

Philippians

Chapter 1

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

We thank you for your provision. We thank you for your Spirit. We pray for understanding as we begin this next book. Your word is food for our soul, and is powerful. Help us to tune out all distraction so that our study might be fruitful. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen!

Chapters 1 and 2 cover the doctrine of Christian fellowship.

S.O.

<u>Philippians Chapters 1-2</u> The Doctrine of Christian Fellowship

C.O.

<u>Philippians 1:1-2</u> The Preface

First we have the preface in Verses 1 and 2.

The introduction:

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1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

It says, Paul and Timotheus, and Timotheus is the transliteration of the Greek word for Timothy.

Paul and Timotheus, the servants, or literally slaves of Jesus Christ,

I think it's interesting that Paul does not introduce himself with his apostolic authority. He says Timothy and I and we're slaves, because he's ministering about fellowship.

There's nobody in high rank in fellowship. Everyone is the servant and slave of all. So Paul presents himself, and even though he's an apostle, he presents himself as a slave!

Paul and Timothy, the slaves of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi,

And again the word saints, every believer in Christ is titled a saint. The word saint means set apart. It's the same word that's used for holy in the term Holy Spirit.

So when the Holy Spirit comes into my life, I get set apart. I'm considered holy, not in performance but in position. I get set apart by Christ.

So what he's saying is to all the set apart ones in Jesus Christ, who are in Philippi.

But then he adds leadership to this. He says with the bishops and deacons:

So he also includes leadership and it shows that Philippi has a developed church where they have official leadership within the church.

The word bishop, Episkopos, sounds like Episcopalian.

Well, that's where you get Episcopalian from. Epi, and Skopos means overseer. Epi means over, and Skopos means scope, to scope over or to be an overseer of a church.

It's applied to pastors and all leaders that are in positions of overseeing the entire fellowship of believers.

Now for a deacon. The word deacon itself, Diakonos means a waiter, like in a restaurant.

And you understand that sense that a deacon is the expression and an extension of the pastoral or ministry leadership in the church, in that they take care of waiting on and taking care of the physical elements in the church or in people's lives which gives the pastors/overseers freedom to study the word and pray.

We see the first instance of it in Acts Chapter 6. They are not called deacons but they are described as deaconing, the verb form. And from that came the term deacon.

That's where the Hellenistic Jews were being overlooked in the distribution of food. And so the disciples said choose out from amongst you seven men who have a testimony amongst you as being under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to take care of this matter so that we can give ourselves to the word and prayer.

Acts Chapter 6 is a perfect example of what deaconing is. It's the extension of the leadership and ministry of the church in order to take care of and wait on people and the physical needs of the church.

So Paul is addressing the overseers and the deacons, the leadership in the church in Philippi, along with all of those who are set apart in Christ Jesus.

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Secondly, the salutation in Verse 2:

**2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father,
and from the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Paul's typical Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father,
and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is the greeting to the Greeks, and peace is the greeting to the Jews.**

Peace is the word Shalom. The Jews always say Shalom coming or going. And of course the Greeks, even in opening their letters would say grace, but they would say it in the form of rejoicing because grace, and joy, and rejoice all come from the same root word.

So he's saying grace to you and peace. That's the greeting to the Greeks, and greeting to the Hebrews. But, he's showing that he's not giving the normal greeting because the source for the grace and the peace is from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's God's peace, and God's grace to you!

So Paul begins this letter with a prayer. And we see both a prayer and a petition. And by the way, those are two different words in the bible. The King James says prayer and supplication.

There's general prayer for thanksgiving, telling people how much they mean to you, but the supplication is a petition, something specific that he would be praying or we would be praying for someone that only applies to them, some kind of need that they might have.

So Paul's prayer in Verses 3 through 8:

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

We know that joy means satisfaction. What Paul is saying is that when I pray, I am satisfied in my spirit when I remember you.

And here's what he remembers about them:

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

When is now? 10 years later. 10 years after Paul first evangelized Philippi, he says I have such a satisfaction in my spirit, just remembering you and giving thanks for you, because of your fellowship, Koinonia, in the gospel from the first day until now.

He says you're involved in the study and the proclamation of the word of God from day one.

Now that is a blessing. That's something that Paul, or anybody in position of ministry can be satisfied about. From the beginning they were involved!

It's interesting that Jesus in John Chapter 8 Verses 30 to 32, as he spoke these words, that is when He finished, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed.

The word indeed in the Greek is the word genuine. Then are you my genuine disciples. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

So I think that's kind of interesting that Jesus said "Well, you believe, but genuine disciples, genuine believers continue in the word.

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Now that's not something that somebody has to work at. The reason why Jesus says that is because it's the Holy Spirit that continues to drive us, to show us our need, and to hunger.

Nobody has to tell me that when I get hungry I need to eat because I get hungry and I eat. Sometimes people have to tell me to stop!

But for a believer that has the Spirit of God in them, the Spirit of God feeds them. It's God's design to feed them through the hearing of the word.

It's God's Spirit that produces the hunger. It's God's Spirit that brings the conviction of my need. Why? It's because God saved me and now He wants to transform my mind. But He can't do that if I'm occupied and I'm everywhere else.

And that is the problem that we have, the occupation of the attention of the mind.

But it is interesting that Paul says after 10 years, my satisfaction and my thanksgiving to God is for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

A pastor's joy is for people to consistently and faithfully be in God's word and see their lives changed and transformed. A pastor should have no satisfaction in just preaching and teaching.

If it's not being worked out in people's lives, the pastor should not be satisfied. If it's just head knowledge, and God's Spirit is not convicting and working it out, what's the point?

M.V.

Philippians 1:6

Now it is interesting that in Verse 6, which is a favorite verse for a lot of people, including myself, but I want to point out to you that in the Greek text, Verse 6 is based on Verse 5.

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Notice how it says being confident.

It's actually a perfect tense, having become confident. Why? Because they've been in fellowship with the gospel from the first day until now.

They've been in fellowship with the gospel, so confidently Paul can say about this very thing that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform, literally complete it, until the day of Jesus Christ:

That's quite a promise. But he didn't say that for all people. He says because you have been in the word from the first day until now, I can tell you that God's promise to you is that whatever work He began in you, He's going to complete it until Christ comes.

He didn't say for all people who profess to be Christians because not all professing Christians are saved, especially in our religious system in our country.

So the confidence comes because they've been in the word since the first day they were saved.

The participation in fellowship, Verses 7 and 8:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

Even as it is meet, or right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, that is his chains, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, you are partakers of my grace.

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This is the second time the word fellowship is found. Partakers is the word for fellowship.

Paul's imprisoned in Rome, 700 miles away, and he says that it's right for me to think this of you because I have you in my heart, and that the same grace that's keeping me and ministering to me and through me here in Rome, you are participating in 700 miles away. It's the same grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

For God is my record, or more literally witness, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

The Greeks, when they wrote, they used the internal organs of the body to express the reality of their affections. He's trying to say it's not surface.

He says that knowing that you're right here with me, but you're 700 miles away, that you would send your pastor with a love offering to help me out and to stay with me and minister to me for a while before I send him back, and to hear him tell me of all the prayers that you have for me, he says that gets me. I've got you right here in my heart.

We're one. That's what fellowship is all about, the unity and the oneness, participating together not only in the gospel but in grace. It's the same grace!

C.O.

Philippians 1:9-11
The Petition of Paul

The petition of Paul:

We've had his prayer, but now his petition, the edification of fellowship. There's actually growth in fellowship.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more.

Notice that he didn't pray that they would get love. A genuine believer already has love, the Agape love, because God is love. If you have Christ living in you, you have His love.

So he says that it might abound yet more and more, and notice that it's in two areas.

First of all in knowledge, or full knowledge literally. So as you grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, love abounds more and more.

Secondly: and in all judgment;

This word has to do with sensitivity, that you would have a sensitivity of what's right and wrong, rather than being deceived.

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

Purposes:

That you may approve the things that are excellent;

The word approve means to put it to the test. It's approval after testing. So he says I want you to grow in love, in knowledge, and in judgement, so that you can put things to the test and come to a determination and a decision about the things that are excellent verses those things that are false.

Another purpose, is that you may be sincere and without offence.

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The word sincere as I mentioned to you some time ago is a word that has to do with putting water in some kind of clear container and holding it up to the sun in order to see the elements that are in the water.

So what he's saying here is that sincerity means that you're just an open book. You're held up to the word. You're held up to the light. You have nothing to hide. Everything's out in the open.

He says I want you to approve the things that are excellent so that you may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

By being filled with the fruit of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ,

He produces the fruit of righteousness. And he says that's what I want your life to produce, and not be caught up in false teaching which is going to diminish your testimony.

And all of this unto the glory and the praise of God.

C.O.

Philippians 1:12-30 The Philosophy of Paul

Now the philosophy of Paul in dealing with fellowship. First of all, the function of fellowship in Verses 12 through 14:

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

But I would you should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out, or happened, rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

So Paul says the first thing that I want you to know is that me being in prisoned here in Rome, I am a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I was put here, and everything that has happened to me to put me here has happened for the furtherance of the gospel. It was not because he had done anything wrong.

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

So that my bonds, or chains in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all the other places;

You see, one of the things that you do not want to do is if you have arrested the apostle Paul for no reason, and you're going to put him under house arrest for two years, which means that a soldier has to be chained to his arm, 24 hours a day, in 6 hour shifts for two years, is that he's not going to sit there and complain.

He's going to say "Hi buddy, oh you don't want to hear the gospel? Guess what, we're chained!" I mean who's the prisoner here? The soldier was his prisoner!

As we saw in Ephesians Chapter 6, it wasn't just that he was chained to a soldier that he presented the armor, but a lot of those were Old Testament quotes. The armor of God was known by the Jews.

So Paul is there and it causes him to remember all of that. But he's there ministering and he's actually allowed to have visitors. So those soldiers have to stand there while he converses with other brothers that are there.

So he says I want to let you know that me being here is for the furtherance of the gospel, and for all the patrolling guards. All of the soldiers are starting to receive Christ, and we will see at the end that some of Herod's family started believing in Christ.

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So if you want to arrest Paul to get him off the streets so he can't preach, you've got the wrong guy. You don't even want to put him in a dungeon where someone takes him food because he's going to talk to them about Christ.

So he says, number one, the furtherance of the gospel is that many in the palace and even the regions beyond are hearing the gospel.

Secondly, in Verse 14:

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

What's he's saying is look at Paul. Look at his difficult circumstances. It was an encouragement to them to look at Paul preach the gospel and it gave them confidence. And they became more bold to speak the word.

So Paul's philosophy, first of all he's there in prison and the function of fellowship is all the time. Prison does not cut off fellowship nor God's work.

And it is interesting again, the people in Philippi, 700 miles away are supporting him and praying for him, even sending their pastor to him.

But there's opposition in fellowship, Verses 15 to 21:

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

He says some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife;

Hard to believe huh? To preach Christ in such a way so as to divide people from other people!

And some also of good will: That is of good motives.

Now the same contrast in Verse 16:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, which is the word for pure. Their motives are not pure when they are preaching the gospel.

Supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

Some people would actually go to the places that Paul preached and say did you hear where Paul's at? And they would say no, what's happening? He's in prison in Rome. What happened? I told you to stay away from that guy. He's a "jailbird." He's always involved in fights and riots and they arrest him all over the place. I told you not to listen to him. And then they bring in their false doctrine.

So Paul says some people even preach Christ in a way so as to even add more affliction to his imprisonment.

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

But others out of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

So you have two different kinds of people!

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

We know what the rejoice means. It means satisfied.

Obviously Paul's not happy that people are coming between him and other people and there's a division happening in the fellowship in the body of Christ.

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But he has to be satisfied with it all because in the midst of it all, Christ is being preached. And all the things that are wrong about what these other people are doing, Christ is being preached!

So he says that's my satisfaction. That also saves him from growing bitter against those who are treating him unjustly, and it allows him to keep the fellowship, the unity of the fellowship in the bond of peace.

M.V.

Philippians 1:19

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

For I know that this shall turn to my salvation

Now I want to get technical with you for a moment. The term to my salvation is literally "for me for salvation."

You might say what's the difference? It's not Paul's salvation. But he knows that in his situation, it's going to be for him for the preaching of the gospel and the salvation of other people.

But notice that it's through two things:

Through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

There you go. The fellowship of believers that are bonded together through prayer, and the supply of God's Spirit, that's it. That's all you need!

M.V.

Philippians 1:20

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body,

What is Paul's philosophy about service to Christ in fellowship? How can he allow himself to be abused and mistreated by other Christians? How can he allow himself to be persecuted in his service for Christ?

Because his philosophy was, may Christ be magnified in my body, whether it be through life or through death.

M.V.

Philippians 1:21

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

If you ever want a good definition for glorifying the Lord in your life, it would be Verses 20 and 21.

What does it mean to glorify the Lord? It's to have His substance seen in and through your life. That's what Paul said, may Christ be magnified in my body. May Christ be magnified in my life and expressed to everybody around me so that no matter what happens to me, others will see Christ, whether it be through life or through death.

His philosophy is for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I like that!

So this brings up the motivation for fellowship:

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

He says but if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. That is I do not know.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

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For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more necessary for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy, that is satisfaction, of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

What he's saying is "I really would like to go be with the Lord."

This is not the kind of life that you want to stick around for, you know? Unless you like being in prison and creating riots!

But he says I really would like to go be with the Lord. It has much more priority for me and desire than here.

Some of us have trouble giving up our life here for Christ because this life means "so much" to us.

And Paul says for me to live is Christ. If I have to stay here, then that's what my life is going to be about, Jesus Christ, and to minister to those so that they can have a furtherance, or advancement, and satisfaction of faith.

So he says in that you would rejoice in Christ for me coming to you again.

Then he shows the motivation for fellowship in his philosophy, the position in fellowship:

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

He says only let your conversation, which is the word citizenship. The word conversation is the word citizenship.

Only let your citizenship be as it becomes the gospel of Christ:

The word becomes means worthy. Again, the balance scales in the markets. You put an item on one side that you want to purchase, and you have to put money on the other side to where it equals out.

And Paul is saying let your life equal out to the ministry of the gospel and truth of Jesus Christ, that whether I come to see you, or be absent, I may hear of your affairs,

Here's what he wants to hear:

Number one, that you stand firm. That's the same message from back in Ephesians.

In one spirit, in one mind, literally soul, while striving together for the faith of the gospel;

The term striving together is the word Sunathletos, Sun (pronounced soon) for with, and Athletos for the word athletic.

You function together as a team for the furtherance of the gospel. No division. You're under the influence of the same Spirit. You're like one soul. You're like one person rather than a bunch of individuals.

The persecution in fellowship:

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28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

All of this, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries:

This is great. Listen to this. Here's Paul's philosophy: Don't be scared off by the opposition.

Because of this:

Which is to them the evident token of perdition, destruction.

It's evidence that they're not saved. But to you of salvation, and that's of God.

Well, if you're going to oppose the gospel, it shows that you're not saved. It shows that you're another person that I need to pray for rather than take it personal.

In none of this do you see Paul taking it personal. He sees purpose in everything about fellowship. He doesn't let any of these issues become a dividing point in fellowship.

M.V.

Philippians 1:29

Now listen to this. These are powerful.

The reason why he says be nothing terrified by your adversaries:

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

For unto you it is given, and by the way, the word given is the word graced.

God has blessed you, favored you, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Isn't that good news? It's God's will!

Like Peter says in his letter, why are you so surprised for the fiery trials that come up against you?

It's God's will that not only you believe, but that you suffer for the sake of Christ.

M.V.

Philippians 1:30

Listen to this:

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Having the same conflict, and that's the word agony. Having the same agony which you saw in me, and now you hear to be in me.

Paul says you want to know what it looks like, what I just told you about believing and suffering? It's the same agony that you see in my life, as I like an athlete battle with the opponent all day long.

That's not just God's will for Paul. That's for every believer.

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again we thank you for the time we have to spend in your word. We thank you for all things, not just the good in our lives, but even the for

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the difficult circumstances we are put in. We thank you for Paul's ministry and for his example.

Help us to understand what it means to glorify you so that others might see you through us. We desire to know you more and more each day. We ask that you continue to draw us to your word. Give us that hunger and desire to continue on. Again we thank you, and it is in Jesus' name we pray, Amen!