occupies Philippians as its major theme.

Paul’s vision for fellowship is more like J. R. R. Tolkien’s in *The Fellowship of the Ring*.^{*} Gandalf and his diverse cohort shared an all-consuming mission. They shared extraordinary, harrowing experiences. This, in turn, led to a deep and meaningful bond.

That’s what fellowship means—the sharing or bond of identity, purpose, mission, and experiences.

The Fellowship of the Cross

Behind the text of Philippians stands a riveting story shared by Paul and the Philippian Christians—what we might call the “fellowship of the cross.” They shared deep love and affection, even tears. We read of imprisonment, the threat of death, great sacrifice, opposition, and boldness—all springing *from* the joyful reality of the gospel and *toward* the ultimate priority of the gospel’s spread throughout the world.

Epaphroditus, a servant and messenger of the Philippian church, risked his life to get resources to Paul who was on the front lines of the battle in a Roman prison (Phil. 2:25-30). The Philippians had, on multiple occasions, supported Paul’s gospel-spreading mission with funds and prayers. Paul wrote Philippians, in large part, to thank the church for their most recent care and to update them on Epaphroditus, who was well and heading back home with the Philippian letter.

This fellowship-bond between an apostle, a church, and their messengers is practically everywhere in Philippians (see 1:5, 7, 14-19, 27; 2:1-8, 17-18, 22, 25, 30; 3:16-17; 4:1-3, 10-16). They shared the gospel of grace and they shared in the gospel-mission. Indeed, through their support and prayers, the Philippians even shared in Paul's "imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel" (Phil. 1:7).

The Philippian church shared the gospel and gospel-mission not only with Paul but between themselves as a church. As such, Paul urges them to live in unity, humble selflessness, and peace with each other (Phil. 1:27; 2:1-5; 4:2-3). Once again, it is because of what they share in Christ that Paul's call to unity and peace is so repeatedly and strongly insisted.

A Unique Epistle

A few other interrelated themes are worth pointing out. Philippians is an unusually warm and deeply personal letter. Paul's pen drips with affection and appreciation for the saints in Philippi. And yet, the Philippian letter also contains some of the most precise theology (specifically, Christology) in all the Bible (Phil. 2:5-11). It contains one of the clearest and most personal explanations of the gospel (Phil. 3:1-11), as well as the manifold outworkings of the gospel (Phil. 3:12-4:9).

Finally, Paul is deeply experiential as he frequently returns to the believer's communion with Christ (e.g., Phil. 3:10, 20). It is *this* Christ that they share. Their bond and fellowship is in his gospel, his grace, his mission, his presence, his promises, and his peace.

All this in four short chapters!

For these reasons and others, Philippians is a book of the Bible that deserves not just our routine reading but our careful study and meditation.

Even now, prayerfully ponder the last few verses from the first chapter, which aptly summarize Paul's aims and themes in Philippians:

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. . . . For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have. (Phil. 1:27-30)

**This illustration of Tolkien's Fellowship of the Rings has been suggested by several Philippians commentators over the years, most recently: Kent Hughes, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon: The Fellowship of the Gospel and the Supremacy of Christ (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 19.*

<https://www.crossway.org/blog/2014/06/why-study-the-book-of-philippians/>

NOTES ON PHILIPPIANS – DR. THOMAS CONSTABLE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The name of the city of Philippi was originally "Krinides" (lit. springs). It stood about 10 miles inland from the Aegean Sea in the Roman province of Macedonia. In 356 B.C. Philip II, King of Macedonia and father of Alexander the Great, renamed the town after himself and enlarged it.

In 42 B.C., the Roman commanders Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus defeated Brutus and Cassius in a battle fought just west of Philippi. After that battle, Philippi became a military colony. Subsequent battles in 42 and 31 B.C. resulted in Philippi receiving even higher status. The citizens enjoyed autonomous government, immunity from taxes, and treatment as if they lived in Italy.^[1] Some commentators have seen indications of the pride the Philippians took in their city in Acts 16:20-21 and Philippians 1:27 and 3:20. Luke's description of Philippi as a "leading city of the district of Macedonia" (Acts 16:12) probably refers to its colonial status, since it was the only Roman colony in the area. Amphipolis was the capital of the district, and Thessalonica was the capital of the province.



The Via Egnatia, the main highway going from Rome toward the east, ran through Philippi, and brought much commerce and many travelers to Philippi. The nearby Gangites (modern Angitis) River was another natural advantage to the city, since it constituted another ancient thoroughfare (cf. Acts 16:13).

The story of the founding of the church in Philippi appears in Acts 16. Philippi was the first town in which Paul preached after he crossed the Aegean Sea from Troas, and entered what we now call Europe. At that time, in A.D. 50, the city had few Jewish residents, and the first converts were Lydia, a Gentile businesswoman from Thyatira in the province of Asia Minor, and the Philippian jailer. The church evidently met in Lydia's home at first (Acts 16:15).

Paul's companions on his first visit to Philippi included Silas, Timothy, and Luke. Luke may have stayed in Philippi to establish the new converts when the other members of Paul's missionary team moved on to Thessalonica. He may have remained there until he traveled to Troas to join Paul on his way to Jerusalem during Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 20:5). Luke dropped the use of "we" from Acts 17:1 through 20:4. However, Luke's activities during this period are unknown. The Philippian Christians sent financial support to Paul in Thessalonica more than once (Phil. 4:15-16).

Probably Paul visited Philippi again, during his third missionary journey, in A.D. 57. He traveled from Ephesus to Corinth by land, and then from Corinth back to Miletus, mostly by land. From there he took a ship to Jerusalem. The land route he took on both occasions would have led him through Philippi.

No serious question about the Pauline authorship of this epistle arose until the nineteenth century. Paul claimed to have written it (Phil. 1:1), and the references to his acquaintances, events in his life, and his way of thinking all point to him as the writer.

The apostle was a prisoner when he penned this letter (Phil. 1:7, 13, 16). References to the palace guard (1:13) and Caesar's household (4:22) have led most interpreters to conclude that Paul wrote from Rome (cf. 1:19-24; 2:24),^[2] though some writers have defended a Caesarean origin for this epistle.^[3] A few have also argued for Ephesus as being the place of origin.^[4] The Marcionite Prologue (ca. A.D. 170) refers to Paul writing Philippians from Rome. Evidently he did so during his first Roman imprisonment (A.D. 60-62), during which time he also wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, the other Prison Epistles. Several scholars believed the internal evidence of Philippians puts its writing toward the end of this period.^[5] Others argued that it was the first of Paul's Prison Epistles.^[6]

The primary purpose Paul had in mind, in writing this epistle, seems to have been pastoral: to reassure and encourage the Philippians. Epaphroditus, whom they had sent with a gift for Paul and to minister to his needs in prison, had recovered from a serious illness and was about to return to Philippi. Paul built up Epaphroditus in the eyes of his readers (2:25-30), which suggests that they may not have appreciated him adequately for some reason. Other reasons for sending this letter include: to explain Paul's present circumstances (1:12-26), to announce Timothy's anticipated visit (2:19), to express thanks for the Philippians' gift to Paul in prison (4:10-14), and to encourage a spirit of joyfulness (3:1; 4:4). Robert Lightner suggested that the book "might be called a thank-you note to saints in Philippi for their generous gifts."^[7]

"It is the spontaneous utterance of Christian love and gratitude, called forth by a recent token which the Philippians had given of their loyal affection."^[8]

Paul also wanted to explain his desire to revisit his readers (2:24), and to deal with the problem of the two women in the church who needed to reconcile (4:2-3). One commentator identified the genre of this epistle as a letter of friendship and moral exhortation.^[9]

Of all Paul's epistles, Philippians is the most consistently positive and personal.^[10] It reflects a joyful spirit. One popular exposition of Philippians stresses the importance of living joyfully in spite of circumstances.^[11] Paul did not rebuke this church sharply, nor did he refer to any major problems in it. His warnings are of a precautionary nature. His occupation with Jesus Christ also stands out. In a total of 104 verses, there are 51 references to the Lord Jesus by name. There are also many references to the gospel (1:5, 7, 12, 27; 2:22; 4:3, 15), and to the fellowship that Paul and the Philippians shared in the gospel ministry (1:5, 7; 2:1; 3:10; 4:14, 16).

" . . . what is most noticeable in this letter is the general paucity of Paul's more specialized theological vocabulary and the infrequency of the explanatory 'for,' which is always a dead giveaway that Paul is involved in heavy argumentation."^[12]

Nevertheless, Philippians has more in common with Romans than any other early Pauline epistle.^[13]

STRUCTURE

The structure of this epistle is essentially chiasmic, as can be seen in the outline below. The center of the chiasm is Paul's exposition of partnership in the gospel, and the example of Jesus' self-sacrifice.

OUTLINE

- I. Salutation 1:1-2
- II. Prologue 1:3-26
 - A. Thanksgiving 1:3-8
 - B. Prayer 1:9-11
 - C. Progress report 1:12-26
 - 1. Paul's present imprisonment 1:12-18
 - 2. Paul's anticipated deliverance 1:19-26
- III. Partnership in the gospel 1:27—4:9
 - A. A worthy walk 1:27-30
 - B. Unity and steadfastness 2:1—4:1
 - 1. Walking in unity ch. 2
 - 2. Walking in steadfastness 3:1—4:1
 - C. Specific duties 4:2-9

1. Restoring unity 4:2-3
2. Maintaining tranquility 4:4-9

IV. Epilogue 4:10-20

- A. The recent gift 4:10-14
- B. The previous gifts 4:15-20

V. Greetings and benediction 4:21-23

MESSAGE

The Philippian Christians were special favorites of the Apostle Paul. Their response to the gospel and their subsequent progress in the faith were exemplary. However, the connections between Paul and Philippi that the New Testament records, both in Acts and in this letter, reveal an interesting paradox. In both books, there is a lot about prison and a lot about rejoicing. Paul ended up in prison when he first evangelized Philippi. Yet in prison, Paul and Silas sang praises to God. When Paul wrote Philippians, he was again in prison, but this time in Rome. However, the dominant emotion that he projected in this book was "rejoicing."

The paradox of a man in prison—rejoicing—lies at the root of what this book is all about. Such an attitude demonstrates an unusual view of life. It is a uniquely Christian view of life. It demonstrates the "mind of Christ," which is the key to this epistle.

The theme of the epistle is participation in the gospel. (Another opinion is that it is "Christ is all!"^[14]) Everything in this letter deals with that subject in some way. By participation in the gospel, I mean the fellowship that Paul and the Philippians shared in the work of disseminating the gospel. This is the work in which all Christians should participate as well. Paul, the Philippians, and we—are all partners in the work of the gospel. The key to working together effectively as partners in the gospel is "having the mind of Christ." Therefore in this overview of the book, I would like to emphasize this fundamental attitude, about which Paul had so much to say in this book.

The key revelation in this epistle is that of the Christian attitude, or viewpoint, or consciousness. Note some of the references to the "mind" or "attitude" in this epistle: 1:7; 2:2, 3, 5; 3:15, 19; 4:2, 10. "Mind" is a key word in this book, and it identifies the emphasis of Philippians.

Paul revealed what the "mind of Christ" was *in the Savior*. We find this revelation in 2:5-11, one of the greatest Christological passages in the Bible. The Gospels reveal Jesus' words and works, but this passage unveils His mind.

Notice, first, the mental attitude of our Savior in 2:6. He did not regard His privileged position as something that He needed to retain. He did not value His position for the sake

of the position. He laid it aside and stooped to unbelievable depths to lift those who needed redemption out of ruin.

This attitude resulted in certain activity, which we read of in verses 7 and 8. Jesus Christ selflessly gave up what was in His own best interests for the sake of the betterment of others. He left the heights of heaven for the lowliness of earth. He who was sovereign became a servant. Instead of becoming the highest of servants, an angel, he became a lowly servant, a man. He could have lived a life of ease as a man, but He submitted to shame and death. He might have died in comfort and private, surrounded by those who loved Him. Instead, He died in agony and shame, *in public*, surrounded by those who hated Him. He could have died appreciated, but instead he died hated and misunderstood. This is the mind of Christ: a lowly mind, a loving mind.

This activity resulted in an award: verses 9-11.

Paul also revealed what the mind of the saints who are in Christ should be. We, too, should have a certain attitude that expresses itself in specific activity, which God will just as surely reward.

Our attitude should be that our "love increasingly abounds," and that we are "sincere and void of offense" (1:9-10). Christ's love is to be our love. His attitude is to be our attitude. Regardless of the present privileged position that we may occupy, we must not retain it as a prize.

An illustration of this attitude is William Borden, the heir to the Borden milk fortune. William became a Christian early in life. After graduating from Yale University in 1909, he went on and graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1912. Even though he could have enjoyed a life of comfort and luxury, never having to work for a living, he chose to pour out his life as a missionary to the Egyptians. He laid down his life a year later, in 1913, in Cairo, the victim of cerebral meningitis, at the age of 25. His life, like our Lord's was short, but it is a classic example of someone who adopted the mind of Christ, and gave up all that he had so that others could have life.[\[15\]](#)

Paul had this attitude. We can see it clearly in the statement he made in Romans 9:1-3. Just before he wrote those words, Paul wrote that nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:38-39). Yet he did not count that secure position something to retain for his own benefit. He was willing to give it up for the welfare of the Jews. Moses voiced a similar sentiment in Exodus 32:32: "But now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from Thy book which Thou has written!"

What is the activity that should flow out of this attitude?

Our life should be "worthy of the gospel" (1:27). This was one of Paul's favorite ways to describe our *conduct responsibility* as Christians (cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:12). Worthy conduct is not just morally upright behavior. It is conduct that the gospel drives,

conduct that aims at proclaiming the gospel, making it known. It is conduct that responds appropriately to God's gift of grace to us.

We are also to be blameless in our relationship to God (2:14-15). Moreover, we are to be harmless in our relationships with people, not doing them harm but good. Our Lord's example of humble service to the point of death is our model. How much do we know about emptying ourselves, humbling ourselves, becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross?

What is the award that will follow this attitude and this activity? It is twofold.

There is *present victory* over circumstances. This whole epistle is a revelation of Paul's triumph over circumstances that would have defeated many people. The pioneer missionary to the regions beyond sat confined in prison. Rather than saying everything was against him (cf. Gen. 42:36), Paul rejoiced that God's program was advancing (1:18). In all the Prison Epistles, Paul viewed himself not as the prisoner of Nero, but of Jesus Christ. He believed the Lord had placed him where he was for the best purpose. Anyone can sing when he or she escapes from prison, but Paul sang in prison.

Second, there is also *future reward*. Throughout this epistle Paul had the judgment seat of Christ in view (1:6, 10-11, 20; 2:16; 3:8-9, 14; 4:5). God will reward the mind of Christ in the saints, just as He has rewarded the mind of Christ in the Savior. We should strive to gain that prize, not to glorify ourselves in heaven, but to have a crown to lay down at Jesus' feet in worship in heaven (cf. Rev. 4:10).

The mind of Christ is the key to this epistle. Paul revealed this mind in the Savior and in the saints. What did he say about this mind or attitude? He said, "Have this mind in you" (2:5).

What is the source for this kind of thinking? Where do we find what it takes to have the mind of Christ in us? We find it in Christ. Specifically, we find it when we orient our lives with Him at the center. Paul put it this way: "To me, to live is Christ" (1:21). For some people, to live is finances. For others, it is fame. For some it is family. For others to live is to have fun. Life is whatever we put at the center of living. Paul put Christ there. Consequently, he viewed God as Christ did. He saw people as Christ did. He viewed his purpose as Christ did. He established his priorities as Christ did. He conducted his daily affairs as Christ did. His life was *Christ*.

God sought to teach the Israelites the importance of putting Him at the center of their lives, by locating the "tabernacle" in the center of the camp, as they traveled through the wilderness. He also located the "temple" at the center of the Promised Land.

What is our responsibility with this attitude? It is to "work out our own salvation" in response to God's working in us (2:12-13). We work *out* what God works *in*. How do we do this? We do it by "forgetting what is past" and by "pressing on to God's goal" for us. Paul used the same Greek word to describe his persecution of Christians (3:6) and his

pressing toward his new goal (3:14; *dioko*). He pursued both goals zealously. He transferred all the passion and fervor, that he once expended on tearing down the church, into building it up. Our responsibility is absolute dedication and unfailing endeavor to the goal of building the church of Jesus Christ.

What are the rules that we must follow with this attitude? Primarily, we must "rejoice in the Lord" (3:1; 4:4). Rejoicing is not only a privilege, but it is a sacred duty for the Christian. God has commanded us to rejoice. To do this, we need to focus our thinking on what God is really doing, as He has revealed this in His Word. We must also be forbearing toward all men, rather than antagonistic (4:5). We must also give ourselves to prayer, rather than to anxiety (4:6). These are the basic rules we need to follow.

By way of application, what does adopting the mind of Christ mean?

For the church, the measure of her authority is the measure of her conformity to the mind of Christ. The church, the corporate body of believers, depends on many different things today to give it authority: political power, charismatic leaders, social influence, impressive buildings and presentations. Yet the church's real authority today is the same as Jesus Christ's authority was when He walked this earth: derived from His humble attitude of submissiveness and obedience to His Father. The essence of the mind of Christ is love. Its consciousness is joy. Its expression is sacrifice. If love, joy, and sacrificial service characterize the church, it will have authority in the world.

For the individual Christian, the application is that we should allow Jesus Christ to master us completely. We should view ourselves as His captives, His prisoners (cf. 1:1). It is only by entering into bondage to the Savior that we can find true liberty. His ideal must become our ideal. His power should be what we depend on to fulfill that ideal. Furthermore, the certainty of His ultimate victory and ours, now and in the future, should be the inspiration for our ceaseless song. The present joy of our lives should come from our companionship with Him day by day. Sharing the mind of Christ will teach us how to love, to serve, and to sing as we live the Christian life.^[16]

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/NT/Philippians/Philippians.htm>

Introduction to the Philippian Letter (Padfield)

Philippians is the epistle of joy and encouragement in the midst of adverse circumstances. Paul freely expresses his fond affection for the Philippian Christians, appreciates their consistent testimony and support, and lovingly urges them to center their actions and thoughts on the pursuit of the Person and power of Christ.

Author

This letter is clearly identified as written by Paul (1:1), and Pauline authorship has never seriously been questioned. There has been frequent and vigorous debate, however, over the date and place of writing.

Date

The traditional view has been that Paul wrote Philippians between A.D. 61 and 63 from imprisonment in Rome. The references to the palace guard (1:13) and Caesar's household (4:22) fit with Paul's Roman imprisonment. In addition, Paul's statements in 1:12–20 and 4:22 strongly suggest that the imprisonment was fairly long. Thus, this letter appears to have been written sometime after the beginning of Paul's imprisonment recorded in Acts 28.

More recently, however, some scholars have suggested that Philippians was written about A.D. 55 during Paul's ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19; 20) or about A.D. 56–61 during his imprisonment at Caesarea (Acts 24–26). They point out that the terms "Caesar's household" and "palace guard" could instead refer to Roman authorities in provincial cities like Ephesus or Caesarea. Those who argue for Ephesus point out that the frequent travels between Paul's prison and Philippi implied by 1:26; 2:19, 23–26; 4:18 suggest that Paul was nearer to Philippi than a Roman imprisonment would allow.

It should be noted, however, that Acts does not mention an imprisonment in Ephesus, that Caesarea was much farther from Philippi than Rome was, and that reasonably swift travel was possible between Rome and Philippi, which was located on the main Roman road, the Via Egnatia. Therefore, the traditional view that this letter was written from Rome sometime between A.D. 61 and 63 is preferred.

Themes and Literary Structure

Philippians is one of Paul's most personal letters. In it he shares his own experience with Christ, and his struggle over whether to prefer dying to be with Christ or living to serve the Philippians (1:21–26). The Philippians were in his heart and they supported him in his imprisonment (1:7), a fact which explains the note of gratitude that Paul frequently sounds (1:3–11; 2:19–30; 4:10–20).

Philippians focuses on: Paul's account of his present circumstances (ch. 1), Paul's appeal to have the mind of Christ (ch. 2), his appeal to have the knowledge of Christ (ch. 3), and his appeal to have the peace of Christ (ch. 4).

Prominent in Philippians is the theme of joy. The word "joy" (Greek: *chara*) is found five times (1:4, 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1) and the verb "to rejoice" occurs eleven times (twice in 1:18; 2:17, 18; 4:4; and once in 2:28; 3:1 and 4:10). Despite his unpleasant circumstances in prison, Paul manifests a joyous confidence in God's provision for him personally and for the Philippian Christians.

Paul exhorts the Philippians to have a spirit of unity and mutual concern by embracing the attitude of humility (2:1–4), the greatest example of which is the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ (2:5–11). The *kenosis*, or "self-emptying" of Christ does not mean that He relinquished His essential deity, but that He withheld His preincarnate glory and voluntarily restricted His use of certain attributes (such as omnipresence).

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts,
pp. 411, 413



See corresponding [Maps of Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey and the City of Philippi](#) in Maps section

<http://www.padfield.com/acrobat/nt/philippians.pdf>

Four Points of Philippians (Padfield)

Introduction

- I. The city of Philippi is located in Greece, on a plain about 10 miles inland from the Aegean Sea.
 - A. The Via Egnatia, the main overland route between Asia and the West, ran through this ancient city.
 - B. In 356 B.C. it was seized by Philip of Macedonia, the father of Alexander.
 - C. In 42 B.C. Mark Antony and Octavian (later Augustus Caesar) combined forces to defeat the armies of Brutus and Cassius, the assassins of Julius Caesar, at Philippi.
 - D. In celebration of the victory, Philippi was made into a Roman colony; this entitled its inhabitants to the rights and privileges usually granted to those who lived in the cities of Italy.
 - E. Eleven years later, Octavian defeated the forces of Antony and Cleopatra in a naval battle at Actium, on the west coast of Greece.
 - F. Octavian punished supporters of Antony by evicting them from Italy and resettling them in Philippi.
- II. The Lord's church at Philippi was established by Paul on his second evangelistic journey in about 52 A.D.
 - A. He had set out from Antioch of Syria and had traveled by land to revisit the churches which he had planted on his first journey.
 - B. Luke records that Timothy had joined him at Lystra (Acts 16:1–10).
 - C. They sailed from Troas, and evidently with a favorable wind, crossed the Aegean Sea in two days to Neapolis (usually took five days), and from there traveled inland to Philippi (Acts 16:11–12).
- III. Philippi did not have enough Jewish citizens to have a synagogue.
 - A. There was a meeting place for prayer just outside the city, where Paul found Lydia and a group of women on the Sabbath engaged in worship.
 - B. To them he preached the first gospel sermon in Europe (Acts 16:13–15).
 - C. Lydia and her household became the first converts; they were later joined by the jailer and household (cf. Acts 16:16–34).
 - D. Paul revisited the city on at least two occasions (2 Cor. 2:13; Acts 20:6).
- IV. Philippians was one of the prison epistles of Paul (around 62 A.D.).
 - A. The church at Philippi had sent Epaphroditus as their messenger to bring aid to Paul while he was in Rome—he fell ill while in Rome and was “sick almost unto death” (Phil. 2:27).
 - B. Upon his recovery, Epaphroditus longed to return home.
 - C. Paul knew of the concern of the Philippians—thus the letter was prompted.
 - D. One of the major characteristics of the Philippian letter is its vibrant undertone of spiritual joy and thanksgiving.
- V. This lesson is concerned with my life and how it relates to Christ.

Discussion

I. Christ Is The Purpose Of My Life (Phil. 1:21–24)

- A. Paul's indifference towards death raises the question of what life and death is—the Stoics had preached indifference and apathy towards death.
- B. Paul announces his principle of life.
 - 1. Regardless of how others felt, this is what life meant to Paul.
 - 2. With many life is: money, power, sensual indulgence, flattery.
 - 3. Paul did not say, "Christ is life," but, "living is Christ and dying is gain."
- C. Christ occupies the whole of Paul's life—no doors locked to Him.
- D. Paul led a surrendered life and found peace and victory (1 Cor. 15:57).
- E. What about death? Simply more of Christ, i.e., "to die is gain."
 - 1. "Gain" is used for interest, gains and profits.
 - 2. Paul spoke about "gaining Christ" (cf. Phil. 3:8).
 - 3. Paul felt like an eagle in a cage—death would be liberation.
 - 4. Death held no terrors for Paul (Heb. 2:9–18).
 - 5. He looked upon death as a friend in disguise, but he was not dissatisfied with life here below.
- F. Is Christ really the *purpose* of your life?

II. Christ Is The Pattern Of My Life (Phil. 2:5–8)

- A. Paul uses the incarnation of Christ to teach a lesson on humility.
 - 1. John says the Word became flesh (John 1:14).
 - 2. Jesus did not consider His state of "equality with God" a thing to be held on to at any cost, when, by giving up the glory, He could redeem us.
 - 3. As Christ possessed the real attributes of Deity, so He took upon Himself the real attributes of servanthip (Heb. 4:14–16).
 - 4. Jesus followed the Father's will obediently to death (Heb. 5:8–9).
 - 5. He cried aloud when His Father's presence left Him (Matt. 27:46).
 - 6. The body on the tree was accursed (Deut. 21:23).
 - 7. The Jews stumbled at the cross and Greek thought it foolish, but to us it is the power unto salvation (1 Cor. 1:20–25).
- B. Christ is the perfect pattern for my life, and I must surrender all that I have that the Father might be glorified (Rom. 12:1–2).

III. Christ Is The Prize Of My Life (Phil. 3:13–14)

- A. Many people do not understand "perfection" in this life.
 - 1. The word translated as "perfect" in the New Testament (Gr. *katartizo*) means "to complete thoroughly, i.e. repair (lit. or fig.) or adjust."
 - 2. "And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them." (Matt. 4:21).
 - 3. "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness..." (Gal. 6:1).
 - 4. "night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?" (1 Thes. 3:10).

IV. Christ Is The Power Of My Life (Phil. 4:12-13)

- A. Paul's strength resides in Christ—He empowers Paul.
- B. Paul uses this great word elsewhere of Christ's relationship to him.
 - 1. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has *enabled* me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry..." (1 Tim. 1:12).
 - 2. "But the Lord stood with me and *strengthened* me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim. 4:17).
 - 3. "be strong in the Lord and in the *power* of His might" (Eph. 6:10).
 - 4. This power is accessible to all who yield themselves to Christ.
- C. Paul learned to do without his way and find joy in God's way.
 - 1. Men can kill him, but they cannot deprive him of the love and power of Christ in his life (Rom. 8:35-39).
 - 2. Paul leads the victorious life because he lets the word of Christ dwell within him and rule in his life.

Conclusion

- I. The time has come for Paul to say farewell to the Philippians (Phil. 4:18-23).
- II. The epistle was very brief, but rich in thought.
- III. He closes with the familiar, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."
- IV. Paul's emphasis is on grace from the Lord Jesus Christ—grace that enhances and enriches the life.

<http://www.expositorysermonoutlines.com/textual/four-points-of-philippians.pdf>

Philippians

Author: Paul (Phil. 1:1).

Purpose: To explain Paul's joy in Christ.

Background: Prison epistle (Acts 16:9–40; 2 Cor. 8:1–7).

Four Points To Remember

1. Christ is the *purpose* of my life (1:21).
2. Christ is the *pattern* of my life (2:5).
3. Christ is the *prize* of my life (3:14).
4. Christ is the *power* of my life (4:13).



Highlights

1. Paul's desire to be with Christ (1:19–24).
 - a. What quandary did Paul (1:23)?
 - b. What were the consequences of the choices before Paul (1:22)?
2. Lesson on humility, exemplified by Christ (2:1–11).
 - a. What, if anything, did Christ give up by coming to this earth (2:6–7)?
 - b. What was the extent of Christ's humiliation?
3. Paul's background (3:3–7).
 - a. What would the average Jew in the first century thought of Paul's background?
 - b. After his conversion, what did Paul think of his background?
4. The generosity of the Philippian brethren (4:10–20).
 - a. What had Paul learned (4:11)?
5. The saints in Caesar's household (4:22).
 - a. What was the occupation of those in "Caesar's household"?

Top Philippians Verses (by ranking):

<http://topverses.com/Bible/Philippians>

Note: Every verse in the Bible sorted by how often it is referenced across the internet

TOP 5 Most Popular Verses (4:13, 2:5, 4:6, 4:8, 2:12):

[Philippians 4:13](#)

Bible Rank: 54

I can do all this through him who gives me strength. NIV

[Philippians 2:5](#)

Bible Rank: 63

In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had: NIV

[Philippians 4:6](#)

Bible Rank: 66

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. NIV

[Philippians 4:8](#)

Bible Rank: 96

Finally, brothers and sisters, 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 about such things. NIV

[Philippians 2:12](#)

Bible Rank: 272

Therefore, my dear 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 fear and trembling NIV

Key Verses in Philippians

[Philippians 1:21](#) For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain....

[Philippians 2:5](#) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...

[Philippians 4:4](#) Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice....

[Philippians 4:13](#) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth ...

[Philippians 4:19](#) But my God shall supply all your need according to his ...

Most Popular Verses in Philippians

[Philippians 4:13](#) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth ...

[Philippians 4:6](#) Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer an...

[Philippians 4:18](#) But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received ...

[Philippians 1:6](#) Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath ...

[Philippians 4:7](#) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, ...

<http://www.godvine.com/bible/philippians>

Additional Study References:

To Live Is Christ: A Study of the Book of Philippians

<https://bible.org/series/live-christ-study-book-philippians> (Downloadable as a protected MS Doc file)

Philippian Commentaries and Sermons

http://www.preceptaustin.org/philippians_commentaries

Philippians – A Study Guide (Copeland)

<http://executableoutlines.com/phil.htm>

Notes on Philippians (Dr. Thomas Constable)

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/philippians.pdf> [PDF]

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/NT/Philippians/Philippians.htm>

also check out: Talking to God: What the Bible Teaches about Prayer

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/prayer/prayer.pdf>

Philippians - Inductive Bible Study

<http://inductive.indubiblia.org/philippians-1>

Philippians: Christ, Our Confidence and Our Strength (Stedman) [also audio]

<http://www.raystedman.org/bible-overview/adventuring/philippians-christ-our-confidence-and-our-strength>

Workbook on Philippians (Padfield)

<http://www.padfield.com/acrobat/nt/philippians.pdf> [PDF]

The Four Points of Philippians (Padfield)

<http://www.expositorysermonoutlines.com/textual/four-points-of-philippians.pdf> [PDF]

Paul's Letter to the Philippians – The Lord is at Hand (O'Neill, CRU at UNC)

http://www.cruatunc.com/hp_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Philippians-Study.pdf [PDF]

Precepts for Life – Count It All Joy (Study of Philippians)

<http://store.precept.org/precepts-for-life/study-guide/Free-Download-Philippians-PDF-Precepts-for-Life-Study-Guide.html> (PDFs Downloadable for Free from store after registration)

Philippians – Fellowship in the Gospel (An Inductive Study on the Book of Philippians)

http://www.grace-bible.org/uploads/publications/Philippians_web_13.pdf [PDF]

Alternate: <http://www.grace-bible.org/resources/bible-studies-and-publications/philippians-1>

Philippians – Nine Lessons from the God's Word (McNabb)

<http://www.biblestudyguide.org/ebooks/mcnabb/philippians.PDF> [PDF]

Philippians – Notes and Outlines (McGee)

http://www.ttb.org/docs/default-source/notes-outlines/no38_philippians.pdf?sfvrsn=2 [PDF]

Bible.org Links for Philippians

<https://bible.org/book/Philippians>

Philippians –IVP Bible Background Commentary, 2nd Ed. [BBC2]

[Intro \(JFB\)](#) [Intro \(NBC\)](#) [Map](#) Chapters [1](#) – [2](#) – [3](#) – [4](#) – [Conclusion](#)

INTRODUCTION (from BBC2)

Authorship. Given the personal allusions and style, the vast majority of New Testament scholars accept Philippians as an authentic letter (or letters) by Paul.

Unity. Some scholars have divided Philippians up into smaller units (more common in the past than today). The division of Philippians is not impossible: short letters were often sent in antiquity, and Paul maintained regular contact with the Philippians. Conversely, letters often had multiple subjects, especially when they were as long as Philippians. Two factors ultimately support the letter's unity: (1) the burden of proof is on those who would divide it, because different letters are usually distinguishable in letter collections; (2) the arguments for division are based on modern letter-writing conventions that overlook ancient rhetorical and epistolary conventions.

Structure. Chapter 1 addresses topics of Paul and the Philippians' common labor in the gospel (using motifs from ancient friendship letters). Chapter 2 provides models for imitation (in which he includes letters of recommendation). Chapter 3 includes a digression (common in ancient letters). Chapter 4 turns to the main business of the letter (a thank-you note eager to avoid any suggestions of the common ancient patron - client ideology).

Situation. Paul states that the purpose of Philippians is to thank them (4:10-20); but writing from prison (probably in Rome, as a majority of scholars think), he also wishes to address some other issues, including the likely further persecution the church will face and an exhortation to work together. As much as the Philippian church (probably made up of several house churches) loved Paul, its members were divided among themselves; thus the recurrent exhortations to unity (1:27; 2:2,14) and mutual service (2:3-11). Exhortations to unity were commonplace in antiquity, but usually corresponded to genuinely present and no less common divisions. At least part of the division here revolves around disagreement between two of Paul's fellow laborers, possibly leaders of separate house churches (4:2-3). If opposition to Paul exists, it probably involves Jewish Christians who advocate circumcision, if Paul believes they have already arrived in Philippi (3:2-21).

Commentaries. Useful commentaries for background include Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43 (Waco, TX: Word, 1983); and Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011). On a less technical level, see, e.g., Ben Witherington III, *Friendship and Finances in Philippi* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1994).

INTRODUCTION (from JFB Commentary)

The **INTERNAL EVIDENCE** for the authenticity of this Epistle is strong. The style, manner of thought, and doctrine, accord with Paul's. The incidental allusions also establish his authorship.

Paley [*Horæ Paulinæ*, ch. 7] instances the mention of the object of Epaphroditus' journey to Rome, the Philippian contribution to Paul's wants, Epaphroditus' sickness (Phl 1:7; 2:25-30; 4:10-18), the fact that Timothy had been long with Paul at Philippi (Phl 1:1; 2:19), the reference to his being a prisoner at Rome now for a long time (Phl 1:12-14; 2:17-28), his willingness to die (compare Phl 1:23, with 2Co 5:8), the reference to the Philippians having seen his maltreatment at Philippi (Phl 1:29,30; 2:1,2).

The **EXTERNAL EVIDENCE** is equally decisive: **Polycarp** [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3 ; 11]; **Irenæus** [*Against Heresies*, 4.18.4]; **Clement of Alexandria** [*The Instructor*, 1 . 1 , p. 107]; **Eusebius** [*The Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne*, in *Ecclesiastical History*, 5 . 2]; **Tertullian** [*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 23]; **Origen** [*Against Celsus*, 1 . 3 , p. 122]; **Cyprian** [*Testimonies against the Jews*, 3.39].

Philippi was *the first* (that is, the farthest from Rome, and first which met Paul in entering Macedonia) Macedonian city of the district, called *Macedonia Prima* (so called as lying *farthest eastward*). The Greek (Ac 16:12) should not be translated "the *chief* city," as *English Version*, but as above [Alford]. Not it, but Thessalonica, was the *chief* city of the province, and Amphipolis, of the district called Macedonia Prima. It was a Roman "colony" (Ac 16:12), made so by Augustus, to commemorate his famous victory over Brutus and Cassius. A *colony* was in fact a portion of Rome itself transplanted to the provinces, an offshoot from Rome, and as it were a portrait of the mother city on a small scale [Aulus **Gellius** , *Attic Nights*, 16.13]. Its inhabitants were Roman citizens, having the right of voting in the Roman tribes, governed by their own senate and magistrates, and not by the governor of the province, with the Roman law and *Latin* language.

Paul, with Silas and Timothy, planted the Gospel there (Ac 16:12, &c.), in his second missionary journey, **A.D.** 51 . Doubtless he visited it again on his journey from Ephesus into Macedonia (Ac 20:1); and Ac 20:3,6, expressly mentions his third visit on his return from Greece (Corinth) to Syria by way of Macedonia. His sufferings at Philippi (Ac 16:19, &c.) strengthened the Christian bond of union between him and his Philippian converts, who also, like him, were exposed to trials for the Gospel's sake (1Th 2:2). They alone sent supplies for his temporal wants, *twice* shortly after he had left them (Phl 4:15,16), and again a third time shortly before writing this Epistle (Phl 4:10,18; 2Co 11:9). This fervent attachment on their part was, perhaps, also in part due to the fact that few Jews were in Philippi, as in other scenes of his labors, to sow the seeds of distrust and suspicion. There was no synagogue, but merely a Jewish *Proseucha*, or oratory, by the riverside. So that there only do we read of his meeting no opposition from Jews, but only from the masters of the divining damsel, whose gains had been put an end to by her being dispossessed.

Though the Philippian Church was as yet free from Judaizing influence, yet it needed to be forewarned of that danger which might at any time assail it from without (Phl 3:2); even as such evil influences had crept into the Galatian churches. In Phl 4:2,3 we find a trace of the fact recorded in the history (Ac 16:13,14), that *female* converts were among the first to receive the Gospel at Philippi.

As to the state of the Church, we gather from 2Co 8:1,2 that its members were *poor*, yet most *liberal*; and from Phl 1:28-30, that they were undergoing persecution. The only blemish referred to in their character was, on the part of some members, a tendency to dissension. Hence arise his admonitions against disputings (Phl 1:27; 2:1-4,12,14; 4:2).

The **OBJECT** of the Epistle is general: not only to thank the Philippians for their contribution sent by Epaphroditus, who was now in returning to take back the apostle's letter, but to express his Christian love and sympathy, and to exhort them to a life consonant with that of Christ, and to warn them against existing dissensions and future possible assaults of Judaizers from without. It is remarkable in this Epistle alone, as compared with the others, that, amidst many commendations, there are no express censures of those to whom it is addressed. No doctrinal error, or schism, has as yet sprung up; the only blemish hinted at is, that some of the Philippian Church were somewhat wanting in lowliness of mind, the result of which want was disputation. Two women, Euodias and Syntyche, are mentioned as having erred in this respect (Phl 4:2,3). The Epistle may be divided into *three* parts: (1) Affectionate address to the Philippians; reference to his own state as a prisoner at Rome, and to theirs, and to his mission of Epaphroditus to them (the first and second chapters). Epaphroditus probably held a leading office in the Philippian Church, perhaps as a presbyter. After Tychicus and Onesimus had departed (A.D. 62), carrying

the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, Paul was cheered in his imprisonment by the arrival of Epaphroditus with the Philippian contribution. That faithful "brother, companion in labor, and fellow soldier" (Phl 2:25), had brought on himself by the fatigues of the journey a dangerous sickness (Phl 2:26,30). But now that he was recovered, he "longed" (Phl 2:26) to return to his Philippian flock, and in person to relieve their anxiety on his behalf, in respect to his sickness; and the apostle gladly availed himself of the opportunity of writing to them a letter of grateful acknowledgments and Christian exhortations. (2) Caution against Judaizing teachers, supported by reference to his own former and present feeling towards Jewish legalism (Phl 3:1-21). (3) Admonitions to individuals, and to the Church in general, thanks for their seasonable aid, and concluding benedictions and salutations (Phl 4:1-23).

This Epistle was written from Rome during the imprisonment, the beginning of which is related in Ac 28:16,20,30,31. The reference to "Cæsar's household" (Phl 4:22), and to the "palace" (Phl 1:13, *Greek*, " *Prætorium*, " probably, *the barrack of the Prætorian bodyguard*, attached to the palace of Nero) confirms this. It must have been during his *first* imprisonment at Rome, for the mention of the Prætorium agrees with the fact that it was during his first imprisonment he was in the custody of the Prætorian Prefect, and his situation, described in Phl 1:12-14, agrees with his situation in the first two years of his imprisonment (Ac 28:30,31). The following reasons show, moreover, that it was written towards *the close* of that imprisonment: (1) He, in it, expresses his expectation of the immediate decision of his cause (Phl 2:23). (2) Enough time had elapsed for the Philipians to hear of his imprisonment, to send Epaphroditus to him, to hear of Epaphroditus' arrival and sickness, and send back word to Rome of their distress (Phl 2:26). (3) It must have been written after the three other Epistles sent from Rome, namely, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon; for Luke is no longer with him (Phl 2:20); otherwise he would have been specified as saluting them, having formerly labored among them, whereas he is mentioned as with him, Col 4:14; Phlm 24. Again, in Ep 6:19,20, his freedom to preach is implied: but in Phl 1:13-18, his bondage is dwelt on, and it is implied that, *not himself*, but *others*, preached, and made his imprisonment known. Again, in Phlm 22, he confidently anticipates his release, which contrasts with the more depressed anticipations of this Epistle. (4) A considerable time had elapsed since the beginning of his imprisonment, for "his bonds" to have become so widely known, and to have produced such good effects for the Gospel (Phl 1:13). (5) There is evidently an increase in the rigor of his imprisonment implied now, as compared with the early stage of it, as described in Ac 28:1-31; compare Phl 1:29,30; 2:27. History furnishes a probable clue to account for this increase of vigor. In the second year of Paul's imprisonment (**A.D.** 62), Burrus, the Prætorian Prefect, to whose custody he had been committed (Ac 28:16, "the captain of the guard"), died; and Nero the emperor having divorced Octavia, and married Poppoea, a Jewish proselytess (who then caused her rival, Octavia, to be murdered, and gloated over the head of her victim), exalted Tigellinus, the chief promoter of the marriage, a monster of wickedness, to the Prætorian Prefecture. It was then he seems to have been removed from his own house into the Prætorium, or barrack of the Prætorian guards, attached to the palace, for stricter custody; and hence he writes with less hopeful anticipations as to the result of his trial (Phl 2:17; 3:11). Some of the Prætorian guards who had the custody of him before, would then naturally make known his "bonds," in accordance with Phl 1:13; from the smaller Prætorian bodyguard at the palace the report would spread to the general permanent Prætorian camp, which Tiberius had established north of the city, outside of the walls. He had arrived in Rome, February, 61 ; the "two whole years (Ac 20:30) in his own hired house" ended February, 63 , so that the date of this Epistle, written shortly after, evidently while the danger was imminent, would be about spring or summer, 63 . The providence of God averted the danger. He probably was thought beneath the notice of Tigellinus, who was more intent on court intrigues. The death of Nero's favorite, Pallas, the brother of Felix, this same year, also took out of the way another source of danger.

The **STYLE** is abrupt and discontinuous, his fervor of affection leading him to pass rapidly from one theme to another (Phl 2:18,19-24,25-30; 3:1,2,3,4-14,15). In no Epistle does he use so warm

expressions of love. In Phl 4:1 he seems at a loss for words sufficient to express all the extent and ardor of his affection for the Philippians: "My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." The mention of bishops and deacons in Phl 1:1 is due to the late date of the Epistle, at a time when the Church had begun to assume that order which is laid down in the Pastoral Epistles, and which continued the prevalent one in the first and purest age of the Church. **A.R. Faussett, JFB Commentary**

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INTRODUCTION (from the NBC (New Bible Commentary))

Philippi and the church there

The Philippi to which Paul went in the course of his missionary work was a significant place in a number of ways. Not only was it an important city in the Roman province of Macedonia, but it had the special status of being a Roman colony (Ac 16:12). This meant that it was like a little piece of Rome abroad. The Latin language was used; Roman law controlled local administration and taxes; many aspects of public life went on as in Rome itself and most of the officials had the same titles as in Rome.

The known history of Philippi, however, goes back a long way. Before 360 BC a small Thracian village stood on the site. The city itself was founded and its name given to it by Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, as he realized the strategic nature of the site. Philippi came into the hands of the Romans in 168 BC after the battle of Pydna. In 42 BC Antony, after he and Octavian had defeated Brutus and Cassius, settled some of his disbanded veterans there, and thus made Philippi a Roman colony. Then in 30 BC, when Octavian had defeated Antony and Cleopatra at the famous battle of Actium, he sent further 'colonists' from Italy to Philippi, to make room nearer home for the settlement of his own war veterans. The strong consciousness of the privileges of Roman citizenship in Philippi is seen in Ac 16:20-21,35-39 and is probably reflected in the letter in 1:27 and 3:20.

Paul's preaching of the gospel in Philippi represents for us what was probably the first apostolic work of evangelization in Europe. For the apostle it would have meant working in a strategic center of a Roman province which had not previously heard the gospel. According to the record of Ac 16:9-10, Paul went there (together with Silas and Timothy) in response to a vision in the night in which he saw 'a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."' As the story of Ac 16 unfolds we read that in Philippi Paul found no synagogue, but on the Sabbath he discovered a 'place of prayer' by the riverside, where a group of women gathered. One of these women, Lydia, 'a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira', appears to have been the first convert, and she opened her home to Paul.

We see something of the pagan background in Philippi when we read of 'a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future' and who 'earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling'. Paul and Silas were condemned to prison through the anger of the slave owners when, with the evil spirit exorcized from the girl, they saw that 'their hope of making money was gone'. The pretext for the condemnation of Paul and Silas was that they, as Jews, were throwing the city into an uproar and advocating customs which, their accusers piously said, were 'unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice'.

The partnership in the gospel, the persecution and the largely Gentile background of the Philippian Christians (all of which are brought out in the letter) are thus seen in this record in Ac 16 of Paul's first visit to Philippi.

Although we do not have many details, it is clear that from that first visit to Philippi Paul left behind a devoted group of Christians. On Paul's third missionary journey recorded in Acts we read of his spending time again in Macedonia (Ac 20:1), and that most probably would have involved a visit to Philippi. Then after a time in Greece, he was back in Macedonia, and Ac 20:6 tells us specifically that Paul set sail from Philippi to return to Jerusalem.

The time and place of the writing of the letter

It is completely clear from reading 1:12-26 that Paul was in prison when he wrote. Philippians, together with Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians, have been called his 'prison letters'. In 2Co 11:23 he speaks of having been frequently in prison. From the record in Acts we know that he had sustained periods of imprisonment in Caesarea and in Rome, and on the basis of what we read in such passages as Ac 20:18-19; 1Co 4:9-13; 15:31-32; 2Co 1:8-10; 4:8-12; 6:4-10; 11:23-27, it is thought that he may well have been imprisoned in Ephesus also. Reasons have been put forward to support each of these places—Caesarea, Ephesus and Rome—as the likely place of Paul's imprisonment when he wrote to the Christians at Philippi.

The most important arguments for *Caesarea* being the place where the letter was written are:

1. Ac 23:25 speaks of the imprisonment at Caesarea being in the praetorium of Herod (NIV, 'Herod's palace'), and the letter speaks of the fact that Paul was 'in chains for Christ' becoming clear through the whole praetorium (NIV, 'palace guard') as well as to others (1:13).
2. The two-year imprisonment in Caesarea (Ac 24:27) would have given time for the communications between Paul's place of imprisonment and Philippi that the letter implies (see below).
3. In Phl 1:7 Paul writes of a defense that he had made, but he was still in prison. It was certainly the case in Caesarea that he made a defense of himself before Felix, and then continued confined for those further two years.
4. In this letter Paul makes no mention of the collection for the poor in Judea which was so important at earlier stages in his work. When he was in Caesarea those gifts had already been delivered in Jerusalem, and so in Philippians he could write of 'gifts' without alluding to this collection.

There is some strength in these arguments. Over against them it must be said that in Caesarea Paul was not facing the immediate possibility of execution, but a journey to Rome to stand on trial before the emperor, because of his 'appeal to Caesar' (Ac 25:11). The alternatives of death and release of which he writes specifically in 1:20-24—and in the case of the latter the hope of a visit to Philippi (see 2:24)—were not really alternatives before him during this time in prison in Caesarea.

If we accept the probability of an imprisonment in *Ephesus*, we could recognize the strength of the following arguments for that being the place of the writing of Philippians:

1. The letter indicates at least four journeys between Philippi and the place of Paul's imprisonment: the first took news of his situation, then Epaphroditus came to Paul from Philippi, a message went back to Philippi to tell of Epaphroditus' illness, and subsequently news was received of the Philippians' concern for him (2:25-30). The journey from Philippi to Ephesus would have taken some seven to ten days, and so it would not have been difficult for all those journeys to have been made.

2. Ac 19:22 tells us that Timothy was sent from Ephesus to Macedonia, and this would fit in with Phl 2:19-22.

3. From the passages mentioned above as arguing for Paul's imprisonment in Ephesus, it would seem that he did indeed face the threat of death there (cf. Phl 1:20-23). It is, however, questionable whether Paul would have faced a long imprisonment in Ephesus, and imprisonment of the time needed for such situations to develop as are described in 1:12-18.

4. When Paul was in Ephesus he certainly contemplated, and indeed fulfilled, the hope of travelling to Macedonia and Greece. On the other hand, it is asked whether Paul could have written 2:24 from Rome, as it seems that at that time his eyes were turned westwards and he did not expect to come further east again (see Ac 20:25 and Ro 15:18-29).

5. There are thought to be greater similarities between this letter and Paul's earlier letters rather than his later ones. In particular the problems of the Judaizers that he deals with in Galatians and Romans continued to concern him.

6. It is thought that such passages as 1:30 and 4:15-16 view the first preaching of the gospel in Philippi as much more recent than the eleven or twelve years that would have been involved if Paul was writing from *Rome*.

If the letter was written from Ephesus, its date of writing would have been about AD 54-55. If it was written from Caesarea, it would have been between 57 and 59. While there seem much greater strengths in the arguments for an Ephesian rather than a Caesarean origin of the letter there remain strong arguments to favor the traditional view that the letter was written from *Rome*:

1. In Rome, as long as Paul awaited trial before the emperor, there were the two possibilities that lay before him, acquittal and release, or being condemned to death. These are the two alternatives of which Paul writes in 1:19-26.

2. Although journeys between Rome and Philippi would have taken longer than between Rome and Ephesus, they need not have taken longer than seven or eight weeks each.

3. Although when Paul thought of going to Rome, he had in mind going further west to Spain (Ro 15:23-28), there is evidence to suggest that while in Rome the apostle's thoughts were turned back to the lands east of him where he had labored already, and where the churches that he had founded were in great need of help from him.

4. While there are similarities between Philippians and earlier letters of Paul, there are also conspicuous differences, and even in the time of the letters to Timothy and Titus the church was still in danger of the Judaizers' legalism.

5. Although explanation can be given to the 'praetorium' (1:13) and 'Caesar's household' (4:22) in relation to Ephesus (or even Caesarea), both expressions would more naturally be used in Rome.

6. The absence of any mention in Philippians of the collection for the Jerusalem Christians has been mentioned above as an argument for a Caesarean origin rather than an Ephesian one. It is also a strong argument for Rome, if Caesarea is ruled out, as the place of writing. From 2Co 8:1-5 and 9:1-4 we see the involvement of Macedonian Christians in that whole undertaking, and so silence in relation to it would suggest it was a thing of the past.

If we settle for Rome as the most likely place for the letter to have been written, we should probably date it about AD 62, towards the end of the period of Paul's imprisonment of which Ac 28 speaks. For our understanding of the letter, however, the location is less important than the appreciation of the fact that it was a letter written out of the experience of sustained imprisonment.

The reasons for writing

As we read the letter to the Philippians we realize that there were a number of reasons that prompted Paul's writing:

1. He wanted to acknowledge the gifts that his friends in Philippi had sent to him (4:10,14-18).
2. He wanted to give news of his own situation, and especially to give the assurance that his imprisonment had by no means involved a setback for the gospel (1:12-26). He also wanted to tell them of his plan to send Timothy with further news (2:19-24), though he had the hope that he would be free to come himself.
3. He needed to explain why he was sending Epaphroditus back, when the Philippians had apparently intended that he should remain with Paul and help him in whatever way he could (2:25-30).
4. News had come to him that there was party spirit and potential disunity in the church at Philippi, and the apostle wanted to urge them to live and act and witness in the unity of the Spirit (1:27; 2:1-11; 4:2-3).
5. Paul also realized that there was a danger of the Philippians being influenced in the direction of Jewish legalism, and so he wanted to make it abundantly clear to them that this would be a basic contradiction of the gospel (3:1-11).
6. He seems also to have been aware of the dangers of a wrong idea about reaching perfection (3:12-16), and of the pressures of materialism on the Christians at Philippi (3:18-21).
7. His writing was also an opportunity to encourage Christians to suffer bravely, to live in single-mindedness and to trust their lives to their Lord in all things and under all circumstances (1:27-30; 2:12-18; 3:17-21; 4:4-9).

The theology and themes of the letter

Most of the letter deals with practical issues of Christian living rather than with Christian beliefs as such. As in all Paul's letters, however, what he says as instructions about discipleship is related to things at the heart of the Christian faith, such as the centrality of the cross (3:18), the work of the Spirit (1:19) and the Christian hope (1:6,10; 3:20). There are sections of the letter, however, where strong and clear statements are made about the person of Christ and about the way of salvation in Christ. In 2:5-11 the facts of Jesus being of the very nature of God and yet becoming truly and fully human are unambiguously stated. Paul says that after Christ's stooping to our humanity and going even to death on the cross, 'God exalted him to the highest place' and uses words of that exaltation that are taken from an OT passage that speaks of every knee bowing before God and every tongue acknowledging him (Isa 45:23).

In 3:4-10, as Paul compares his pre-Christian ambitions and the life that he found in Christ, he makes clear that 'righteousness' (being in the right with God) is not possible by one's own acts of obedience to the law or faithfulness in outward observances. It is possible only through Christ, by

a 'righteousness' that is entirely God's gift and grace, and made available by the suffering and death and resurrection of Christ.

In what is said about Christian living there are certain dominant notes in the letter:

1. *Joy.* The noun 'joy' or the verb 'rejoice' are used sixteen times in the letter. Paul speaks of joy in prayer (1:4), joy in the fruit of his work (4:1) and joy in suffering, even facing death (2:17). He rejoices where there is unity and fellowship (2:2), finds joy in the gifts of his friends (4:10) and has joy when he knows that others are preaching Christ (1:18). He encourages his readers to rejoice in their faith and in their relationship with the Lord (1:25; 3:1; 4:4), and in their receiving and welcoming a brother in Christ (2:28-29).

2. *Fellowship and unity.* Paul writes with gratitude for the Philippians' partnership in the gospel from the beginning (1:5), as they shared in God's grace enabling the defense and the confirmation of the gospel (1:7). It was a fellowship 'of giving and receiving' that he had known with the Philippian Christians (4:15). He encourages them to continue 'standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel' (1:27, NRSV). It would make the apostle's joy complete if they were 'like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose' (2:2). He wanted to be sure that the church at Philippi was not allowing its fellowship to be marred by selfishness, pride or party spirit (2:1-4). Where there was disagreement between members, help needed to be given so that the unity and fellowship and witness of the body was not spoilt (4:2-3).

3. *Paul's spiritual ambition.* No letter shows this more vividly. We see the completeness of Paul's commitment to Jesus Christ, and his single-minded desire to know him and make him known. This is shown most clearly in 3:7-14, but alongside that passage we should set Paul's hope and longing expressed in 1:20 that he would never be ashamed, but with courage make sure that Christ would be 'exalted in [his] body, whether by life or by death'. In 4:11, 13 he can speak of his contentment in any circumstances, any deprivations, any difficulties, as long as Christ strengthened him to bear them and Christ was being glorified through them.

How the letter came to be written

Those who examine the NT documents closely ask questions that belong to literary and historical criticism: Is this the genuine work of the one whose name it bears? Was it all written as a letter as it purports to be? In the case of this letter these are fairly academic questions. No serious doubts are felt about Pauline authorship except by a tiny minority of scholars. There are three questions, however, that deserve brief attention.

1. Might 2:6-11 have been an early Christian hymn, taken up and quoted by the apostle as appropriate to his letter? These verses, with the humiliation and exaltation of Christ as their theme, are rhythmic in form, and scholars have arranged them in six stanzas of three lines each. We have highly poetic passages in some of Paul's other letters (like 1Co 13), but these verses read rather like a quotation, deeply relevant to the purpose of the section but not originally composed for it. We have other examples of hymns or credal fragments being used in NT letters (e.g. Ep 4:4-6; 5:14; 1Ti 1:17; 3:16; 6:15-16; 2Ti 2:11-13). This appears to be a similar but longer example of such a quotation. There are words here not used elsewhere by Paul, some are not found anywhere else in the NT. If the hymn were composed by someone other than the apostle himself, this would also account for the incarnation and the work of Christ being described in a somewhat different way from that with which we are familiar from Paul's other writings. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the alternative that Paul himself was the author. We should certainly see 2:6-11 as a hymn in praise of Christ, perhaps by Paul, perhaps by someone else, but if so, taken by the apostle and made his own and appropriate to its context in this letter.

2. In the midst of 3:1 we have a sudden break in subject matter that some have suggested is best explained as an indication of a completely different letter being inserted into the one that we have been reading up to this point. There is certainly a break in the argument, but there are other examples of that kind of thing in Paul's letters. If this were part of another letter set into an earlier one, it is hard to see where the interpolation ends. A more probable explanation would seem to be that whether fresh news came to hand from Philippi, or the apostle's mind was turned to this ever-pressing problem, he saw fit to warn his readers afresh of the menace of those who substituted law for grace as a means of acceptance with God. Having done this, he then moved to the final things that he wanted to say to the Philippians.

3. Some have asked whether 4:10-20 might belong to an earlier letter on the grounds that Paul would hardly have waited so long to acknowledge the gift brought from Philippi by Epaphroditus, and in any case he might have been expected to express this gratitude early on in his letter. There is some strength in this argument, but against it we can say that there may have been an acknowledgment of the gift in an earlier letter, of which we do not have a copy, and here Paul's gratitude is simply repeated. We should also be aware of the sensitivities involved in the way that Paul needed to express appreciation and at the same time to emphasize the fact that he was not dependent on their gifts (see the notes on 4:10-20). Because of these sensitivities we could understand why Paul left this delicate subject to the end of his letter. The probabilities would seem, therefore, to point against interpolation theories about the writing of Philippians.

We have in Philippians, as R. P. Martin puts it, 'a window into Paul's personal and pastoral character', and also 'a case-study of one early Christian congregation with whom Paul cherished fond and enduring relationships' (R. P. Martin, *Philippians*, NCB [Oliphants, 1976], p. ix).

While the letter to the Romans has gripped people's minds down the centuries and enabled them to see the wonder of the gospel of salvation in Christ, this letter to the Philippians has brought inspiration and courage to many facing hardship and persecution for the sake of the gospel, and so has made an incalculable impact on the lives of men and women.

Further reading

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R. P. Martin, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, TNTC (IVP/UK/Eerdmans, 1987).

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G. B. Caird, *Paul's Letters from Prison* (OUP, 1976).

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NBC (New Bible Commentary Introduction to Philippians)

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The Letter to Philippi (HBH):



Source: HBH, Halley's Bible Handbook

Philippians 1:1-2

Introduction

Phl 1:1. The title "servants" is not necessarily demeaning in either a Jewish setting (the prophets had been called "servants of God") or a Greco-Roman one (slaves of the emperor and other high officials wielded far more power than independent free persons). On "overseers" and "deacons," see comment on 1Ti 3:1,8, where these terms also occur together. Some letters opened by naming multiple authors, yet continued as if written only by the first one (e.g., Cicero, *Letters to Friends* 16.11.1).

Phl 1:1 Timothy was one of Paul's most trusted co-workers and messengers (see "Timothy" at Ac 16:1-3). He is listed as co-sender, as he is for five other letters (2 Cor, Col, 1 Thes, 2 Thes, Phlm). • **slaves of Christ Jesus:** As those who belong entirely to Christ, they were completely devoted to his service (see 2:20-21). • **God's holy people** have been made holy in God's sight by Christ's redeeming work (see Ep 1:4,7; 5:25-27; Col 1:22), and they are being sanctified by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in their lives (cp. 4:21). • **Philippi** was a Roman colony in the province of Macedonia. The church in Philippi was the first Christian community in Greece (see Ac 16:11-40). • In the early church, **elders** (or overseers; or bishops) usually provided spiritual leadership, while **deacons** attended to practical matters (see 1Ti 3:1-13). There were no professional pastors or priests as there are today. NLTSDN

[slaves] ^{2tn} Traditionally, “servants” or “bondservants.” Though δούλος (doulos) is normally translated “servant,” the word does not bear the connotation of a free individual serving another. BDAG notes that “‘servant’ for ‘slave’ is largely confined to Biblical transl. and early American times...in normal usage at the present time the two words are carefully distinguished” (BDAG 260 s.v.). The most accurate translation is “bondservant” (sometimes found in the ASV for δούλος), in that it often indicates one who sells himself into slavery to another. But as this is archaic, few today understand its force. NETNTS

sn Undoubtedly the background for the concept of being the Lord's slave or servant is to be found in the Old Testament scriptures. For a Jew this concept did not connote drudgery, but honor and privilege. It was used of national Israel at times (Isa 43:10), but was especially associated with famous OT personalities, including such great men as Moses (Jos 14:7), David (Ps 89:3; cf. 2Sa 7:5,8) and Elijah (2Ki 10:10); all these men were “servants (or slaves) of the Lord.” NETNTS

^{4sn} *The overseers* (or “church leaders,” L&N 53.71) is another term for the same official position of leadership as the “elder.” This is seen in the interchange of the two terms in Tit 1:6-7 and in Ac 20:17,28, as well as in the parallels between Tit 1:6-7 and 1Ti 3:1-7. NETNTS

Phil 1: 1 This is really Paul's letter and from v 3 the first person singular is used, but the apostle graciously links Timothy's name with his (as in 2 Corinthians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon). Timothy had been with Paul when he first preached the gospel in Philippi, and he had continued to have a close association with the Philippian Christians (see on 2:19-23). Both are *servants of Christ Jesus*—the word is literally ‘slaves’, as they reckoned themselves to belong, body, mind and spirit, to Christ and wanted to be subject to him in everything. The recipients are called saints, which means those set apart for God and called to live in holiness (cf. Ro 1:7), and that life was *in Christ Jesus*. This phrase, or its equivalent, appears many times in this letter, indicating that Christ is the very environment of the Christian's life. Believers live and move within the orbit of his will, his grace, his presence. We find life united by faith to him, and we cannot live as we should apart from him (cf. Jn 15:1-11). Paul stresses that he is writing to all the Christians at Philippi, and this repeated emphasis (see 1:4,7-8,25; 2:17,26; 4:21) suggests that there was the danger of factions among them (cf. 2:1-4). He mentions, in particular, their *overseers and deacons*, perhaps because they were in danger of being slighted (cf. 1Th 5:12-13), or perhaps because they had organized the gifts for Paul (4:14-18). Overseers (or ‘bishops’) and ‘elders’ are names used sometimes in the NT for the same people (see Ac 20:17,28 and Tit 1:5-7); eldership was their place in the community, oversight their responsibility. *Deacons* are not often spoken of (see 1Ti 3:8,12-13), although the term diakonos in the Greek is often used more generally for a ‘minister’ or ‘servant’. Possibly the work of deacons is to be traced back to Ac 6:2, where the seven were appointed to ‘serve’ (Gk. *diakonein*) in a way like the later deacons.

Phil 1:2. Paul here Christianizes a customary ancient greeting form (see comment on Ro 1:7).

Philippians 1:3-11

Thanks to God for the Philipians

Thanksgivings were common in ancient letters; Paul is particularly fond of them, omitting them in congregational letters only to the Galatians, and there for obvious reasons.

Phl 1:3-4. Jewish language sometimes connects prayers with "memorials" or "rememberings" before God (as in Ro 1:9); here Paul may mean that he thanks God during his regular prayers for the Philippians (cf. Phl 4:6). Letter writers often remarked that they had joy when thinking of or hearing about the recipient.

Phl 1:5. The term translated "participation" (NASB) or "partnership" (NIV) was often used in an economic sense for those who "share" (cf. NRSV) monetarily. Here it includes the financial help the Philippians have given (4:10-20).

⁷**sn** Your participation [partnership, contribution, fellowship in some versions] (Grk "fellowship") could refer to Paul rejoicing because of the Philippian converts' "fellowship" in the gospel along with him, but it is more likely that this refers to their active "participation" with him in the gospel by means of the financial support they sent to Paul on more than one occasion, discussed later in this letter (4:10-19, esp. 4:15-16).

[The word translated (in the WEB) "partnership" (*koinonia*) also means "fellowship" and "sharing."] WEB

Phl 1:6. "Day of Christ Jesus" adapts Old Testament language for the "day of the Lord," and so assumes that Christ is divine. Writers or speakers of exhortations or requests often expressed confidence that the recipient would do well; Paul's confidence in their perseverance is based on 1:5,7.

Phl 1:7. Letters of friendship often mentioned sharing one another's feelings (including sorrows). Given his imprisonment and legal situation, Paul also naturally uses language common in legal proceedings: the "defense" and "confirmation," or vindication, acquittal. His situation was relevant to their own (see comment on Phl 1:19). People often abandoned their friends if the latter were imprisoned or otherwise shamed, but loyalty was respected.

Phl 1:8. Letters of friendship often displayed affection and mentioned the writer's longing for his friends. Ancients commonly called on a deity as a witness, assuming the deity's knowledge; to lie under such conditions was to invite the deity's wrath.

Phl 1:9-11. As Paul does here, philosophers also stressed the need to discern what was good from what was bad. On the source of "righteousness" (v. 11), see also comment on 3:9.

Philippians 1:12-26 The Profit in Hardship

Greek philosophers typically declared that neither imprisonment nor death mattered; only one's attitude did. Paul partly agrees with this view but for very different reasons: God's sovereign use of hardship for his glory (1:12-14, a Jewish and Old Testament relief) and the superiority of undistracted devotion to Jesus (1:21,23). Letters often filled in readers on recent news; public documents and speeches usually included a narrative component leading up to the circumstances of writing.

Phl 1:12. Stoic philosophers argued that imprisonment, like death, was not a bad thing; Jewish faith recognized that God was sovereign even in sufferings (cf., e.g., Joseph's imprisonment).

Phl 1:13. Some commentators have suggested that "palace" or "praetorium" here may refer to a provincial governor's residence, such as the place of Paul's detention in Caesarea (Ac 23:35); Paul was often detained (2Co 11:23), and a detention in Asia or in Syria-Palestine would clarify the presence of so many helpers in Col 4:10-15. Others, taking "Caesar's household" (4:22) literally, think that "praetorium" here refers to detention in Rome by the "praetorian guard" (NASB), as in Ac 28:16; the centrality of Rome in the empire attracted many people, which could account for the presence of the ministers in Col 4:10-15. No army was allowed in Italy, but the Praetorian Guard consisted of several thousand free Italian soldiers in twelve cohorts of as many as a thousand each. They were the emperor's elite bodyguard

under the praetorian prefect. Viewed as clients of the emperor (thus part of his extended household), they were kept loyal with the highest pay in the Roman military; they were also kept loyal by the leadership of a prefect who could never legally become emperor (being a knight rather than a senator).

Phl 1:14-17. Despite the disapproval of some philosophers, competition for honor was a central value for men in much of society, including, conspicuously, Rome and its colonies. Jewish teachers allowed that serving God from impure motives was better than not serving him at all. They also unequivocally insisted, however, that those who used the law only for their own gain would not share in the world to come. Ancient writers and speakers sometimes outlined alternatives (1:15) before elaborating them (1:16-17).

Phl 1:18. "What then?" was a common phrase for furthering an argument or transitioning to a conclusion. One could repeat a word or phrase for emphasis (thus here Paul's rejoicing, though he varies the verb tense and voice; ancient hearers also appreciated variation).

Phl 1:19. "This will turn out for my deliverance" precisely echoes Job 13:16 in the Septuagint, although Paul, unlike Job, sees God as his defender here. "Salvation" (KJV) often meant physical "deliverance," sometimes from prison, and in this context it must have this meaning. Not all residents of Philippi were citizens, but those who were Philippian citizens (who would often be the most prominent members of the church) were also Roman citizens (see comment on 3:20) and as such enjoyed certain legal protections. Paul's fate in court as a Christian who was also a Roman citizen would set a legal precedent that could affect their own legal standing, so they would have more than one reason for concern about how his case turned out.

Phl 1:20-23. Ancient speakers sometimes contemplated their options in front of their audiences (though the choice here is not really Paul's). Philosophers often argued that death was neutral, not evil; it was either annihilation or the migration of the soul from one place to another. They contended that it could be either advantageous or not, and that one could choose accordingly. Paul sees death as an evil (1Co 15:26) and not something to be chosen, but also, when it comes in God's plan, as a way to pursue Christ undistracted (2Co 5:4-10). Most Judeans emphasized the future resurrection of the bodies of the righteous but believed that the souls of the righteous dead were meanwhile in heaven with God; Paul agrees with them. Many Greco-Roman writers expressed a desire to die and so be free from sufferings; Old Testament writers did not usually take this position (Ps 30:9), but some became discouraged enough to express this sentiment (1Ki 19:4), or even to wish that they had never lived (Job 3:1-19; Je 15:10; 20:14-18).

Phl 1:24. Ancient thinkers sometimes argued that one should use reason to determine whether it was more profitable to die or to continue to endure suffering for the good one could accomplish (e.g., Cicero, *Letters to His Brother Quintus* 1.3.1-2; Pliny, *Epistles* 1.22.9-10). Although Paul's death, if it happened, would not be voluntary, he reasons nonetheless; his remaining would help them by virtue of his continuance as a teacher, and perhaps also for legal precedent: see comment on 1:19. Speakers commonly cited "necessity" as a reason for a choice; a writer who affirmed that he clung to life for another's sake (Phl 1:24) thereby also demonstrated love for them (e.g., Seneca, *Epistle to Lucilius* 104.2-3; Fronto, *Ad M. Caesarem* 5.33/48).

Phl 1:25-26. "Progress" was commonly used for educational or moral advancement. (Although Stoics viewed people as either perfect or not, according to ideal types, on the practical level even they emphasized "progress" toward virtue.) Nero was not particularly interested in legal questions, and in A.D. 62 he freed Jewish prisoners that the procurator Felix had previously sent him (Josephus, *Life* 16). Paul was likely released at this time (see comment on Ac 28:30-31).

Philippians 1:27-30 Endure in Hope

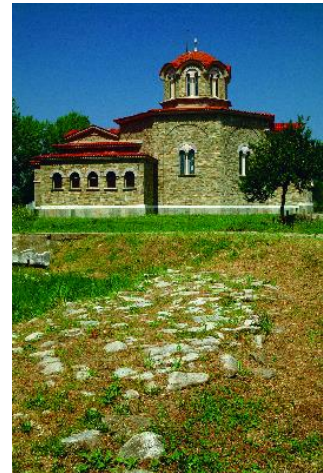
Phil 1:27. "Conduct yourselves" uses Greek terminology sometimes applied to a citizen in a free state (cf. 3:20), language that Jewish writers used to describe their people obeying God's law was in Ac 23:1; 2Ma 6:1; 3 Maccabees 3:4 ; 4 Maccabees 2:8; 5:16). On the athletic image (here undoubtedly implied in the Greek word that KJV and NASB translate "striving together"), see comment on 1:30. Exhortations to unity commonly included calls to be "of one mind" or the like.

Phil 1:27 Paul may come back again to Philippi or he may not. What matters, he stresses, is that they live *in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ*. In all ages—and not least today—the greatest hindrance to the advance of the gospel has been the inconsistency of Christians. The gospel has its greatest influence when the lives of Christians commend it, and that gives us our special responsibility. The Greek word translated *conduct yourselves* is the one from which our word 'politics' comes and the word often conveys the idea of fulfilling one's duty as citizen. In Philippi, as we have noted, Roman citizenship was prized, but the Philippian Christians had the responsibility to live individually and corporately as heavenly citizens (cf. 3:20). Paul often speaks of the need to stand firm in the face of opposition and difficulty (cf. 1Co 16:13; Ga 5:1; Ep 6:11-14; 1Th 3:8; 2Th 2:15).

Phil 1:28. The confidence that Paul suggests here alludes to the Old Testament and Jewish hope that God would destroy his people's enemies in the end time but vindicate and save his people. Cf. Wis 5:1-2; Bar 4:24-25.

Phil 1:29. Although Jewish people sought to avoid persecution when possible, they extolled the martyrs who preferred death to disobeying God. (One could perhaps distinguish public attitudes, such as praise for past heroes, from personal attitudes, such as the price individuals paid in daily life for their convictions. In the case of Paul, however, he was daily confronted with the personal choice and in his own life modeled commitment to the point of martyrdom.) Paul regards suffering for Christ as a privilege (cf. similarly Ac 5:41). The idea of sufferings indicating the nearness of the end (as in Jewish thought) might also be present here.

Phil 1:30. Although the term had also developed a more generic use, Paul probably applies the language of ancient athletic competitions ("contest" or "conflict"—KJV, NASB) to the life of the moral person, as do many Greek moralists. Here the issue is persecution; on the Philippians' sharing in Paul's fate, see comment on 1:19.



The Via Egnatia once passed near the modern Church of Lydia near the ruins of Philippi. Paul used the Via Egnatia (Egnatian Way) as he traveled through Philippi on his way to Thessalonica.

Philippians 2:1-11 Be Servants Like Christ

Paul continues his exhortation of 1:27-30, advocating unity (1:27) and fearlessness in the face of martyrdom's reward (1:28; 2:9-11; cf. 3:20-21). Ancient moral writers often adduced examples to prove their points, and Paul here adduces Jesus (2:5-11), himself (2:17-18), Timothy (2:19-24) and Epaphroditus (2:25-30). Correspondences between 2:6-11 and 3:20-21 indicate the extent to which Paul

uses Christ as a model for believers here. (The majority of scholars accept Phl 2:6-11 as a pre-Pauline hymn, based on the structure and language of the passage. Others point out that Paul could be responsible for the hymnic features himself. Greek authors peppered their writings with quotations from Greek poetry, and Paul's use of an earlier Christian hymn is possible, although it cannot be regarded as proven. Despite its rhetorical patterns, the material need not be a hymn per se; ancient writers and speakers often used exalted prose, sometimes even with rhythm, to describe deities.)

Phl 2:1-4. Competition for honor was heavy in Roman society, a behavior if anything more pronounced in Philippi. Paul borrows language commonly used in Greek *homonoia* speeches, which advocated harmony and unity among the hearers. Most philosophers advocated preferring the larger good to one's own. Jewish teachers also had maxims such as, "Value your fellow's honor no less than your own" (cf. Mishnah *Avot* 2:10; *Avot of Rabbi Nathan* 15, 19 A; 29, §60B). One could urge a person to act on the basis of affection, e.g., sometimes for the exhorter (Fronto, *Ad M. Caesarem* 5.1: "If you have any love at all for me . . .").

Phl 2:5-6. Some intellectuals urged being of "one mind" with the gods, having the correct, divine perspective. Some scholars suggest that Christ's being in the "form of God" alludes to Adam being formed in God's image (Ge 1:26). Unlike Adam, who being human sought divinity (Ge 3:5), Jesus, being deity, relinquished his rightful position of honor. Also and probably even more to the point here is that Jewish texts described divine Wisdom as the perfect, archetypal image of God ("form" may mean "role" more than "image" here; cf. 2:7b, "form of a servant," although this phrase parallels "likeness" in 2:7c; cf. comment on Col 1:15). (One might contrast Jesus' voluntary surrender of status with the emperor during Paul's time, Nero, who aspired to divinity.)

Phl 2:7. The "servant" of Isa 53 also was "poured out" or "emptied himself," though not in incarnation but in death (Isa 53:12; cf. Phl 2:8). (Paul uses a more specific Greek word for "slave" [so NRSV] here than appears for the servant in the LXX of Isa 53; elsewhere, however, cf. Isa 49:5, 7.)

Phl 2:8. Judaism prized obedience to the point of death in stories about its martyrs. Crucifixion was the most degrading form of execution, reserved for non-Roman criminals who were slaves or free persons of the lowest status. Writers and speakers sometimes repeated a word (here "death") to reinforce the point.

Phl 2:9. Some commentators have seen in the language of this verse an allusion to the exaltation of Isa 52:13. If, as is likely, that verse refers to suffering more than glory (Isa 52:14-53:11), Paul either does not refer to it here (the term in Isaiah is very common in the Septuagint) or *contrasts* the exaltation accomplished by God with the suffering Jesus experienced among people.

Phl 2:10-11. Isa 45:23 ("every knee will bow . . . every tongue will declare") refers to the final submission of all nations to God; that Paul applies the text to Jesus (especially with an Old Testament divine title, "Lord," in v. 11) is telling. Those "in heaven" would include the angels, probably including the rebellious angels who rule the Gentile nations (see comment on Ep 1:21-23). Greeks worshiped gods in the heavens, earth, sea and underworld; traditional Greek mythology also placed the shadowy existence of departed souls in the underworld. Paul announces that whatever categories of beings there are, they must acknowledge Christ's rule, because he is exalted above them. One often bowed the knee in obeisance before a ruler or deity.

Phl 2:10-11 The entire creation, including spiritual powers and angels, humans on earth, and those who have died, will one day acknowledge the authority of **Jesus Christ** as **Lord** (see Ep 1:9-10,21; Col 1:20-25; 1Pe 3:22). • **every tongue confess** (cp. Isa 45:23; Ro 14:11): This does not imply universal salvation, because not all will confess him as Lord freely out of love and devotion. • **Lord**, a divine title representing the OT name Yahweh, is frequently applied to Jesus in the NT. NLTSBN

Philippians 2:12-16**Live Right**

Paul here continues his exhortation to the believers to live in unity (2:1-11).

Phl 2:12-13. Letters were often used as proxies for one's presence; Paul thus entreats the Philippians through the letter to obey his teaching as if he were present. They secure their ultimate "salvation" by persevering together (see 1:27-28). The reward of this obedience is implied by the parallel with Jesus' obedience in 2:8-9. The teaching that they are enabled to obey by God's power is at best rare in pre-Christian literature outside Old Testament teachings on the Spirit, see comment on Ga 2:19-20. "Fear and trembling" appear together often in the Old Testament and Jewish sources (cf., e.g., Ps 55:5; 4 Maccabees 4:10; 1 Enoch 14:13).

Phl 2:14. "Grumbling" and "disputing" (NASB) had characterized Israel in the wilderness and were condemned in the Old Testament; philosophers who emphasized the wisdom of the gods did not approve either. See comment on 1Co 10:9-10.

Phl 2:15. "Crooked and perverted generation" closely echoes Dt 32:5, which complains that rebellious Israelites are not God's children; here, by contrast, believers are God's children. Jewish tradition often compared the righteous with "lights" in a dark world; cf. especially Da 12:3 (the term Paul uses here was especially applied to heavenly bodies, reflecting an image like the one Daniel uses).

Phl 2:16. The "day of Christ" is modeled after the Old Testament "day of the Lord" (see comment on 1:6). The expression "labor in vain" was not uncommon; on athletic metaphors, see comment on Phl 1:30; 3:12-14.

Philippians 2:17-24**The Examples of Paul and Timothy**

Paul continues to model the servant lifestyle by examples.

Phl 2:17-18. Israel had drink offerings (e.g., Lev 23:18,37), and other ancient religions also regularly poured out libations to the gods, usually wine but sometimes water or another substance. Gentiles also poured libations at the beginning of banquets and could pour them in memory of person who had died. Paul is being poured out (cf. 2:7) as such a "drink offering" to the true God, a willing offering on their behalf that joined their own sacrifice.

Phl 2:19. Travelers regularly carried news and letters.

Phl 2:20-21. Both Greek philosophers and Old Testament prophets complained about the scarcity of those fully devoted to the cause. Paul offers many "letters [or passages] of recommendation," a common ancient form of writing (see comment on Ro 16:1-2), but he places Timothy, his special emissary, in a category by himself, offering the highest commendation. Those writing letters of recommendation often offered such superlative praises (occasionally for more than one person). Thus Cicero can claim, "There is no one like him" (e.g., *Letters to Friends* 13.1.5; 13.18.2; 13.26.1); or "This is the most special recommendation" (*Letters to Friends* 13.32.2; 13.34.1; 13.35.1).

Phl 2:22. Messengers were often sent as personal representatives, to be received with the same honor accorded the sender (e.g., 2Sa 19:37-38). Teachers and disciples often developed an intimate relationship described in terms of "father" and "son."

Phl 2:23. News was difficult to send, because it had to be carried by an available traveler and otherwise by a messenger—a sometimes dangerous undertaking given travel conditions at various times of the year (cf. 2:30). Paul report of the outcome of his trial.

Phl 2:24. Letters were used as surrogates for one's presence but also often announced one's coming.

Philippians 2:25-30

Epaphroditus's Sacrificial Service

People often wrote letters of recommendation, often supporting the carrier; Paul includes this recommendation in his larger letter. Epaphroditus had been the Philippians' messenger, bringing their gift to Paul in prison (4:18); he no doubt carried Paul's letter back to them. Travel conditions were dangerous and harsh, especially at sea in late fall and early spring, and these conditions decreased one's resistance to antiquity's many diseases (vv. 26-27). Because "Epaphroditus" is a common name, no firm conclusions about his ethnic origin may be drawn from it, but the context suggests that he was from Philippi. Soldier metaphors (2:25) appear elsewhere, and military images were common (see comment on Ro 13:12).

People often reported on theirs or others' health in personal letters, as well as expressing concern for others' health. We cannot know the cause of Epaphroditus's ill health, but malaria, for example, was very common, and typhoid existed. Gentiles prayed to their gods for healing (especially certain deities associated with healing, most notably Asclepius); Jewish people prayed to and praised the true God as the healer of body as well as the forgiver of sin. Jewish prayers for healing were sometimes described as prayers for "mercy." "Risked" (in "risked his life," v. 30) was often used as a gambling term, and some scholars have noted that gamblers invoked Venus, goddess of gambling, with the term *epaphroditus*; on this view Paul could be making a wordplay on his friend's name. Although God usually healed those in the Bible who prayed to him, his activity could not be taken for granted; even some of his most faithful servants had died from sickness (2Ki 13:14; cf. 1Ki 1:1; 14:4).

Philippians 3:1-16

Righteousness Not from Human Works

The section from 3:1-4:1 is a digression. Some scholars have suggested that it was a different Pauline letter accidentally inserted into the middle of Philippians (though in papyri such accidents must have been extremely uncommon), or one combined with several other Pauline letters to the Philippians. But digressions were common in ancient speaking and writing, and literary connections with the rest of the letter strengthen the suggestion that it is part of a unified letter.

Philippians Righteousness Not from 3:1. The expression often translated "finally" here sometimes indicated the end of a letter (cf. GNT: "in conclusion"), but just as often functioned as a transition device within a letter (cf. 1Th 4:1; 2Th 3:1; cf. *Testament of Reuben* 5:5). (Less relevantly, "ending" twice also could fit the casual nature of some letters; cf., e.g., apparent plans to end in Pliny, *Epistles* 3.9.26-27, 37; Seneca, *Epistle to Lucilius* 119.9, 16.) One might also say again a point that bore repeating (and even say so, e.g., Cicero, *On Friendship* 22.85). Reminders were common in moral exhortation.

Phl 3:1 *my dear brothers and sisters*: Literally brothers; also in 3:13,17. See note on 1:12. • rejoice in the Lord: This theme is resumed in 4:4 (see also 1:18; 2:17-18,28; 4:10). • The phrase ***these things*** (literally the same things) is ambiguous: it may refer to (1) the immediately preceding encouragement to ***rejoice in the Lord***; (2) the earlier encouragement to follow Christ's example (2:1-18); (3) Paul's exhortation in general; or (4) the following warning about threats to their faith.

Phl 3:2. The threefold repetition of "beware" is rhetorical *anaphora*, opening repetition to highlight a point. The opponents here are not Jewish persecutors, who would be unlikely in Philippi, which apparently had a very small Jewish community (cf. Ac 16:13). Rather, they are like the traveling Jewish Christian

teachers Paul had encountered in Galatia who want to circumcise Gentiles. Scholars debate whether they have already visited Philippi or are simply traveling about; if the latter, Paul is warning that they may come there.

"Dog" was a familiar insult, sometimes implying dogs' vulgar public sexual, excretory or (cf. 3:8,19) dietary habits. Cynic philosophers were regularly called "dogs," but given the specific error Paul refutes in this passage, he clearly does not use it as a reference to these philosophers; that use merely illustrates to what a great extent the term was one of disdain. Philosophers called those ruled by passions "beasts." Probably more to the point, Jewish teaching considered dogs unclean and sometimes sexually immoral; the Old Testament might apply the title to male cult prostitutes (Dt 23:17); especially to enemies in Ps 22:16. Such a title would certainly make the pietists who were demanding circumcision recoil. There were "beware of dog" signs even in ancient Rome, where they were pets and watchdogs (Petronius, *Satyricon* 29), no doubt reinforcing the biting sarcasm of Paul's phrase. Here Paul uses another word for "circumcision" (NASB), which means "mutilation" (NIV, NRSV; cf. the LXX of 1Ki 18:28); see comment on Ga 5:12 for the cultural significance of this idea. Plays on words were common; cf. mutilation (*katatome*) here and circumcision (*peritome*) in 3:3.

Phl 3:3. Paul says that spiritual circumcision (Dt 10:16; 30:6; cf. Lev 26:41; Je 4:4; 9:25-26) is what really matters to God. Because ancient Judaism usually associated the Spirit with prophecy, "worship in the Spirit" (NASB, NRSV) may refer to charismatic worship of the sort depicted in 1Ch 25:1-6; because most Jewish people believed that the Spirit was no longer available in that fullness in their own time, Paul lays claim to an experience for the church that confirms the Messiah's arrival and that most of his Jewish contemporaries (possibly excepting other "fringe" groups such as the Qumran sectarians) would not pretend to match.

Phl 3:4. Lists of virtues or vices were common in epideictic (praise and blame) speeches, and in narrative form they characterized epideictic biographies. Self-commendation was considered appropriate if one were defending oneself or using oneself as a legitimate model for others. By claiming to have greater merit than his opponents even on their own terms, he turns this self-commendation into an occasion to undermine them; professional speakers and writers often used the standard rhetorical technique of "comparison" to accomplish this end.

Phl 3:5. Gentile lists of praises (cf. Menander Rhetor 2.3, 385.5-9) could begin with nature and nurture (cf. Phl 3:5) and proceed to accomplishments and actions, the latter including the four cardinal virtues (which included justice; cf. 3:6). Gentile lists of a person's virtues typically included items such as noble birth or beauty as well as character traits like prudence or steadfastness. Those born Jewish males were circumcised the eighth day; by this virtue Paul eliminates any competition from proselytes converted by his opponents later in life—in practice proselytes had lower social status in Judaism than those born Jewish. "Hebrew of Hebrews" could indicate a Palestinian Jewish origin, although this is not clear; however, that Paul lived in Judea before his conversion is clear from the fact that he was a Pharisee (in Acts, cf. comment on 22:3). Although Pharisaic piety was known elsewhere, Pharisees themselves seem to have lived only in Palestine and been concentrated around Jerusalem. They were noted for being the most meticulous observers of the law—something Paul's opponents now claimed to be.

Phl 3:6. "Zeal" for the law did not always or necessarily include violence, but the chief models for such zeal included Phinehas (Nu 25:7-13) and especially the Maccabees, and Jewish patriots called themselves "Zealots" in the war against Rome not long after Paul wrote these words. By defining his legalistic righteousness in terms of his persecution of Christians, Paul associates his opponents' position of "zeal" for the law with opposition to the Philippian Christians' faith.

Phl 3:7. Appealing to the Christian faith shared by himself, his readers and (according to themselves) even his opponents, Paul dispenses with his worldly credentials—and thus the only credentials to which his opponents could lay claim at all; see comment on 2Co 11:16-18. "Gain" (or "gains"—NIV; or "profit"—

GNT) and "loss" are marketplace terms, like other terms later in the letter (4:10-20); Paul had to sacrifice all his former spiritual assets to follow Christ, who was what really mattered.

Phl 3:8. "Dung" (KJV) or "rubbish" (ESV, NASB, NRSV; "garbage"—NIV) usually meant either excrement or food to be thrown away, which dogs might enjoy (3:2). (Ancient speakers valued skill in producing insolent insults.)

Phl 3:9. As in 3:6, the problem is not the law but that the righteousness is Paul's own, hence inadequate. Both biblical psalmists and later Jewish ones whose hymns appear in the Dead Sea Scrolls waited on God for their vindication or acquittal, and Paul likewise had to receive his justification, or righteousness, from God alone, but Paul understands that this is found in Christ.

Phl 3:9 Paul here summarizes the contrast between his understanding of salvation and that of his opponents (3:2). • Believers **become one with** Christ by trusting him for salvation and sharing his life (cp. Jn 15:1-5). • We become righteous, not by observing the law of Moses, but **through faith in Christ** (or through the faithfulness of Christ). This is **God's way of making us right with himself**: Salvation cannot be earned, but only received as a free gift (see Ro 1:17; 3:21-26; 4:5-8; Ga 2:16; Ep 2:8-9). NLT SBN

Phl 3:10. The ultimate revelation in the Old Testament was to "know" God (Ex 33:13), a relationship available to all the people of the new covenant (Je 31:34). This language reflects both the covenant relationship (on the corporate level) and intimate fellowship with God (on the personal level experienced by the prophets). But Paul also connects knowing Christ with sharing his sufferings and glory. On the imitation of God, see comment on Ep 5:1.

Phl 3:11. The ultimate sharing of Christ's resurrection occurs at the future resurrection of the righteous (in which most Jews believed). Many Jewish people believed that a period of sufferings would precede the resurrection, and this seems to be Paul's view as well (clear in Ro 8:18-22), though Paul speaks here of his own sufferings (Phl 3:10-11).

Phl 3:12-13. In the language of athletic competition—often used metaphorically by ancient moralists (e.g., Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.17.29; Diogenes Laertius 6.2.34) and Greek-speaking Jews (e.g., *Testament of Job* 4:10; Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.217-18)—Paul describes his striving for the future hope of 3:11. Greco-Roman sages generally admitted that they were not yet "perfect" (in contrast to the *ideal* sage) but were making progress. Nevertheless they sometimes spoke of themselves as the "mature," the wise, as opposed to those who were still novices. (Older commentators note that the mystery cults described the highest stage of initiation as "perfection" or "completion," but this is probably less relevant here than the language of sages.) "What is behind" (NIV) belongs to Paul's image of the race; to win, one must keep one's eyes on the finish line; Greek runners often ran in a straight line and back.

Phl 3:14. At the end of each race, officials had their heralds proclaim the winner and call him up to receive his prize (in the Olympic games, a palm branch). ("Above" or "upward" also alludes to Christ in heaven, 3:20; cf. Col 3:1-2.) In Paul's metaphor, the prize is the full revelation of Christ at the resurrection (3:10-11).

Phl 3:15. In philosophy, those who were advanced in learning, as opposed to novice students, could be described as "mature" (NIV, NRSV; "perfect"—KJV, NASB). (This was, however, mostly "in principle"; Stoics depicted the ideal so starkly that even sages did not claim to have attained it themselves.)

Phl 3:16. Although not looking back to one's past (3:13) and not yet complete (3:11-12), they were to maintain what they had already achieved. "Live" here can mean "walk" (KJV) or "keep to a straight line"; possibly here Paul adapts his race metaphor from 3:12-14 (races were often in straight lines and back), although this is by no means certain.

Philippians 3:17-4:1**Judgment and Salvation**

Teachers like Paul would make it to the resurrection of the righteous by staking their righteousness on nothing but Christ (3:9-11); his opponents, however, like dogs interested in dung (3:2,8), were headed for destruction, as were those who followed them (3:18-19).

Phl 3:17. Disciples often learned by imitating their teachers; examples were important for learning. (Paul had given four examples, using himself for one, in chapter 2, and again used himself in 3:4-14.)

Phl 3:18. Displays of emotion were considered appropriate in public speaking, both expressions of outrage (3:2) and "weeping," which often invited audiences to feel the same. Letter writers could also mention their tears (e.g., Cicero, *Letters to His Brother Quintus* 1.3.3; Pliny, *Epistles* 5.21.6). "With tears" (NIV, NRSV, GNT) or "weeping" (KJV, NASB) indicates his love for his opponents.

Phl 3:18 The identity of the *enemies* is not known; they might have been (1) Jews or Jewish Christians proud of their circumcision (as in 3:2), whose emphasis on observant Judaism contradicted the *cross of Christ*; (2) pseudo-believers living a worldly, immoral life (cp. 3:19); or (3) professing believers who have rejected Paul's cross-centered view of the Good News. Christ's crucifixion as a criminal was scandalous and offensive to many (see 1Co 1:23; cp. Ro 9:33; 1Pe 2:8). NLTSBN

Phl 3:19. Greco-Roman philosophers and non-Palestinian Jewish writers (especially Philo) repeatedly railed against those ruled by their passions, often remarking that they were ruled by their "belly" (KJV, NRSV) or their (sexual or culinary) "appetite" (NASB), disdaining their neglect of eternal things. Gluttony especially became part of Roman culture, and its practice by the aristocracy was a frequent butt of satirists' humor. But being ruled by one's "belly" meant more than gluttony; it was used to mean any fleshly indulgence (cf. "bodily desires"—GNT). This would be a serious insult to those who thought they were zealous for the law (Diaspora Jews emphasized how the law enabled them to master passions); but Paul had already "shamed" their "glory" by his own example in 3:4-8.

Phl 3:20. Citizens of Philippi, a Roman colony, were automatically citizens of Rome, sharing all the rights and privileges of Roman citizens even though most of them had never been there. (Not everyone who lived in Philippi was a full citizen of Philippi, but the citizenship held by some of the church, especially owners of many or most of the homes in which it met, would raise the status of the whole movement there.) Paul's readers in Philippi therefore understand quite well what it means to be citizens of the supreme city while not yet living there. Philosophers sometimes declared themselves citizens of the world rather than any mere city-state. Citizenship in heaven was more important than descent from a tribe in Israel (3:5). ("Citizenship" is not "conversation," as in the KJV.)

Many deities in Philippi were called "Saviors," as was the emperor; although this title for Jesus derives from Old Testament language for God (e.g., Isa 45:21), it provides a stark contrast with the paganism Christians outside greater Judea had to confront daily.

Phl 3:21. Paul's view of the resurrection is that it involves the body, but one distinct in nature from the current body (Greek culture considered the idea of a bodily resurrection vulgar superstition, but many Jews valued the whole person; see comment on 1Co 15). Many Jewish conceptions of the resurrection body differed from the current body (cf. Da 12:2-3). As in Judaism, the resurrection occurs at the time of the ultimate battle, when God subordinates all his enemies (cf. also 1Co 15:25-28).

Phl 4:1. Letters often expressed longing to see the recipient in person. That the Philippians are Paul's "crown" indicates that they are in some sense his prize (potentially fitting his recent athletic metaphor; cf. 3:14; 1Th 2:19 and comment on 1Co 9:24-25). They must stand firm against Paul's opponents and persevere if Paul is to receive the reward he seeks for his labor for them—their salvation. There were different sorts of crowns. Heroes could be rewarded with public crowns, but the term applied especially to athletes' wreaths; Judaism also used the image for rewards at the end time.

Philippians 4:2-9 Work Together

Moral writers often strung together short, unrelated statements of moral advice. Paul similarly lists several admonitions in 4:4-9 here, although a common theme runs among them.

Phl 4:2. "Euodia" and "Syntyche" are Greek names; because Philippi was a Roman colony, their Greek names might indicate that they are foreign merchants like Lydia (Ac 16:14; see comment on Ac 16:21), although this is only a surmise (some commentators suggest that one of them *is* Lydia). Their prominence as Paul's coworkers may have been more acceptable at Philippi than it would have been in some other parts of the empire. Macedonian and Roman women had more freedoms than women in more traditionally Greek areas, and inscriptions indicate heavy involvement of women in the religious activities of this city.

Phl 4:3. Ancients appreciated mediators who could reconcile estranged parties (see, e.g., Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 1.3; also 1.5; 1.10; Tacitus, *Histories* 2.5). Clement may be the author of *1 Clement*, a late-first-century Christian letter from Rome to Corinth, as tradition suggests, although Clement is a common Roman name. The "book of life" is an Old Testament image further developed in ancient Judaism (e.g., Ex 32:32-33; Da 12:1; Mal 3:16; the Essene CD 20.19; *Jubilees* 36:10).

Phl 4:3 my **true partner** or *loyal Syzygus*: The Greek word *suzuge* is either a proper name or a description; this person is unknown. • Nothing more is known of **Clement**. • Those **whose names are written in the Book of Life** are true believers, destined to receive eternal life (see Lk 10:20; Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12,15; 21:27; cp. Ex 32:32; Ps 69:28; Da 12:1).

Phl 4:4. One could repeat a word or phrase for emphasis (see comment on Phl 1:18). Constant rejoicing, like constant gratitude (cf. 4:6), reflects confidence in God (see comment on Ep 5:20).

Phl 4:5. "The Lord is near" could refer to the Second Coming (3:20-21; cf. Isa 13:6; Eze 30:3; Joe 1:15; 3:14; Zep 1:7) or that the Lord is close to his people and hears their cries (see Dt 4:7; Ps 34:18; 145:18).

Phl 4:6-7. "Peace" (v. 7) could indicate tranquility (vs. the anxiety in v. 6), a trait valued by many philosophers, although in the context of unity it may also have its usual meaning of peace with one another (as in Greco-Roman *homonoia* speeches; cf. 4:2). If any connotations of the latter use are present, the image of such peace "standing guard" (if pressed in a military sense) over hearts and minds is striking. Jewish prayers (some based on Nu 6:24-26) often asked God to keep his people from harm and grant peace. On the mind, cf. 4:8 and 2:5.

Phl 4:8. Like many writers, Paul resorts to a full list of virtues, including *arete*, "excellence," which was central to the Greek concept of virtue. Throughout this list he borrows the language of Greek ethics, although nothing he says would have been objectionable to traditional Jewish hearers. (He omits some traditional Greek virtues, like "beauty" and "goodness" per se, but the last omission need not be viewed as significant, because such lists were never intended to be complete.) Greek and Roman philosophers repeatedly emphasized thinking such virtuous thoughts, and Jewish writers repeatedly borrowed their language the same way Paul does to communicate to Greek-speaking Jewish readers.

Phl 4:9. Teachers often exhorted students to live what they had been taught and to follow the example set by the teacher.

Philippians 4:10-20 **Paul's Thank-You Note**

Paul avoids a direct "thank you" in this section (which could portray him as a dependent on the church's benefaction) while expressing his appreciation. Paul acknowledges their gift graciously, without sounding as if he is requesting more. (Gratitude may have been particularly valued in Macedonia, of which Philippi was a part; in earlier times an ungrateful man was said to have been liable to prosecution there— Seneca , *On Benefits* 3.6.2.) In the ancient world, patrons showed hospitality to and looked out for their clients ; if Paul had said "thank you" forthrightly, he might have cast himself in the role of a subordinate, dependent client.

Phl 4:10. Letters of friendship, when responding to a friend's letter, often opened with a statement of joy about receiving that friend's letter (e.g., Oxyrhynchus papyri 1676.4-5). Writers also often assured letters' recipients that the writers trusted the readers' intentions.

Phl 4:11-13. Greek moralists, influenced by Stoic thought, praised those who could be content with little as well as with much. (Cynics went so far as to prove their contentment in little by making certain that was all they ever had.) It was said that the wise man needed no one but himself and was completely independent. But although Paul uses the language of contentment in all circumstances (being able to do "all things," as in 4:13) common among Stoic philosophers and others, the idea of persevering and enduring for God's sake was commonly lived out by the Old Testament prophets, Jewish martyrs and other servants of God.

Paul's "abundance" (NASB) would have been meager and simple by modern standards; artisans were better off than the poor, but far below the standard of living enjoyed by the modern Western middle class or by the well-to-do of antiquity. ("Moderation"—seeking a mean between two extremes—was central to most Greek discussions of virtue, especially in Aristotle; it also appears in Diaspora Jewish ethics. But Paul nowhere seeks such a mean; like the best of Greek philosophers, he can live in any situation. His language is thus closer to the dominant philosophic school of his day [Stoicism] rather than to the Peripatetic [Aristotelian] school. Unlike such philosophers, who depended only on themselves, however, he is "self-sufficient" only by virtue of Christ, who works in him.)

Phl 4:14-16. The language of "sharing" (partnership, 4:14-15) is the language of ancient business documents; it may even suggest a special account from which the Philippians sent Paul help when he was in need. "For my needs" (NASB, NRSV) also occurs in business documents specifying the purposes of a disbursement. The form he uses for the title "Philippians" is normally bad Greek but was what the Roman citizens of Philippi called themselves; it is thus a mark of sensitivity to their local traditions and culture.

Phl 4:17. "Profit" (NASB, NRSV, GNT), "what may be credited to your account" (NIV), is literally "fruit" (KJV), but because many business transactions involved crops this was a natural extension in ancient documents. Paul trusts that God will reward the Philippians with interest for their sacrifice on his behalf.

Phl 4:18. "I have received" was very common, perhaps the most common standard phrase, in receipts; Paul acknowledges their gift in regular business terms. But he also uses Old Testament language for a sacrifice ("sweet-smelling," GNT; "acceptable"; sacrificial language was sometimes applied figuratively); in being partners with this missionary, they are partners with the God who sent him.

Phl 4:18 *Epaphroditus* (see also 2:25-30) carried **the gifts** from Philippi. • Their gifts were a **sweet-smelling sacrifice**: In the OT, acceptable offerings were a pleasant fragrance to God (see Lev 1:9,13,17; 2:2,9; 3:5,16; cp. Ro 12:1; Ep 5:2). NLT SBN

Phl 4:19-20. Verse 19 may be a wish-prayer, as some commentators have suggested (see comment on 1Th 3:11); others take it as a statement. On either reading, the point is much the same: Paul cannot pay back the Philippians, but he trusts that God will. Although ancient writers often used wealth as a metaphor for spiritual riches like wisdom, in this context Paul no doubt means that he trusts that God will reward them for their faithfulness to his work (cf. Dt 15:10; Pr 19:17). "Needs" in the case of most of the Philippian Christians were genuine, basic needs (see 2Co 8:1-2), not mere "wishes" (as some readers take it today). "In glory" (KJV, NASB, NRSV) can be translated "in a glorious way" or "glorious riches."

Philippians 4:10-20 Conclusion

Phl 4:21. Greetings were common in ancient letters. Because Paul knows most of the believers in Philippi, he keeps his greeting general. Letters also commonly included greetings from others (in this case probably believers in Rome), because mail had to be sent via travelers and thus could not be sent frequently.

Phl 4:22-23. The "household of Caesar" could refer to anyone in the Roman civil service directly dependent on Caesar, including all his slaves and freedmen; it always indicated great prestige. It most likely refers here to the Praetorian Guard (see comment on 1:13); if Paul was in Rome at this point, anyone who guarded him (Ac 28:16,30) would naturally be exposed to his teaching. Even Caesar's slaves wielded more power and prestige than most well-off free persons; the Praetorian Guard itself held the prestige of the Roman military's elite, often rewarded by Caesar himself. Paul's greeting would impress his readers: his imprisonment has indeed advanced the gospel (1:12-13).

[\[Back to Beginning of Commentary\]](#)

Philippians Study Videos by Gene Getz from his Life Applications Study Bible

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<http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/1311/> (Philippians#2 – Expressing Appreciation)

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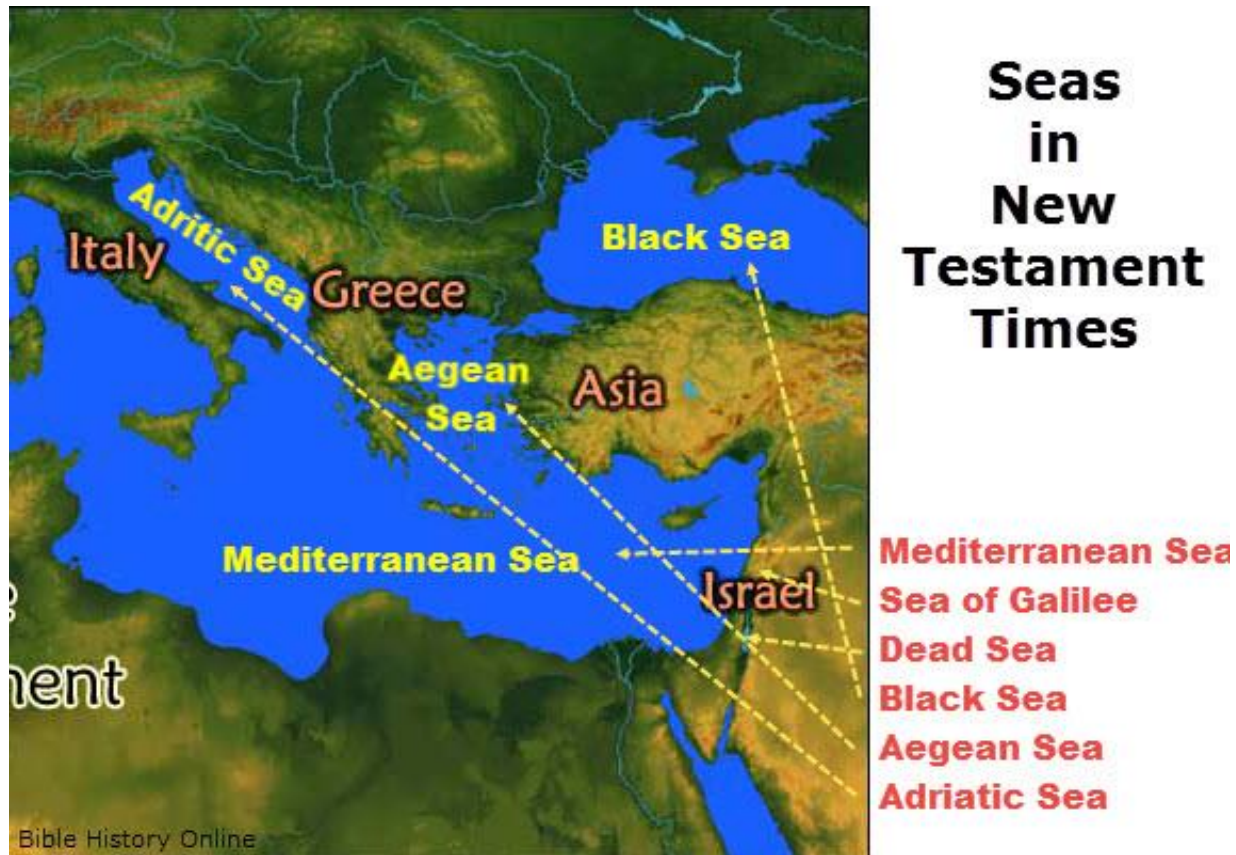
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MAPS and Charts

Map of the New Testament World



http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_new_testament_world.html



The Seas (6 Great Seas)

There were six important seas in the New Testament World, some are mentioned in the Gospels and the Book of Acts.

1. The Mediterranean Sea which bordered the land of Israel on the east as far as Italy on the east.
2. The Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias, mainly associated with the life of Jesus.
3. The Dead Sea, Although it was not mentioned in the New Testament it was in southern Israel.
4. The Black Sea, it was just north of Asia Minor.
5. The Aegean Sea, located between Asia Minor and Greece.
6. The Adriatic Sea, located between Greece and Italy.



Roman Provinces in Europe (5 Provinces)

1. **Thrace** was the land bordering the southwest corner of the Black Sea.
2. **Macedonia** was the land at the northeast corner of the Aegean Sea, in-between Thrace, Illyricum, and Greece.
3. **Greece or Achaia** was the land southwest of Macedonia, bordering 3 seas.
4. **Illyricum** was the land north of Greece, northwest of Macedonia, and the eastern portion of the Adriatic Sea.
5. **Italy** was the country across the Adriatic Sea from Greece and Illyricum. Rome was the capital of Italy.

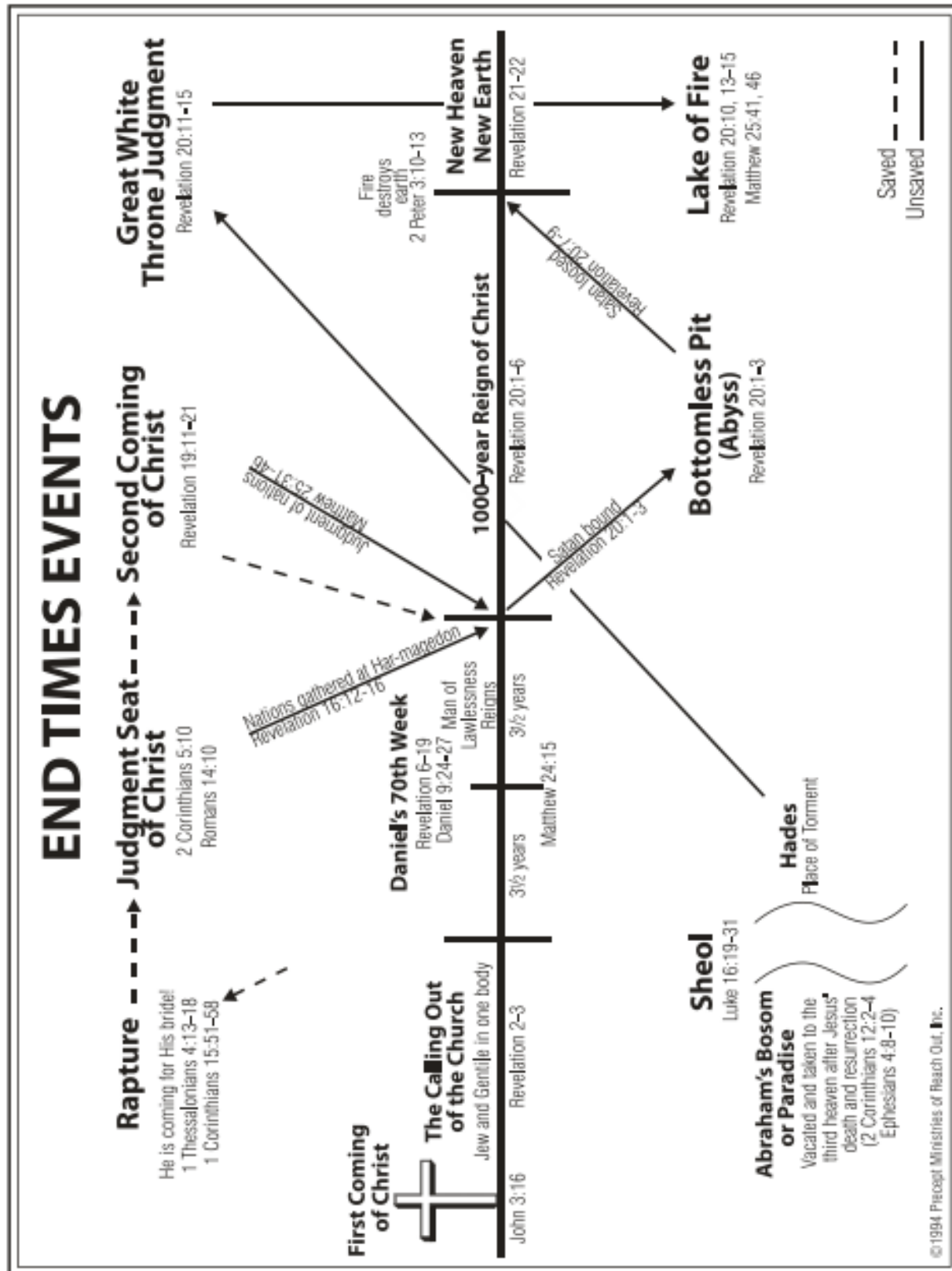






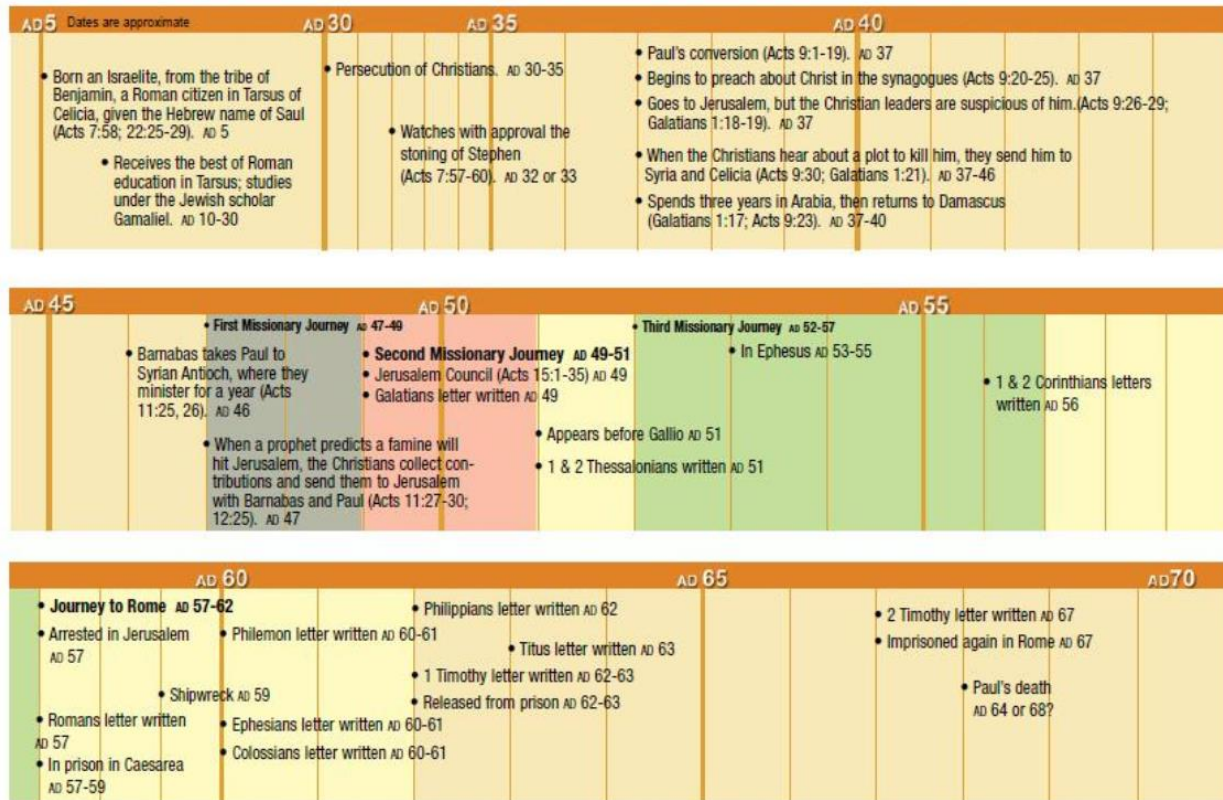


Precepts for Life Map

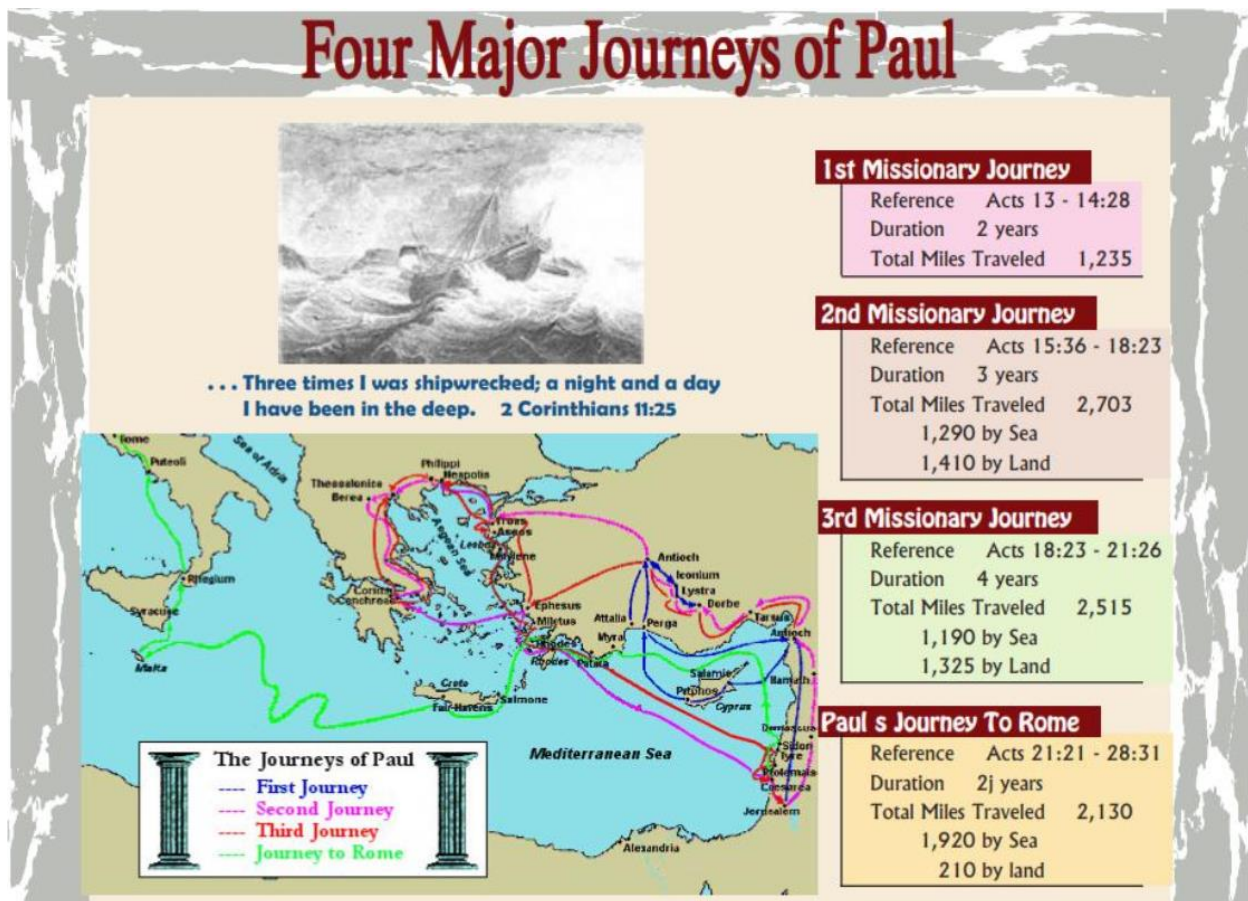


Precepts for Life – Philippians End Times Events Chart

The LIFE of the APOSTLE PAUL Time Line



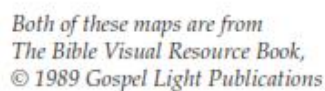
See also “**The Complete Sayings of Jesus NKJV**” for more charts, maps, various timelines and overview of Paul’s letters.



Source: Barnes Bible Charts

See also “**The Complete Sayings of Jesus NKJV**” for more charts, maps, various timelines and overview of Paul’s letters.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Interesting Time Frames in Paul's Life

- The Church had been established about three years before Paul became a Christian.
- Paul persecuted the Church for about the first 3 years of its existence.
- Paul became a Christian about 4 to 5 years prior to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.
- Paul's 1st missionary journey began approximately 10 years after his conversion.
- Paul lived about 32 years after his conversion.
- Of Paul's 32 years of Christian service, about 9 years were spent in his three missionary journeys
 - 1st missionary journey - 2 years
 - 2nd missionary journey - 3 years
 - 3rd missionary journey - 4 years
- The Church was available to the Gentiles during the last 28 years of Paul's ministry.
- Paul's 1st Roman imprisonment occurred some 25 years after his conversion and about 7 years prior to his death.



[Source: <http://www.biblecharts.org/paulahebrewofthehebrews.html>]

See also “**The Complete Sayings of Jesus NKJV**” for more charts, maps, various timelines and overview of Paul's letters.

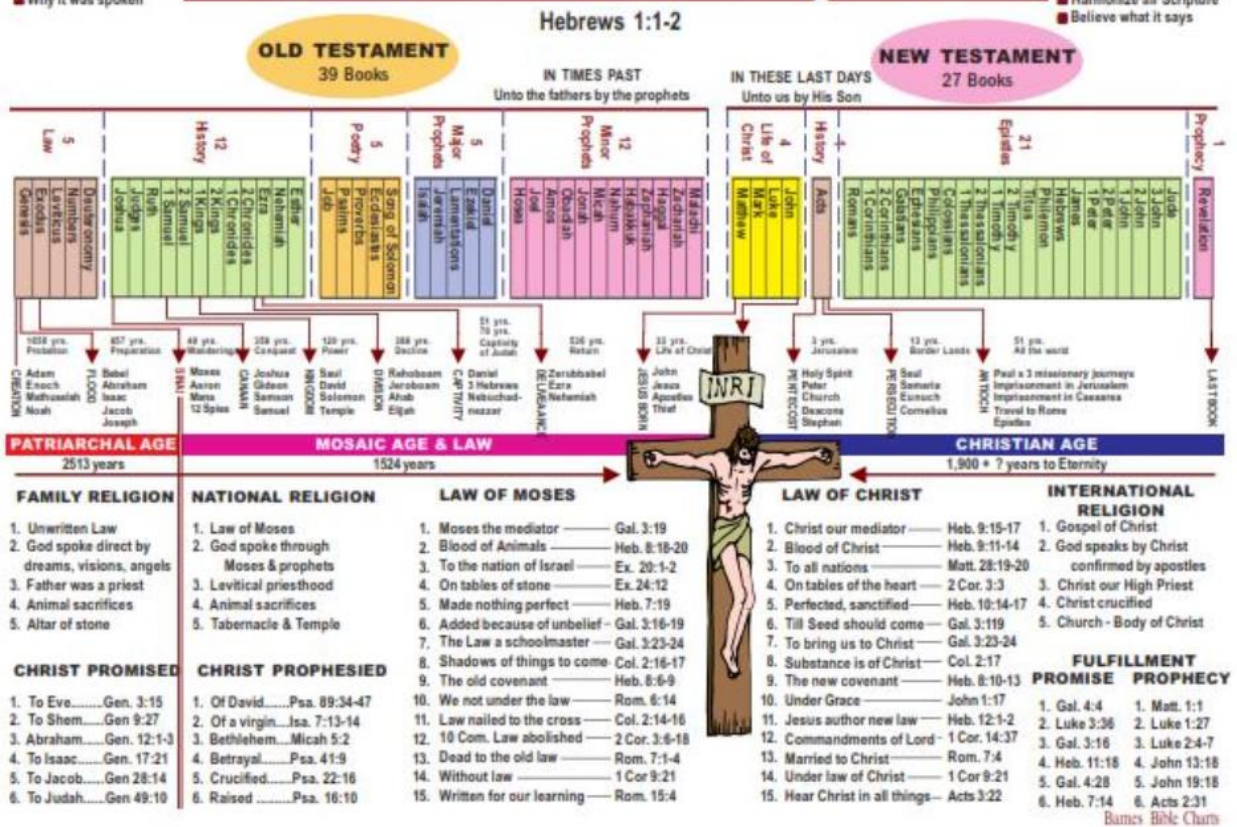
HOW TO STUDY

- Find out who spoke
- To whom they spoke
- In what age they spoke
- Why it was spoken

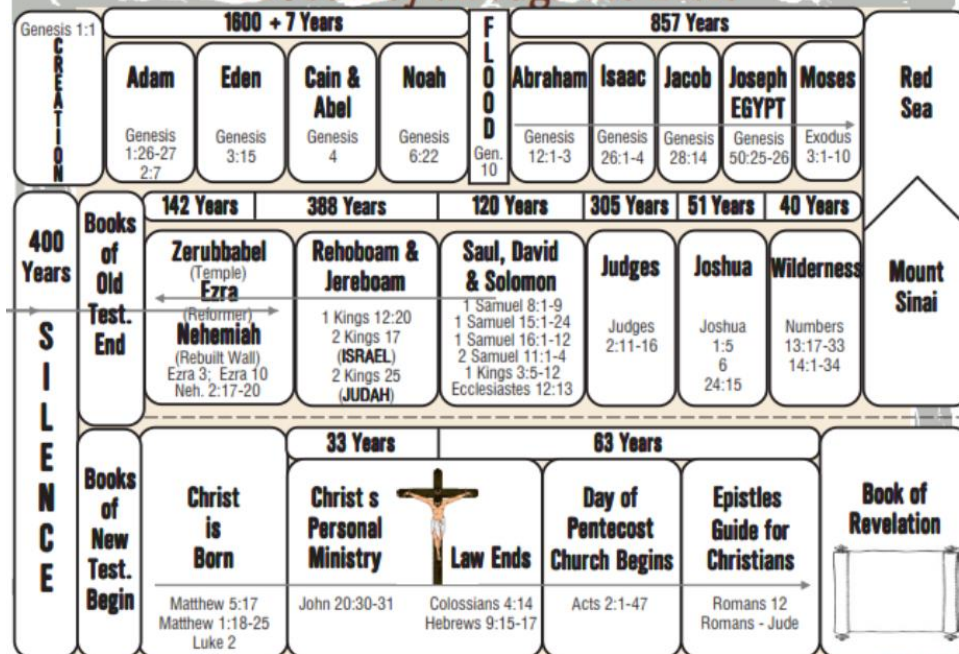
The Bible - God Has Spoken

HOW TO UNDERSTAND

- Study for yourself
- Read in context
- Harmonize all Scripture
- Believe what it says



A Journey through the Bible



History from Moses to Alexander the Great

BC 1445 Exodus/10 Plagues/Law Given

God raised up Moses to deliver the people from Egypt and through 10 plagues demonstrates his power and makes a name for himself. The last plague is the execution of the first born unless the house had the blood of a lamb (or goat) on their door posts. The Israelites were expelled after this last plague and made it through the Red Sea and then eventually to the Mountain of Sinai where God gave them the covenant.

BC 1405 Conquest of Canaan

Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness because when they reached the promised land, they refused to enter it. Now under Joshua, the successor of Moses, the people conquer the east side of the Jordan and then make their way into the land via Jericho. This is the first time Israel actually possesses the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

BC 1391-1050 Judges

The period of the Judges covers a few hundred years during which a cycle repeated itself over and again. (1) The people become oppressed by a foreign nation and call out to God in their despair. (2) God raises a Judge or Deliverer to obtain military victory. (3) The people become complacent and “everyone does what is right in his own eyes” which causes God’s protection to be forfeited.

BC 1050-930 United Kingdom

The first king of Israel was from the tribe of Benjamin, called Saul. The kingdom was taken from him and given to David of the tribe of Judah (though David did not rise to the throne until Saul died in battle). Then David’s son, Solomon was anointed above his brothers by David to be king over Israel. Each of these first three kings reigned for 40 years. This is called the “Golden Age” because during it Israel enjoyed peace, prosperity, and they worshiped God.

BC 966 First Temple Built

Shortly after the Law was given (BC 1445) Moses was given instruction on building the tabernacle (a tent meticulously designed by God to represent his presence among the people). The center piece of the tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments and some other items. David wanted to build a “house” for God but was refused because he was a man of war. Solomon used the materials David had laid up for the construction of the temple and dedicated it sacrificing thousands of animals. Then the glory of God visibly came into the temple.

BC 930 Kingdom Splits

Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, does not act wisely and instead of reaching out to the northern part of the kingdom alienates them. This causes a rift between the north and the south. Jeroboam is crowned king of the northern ten tribes (called hereafter Israel) and Rehoboam retains control (barely) of the southern two tribes (called hereafter Judah).

BC 930-721 Northern Kingdom of Israel

Jeroboam was the first king (the son of Nebat) and his first acts involved making two golden calves. One was to be installed in the south and one in the north. He appointed a new priesthood to offer sacrifices. The new capital was Samaria. The kings were not descended through one family line and there were often bloody assassinations to gain the throne. The last king was Hoshea the son of Elah. The Assyrians conquered Israel, deported its inhabitants and resettled other people in Samaria (later dubbed the Samaritans).

BC 930-586 Southern Kingdom of Judah

Under David's grandson, Rehoboam the kingdom split but God was merciful to the house of David and providentially saw to it that David's family line continued throughout all the kings of Judah. Jerusalem remained the capital. Hezekiah miraculously survived the vicious attack of Assyria when God sent two angels to defeat Sennacherib's army. The last kings of Judah were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. At this point, the Babylonian empire conquered Jerusalem three times, the last of which resulted in the cities complete destruction.

BC 911-612 Assyrian Empire

Historians mark the beginning of the Assyrian empire with the accession of Adad-Nirari II to the throne. Before this Assyria existed but was not very powerful. When Tiglath-Pileser III (also known as Pulu) ascended to the throne, he defeated Babylonia, the Medes, Hittites, Syria, and Phoenicia. He occupied Philistia in BC 738 and subjected Israel to tribute. In BC 727 Tiglath-Pileser III's was succeeded by Shalmaneser V who died in BC 722 while laying siege to Samaria. Sargon II seized the throne and finished off Samaria and carried off 27,000 people into captivity in BC 721. Under Sennacherib (BC 705-681) an unsuccessful attack was made against Jerusalem and her king, Hezekiah. It really ended in BC 612 when the capital of Nineveh was defeated by the Babylonians.

BC 612-539 Babylonian Empire

Nabopolassar successfully rebelled and with the help of the Medes defeated Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) in BC 612. Under Nebuchadnezzar's 43 year reign Babylon was at the peak of its strength. He brought Judah under his control and imposed taxes on them. Judah rebelled, was conquered, then rebelled again, and this time it was destroyed and all the citizens were deported. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by Nabonidus who eventually was defeated by Cyrus the king of the Medo-Persian Empire in BC 539 at Opis. Cyrus entered the city of Babylon without fighting.

BC 605 Jerusalem Defeated (First Exile)

During the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (king of Judah), Jerusalem was defeated and the some of the vessels from the house of God were brought by Nebuchadnezzar into Shinar (another name for Babylon) (Daniel 1:1-2). Daniel, Mishaël, Hananiah, Azariah and others who showed promise are brought to Babylon and trained to be able to serve in the royal court there (Daniel 1:3-6). Judah was made to pay taxes to Babylon but soon stopped in defiance to their foreign conquerors.

BC 597 Jerusalem Defeated Again (Second Exile)

In the eighth year of king Jehoiachin, Nebuchadnezzar again defeated Jerusalem and carried away the rest of the treasures of the temple, and the treasures of the king's house, and led away into captivity all the captains, the warriors, the craftsman, and the smiths (2nd Kings 24:8-16). Only the poorest people were left in the land. During the siege, Jehoiachin surrendered and went out to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken back to Babylon. Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah (also called Zedekiah), was put in charge by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:17). Ezekiel may have been taken during this time. He prophesied extensively about the coming destruction of Jerusalem while living in Babylonia near the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1-3).

BC 586 Jerusalem Destroyed/Temple Destroyed (Third Exile)

Jerusalem again rebelled and the army of Babylon once again defeated it in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah (2nd Kings 25:1-2). Zedekiah fled but was captured; both of his sons were slaughtered before his eyes and then his eyes were put out and he was brought in bronze fetters to Babylon where he died. The temple was burned to the ground to such a degree that when it was rebuilt even a new foundation had to be made. The city walls were completely destroyed along with the prominent houses and the gates to the city (2nd Kings 25:1-21). Jeremiah was in the city when this happened and survived.

BC 586-516 Seventy Year Captivity

The land was to lie dormant for seventy years to make up for the Sabbaths that it had not enjoyed (the Israelites were supposed to rest from farming every seventh year, but they did not). There are multiple ways to date this event. Some start in 605 (or 606) and end it in 535 (or 536). Here I have indicated the time from when the temple was destroyed (586) to when it was finally rebuilt (516). However one counts it, the people were able to survive in the foreign regions in which they were transplanted, just as God had prophesied through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25.1-14). Daniel's prayer undoubtedly ties in with the end of the captivity (Daniel 9).

BC 539-333 Achaemenid Empire (also called Medo-Persia)

Cyrus the Great (also called Cyrus II of Persia) successfully defeated the Median Empire, the Lydian Empire, and the Babylonian Empire between BC 559 and 539. His son, Cambyses II conquered Egypt. Cyrus was politically shrewd, modeling himself as the "savior" of conquered nations. To reinforce this image, he instituted policies of religious freedom, and abolished slavery in the newly acquired cities. Other kings in this empire include Darius I, Xerxes I (Ahasuerus), Artaxerxes I, etc. In BC 334 during the reign of Darius III, Alexander the Great successfully established the Greeks as the new empire.

BC 538 Cyrus Issues Decree to Return to Judea

In the first year that Cyrus was established as the king of the empire he issued a decree that the Jews living throughout his empire could return to Judah and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1.1-4). Zerubbabel & Joshua lead 49,897 people back to Jerusalem (Ezra 2.2, 64-65) and begin work on the temple in BC 536. Zerubbabel was the Persian approved governor and Joshua was the highpriest. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah urged the building of temple through their prophecies.

BC 516 Second Temple Built

The building of the temple was begun in BC 536 but stopped some time before BC 529. The people of the surrounding areas (outside of Judah) discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their work until Darius I became king (Ezra 4.4-5). Then God moved through the prophets Zechariah and Haggai to urge the work to begin again (without permission from the authorities) in BC 520. It was finally completed and dedicated in BC 516.

BC 484-475 Events of Queen Esther

In BC 484 King Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) gave a banquet and his queen (Vashti) publicly disobeyed him. The king sought after a new queen and chose Esther (Hadassah). During this time a man named Haman (who was the right hand man of the king) gained much power and wanted to annihilate the Jews because Mordecai (Esther's Uncle) would not bow to Haman as he passed. In a last minute effort to defend her people Esther succeeds in gaining Xerxes I's approval to reverse Haman's plot and the Jews throughout the Persian Empire were saved. The festival of Purim is celebrated annually (up to this day) as commemoration of this deliverance.

BC 457 Ezra Arrives in Jerusalem

In the seventh year of King Artaxerxes I (BC 464-425), Ezra the scribe was sent to establish Mosaic Law in Jerusalem. His mission was to teach the people how to live. He was given a good deal of silver and gold to get the sacrificial system going. BC 445 Nehemiah Arrives in Jerusalem and Builds Wall Governor Nehemiah was commissioned by Artaxerxes I to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2.1). The work began and it was strongly opposed by Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab (Nehemiah 2.10, 19). Even so, the workers continued with incredible speed holding a weapon in one hand a tool in the other. The wall was finished in 52 days (Nehemiah 6.15).

BC 333 Alexander the Great's Empire

Alexander (son of Philip of Macedon) was king from BC 336 to 323 being only 20 years old. He was one of the most successful military commanders in history, and was undefeated in battle. He defeated Darius

III at the Battle of Issus in BC 333. By the time of his death (at only 33 years old), he had conquered most of the world known to the ancient Greeks pressing east into India. In the same year, Alexander took Jerusalem and now Judea was a Greek province instead of a Persian one. He founded Alexandria in Egypt (along with a number of other Alexandrias) which became a major city of trade, education, and culture. In BC 331, Alexander was welcomed as a liberator in Egypt and was pronounced the son of Zeus by Egyptian priests of the god Amun.

From then on, Alexander referred to the god Zeus-Ammon as his true father. Alexander was a brilliant and fearless military strategist (he was undefeated in battle) but was also well educated in general, having Aristotle as his personal tutor. Alexander wasn't just interested in conquering the world and submitting it to Greek rule; he wanted to make the world like Greece, civilizing it. He spread the Greek language, culture, religion, and philosophy to the lands he conquered and encouraged intermarriage. By the time of Jesus Greek was the common international language of the day. Alexander died in BC 323 of unknown causes (speculations include binge drinking, malaria, West Nile virus, typhoid, and viral encephalitis).

Audio Versions of the Book of Philippians

<http://www.audiotreasure.com/webindex.htm> (WEB - World English Bible)

<http://www.audiotreasure.com/> (numerous versions)

http://www.lightinside.org/light/free_audio_bible.htm (numerous versions)

<http://www.divinerevelations.info/bible/> (numerous versions)

General Overview Notes – Philippians

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S LETTERS

STUDY GUIDE

Topic 5: Paul's Letter to the Philippians

I. The Letter Opening and the Thanksgiving (1:1-10)

- A) The senders: "Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ" (1:1a)
- B) The recipients: "All the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (1:1b)
- C) The greeting: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:2)
- D) The thanksgiving with a first mention of Paul's imprisonment for the sake of the gospel (1:3-11)
 - 1) A captivity epistle (1:7; 1:12-26; 4:12), one of four letters from prison written by Paul or in his name
 - 2) 52 or 62? Ephesus or Rome?

II. Reasons for This Occasional Letter

- A) Reassurance (1:12-26)
- B) Gratitude
 - 1) For their gift and support (4:10-20)
 - 2) For the service of Epaphroditus, who has been seriously ill (3:25-30)
- C) Encouragement for a church beleaguered from without
 - 1) The need to stand firm (1:27-30)
 - 2) Paul's attack upon the opponents
 - (a) Name-calling in 3:2-4
 - (b) More name-calling (3:18-19)
 - (c) Don't be like them (3:20-21)
 - 3) The Example of Paul (3:7-12)
- D) Exhortation for a church with internal tensions
 - 1) Be of one mind (2:3, 5; 3:15, 19; 4:2)
 - 2) The great christological hymn (2:5-11)
 - 3) Self-emptying (2:5b-8)
 - 4) Exaltation (2:9-11)
 - 5) Admonition for Euodia and Syntyche (4:2-3)

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THE APOSTLE PAUL'S LETTERS

STUDY GUIDE

III. One or Many Letters

A) Some scholars say three letters

- 1) Their reason: shifts in thought and vocabulary
- 2) The letters:
 - (a) A letter of thanks (4:10-20)
 - (b) A letter delivered by Epaphroditus (1:1-3:1a; 4:2-9; 21-23)
 - (c) A letter attacking the opponents (3:1b-4:1)

B) Most say one letter

- 1) The manuscript tradition
- 2) The freedom of the letter writer
- 3) The thematic and rhetorical unity of the letter