

# PHILIPPIANS

## **The saints in Philippi (1:1-2)**

**1** From Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.  
To all our fellow saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, to all who have been called by Him and are set apart to live for Him; and to all those in leadership and ministry among you, those whom God has placed in authority to oversee your lives and to serve you in His Name.

<sup>2</sup>May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ impart grace and peace to you all.

## **Paul's love for the Philippian church (1:3-11)**

<sup>3</sup>I am so thankful to God whenever I think of you. <sup>4,5</sup>I pray regularly for you all with great joy because I know you partner with me in spreading the gospel. You have done this from the very beginning of our relationship and you continue to do so. <sup>6</sup>This causes me to be confident that, because the Lord has begun such a good work in you, He will enable you to complete the purpose He has for you as you await the Lord Jesus Christ's return.

<sup>7</sup>My attitude towards you all is justified because I have such love for you in my heart. You share God's grace with me no matter what my situation, whether I am in chains for the gospel or speaking out boldly and defending the truth of God's Word. <sup>8</sup>God Himself knows how deep my affection is for you all, not a carnal affection but that which comes from Christ Jesus. I simply long to be with you.

<sup>9</sup>This is what I pray for you: that your love for God and for one another will become stronger and stronger, that you grow to know Him better and will have great depth of insight into the truth. <sup>10</sup>For then you will be able to discern God's best purposes, and you will walk in pure and blameless love until Christ calls you home. <sup>11</sup>You will bear much fruit because of the right relationship you have with God that is only possible through Jesus Christ. And you will live for God's praise and glory.

**Making Jesus known to others (1:12-18)**

<sup>12</sup>My dear brothers, I want you to understand that God has allowed what has happened to me so that it can be used to further the work of the gospel. <sup>13</sup>The whole palace guard and all others here know clearly that I am in these chains because I serve Christ. <sup>14</sup>These chains of mine have even encouraged most of our brothers in the Lord to be more courageous and fearless in the way they proclaim God's Word!

<sup>15</sup>It is a sad fact that some preach Christ out of wrong motives of envy and rivalry; but others preach out of right motives, seeking the good of those to whom they witness. <sup>16</sup>They share the truth with others in love, and they are well aware that I am in this present situation only because I have defended the truth of the gospel.

<sup>17</sup>Those who preach Christ out of selfish ambition are not sincere, and they take the opportunity to speak against me because I am confined in these chains. <sup>18</sup>Does this really matter? Well, even if their motives are false, at least Christ is being preached! But how much better it is when people's motives are right and true. Yet I rejoice in every way in which Jesus is made known to others.

**Live for Christ (1:19-30)**

<sup>19</sup>No situation will stop me continuing to rejoice, for I know that I am strengthened by your prayers for me, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ continues to help me. So what has happened to me will end in my freedom. <sup>20</sup>My expectation and hope is that I will not act in any way of which I would be ashamed, but will be given the courage I need so that Christ will continue to be exalted in my body, whether I live or die.

<sup>21</sup>The way I see things is clear; if I live it will be for Christ, and if I die it will gain my heavenly inheritance in Him. <sup>22</sup>If I continue to live in this present body I can continue to work fruitfully for God's Kingdom. What choice would I make if it was left to me? I am not sure! <sup>23</sup>I feel drawn in both directions: One part of me longs to depart this present world and be with Christ in His glory; that would surely be the better option. <sup>24</sup>But another part of me is willing to remain in this present body if, by doing so, I can continue to serve you.

<sup>25</sup>That being the case, I know that I will make the decision to remain with you and will continue to help you in any way I can, so that you will progress in your faith with true joy. <sup>26</sup>I want your joy in Christ Jesus to overflow because I have been restored to you again.

<sup>27-28</sup> However, no matter what happens, it is important that you behave in ways that are worthy of Christ's gospel. For then whether I come and visit you again or can only hear about you because I am separated from you, I will be confident that you are united together for the faith of the gospel and do not allow any opposition to cause you to hold back through fear.

Your faith will be a warning to those who oppose the truth, that they will be destroyed but that you will be saved by God Himself. <sup>29</sup>Through Christ it has been given you, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him. <sup>30</sup>This is why you experience the same struggle that I continue to suffer, as you have heard.

### **Humility (2:1-11)**

**2** See what great encouragement you have because you are united with Christ. Look at how you are strengthened by His love for you. And because you live at one with the Spirit, you are tender-hearted and compassionate. <sup>2</sup>So you will complete my joy if you are united in the way you think, in the love you have for each other and in the way you live in the Spirit to fulfil God's purpose.

<sup>3</sup>To fulfil these aims, be sure never to act out of selfish ambition. And do not be conceited, for that is only empty vanity. Rather, live humbly, thinking that others are better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Yes, you will have to be responsible about your own affairs, but you should be equally concerned about the interests of others around you. <sup>5</sup>In fact your attitude should reflect that of Christ Jesus Himself:

<sup>6</sup>By nature He is God, but He did not hold onto His divine status of being equal in heaven with the Father.

<sup>7</sup>He was prepared to make Himself nothing, taking the nature of a servant and becoming thoroughly human.

<sup>8</sup>He was a man in every respect, even though He retained His divinity. Even so, He humbled Himself to such an extent that He obeyed the Father's will, that He should die the death of a criminal on the cross. <sup>9</sup>Because of His obedience, God the Father has now exalted Him to the highest place in heaven, and has given Him the Name that is far superior to any other name. <sup>10</sup>Every knee in heaven, on earth and even in the underworld, will bow at the Name of Jesus. <sup>11</sup>Every tongue will have to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, for this is the Father's glorious will.

**Faithful witnesses (2:12-18)**

<sup>12</sup>My dear friends, you see why it has been so important for you to obey the Lord, not only when I am with you but even more when we are apart. Continue to live as those who are saved, who fear the Lord, dreading the idea of ever denying Him. <sup>13</sup>For God Himself is at work within you so that you want to do what is good in His eyes.

<sup>14-16</sup>Therefore, there is to be no complaining or arguing among you, no matter what you are asked to do, for this will enable you to become blameless and pure, living as God's children in an unrighteous and depraved generation. You are to shine like the stars in the universe as you share the Word of life with others. Then on the great Day of the Lord I will be able to boast that all my work among you was not for nothing.

<sup>17</sup>Even if my life was poured out in sacrifice, even if it is costly to serve you so that you live as people of faith, I am content and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup>That being the case, it is only right that you should also be content and rejoicing with me.

**Paul commends his colleagues (2:19-30)**

<sup>19</sup>I hope that it will be the Lord's will to send Timothy to you in the near future, for then he will be able to bring me news about you, and that will encourage me. <sup>20</sup>He is unique in the way he is genuinely concerned about your welfare. <sup>21</sup>Everyone seems more concerned about their own interests than those of Jesus Christ! <sup>22</sup>But Timothy has already proved himself, as you know. He regards me as his spiritual father and, like a good son, he has served with me in working for the gospel. <sup>23</sup>This is why I hope to send him to you just as soon as I can spare him. <sup>24</sup>And I trust the Lord that my circumstances will change so that I will soon be able to visit you myself.

<sup>25</sup>Meanwhile, I think it expedient to send my brother Epaphroditus back to you. He is my fellow worker and soldier along with me. And he is your messenger, whom you sent to care for me. <sup>26</sup>But he misses you all and was really upset that you heard about his illness. <sup>27</sup>He was very sick and almost died; but God showed His mercy and healed him. That was God showing mercy to me as well as him, to save me from any further sorrow on top of what I was already experiencing.

<sup>28</sup>This is why I am so keen to send him back to you, for you will be reassured when you see him, instead of being anxious about his welfare. <sup>29</sup>Welcome him back, joyfully thanking God for him. Always honour men like him. <sup>30</sup>It was because of his faithfulness to the

work of Christ that he almost died. He was prepared to risk his life to help me in ways you are unable to fulfil.

### **Righteousness through faith in Christ (3:1-11)**

**3** My brothers, rejoice in the Lord! I do not consider it a burden to remind you of this again and again for your own good. Keep rejoicing in the Lord!

<sup>2-3</sup> Be on your guard for those who want to draw you away from the truth. They are no better than dogs. All they want to do is mutilate the flesh, whereas we are those who are truly circumcised by the Spirit working in our hearts. It is by the Spirit that we worship and our glory is in Christ Jesus, not in what is done to the flesh. We put absolutely no confidence in the flesh.

<sup>4</sup> If it would be justifiable for anyone to put confidence in these outward physical things, I would certainly be the first to qualify! <sup>5-6</sup> Yes, as a Jew I was circumcised on the eighth day; I certainly belong to the people of Israel. I belong to the tribe of Benjamin, a true Hebrew of the Hebrews. I kept the law like a good Pharisee and was full of zeal in the way I persecuted the church. And I was perfect in my legalistic righteousness!

<sup>7</sup> I used to think all these things were to my credit, and yet now I have Christ I realise I gained nothing from them. <sup>8-9</sup> So I now regard those things as worthless compared to the greatest privilege of all, of knowing Christ Jesus as my Lord. For His sake I left everything of the past behind and considered those things rubbish, so that I could have Christ and live in Him. Seeking my own righteousness through obeying the law was futile when compared to the righteousness I have now through faith in Christ. This is the true righteousness that comes as a gift from God and can only be received through faith in Christ.

<sup>10-11</sup> I want to know Christ and His resurrection power. I am prepared to be at one with Him by sharing in His sufferings. Like Him, I am ready to die for the truth and then somehow by His power be raised from the dead.

### **Aim for the prize (3:12-16)**

<sup>12</sup> I do not claim to have received all that God has for me, neither have I yet been made perfect. But I am always moving forward to take hold of everything that Christ Jesus had planned to give me when He laid hold of my life.

<sup>13</sup>My brothers, I know I have not yet appropriated everything; but I maintain my focus. So I forget what lies behind me in the past and I reach out with longing for what lies ahead. <sup>14</sup>Yes, I press on towards my goal, which is to gain the prize that God has for me when He calls me home to heaven in unity with Christ Jesus.

<sup>15</sup>If you are mature in the way you view spiritual things, then you will think in the same way. If you believe differently, God will bring the correction you need and make everything clear to you. <sup>16</sup>At least continue to live in the good of what you have already received and do not slip back.

### **Citizens of God's heavenly Kingdom (3:17-4:3)**

<sup>17</sup>So, brothers, join with those who follow my example and learn from those who adopt the pattern of life we showed you.

<sup>18</sup>I repeat now with tears in my eyes what I have already told you in the past. Many face destruction because they live as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup>They make their stomachs their God and are even proud of the shameful ways in which they live. They are obsessed with earthly things.

<sup>20</sup>By contrast, we know that we are citizens of God's heavenly Kingdom. This is why we await eagerly the time when the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, will return to earth from heaven. <sup>21</sup>Then He will transform these earthly bodies of ours by the power by which He is able to bring everything under His control. Then our bodies will be like His glorious body!

**4** In view of all this, my brothers, you should stand strong in the Lord. I love you and long to be with you, for I regard you as my joy and my crown, my dear friends!

<sup>2</sup>I beg both Euodia and Syntyche to let the Lord bring them to agreement with one another. <sup>3</sup>Yes, I ask you as those who are bound in loyalty to me, to help these women who have worked with me in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers, whose names are written in the Book of Life.

### **Rejoice, pray and give thanks (4:4-9)**

<sup>4</sup>Always rejoice in the Lord! I repeat: Rejoice! <sup>5-6</sup>Let your gentle spirit be obvious to others. The Lord is near; so there is no need to be anxious about anything. Instead pray about everything, following your petitions with thanksgiving whenever you ask anything of God!

<sup>7</sup>God's peace is beyond understanding and will keep your hearts and minds at one with Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>What, then, should fill your thoughts? Whatever is true and noble and right in God's eyes; what is pure and lovely to Him; what He admires, which is everything that is excellent and worthy of praise.

<sup>9</sup>Put into practice all you have learned from me; whatever you have received or heard from me. The Lord's peace will continue to be with you.

### **Contentment in all circumstances (4:10-13)**

<sup>10</sup>Your renewed concern for me has caused me to rejoice greatly in the Lord. I appreciate that in the past you had no opportunity to show such concern. <sup>11</sup>I am not suggesting that I am in need, for I have learned to be content regardless of the circumstances in which I find myself. <sup>12</sup>I certainly have known what it is to be in need and I have also known times of abundance. I learned how important it is to be content no matter what the situation, whether I am well fed or hungry, whether I am living in abundance or am lacking what I need. <sup>13</sup>I discovered that I am able to do everything through trusting in the One who always gives me strength.

### **Thankfulness for Philippians' generosity (4:14-20)**

<sup>14</sup>Yet I do appreciate your willingness to share in my troubles. <sup>15</sup>You Philippians are also fully aware that when you were first introduced to the gospel, you were the only church that undertook to share in the cost involved when I moved on from Macedonia. As a result, you also shared in the benefit of receiving. <sup>16</sup>Even when I was in Thessalonica, again and again you sent me the support I needed. <sup>17</sup>It is not that I am seeking a gift, only that more may be credited to your heavenly account! <sup>18</sup>I have received all I need and more besides. Now that I have received the gifts you sent by Epaphroditus I have plenty. Your gifts are a sweet offering, an acceptable sacrifice that pleases God.

<sup>19</sup>And my God will surely supply for all your needs, drawing on the glorious riches He has given us through our unity with Christ Jesus.

<sup>20</sup>Glory belongs to God our Father for all eternity. Amen! It shall be so!

### **Final greetings (4:21-23)**

<sup>21</sup>Please give my personal greetings to all the saints, those who live

at one with Christ Jesus. The brothers here with me send you their greetings. <sup>22</sup>And all the saints here in Rome, especially those in Caesar's household, send their greetings also.

<sup>23</sup>The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be imparted to your spirit. Amen! It shall be so!