**The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians**

**Philippians Chapter 1**

OPENING GREETING (1:1-11)  
Salutation

1Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ[[1]](#footnote-13280) Jesus, to all the holy ones in *union with* Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons. 2Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer

3I thank my God every time I remember you. 4In every prayer of mine for you, I always pray with joy 5because of your participation in *the advancement of* the good news from the first day until now. 6I am convinced of this: that he who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the Day of Christ Jesus. 7It is only right for me to think this way about all of you because I have you in my heart both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the good news, *and* because all of you are partakers of grace together with me. 8Indeed, God is my witness, how I long for you all with the deep affection[[2]](#footnote-12985) of Christ Jesus.

9And I keep praying this: that your love will continue to increase more and more in *connection with* knowledge and every kind of insight, 10so that you can determine the things that are best in order to be pure and without offense until the Day of Christ, 11being filled with the fruit of righteousness that *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

PAUL’S CIRCUMSTANCES AND OUTLOOK (1:12-29)  
Advancing the Good News

12Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the things that happened to me have actually served to advance the good news. 13As a result *of those things*, my imprisonment for *preaching* Christ has become well-known throughout the whole imperial guard,[[3]](#footnote-26468) and to everyone else. 14Also, most of *our* brothers and sisters, having become confident in the Lord because of my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word of God without fear.

15Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ out of envy and rivalry, but some out of good will. 16The latter *do it* out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the good news, 17but the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not with pure motives, intending to cause trouble for me in my imprisonment.

Live or Die for Christ

18What really matters? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, 19because I know that through your prayer and the help of the spirit of Jesus Christ, this will end in my salvation, 20as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22But if I continue to live in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful work for me. Yet what I would prefer, I do not know. 23Now I am hard-pressed between the two, having the intense desire to depart and to be with Christ because that is far better, 24yet to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25And since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith,[[4]](#footnote-21526) 26so that your reason for boasting in Christ Jesus will continue to increase because of me by my coming to you again.

LIVING A SANCTIFIED LIFE (1:27-2:30)  
Live as Citizens of Heaven

27Above all, conduct yourselves as citizens *of heaven* in a manner worthy of the good news of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one soul, contending together for the faith that is based on the good news, 28and are not being frightened in any way by those who oppose you, which is a clear sign to them of *their* destruction, but of your salvation, and this is from God. 29For on behalf of Christ, you have been graciously given *the privilege* not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake, 30since you are experiencing the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

**Philippians Chapter 2**

Live Humbly and Sincerely

1Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ,[[5]](#footnote-29361) if any comfort from love, if any fellowship based on the spirit, if any compassion[[6]](#footnote-31269) or mercy, 2*then* make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, *and* *being* united together with *one* soul—of one mind. 3Do nothing out of selfish ambition or out of conceit, but in humility value others as more important than yourselves. 4Each of you should look out not *only* for his own interests, but also for the interests of each other.

Christ’s Example of Humility

5Have this mindset in you that was also in Christ Jesus, 6who, though being in the appearance of God,[[7]](#footnote-21016) did not consider equality with God something to be grasped at, 7but *instead* he emptied himself by taking the appearance of a servant, becoming like *the rest of* humankind. And being found as an ordinary human,[[8]](#footnote-24977) 8he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death—even death on a cross! 9And therefore God raised him to the highest place *of honor* and gave him the name that is above every name, 10so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth— 11and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Live as Lights in the World

12So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13because it is God who is working in you both to want *to do*, and to do, his good pleasure. 14Do all things without complaining or arguing 15so that you are blameless and pure, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation. Shine among them as lights in the world 16as you hold fast the word of life, so that I have a reason for boasting on the Day of Christ, that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17Indeed, even if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* upon the sacrifice and service coming from your trust, I rejoice and share *my* joy with you all, 18and in the same way you also should rejoice and share *your* joy with me.

Paul Commends Timothy

19Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too will be cheered up when I learn how you are doing. 20For I have no one *else* that is like-minded,[[9]](#footnote-24211) who will genuinely care for your interests, 21because they are all seeking their own interests, not the interests of Jesus Christ. 22But you know his proven character, that like a child with a father, he has served with me in *the advancement of* the good news. 23Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things will go with me, 24although I have confidence in the Lord that I myself will also come soon.

Paul Commends Epaphroditus

25Meanwhile, I consider it necessary to send Epaphroditus to you—my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and servant to me in my need— 26since he has been longing for you all and was very troubled because you heard that he was sick. 27For indeed he was sick, close to death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28Therefore, I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you can rejoice, and so that I will be less anxious *about you*. 29So welcome him *as a brother* in the Lord with all joy and hold people like him in high regard, 30because for the work of Christ he came near to death, risking his life in order to provide what you were not able to in your service to me.

**Philippians Chapter 3**

WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT (3:1-4:1)  
Warning Against Jewish Opponents

1Furthermore, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is not troublesome for me, and it is a safeguard for you.

2Beware of the dogs! Beware of the evil workers! Beware of those who mutilate *the flesh*! 3For we are the ones who are *truly* circumcised, the ones who are serving by the spirit of God and boasting in Christ[[10]](#footnote-25323) Jesus and not putting any confidence in the flesh, 4although I myself have *reasons for putting* such confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he has *a reason for* confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5circumcised on the eighth day; of the people of Israel; of the tribe of Benjamin; a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6in regard to zeal, persecuting the church; in regard to the righteousness that is in the law, I was blameless.

Knowing Christ

7But everything that was gain to me, these *things* I have considered as loss because of Christ. 8But even more than that, I consider all things as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things—and consider them dung—in order to gain Christ 9and be found in *union with* him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that is through trust in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God based on trust. 10*My goal is* to know him: *to experience* the power of his resurrection and to share in his sufferings, becoming like him in his *obedience unto* death, 11that through whatever happens,[[11]](#footnote-30303) I will arrive at the resurrection from among the dead.

Striving Toward the Heavenly Calling

12Not that I have already obtained *these things*, or have already reached the goal *of knowing him*,[[12]](#footnote-23429) but I press on to take hold of *the goal* for which also Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of *it.* But one thing *I do*: letting go of the things that are behind and reaching forward to the things that are ahead, 14I press on toward the goal in order to *win* the prize promised in God’s calling to what is above[[13]](#footnote-14499) in *connection with* Christ Jesus. 15So then, all who are mature must think this way, and if you think differently about anything, God will reveal that to you too. 16In any case, let us live up to that which we have already attained.[[14]](#footnote-12403)

Imitating Paul’s Conduct

17Brothers and sisters, join with others in being imitators of me, and pay attention to those who are walking according to the pattern you have *seen* in us. 18For I have told you often, and now tell you again in tears, that many walk as enemies of the cross of Christ, 19whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things. 20But our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21who will transform our lowly body[[15]](#footnote-30197) *so* it will have the same form as his glorious body, by the power that also enables him to subject all things to himself.

**Philippians Chapter 4**

Imitating Paul’s Conduct (cont.)

1So then, my brothers and sisters, my beloved whom I long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.[[16]](#footnote-23908)

EXHORTATIONS IN UNITY, JOY, AND PEACE (4:2-9)  
Settle Disputes

2I exhort Euodia and I exhort Syntyche to be like-minded in the Lord. 3Yes, I ask you also, loyal co-laborer,[[17]](#footnote-14145) help these women who contended together with me in *spreading* the good news along with both Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord

4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! 5Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Pray and Experience God’s Peace

6Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, through prayer and petitions with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, 7and *as a result,* the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts *since you are* in *union with* Christ[[18]](#footnote-19479) Jesus.

Direct Your Thoughts

8Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is righteous, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if there is anything virtuous, and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9Put into practice the things that you learned and received and heard and saw in me, and the God of peace will be with you all.

FINAL REMARKS (4:10-23)  
Giving Thanks for Support

10I greatly rejoice in the Lord that now at last your concern for me has blossomed again. Of course, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked the opportunity *to show it*. 11I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am *in*. 12I know what it is to have little, and I also know what it is to have an abundance. In any and every situation I have learned the secret *to being content*, whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need. 13I have strength for all situations in *union with* him[[19]](#footnote-11761) who empowers me. 14Nevertheless, you have done well by sharing with me in my affliction.

15And you Philippians also know that in the beginning of the good news, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in regard to giving and receiving except you alone. 16Even *when I was* in Thessalonica you sent *gifts* more than once for my need. 17Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that accumulates to your account. 18But I have received everything *you sent* and *now* have an abundance. *My needs* have been supplied because I received from Epaphroditus the things *that came* from you—*which are* a sweet-smelling fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19And my God will supply your every need according to his riches in glory[[20]](#footnote-18763) in *connection with* Christ Jesus. 20To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Farewell Greetings

21Greet every holy one in Christ Jesus. The brothers and sisters who are with me greet you. 22All the holy ones greet you, especially those who are of Caesar’s household.

23The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

1. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-13280)
2. Lit. “bowels” [↑](#footnote-ref-12985)
3. Lit. “praetorian guard,” the private army the emperor used to protect himself. [↑](#footnote-ref-26468)
4. “Faith” refers to the Christian Faith. [↑](#footnote-ref-21526)
5. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-29361)
6. Lit. “bowels,” referring to the seat of one’s emotions [↑](#footnote-ref-31269)
7. Or “of a god” [↑](#footnote-ref-21016)
8. Lit. “as a human in his appearance” [↑](#footnote-ref-24977)
9. Lit. “of equal soul” [↑](#footnote-ref-24211)
10. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-25323)
11. Lit. “if somehow” [↑](#footnote-ref-30303)
12. Lit. “have already been perfected” [↑](#footnote-ref-23429)
13. Or “the upward calling of God” [↑](#footnote-ref-14499)
14. Lit. “to what we have attained, let us keep in line with the same.” [↑](#footnote-ref-12403)
15. Lit. “the body of our lowliness” [↑](#footnote-ref-30197)
16. Phil. 4:1 is the close of chapter 3. Phil. 4:2 actually starts chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-23908)
17. Lit. “true yokefellow” [↑](#footnote-ref-14145)
18. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-19479)
19. Or “through him” [↑](#footnote-ref-11761)
20. Or “his glorious riches” [↑](#footnote-ref-18763)