

PAUL IN PHILIPPIANS

1. **On his second missionary journey, Paul was beaten and imprisoned in Philippi.**
 - a. **Ac 16:19-24** 19 When [the slave girl's] owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice. 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.
 - b. The Philippians had seen first hand Paul's ability to be joyful in prison.
 - (1) **Ac 16:25** 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them....
 - c. The Philippians knew imprisonment would not stop Paul from proclaiming the gospel.
 - (1) **Ac 16:30-31** 30 ...[The Philippians jailer] brought [Paul and Silas] out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.
 - d. *Persecution.*
2. **Even in prison, Paul cares about faraway believers and churches.**
 - a. Paul remembers the Philippians and regularly prays for them (1:3-4).
 - b. Paul takes pride in the Philippians' advance to spiritual maturity (1:6; 2:16; 4:1).
 - c. Paul holds the Philippians in his heart and yearns for them with affection (1:7-8).
 - d. Paul longs to see the Philippians again (1:26; 2:12, 24; 3:1).
 - e. Paul keeps in touch by sending people and letters (2:19, 23, 25; 3:1; 4:1).
 - f. Paul wants to be cheered by news of the Philippians (2:19).
 - g. Paul is genuinely concerned for the Philippians' welfare (2:20).
 - h. *Compassion.*
3. **Paul cares about the Philippians' advance to spiritual maturity, even in his absence.**
 - a. Paul believes the Father will bring to completion the work he began in the Philippians.
 - (1) **Php 1:6** 6 ...I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Messiah.
 - b. Paul prays the Philippians will be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah.
 - (1) **Php 1:9-11** 9 ...It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Messiah, to the glory and praise of God.
 - c. Paul asks the Philippians to live worthily of the gospel, whether he comes or not.
 - (1) **Php 1:27** 27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Messiah, 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....

- d. Paul wants to be proud of the Philippians on the day of Messiah.
 - (1) **Php 2:16** 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
- e. Paul urges the Philippians not to regress.
 - (1) **Php 3:16** 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.
- f. Paul urges the Philippians to stand firm in the Lord.
 - (1) **Php 4:1** 1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

4. Paul views his imprisonment as an opportunity to advance the gospel.

- a. In prison, Paul is defending and confirming the gospel (1:7, 16).
 - (1) **Php 1:7** 7 ...You are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
 - (2) **Php 1:16** 16 ...I am put here for the defense of the gospel.
- b. Surprisingly, Paul's imprisonment has served to advance the gospel (1:12).
 - (1) **Php 1:12** 12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel....
- c. It has become well known in Rome that Paul's imprisonment is for Messiah (1:13).
 - (1) **Php 1:13** 13 ...It has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Messiah.
- d. Many brothers have become confident in the Lord by Paul's imprisonment (1:14).
 - (1) **Php 1:14** 14 ...Most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
- e. Members of Nero's own household have become Christians.
 - (1) **Php 4:22** 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
- f. *Gospel*.
 - (1) Never doubt the power of the gospel.

5. Paul expects advance, progress, and fruitfulness.

- a. Paul prays the Philippians love will about more and more.
 - (1) **Php 1:9** 9 ...It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more....
- b. Paul is pleased his imprisonment is advancing the gospel.
 - (1) **Php 1:12** 12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel....
- c. If Paul lives, it will mean fruitful labor for him (1:22).
 - (1) **Php 1:22** 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me.
- d. Paul knows he will remain for the Philippians' progress in the faith (1:25).
 - (1) **Php 1:25** 25 ...I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith....
- e. Paul doesn't want to run or labor in vain (2:16).
 - (1) **Php 2:16** 16 ...So that in the day of Messiah I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
- f. Paul presses on toward the goal of spiritual maturity (3:13-14).

(1) **Php 3:13-14** 13 ...One thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Jesus.

g. *Time Management.*

(1) Paul doesn't waste time. He is a master of time management for the gospel.

6. Paul loves to use metaphors to explain the Christian life.

a. Citizenship.

(1) **Php 1:27** 27 Only keep discharging your obligations as [heavenly] citizens (πολιτεύομαι, pres.) in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Messiah....

(2) **Php 3:20** 20 Our commonwealth (πολίτευμα) is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Messiah.

(3) Philippi is a Roman colony where many enjoy full Roman citizenship rights. The Philippian believers are used to thinking in terms of citizenship and understand its importance.

b. Warfare.

(1) **Php 1:27** 27 ...Standing firm in one spirit, with one mind fighting (συναθλέω, pres.) side by side for the faith of the gospel.

(a) "The image is of a phalanx of soldiers fighting as a unit."¹

(2) **Php 2:25** 25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother, co-worker, and co-soldier (συστρατιώτης)....

(3) **Php 4:3** 3 ...Help these women, who have fought (συναθλέω) side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers....

c. Banking/commerce.

(1) **Php 1:5** 5 ...Because of your [ministry] partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

(2) **Php 1:22** 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means profitable work (καρπὸς ἔργου) for me.

(3) **Php 3:7** 7 Whatever profit (κέρδος) I had, I mentally calculated (ἡγέομαι) as loss (ζημία) for the sake of Messiah.

(a) "Becoming a Christian involves rebalancing one's spiritual books. All the things Paul used to calculate as credits—family background, educational pedigree, denominational affiliation, personal reputation—he now puts in the debit column for the sake of Christ (Phil 3:7). Apparent spiritual advantages that usurp faith in Christ are not assets but liabilities."²

(4) **Php 4:15** 15 ...No church entered into [business] partnership (κοινωνέω) with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

(5) **Php 4:17** 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit (καρπὸς) that increases to your [spiritual bank] account (λόγος).

d. Athletics.

(1) **Php 3:13-14** 13 One thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and exerting myself to the uttermost (ἐπεκτείνωμαι, pres.) to what lies ahead [the goal], 14 I press on

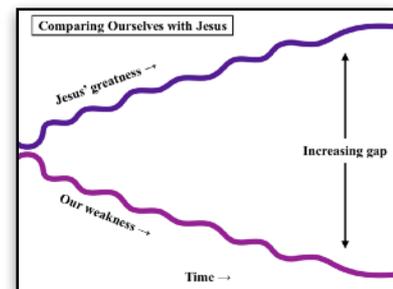
¹ Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 641-643.

² Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 641-643.

toward the goal/mark/target (σκοπός) for the award/prize/reward (βραβεῖον) of the upward call of God in Messiah Jesus.

7. Paul is fanatical about Jesus.

- a. He views himself as Jesus' servant (1:1).
- b. He wants Jesus to be honoured in his body, whether by life or death (1:20).
- c. For Paul, to live is Jesus (Php 1:21).
(1) **Php 1:21** 21 For to me to live is Messiah....
- d. He desires to depart and be with Jesus (1:23).
- e. He seeks the interests of Jesus (2:21).
- f. He counts everything as loss for the sake of Jesus (3:7).
(1) **Php 3:7** 7 ... Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Messiah.
- g. He counts everything as loss because of the work of knowing Messiah Jesus (3:8).
(1) **Php 3:8** 8 ... I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Messiah Jesus my Lord.
- h. He suffers the loss of all things to gain Jesus (Php 3:8).
(1) **Php 3:8** 8 For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Messiah....
- i. He counts all things as rubbish in order to gain Jesus (Php 3:8).
(1) **Php 3:8** 8 For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Messiah....
- j. He wants to be found in Jesus (3:9).
- k. He wants to know Jesus and the power of his resurrection (3:10).
- l. He wants to share in Jesus' sufferings (3:10).
- m. He wants to become like Jesus in his death (3:10).
- n. Everything he does he does "in the Lord."
- o. *Jesus*.
(1) Until we become fanatical about Jesus, we're not really getting it.



8. Paul is able to be joyful and content despite adverse circumstances.

- a. Paul prays for the Philippians with joy (Php 1:4).
- b. Paul rejoices that Jesus is being proclaimed, even by people motivated by envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition (Php 1:18).
- c. Paul makes the choice to rejoice (Php 1:18).
- d. Paul want the Philippians to complete his joy (Php 2:2).
- e. Paul rejoices even though he may shortly die (Php 2:17).
- f. Paul is experiencing sorrow (Php 2:27) and anxiety (Php 2:28).
- g. His primary command to the Philippians is to rejoice (Php 2:18; 3:1; 4:4).
- h. Paul has leaned to be content in all situations (Php 4:11-13).
- i. *Joy*.

9. Paul sets himself up as an example because he knows he's on the right road.

- a. Paul asks the Philippians to imitate him.
(1) **Php 3:17** 17 Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.
- b. Paul asks the Philippians to practice what they have seen in him.

- (1) **Php 4:9** 9 What you have learned, received, heard, and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- c. Paul shares his mindset with the Philippians that they may have the same mindset.
 - (1) **Php 3:15** 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.
- d. *Imitation.*

10. Paul is ready to die for Jesus.

- a. Paul is determined to honour Jesus in life or in death.
 - (1) **Php 1:20-21** 20 ...It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Messiah will be honoured in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Messiah, and to die is gain.
- b. For Paul, departing this life is better than remaining because he will be with Jesus.
 - (1) **Php 1:23** 23 My desire is to depart and be with Messiah, for that is far better.
- c. Jesus became obedient to the point of death. Paul must be willing to do likewise.
 - (1) **Php 2:8** 8 ...Being found in human form, [Jesus] humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- d. Paul rejoices even though he may be poured out as a drink offering.
 - (1) **Php 2:17** 17 Even if I [Paul] am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.
- e. Epaphroditus, too, nearly died for the work of Messiah.
 - (1) **Php 2:30** 30 ...[Epaphroditus] nearly died for the work of Messiah, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.
- f. *Physical Death.*