

## ***PHILIPPIANS 1 | The Advance of the Gospel***

### *Grace and Peace*

1 Paul and Timothy, servants (δοῦλοι) of Messiah Jesus, to all the saints (ἅγιοις) in Messiah Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers (ἐπισκόποις) and deacons (διακόνους). 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Messiah.

### *Paul's Affection for the Philippians*

3 I thank<sup>1</sup> my God in all my remembrance (μνηα) of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy (χαρά), 5 because of your partnership (κοινωνία) in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion (ἐπιτελέω)<sup>2</sup> at the day of Jesus Messiah. 7 It is right for me to think (φρονέω) this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart,<sup>3</sup> for you are all co-partners (συγκοινωνός) with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense (ἀπολογία) and confirmation (βεβαίωσις)<sup>4</sup> of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness (μάρτυς), how I yearn (ἐπιποθέω)<sup>5</sup> for you all with the affection (σπλάγχνον)<sup>6</sup> of Messiah Jesus.

### *Paul's Prayer for the Philippians*

9 And it is my prayer that your love (ἀγάπη) may abound more and more, with knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) and all discernment (αἴσθησις),<sup>7</sup> 10 so that you may keep approving (δοκιμάζω, pres.) what is excellent (διαφέρω), and so be pure (εἰλικρινής)<sup>8</sup> and blameless (ἀπόσκοπος)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Ro 1:8-10** 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Messiah for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers.... **Eph 1:16** 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.... **1 Th 1:2** 2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers.... **2 Ti 1:3** 3 I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.

<sup>2</sup> “[T]o bring about a result according to plan or objective, *complete, accomplish, perform, bring about*” (BDAG, 383).

<sup>3</sup> **2 Co 7:3** 3 ...I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

<sup>4</sup> “[P]rocess of establishing or confirming something, *confirmation, validation*” (BDAG, 173).

<sup>5</sup> “[T]o have a strong desire for someth., with implication of need, *long for, desire*” (BDAG, 377).

<sup>6</sup> “Christ’s love had so overwhelmed Paul that His affection was Paul’s very own” (R. P. Lightner, *BKC*, 2:650).

<sup>7</sup> “[C]apacity to understand, *discernment*...denoting moral understanding” (BDAG, 29).

<sup>8</sup> “[U]nmixed, without alloy”, then in moral sense pert. to being sincere, without hidden motives or pretense, *pure*” (BDAG, 282).

<sup>9</sup> “[B]eing without fault because of not giving offense, *undamaged, blameless*” (BDAG, 125). **1 Co 1:7-8** 7 ... You are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Messiah, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Messiah. **1 Th 5:23** 23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Messiah.

for the day of Messiah, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Messiah, to the glory and praise of God.

### *Paul's Imprisonment Advances the Gospel*

12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has really served to advance (προκοπή)<sup>10</sup> the gospel,<sup>11</sup> 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard<sup>12</sup> and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Messiah.<sup>13</sup> 14 And most of the brothers and sisters, having become confident (πείθω, perf. act.) in the Lord [Jesus] by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15 Some indeed preach Messiah from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love (ἀγάπη), because they know that I am put here for the defense (ἀπολογία) of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Messiah out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Messiah is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

### *Paul's Attitude to Life and Death*

Yes, and I will rejoice,<sup>14</sup> 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Messiah this will turn out for my deliverance (σωτηρία), 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full confidence (παρρησία) now as always Messiah will be honoured (μεγαλύνω)<sup>15</sup> in my body, whether by life or death.<sup>16</sup> 21 For to me to live is Messiah and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful work (καρπὸς ἔργου) for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Messiah, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your advance (προκοπή) and joy (χαρά) in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Messiah Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

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<sup>10</sup> “[M]ovement forward to an improved state, *progress, advancement, furtherance*” (BDAG, 871).

<sup>11</sup> **2 Ti 2:9** 9 ...For which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound!

<sup>12</sup> Though Paul resided in his own rented facility (Ac 28:30), he was guarded by Roman soldiers all the time. The custom was for a prisoner to be chained at the wrist to a soldier (Lightner, *BKC*, 2:650-651).

<sup>13</sup> **Eph 3:1** 1 ...I, Paul, a prisoner of Messiah Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles....

<sup>14</sup> **Ac 16:25** 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners [in Philippi] were listening to them.

<sup>15</sup> “[T]o cause to be held in greater esteem through praise or deeds, *exalt, glorify, magnify, speak highly of*” (BDAG, 623).

<sup>16</sup> **Ac 20:24** 24 I [Paul] do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. **Ac 21:13** 13 I [Paul] am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. **Ro 14:8** 8 ...If we live, we live to the Lord [Jesus], and if we die, we die to the Lord [Jesus]. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

### *Contend Side by Side for the Gospel*

27 Only discharge your obligation as citizens (πολιτεύομαι, pres.)<sup>17</sup> in a manner 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 (πνεῦμα), with one mind (ψυχῇ) striving (συναθλέω, pres.)<sup>18</sup> side by side for the faith of the gospel (τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a sign (ἔνδειξις)<sup>19</sup> to them of their destruction (ἀπώλεια), but of your salvation (σωτηρία), and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Messiah you should not only believe (πιστεύω, pres.) into (εἰς) him but also suffer (πάσχω, pres.) for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict (ἀγών)<sup>20</sup> that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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<sup>17</sup> “[T]o be a citizen, have one’s citizenship/home...; to conduct one’s life, *live, lead one’s life*” (BDAG, 846).

<sup>18</sup> “[C]ontend/struggle along with” (BDAG, 964). **Jud 3** 3 ...Exert intense effort (ἐπαγωνίζομαι) for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

<sup>19</sup> “[S]ometh. that points to or serves as an indicator of someth., *sign, omen*...; someth. that compels acceptance of someth. mentally or emotionally, *demonstration, proof*” (BDAG, 332).

<sup>20</sup> “[A] struggle against opposition, *struggle, fight*” (BDAG, 17).

## Observations

### 1. Lists.

#### a. Jesus.

- (1) Paul and Timothy are Jesus' servants (v. 1).
- (2) Jesus is the Messiah (v. 1).
- (3) The Philippian saints are in Jesus (v. 1).
- (4) Jesus is the source of grace and peace (v. 2).
- (5) Jesus is the Lord (v. 2).
- (6) Jesus' day is coming (v. 6, 10).
- (7) Jesus is affectionate (v. 8).
- (8) The fruit of righteousness comes through Jesus (v. 11).
- (9) Paul's imprisonment is for Jesus (v. 13).
- (10) Most of the brothers have become confident in Jesus to speak the word (v. 14).
- (11) Some preach Jesus from envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition (vv. 15, 17).
- (12) Jesus is being proclaimed in Rome (vv. 13, 18).
- (13) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus (v. 19).
- (14) Jesus will be honoured in Paul's body, whether by Paul's life or death (v. 20).
- (15) For Paul, to live is Jesus (v. 21).
- (16) Paul's desire is to be with Jesus (v. 23).
- (17) To be with Jesus is far better than remaining in the flesh (v. 23).
- (18) The Philippians will glory in Jesus because of Paul's coming again (v. 26).
- (19) The Philippians are to live worthy of the gospel of Jesus (v. 27).
- (20) The Philippians have believed in Jesus (v. 29).
- (21) The Philippians also must suffer for Jesus' sake (v. 29).

#### b. God the Father.

- (1) The Father is the source of grace and peace (v. 2).
- (2) Paul thanks the Father when he remembers the Philippians (v. 3).
- (3) The Father began a good work in the Philippians (v. 6).
- (4) The Father will bring the good work in the Philippians to completion (v. 6).
- (5) The Father witnesses Paul's yearning for the Philippians (v. 8).
- (6) The Philippians' fruit of righteousness brings the Father glory and praise (v. 11).
- (7) The Philippians' salvation is from the Father (v. 28).

#### c. Gospel.

- (1) The Philippians have partnered in the gospel from from the first day until now (about 10-12 years)(v. 1).
- (2) In prison, Paul is defending and confirming the gospel (v. 7).
- (3) Paul's imprisonment has served to advance the gospel (v. 12).
- (4) Because of Paul's imprisonment, most of the brothers are more bold to speak the gospel without fear (v. 14).
- (5) Some preach the gospel from envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition (vv. 15, 17).
- (6) Others preach the gospel from good will and love (vv. 15-16).
- (7) Paul is put in prison for the defense of the gospel (v. 16).
- (8) Paul rejoices that the gospel is proclaimed, whether in pretense or in truth (v. 18).
- (9) The Philippians' manner of life is to be worthy of the gospel (v. 27).
- (10) The Philippians are to strive side by side for the faith of the gospel (v. 27).

d. Prayer.

- (1) Paul remembers the Philippians in prayer (1:3-4).
- (2) Paul thanks God when he remembers the Philippians in prayer (1:3-4).
- (3) Paul prays regularly for the Philippians, and he does so with joy (1:4).
- (4) Paul prays that the Philippians' love will abound with knowledge and discernment (1:9).
- (5) Paul prays that the Philippians will approve what is excellent and be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah (1:10).
- (6) Paul prays the Philippians will be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Messiah (1:11).

e. Partnership.

- (1) The Philippians have partnered with Paul in the gospel from the first day until now (1:5).
- (2) The Philippians are all partakers with Paul of grace, both in his imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel (1:7).

f. Knowledge/mind/thinking.

- (1) Paul regularly remembers the Philippians in his prayers (1:3).
- (2) Paul is certain the Philippians will advance to spiritual maturity (1:6).
- (3) Paul prays that the Philippians' love may abound with knowledge and discernment (1:9).
- (4) Knowledge and discernment will enable the Philippians to approve what is excellent in God's sight (1:10).
- (5) Paul wants the Philippians to know the effect of his imprisonment (1:12).
- (6) That Paul's imprisonment is for Messiah has become widely known (1:13).
- (7) Those who know the real reason for Paul's imprisonment preach Messiah out of love (1:16).
- (8) Paul knows he will be delivered from prison (1:19, 25).
- (9) Paul knows he will continue with the Philippians for their advance and joy in the faith (1:25).
- (10) The Philippians are to strive for the faith of the gospel with one mind (1:27).

## 2. Contrasts

Good Evangelists	Bad Evangelists
Confident in the Lord (v. 14) Bold to speak the word without fear (v. 14) Preach from good will (v. 15) Preach out of agape love (v. 16) Know Paul is put in prison for the defense of the gospel (v. 16) Preach in truth (v. 18)	Preach Messiah from envy and rivalry (v. 15) Proclaim Messiah out of selfish ambition (v. 17) Insincere (v. 17) Want to afflict Paul in his imprisonment (v. 17) Preach out of pretense (v. 18)

Life	Death
To live is Messiah (v. 21) Fruitful labour for Paul (v. 22) More necessary on the Philippiian's account (v. 24) For the Philippians progress and joy in the faith (v. 25) Philippians will glory in Jesus because of Paul's coming again (v. 26).	To die is gain (v. 21) Paul's desire is to depart and be with Messiah (v. 23) Far better (v. 23)

Philippians	Opponents
Not frightened (v. 28) Salvation from God the Father (v. 28) Engaged in conflict (v. 30)	Opposed the Philippians (v. 28) Destruction (v. 28) Cause the Philippians to suffer (v. 29)

## *Discussion Questions | Lesson Two*

- 1. Who did we BLESS this past week?**
  - a. Begin with prayer, Listen, Eat, Serve, Story.
- 2. Pray.**
- 3. Review.**
  - a. What are the three phases of the inductive Bible study process?
  - b. What are the nine steps of observation phase?
  - c. What is the Holy Spirit's role in Bible study?
- 4. At a Glance (p. 10).**
  - a. What's your book theme?
  - b. Whose the author?
  - c. What's the date?
  - d. What are the key words?
  - e. What's the purpose?
  - f. What's the historical setting?
  - g. What is your chapter 1 theme?
- 5. Read Philippians 1.**
- 6. Observation Steps 1-9.**
  - a. Did you remember to begin with prayer?
  - b. As you asked the 5 Ws and an H, what stood out to you?
    - (1) Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
  - c. What key words did you decide to mark?
  - d. What lists did you make, and what did you learn?
    - (1) Jesus
    - (2) Paul
    - (3) Joy
    - (4) Mind/thinking
    - (5) Father
    - (6) Spirit
    - (7) Gospel
    - (8) Prayer
  - e. What contrasts did you find?
  - f. What comparisons did you find?
  - g. Did you notice any expressions of time?
  - h. What geographic locations did you mark?
    - (1) Look at the map on p. 16. Where is Philippi in relation to Rome?
  - i. What terms of conclusion did you mark?
  - j. How many paragraphs were there, and what were your paragraph themes?
  - k. What was your chapter theme?

## 7. Historical Background.

- a. Acts 15:36-17:1.
  - (1) How did Paul and Timothy meet (p. 13, 1)?
  - (2) Why did Paul and Timothy go to Philippi (p. 13, 3)?
  - (3) How did they meet the Philippians (p. 13, 2)?
  - (4) Was there a Jewish synagogue in Philippi (p. 13, 4)?
  - (5) What significant things happened when Paul first came to Philippi (p. 13, 5)?
- b. Acts 20:1-6.
  - (1) Did Paul visit Philippi again (p. 14, 6)?
- c. Acts 28:16-31.
  - (1) From where did Paul write his letter to the Philippians (p. 14, 1)?
  - (2) What do we learn from Acts 28:16-31 (p. 14, 2)?
- d. Is 2 Timothy 1:8-18 and 4:6-22 discussing the same imprisonment (p. 14, 3)?

## 8. “Sequence of Events in Paul’s Life” (p. 15).

- a. What caught your attention from the chart on p. 15?
- b. What year did Paul meet the Philippians?
- c. What year was he first imprisoned?
- d. What year did he write Philippians?
- e. Did Paul actually revisit the Philippians? How do we know (1 Ti 1:3)?
- f. When was Paul killed?

## 9. Review.

- a. What lessons for life have you gained so far in your study?

### *Discussion Questions | Lesson Three*

#### **1. Who have we BLESSed?**

#### **2. Review.**

- a. What are the three phases of inductive Bible study?
- b. What are the nine steps of the observation phase?

#### **3. Philippians at a Glance (p. 10).**

#### **4. Paul and the Philippians.**

- a. Acts 16.
  - (1) How did Paul and Timothy meet the Philippians (p. 13, 2)?
  - (2) Why did Paul and Timothy go to Philippi (p. 13, 3)?
  - (3) Was there a Jewish synagogue in Philippi (p. 13, 4)?
  - (4) What significant things happened when Paul and Timothy came to Philippi (p. 13, 5)?
- b. Acts 20:1-6.
  - (1) Did Paul visit Philippi again (p. 14, 6)?
- c. From where did Paul write his letter to the Philippians (p. 14, 1)?
  - (1) What do we learn from Acts 28:16-31?
  - (2) Is 2 Timothy 4:6-22 discussing the same imprisonment?
- d. Look at the chart “Sequence of Events in Paul’s Life” (p. 15).
  - (1) What caught your attention from the chart?
  - (2) What year did Paul meet the Philippians?
  - (3) What year was Paul first imprisoned?
  - (4) What year did he write Philippians?
  - (5) When was Paul released?
  - (6) Did Paul revisit the Philippians? How do we know (1 Ti 1:3)?
  - (7) When was Paul killed?

#### **5. Read Php 1.**

#### **6. Philippians 1:1-2.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. Who are the specific groups of people mentioned? How would you define them?
- c. What did you learn about servants/slaves from Deuteronomy 15:12-18?

#### **7. Philippians 1:3-8.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. How does Paul feel about the Philippians?

#### **8. Philippians 1:9-11.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. What did Paul pray for the Philippians and why?

- c. How does the prayer relate to v. 6?
- d. Whose someone for whom you'd like to pray this prayer?

**9. Philippians 1:12-14.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. Why are the brothers becoming confident?
- c. How confident are you to speak the gospel without fear?
- d. What is the purpose of Paul's imprisonment?

**10. Philippians 1:15-18.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. Describe the two groups of evangelists. How do they compare?
- c. Is Paul's joy in v. 18 justified?
- d. What is to be our attitude toward other churches that are proclaiming Jesus?
- e. What about Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, or Roman Catholics?

**11. Philippians 1:18-26.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. How does Paul view the dilemma of life and death?
- c. What happens to believers when they die, according to this paragraph?
- d. Why did Paul look forward to death?
- e. What is the purpose for Paul if he continues to live?
- f. As believers, what is our primary purpose for living? What choices do we need to make to fulfil that purpose?

**12. Philippians 1:27-30.**

- a. Paragraph theme?
- b. How do we live lives worthy of the gospel?
- c. Practically, how are we to be of one spirit and one mind? How are we to strive side by side for the faith of the gospel?
- d. How are things going to end up for the Philippians and their opponents (v. 28)?
- e. What has been granted to the Philippian believers and to us (v. 29)?
- f. What conflict are we engaged in (v. 30)?
- g. What did you learn from the passages on suffering?
  - (1) Is there a purpose for suffering?
  - (2) How should we respond to suffering?

**13. Review.**

- a. How are you applying what you've learned so far?

## *PHILIPPIANS 1 | The Advance of the Gospel*

### *Introduction*

#### **1. Images.**

- a. Dimitri's singing HeartSongs every morning in a Soviet prison (N. Ripken, *The Insanity of God*, 156-55).
- b. Russian youth recreating from memory the four gospels and 1200+ songs with only a few mistakes (N. Ripken, *The Insanity of God*, 164-65).

#### **2. Needs.**

- a. Does persecution of believers have a purpose?
- b. What happens when we die? Is it better to live or die?
- c. If we are going to heaven, why does God leave us on this earth? What if we feel like giving up?
- d. Given we're engaged in spiritual conflict, what's our strategy? How do we not only survive but win?

#### **3. Subjects.**

- a. How to pray for other believers, the purpose of persecution, the proper attitude to life and death, and the key to victory in the struggle we're in.

#### **4. Text:** Philippians 1

#### **5. Outline.**

- a. Philippians at a Glance
- b. Greeting to the Philippians Saints (1:1-2)
- c. Paul's Affection for the Philippians (1:3-8)
- d. Paul's Prayer for the Philippians (1:9-11)
- e. The Surprising Advance of the Gospel (1:12-18)
- f. Paul's Attitude toward Life and Death (1:19-26)
- g. Striving Side by Side for the Gospel (1:27-30)

### *Biblical Worldview*

#### **1. Greeting to the Philippian Saints (Php 1:1-2).**

- a. Everything Paul says and does is as a servant of Jesus (Php 1:1).
  - (1) **Php 1:1** 1 Paul and Timothy, servants (δοῦλοι) of Messiah Jesus....
  - (2) A δοῦλος is a "male slave as an entity in a socioeconomic context, *slave*" (*BDAG*, 260).
  - (3) On Paul's business card, it says simply "servant of Messiah Jesus."
- b. Every believer in the Philippian church is a "saint" (Php 1:1).
  - (1) **Php 1:1** 1 To all the saints (ἁγίοις) in Messiah Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers (ἐπισκόποις) and deacons (διακόνους).
  - (2) ἅγιος: one who is "dedicated or consecrated to the service of God, ...*holy, sacred*, ...reserved for God and God's service, ...consecrated to God, holy, pure, reverent" (*BDAG*, 10).
  - (3) Paul addresses the contents of his letter to the entire church, not just the leaders.
- c. *Identity in Jesus.*

- (1) Every believer in Jesus is a saint, positionally set apart from the world for God.
  - (a) **Ro 1:7** 7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints....
  - (b) **1 Co 1:2** 2 To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those set apart in Messiah Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah, both their Lord and ours.

## 2. Paul's Affection for the Philippians (Php 1:3-8).

- a. Paul remembers the Philippians and regularly prays for them (Php 1:3-4).
  - (1) **Php 1:3-4** 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy....
- b. The Philippians have consistently partnered with Paul from the first (Php 1:5-7).
  - (1) **Php 1:5** 5 ...Because of your partnership (κοινωνία) in the gospel from the first day until now.
- c. Paul is confident about the Philippians' advance to spiritual maturity (Php 1:6).
  - (1) **Php 1:6** 6 And 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.
- d. Paul holds the Philippians in his heart (Php 1:7).
  - (1) **Php 1:7** 7 It is right for me to think (φρονέω) this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all co-participants with me of grace....<sup>21</sup>
- e. Imprisoned in Rome, Paul is defending and confirming the gospel.
  - (1) **Php 1:7** 7 ...Both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
- f. Paul yearns for the Philippians with the compassion of Jesus (Php 1:8).
  - (1) **Php 1:8** 8 For God is my witness, how I long (ἐπιποθέω)<sup>22</sup> for you all with the compassion (σπλάγχνον)<sup>23</sup> of Messiah Jesus.
- g. *Love for Others.*
  - (1) As believers, we are to show lots of affection for one another.
  - (2) As parents, we are to show lots of affection for our children.
  - (3) As disciple-makers, we are to show lots of affection for our disciples.
- h. *Giving to Ministry.*
  - (1) We are to partner prayerfully and financially with those who are defending and confirming the gospel.
- i. *Gospel.*
  - (1) The gospel is to be defended and confirmed.

## 3. Paul's Prayer for the Philippians (Php 1:9-11).

- a. Paul prays the Philippians' love will abound with knowledge and discernment.
  - (1) **Php 1:9** 9 ...It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment....
  - (2) Our love is to increase over time.

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<sup>21</sup> **2 Co 7:3** 3 ...I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

<sup>22</sup> "[T]o have a strong desire for someth., with implication of need, *long for, desire*" (BDAG, 377). **Ro 1:11** 11 ...I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you....

<sup>23</sup> "Christ's love had so overwhelmed Paul that His affection was Paul's very own" (R. P. Lightner, *BKC*, 2:650).

- (3) Our increasing love must be accompanied by knowledge and discernment.
- b. Increasing love, knowledge, and discernment will give the Philippians the capacity to approve what is excellent.
- (1) **Php 1:10** 10 ...So that you may keep approving (δοκιμάζω, pres.) what is excellent (διαφέρω)....
- (a) δοκιμάζω: “to make a critical examination of someth. to determine genuineness, *put to the test, examine*...to draw a conclusion about worth on the basis of testing, *prove, approve*, here the focus is on the result of a procedure or examination. ...[P]rove by testing, of gold...accept as proved, approve...” (BDAG, 255).
- (b) διαφέρω: “differ to one’s advantage fr. someone or someth., *be worth more than, be superior to*...the things that really matter” (BDAG, 239).
- (2) The capacity to approve what is excellent is vital in the Christian life.
- (a) Illustration: Zac’s stepfather Les commenting on how he has seen Zac make really good choices lately—going to university, helping him with home remodelling, doing his Bible study homework.
- (3) We are to critically examine all things we come across to determine their genuineness, so that we will choose the things of greater value, with the result that our lives become pure and blameless.
- c. By approving what is excellent, the Philippians’ may be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah.
- (1) **Php 1:10** 10 ...And so be pure (εἰλικρινής) and blameless (ἀπόσκοπος) for the day of Messiah....
- (a) εἰλικρινής: “‘unmixed, without alloy’, then in moral sense pert. to being sincere, without hidden motives or pretense, *pure*” (BDAG, 282).
- (b) ἀπόσκοπος: “being without fault because of not giving offense, *undamaged, blameless*” (BDAG, 125).
- (2) We are already positionally pure and blameless.
- (a) **1 Co 1:7-8** 7 ... You are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Messiah, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Messiah.
- (3) But we are also to be experientially pure and blameless.
- (a) **1 Th 5:23** 23 ...May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Messiah.
- d. By approving what is excellent, the Philippians will also being filled with the fruit of righteousness.
- (1) **Php 1:11** 11 ...Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Messiah....
- (2) The “fruit of righteousness” includes character, good works, and disciples.
- (a) Character.
- 1) **Ga 5:22-23** 22 ... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control....
- (b) Good works.
- 1) **Eph 2:10** 10 ...We are [God’s] workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- (c) Disciple-making.
  - 1) **Mt 28:19** 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations....
  - (3) We are to pray a similar pray for our disciples and other believers.
  - (4) Our prayers for other believers are to centre on their spiritual advance, maturity, and production.
- e. The Philippians' advance to spiritual maturity will glorify the Father.
  - (1) **Php 1:11** 11 ...To the glory and praise of God.

#### 4. The Surprising Advance of the Gospel (Php 1:12-18).

- a. Paul's 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 (προκοπή) of the gospel....
    - (a) προκοπή: "[M]ovement forward to an improved state, *progress, advancement, furtherance*" (BDAG, 871).
  - b. The whole imperial guard in Rome now knows Paul is imprisoned for Jesus.
    - (1) **Php 1:13** 13 ...So that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard<sup>24</sup> and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Messiah.<sup>25</sup>
    - (2) Paul's trial is enabling Luke to share the gospel with Nero and his imperial staff.
      - (a) **Lk 1:1-4** 1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me [Luke] also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus [Nero's legal investigator], 4 that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been informed about (κατηχέω, aor. pass.).
    - (3) Members of Nero's own family have trusted in Jesus and become Christians.
      - (a) **Php 4:22** 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
    - (4) Illustration: A Muslim guard in the Middle East yelling at a Christian prisoner to stop singing "so your songs won't convert us" (N. Ripken, *The Insanity of God*, 299).
    - (5) The gospel spreads in surprising ways in surprising places. We may be bound, but the gospel is not bound.
      - (a) **2 Ti 2:9** 9 ...I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound!
  - c. Believers in Rome have become confident to preach because of Paul's imprisonment.
    - (1) **Php 1:14** 14 And most of the brothers and sisters, having become confident (πείθω, perf. act.) in the Lord [Jesus] by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
    - (2) Paul uses six synonyms for courage in vv. 14-28:
      - (a) Confident (v. 14).
      - (b) Bold to speak the word (v. 14).

<sup>24</sup> Though Paul resided in his own rented facility (Ac 28:30), he was guarded by Roman soldiers all the time. The custom was for a prisoner to be chained at the wrist to a soldier (Lightner, *BKC*, 2:650-651).

<sup>25</sup> **Ac 28:20** 20 For this reason...I have asked to see you [Jews in Rome] and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain. **Eph 3:1** 1 ...I, Paul, a prisoner of Messiah Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles....

- (c) Without fear (v. 14).
- (d) Not at all ashamed (v. 20).
- (e) Full courage (v. 20).
- (f) Not frightened by opponents (v. 28).
- (3) In the Spirit, we are to be courageous and share the gospel.
- (4) When we take a stand for Jesus, we can expect others to take a stand.
- d. Some in Rome preach Messiah for the wrong reasons.
  - (1) **Php 1:15-17** 15 Some indeed preach Messiah from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love (ἀγάπη), because they know that I am put here for the defense (ἀπολογία) of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Messiah out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.
  - (2) Their motive is evil, but their content must be good enough. Even with an evil motive, they are still preaching Jesus.
- e. Paul disregards their personal attacks and rejoices that Messiah is being proclaimed.
  - (1) **Php 1:18** 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Messiah is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.
  - (2) Paul's interest is Jesus, not himself. His passion is the advance of the gospel.
  - (3) Our life passion is to be the advance of the gospel.
  - (4) We are to rejoice when Jesus is proclaimed, even when it is by those whose motives we are unsure about.

## 5. Paul's Attitude toward Life and Death (Php 1:18-26).

- a. Paul rejoices because he knows he will be delivered from prison (Php 1:18-19).
  - (1) **Php 1:18-19** 18 Yes, and I will rejoice,<sup>26</sup> 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Messiah this will turn out for my deliverance (σωτηρία).
- b. Paul has determined that Jesus will be honoured through his life or death (Php 1:20).
  - (1) **Php 1:20** 20 ...As it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full confidence (παρρησία) now as always Messiah will be honoured (μεγαλύνω) in my body, whether by life or death.
    - (a) μεγαλύνω: “[T]o cause to be held in greater esteem through praise or deeds, *exalt, glorify, magnify, speak highly of*” (BDAG, 623).
  - (2) The PUP workbook asked us to write out a personal prayer based on Php 1:20. Did you do it? Here's what mine said: “Father, give me an eager expectation and hope that I, Jeff, will not at all be ashamed of Jesus, right here in the context of Dunedin, New Zealand, in 2020, but that with full courage now as always Jesus will be honoured in my body, whether by life or by death. Amen.”
- c. Paul is ready to die and be with Jesus (Php 1:21-23).
  - (1) **Php 1:21-23** 21 For to me to live is Messiah and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful work (καρπὸς ἔργου) for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Messiah, for that is far better.

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<sup>26</sup> **Ac 16:25** 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners [in Philippi] were listening to them.

- (2) For Paul, to die is gain (Php 1:21) because he will be with Jesus, which is far better than remaining (Php 1:23). But Paul doesn't really get to choose whether he will live or die (Php 1:22). God is in charge of that.
- (3) As believers, whether we live or die, we belong to Jesus.
  - (a) **Ro 14:8** 8 ...If we live, we live to the Lord [Jesus], and if we die, we die to the Lord [Jesus]. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.
- (4) Our desire should be to be at home with Jesus.
  - (a) **2 Co 5:6-8** 6 ...While we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.
- d. Paul will continue to live for the Philippians' benefit (Php 1:21-26).
  - (1) For Paul, to live is Jesus (Php 1:21).
    - (a) **Php 1:21** 21 For to me to live is Messiah....
  - (2) To live means fruitful labour for Paul (Php 1:22).
    - (a) **Php 1:22** 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful work (καρπὸς ἔργου) for me.
  - (3) It is more necessary on the Philippians' account for Paul to live (Php 1:24).
    - (a) **Php 1:24** 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.
  - (4) Paul will continue for the Philippians' joy and progress in the faith (Php 1:25).
    - (a) **Php 1:25** 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your advance (προκοπή) and joy (χαρά) in the faith....
  - (5) The Philippians will glory in Jesus because of Paul's coming again (Php 1:26).
    - (a) **Php 1:26** 26 ...So that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Messiah Jesus, because of my coming to you again.
- e. Application.
  - (1) Believer, would you just rather go home and be with Jesus right now? Have you recently lost a close loved one, your husband or wife? Are you wondering why God has kept you here?
  - (2) It's good you want to be with Jesus...that is far better. But it is more necessary for you to be here at this time. God has some mission for you to complete. Is it a prayer you need to pray? Is it a level of maturity you need to advance to? Is it something you need to learn? Is it a believer you need to disciple? Is it unbelievers in your life with whom you need to share the gospel? Is it finances you need to give for the advance of the gospel? God isn't finished with you until you reach the finish line.

## 6. Striving Side by Side for the Gospel (Php 1:27-30).

- a. The Philippians are obligated to live as gospel-minded citizens (Php 1:27).
  - (1) **Php 1:27** 27 Only discharge your obligation as citizens (πολιτεύομαι, pres.) in a manner worthy of the gospel of Messiah, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you...
    - (a) πολιτεύομαι: "[T]o be a citizen, have one's citizenship/home...; to conduct one's life, *live, lead one's life*" (BDAG, 846).

- (b) The Philippians understand it is important for them to act like Roman citizens, even though they are thousands of miles away from Rome, because they are in fact Roman citizens.
- (2) Illustration: meeting a Kiwi in Europe or Asia.
- (3) Paul urges them to act like heavenly citizens, even though they are millions of miles away from heaven, because they are in fact heavenly citizens.
- (a) **Php 3:20** 20 But our citizenship is in heaven....
- b. The Philippians are to be unified as they strive together for the gospel (Php 1:27).
- (1) **Php 1:27** 27 ...That you are standing firm in one spirit (πνεῦμα), with one mind (ψυχή) contending (συναθλέω, pres.) side by side for the faith of the gospel....
- (a) συναθλέω: “[C]ontend/struggle along with” (BDAG, 964).
- (2) Illustration: Roman phalanx.
- (3) Illustration: NZ All Blacks Scrum Practice (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt9MuKZGOiA>).
- c. The Philippians’ side by side unity and courage is a sign to their opponents (Php 1:28).
- (1) **Php 1:28** 28 ...And not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a proof (ἔνδειξις) to them....
- (2) Paul and his associates in Rome are courageous. The Philippians are to be courageous, too.
- (a) **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.
- (b) **Php 1:20** 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.
- (3) Illustration: When the All Blacks stand shoulder to shoulder and engage in a Haka, it is a sign to their opponents they will be destroyed on the rugby pitch ([https://youtu.be/yiKFYTFJ\\_kw?t=48](https://youtu.be/yiKFYTFJ_kw?t=48))
- d. The Philippians will be delivered by God, but their opponents will be destroyed (Php 1:28).
- (1) **Php 1:28** 28 This is a proof (ἔνδειξις) to them of their destruction (ἀπώλεια), but of your deliverance, and that from God.
- (a) ἔνδειξις: “[S]ometh. that points to or serves as an indicator of someth., *sign, omen*...; someth. that compels acceptance of someth. mentally or emotionally, *demonstration, proof*” (BDAG, 332).
- (2) Salvation and destruction hinges on one thing only—belief or disbelief in Jesus.
- (a) **Jn 3:16-18** 16 ...God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
- (3) Perhaps some of the Philippians’ opponents will believe in Jesus and be saved.
- (a) **Ac 16:30-31** 30 Then [the Philippian 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.

- e. The Philippians have believed into Jesus. They are justified for eternal life (Php 1:29).  
(1) **Php 1:29** 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Messiah you should not only believe (πιστεύω, pres.) into (εἰς) him....
- f. Engaged in conflict, the Philippians must expect to suffer for Jesus (Php 1:29).  
(1) **Php 1:29** 29 ...But also suffer (πάσχω, pres.) for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict (ἁγών)<sup>27</sup> that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.  
(2) The world hated Jesus before it hated Paul and the Philippians.  
(a) **Jn 15:18-21** 18 If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.  
(3) Those who are persecuted for Jesus are blessed and will be rewarded.  
(a) **Mt 5:10-12** 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when others revile you, persecute you, and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.  
(4) All who desire to live a godly life in Jesus will be persecuted.  
(a) **2 Ti 3:10-12** 10 You [Timothy]...have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me [Paul] at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured. Yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Messiah Jesus will be persecuted...

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<sup>27</sup> “[A] struggle against opposition, *struggle, fight*” (BDAG, 17).

*Notes*