

PHILIPPIANS

This was a personal project to do my own translation of the letter to the Philippians. I made use of lexicons, other English translations, and comparisons with other places in the NT where particular words occur, and in some cases commentaries. This doesn't represent the rigor of a published translation, but I hope that it brings out nuance or color from the original that is often not obvious. ~Caleb Yoder

CHAPTER 1

¹From Paul and Timothy – slaves of Christ Jesus.

To all the saints in Christ Jesus that are in Philippi, with the leaders and ministers.¹

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³I always thank my God every time I think of you, ⁴in each of my prayers for all of you. I offer these prayers with joy, ⁵because of your fellow partnership for the Good News from the first days until now.

⁶I'm convinced of this very thing: that the one who started a good work in you will bring it to completion by the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷So, it is right for me to be of this mind about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, both while I'm in chains, and in defense for a favorable verdict of the Good News; you all are fellow partners with me in grace. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the deep compassion of Christ Jesus.

⁹And this I pray: that your love might yet grow more and more in knowledge and every kind of discernment. ¹⁰I pray this so that you can work out what really matters, and so you will be pure and blameless in motives for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes from Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

¹²I want you to know, brothers and sisters², that all I've gone through has come for the progress of the Good News. ¹³For one, my chains have been revealed to be "in Christ," among the whole praetorian guard and all the rest. ¹⁴And most of the brothers and sisters in the Lord, convinced by my chains, have dared all the more to speak the word without fear.

¹⁵Some preach out of envy or to be contentious, while others out of good motives. ¹⁶This group does it out of love, knowing that I am held up for the defense of the Good News. ¹⁷The others proclaim Christ insincerely, out of self-interest, supposing they'll cause me more pain while I'm in chains.

¹ Or *bishops and deacons*. At the time when Philippians was written, "bishops" and "deacons" were likelier to be descriptive nouns simply describing the roles, rather than denoting formal positions of authority that the words "bishop" and "deacon" would later represent.

² Greek *adelphoi* (brothers). A masculine plural often refers to a mixed group of both genders, so here translated as "brothers and sisters."

¹⁸But what does it matter? Just that in any case, whether with pretext or honesty, Christ is proclaimed, and for that I rejoice.

Yes, and I'll keep rejoicing, ¹⁹for I know that this will lead to my deliverance³, through your prayer and the support of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰Because I'm waiting this out and hoping that I won't be put to shame in anything. Instead, loud and clear, now as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether I live or I die.

²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is profit. ²²If it's to live in this body, then I have fruitful work, and I don't know what to prefer. ²³I'm torn between the two: I really desire to leave this life and be with Christ, which is so much better. ²⁴Yet for your sake, it's more necessary to remain in body.

²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue alongside all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that your sense of pride will increase in Christ Jesus because of me when I come back to you.

²⁷Only live your common life in a way that is worthy of the Good News of Jesus, so that whether I can come and see you or only get to hear about you, you stand firm, striving together in one spirit and one mind in the faith of the Good News, ²⁸ and not at all scared of those that oppose you. This is a sign to them of their destruction but of your salvation, and this from God.

²⁹Because you are given this grace for Christ's behalf: not only to believe him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰as you experience the same struggle that you saw firsthand and now hear I have.

CHAPTER 2

¹If therefore there's any encouragement in Christ
If any hopeful persuasion of love,
If any partnership of the Spirit,
If any deep compassion and mercy,

²Complete my joy:
 Have the same mindset;
 with the same love;
 with the same heart;
 with one mindset,

³Don't do anything out of self-interest, or for empty praise,
 But with a mindset of humility,
 Consider each other as above yourselves.

⁴Don't look out for just yourself,
 rather, each of you look out for others.

⁵Let this mindset be in you, just as it was in Christ Jesus:

³ Or *salvation*. It's not clear whether Paul strictly means release from prison or winning God's approval in the next age. Same word also in 1:28 and 2:11 as "salvation."

⁶Though he was in the form of God,
He didn't consider as prize to seize
Being equal to God.

⁷Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
becoming like humans.

And once found in shape as a man,
⁸he humbled himself,
becoming subject to death,
even the death of a cross.

⁹Therefore, God exalted him
And favored him with the name above every name.

¹⁰So that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow
-- in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth --

¹¹and every tongue confess,
that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the father.

¹²Therefore, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you but now all the more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³For God is the one who works within you, creating both the desiring and the working for good purpose.⁴

¹⁴Do everything without grumbling or arguing ¹⁵so that you may be blameless and pure, unblemished children of God in a crooked and corrupt generation. Among them, you shine like lights in the world, ¹⁶as you hold on to the word of life, so that I'll be totally confident for the day of Christ that I did not run for nothing, nor labor for nothing.

¹⁷But even if I am made into a drink offering poured over the sacrifice and worship from your faith, I am glad, and will rejoice with all of you; ¹⁸and for the same reason you are glad and rejoice with me.

¹⁹I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that my spirits can be cheered knowing how you are doing. ²⁰I have no one who shares my heart more, who cares sincerely about you.

²¹For everyone looks out for their own interests, and not those of Jesus Christ. ²²You know that he's proved himself; like a son with his father, he has served with me for the sake of the Good News. ²³So I hope to send him as soon as I see how things go with me.

²⁴I'm convinced also in the Lord that I myself will soon come. ²⁵But I think it's necessary to send Epaphroditus to you, my brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier. He is also your missionary and has served my needs. ²⁶After all, he greatly longs for all of you, and feels distressed because you heard he was sick.

⁴ Literally "It is God who works within you both the desiring and the working..." (Desiring and working are direct objects of "works")

²⁷In fact, he was so sick he nearly died. But God had mercy on him, and not just on him, but also on me, so that I wouldn't have grief upon grief.

²⁸Therefore, I'm sending him immediately, so that once you see him you can be glad and I will be freed from grief. ²⁹Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people such as him, ³⁰because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life, in order to fulfill a service for me that you were unable to offer.

CHAPTER 3

¹In addition, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. It's no trouble to write the same things to you, and it only puts you on firmer ground.

²Watch out for the dogs; watch out for the bad workers; watch out for those who chop up flesh. ³For it is we who are the circumcised, who serve the Spirit of God, and who find pride in Christ Jesus, rather than confidence in the "flesh." ⁴After all, I have reason to have confidence in the flesh.

If anyone thinks they can be confident in the flesh, I can even more. ⁵Circumcised on the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, Hebrew of Hebrews, as far as the law – a Pharisee, ⁶as far as devotion – a persecutor of the church, as far as the rightness found in the law – blameless.

⁷But whatever was to my profit, I consider those things loss because of Christ. ⁸In fact, I consider all these things to be loss, because knowing Christ Jesus my Lord is way better. For him I have suffered the loss of all things; I consider them excrement, so that I might have Christ as my profit and ⁹be found in him.

So, I don't claim my rightness from the law, but the rightness that comes through Christ's faithfulness – God's rightness based on faith.

¹⁰This way I know Christ, the power of his resurrection, and the fellow partnership of his sufferings, as I'm conformed to his death, ¹¹if, somehow, I may arrive at the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already received this or have already been made perfect, but I keep up the chase as if to catch this thing, since Christ Jesus caught me.

¹³Brothers and sisters, I don't consider myself to have caught it. One thing though, forgetting what's behind, and straining toward what lies in front of me, ¹⁴I keep up the chase till the finish mark for the prize of God's upward calling in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵Let all of us who are mature have this mindset. And if your mindset is different, God will reveal that to you. ¹⁶Only let us hold the line with how far we've come.

¹⁷Together imitate me, brothers and sisters, as you observe those whose walk is like our example. ¹⁸For many walk – as I've often told you and now with tears – as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their endpoint is destruction, their God is the stomach, and their glory is in their shame. They set their minds on earthly things.

²⁰But our citizenship is in the heavens. We await a savior from there – the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will reshape our humble bodies to be formed just like his body of glory, by the energy of his power to also subject all things to himself.

^{4:1}Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and victor’s crown, stand in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

PHILIPPIANS 4:2-END

²I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to have the same mindset in the Lord. ³Yes, and I ask you, true companion⁵, help these women, who together have struggled with me in the work of the Good News, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord at all times. I’ll say it again, rejoice. ⁵Let your peaceableness be known to all people. The Lord is near.

⁶Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let God know your requests. ⁷And the peace of God that’s far above all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, as much as is true, as much honorable, as much right, as much pure, as much lovely, as much commendable – if something has excellence or merits praise – give account of these things. ⁹What you learned, received, heard and saw in me – keep putting that into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰It gave me great joy in the Lord, now that you at last revived your mindfulness of me. Since after all, you have been mindful of me, but the right time hadn’t come for you to show it. ¹¹Not that I’m saying this out of need. Because I’ve learned to be content in whatever situation I’m in.

¹²I know how to accept humiliation⁶ and I know how to be very well off. In each and every situation, I’ve learned the secret: how to eat my fill and how to endure hunger; how to be well off, and how to be in need. ¹³In all this I am strong through the one who empowers me.

Yet you’ve done well by becoming fellow partners in my suffering. ¹⁵You Philippians know that since the early days of the Good News, when I left Macedonia, not one church partnered in the matter of giving and receiving except for you. ¹⁶And in Thessalonica too, not once but twice, you sent me aid⁷ for my need. ¹⁷Not that I’m looking for the gift, but rather I’m looking for the good fruit that accrues to your account.

¹⁸I’m completely paid and am well off. I am more than full, because I’ve received from Epaphroditus what you sent – a fragrant aroma and acceptable offering, pleasing to God.

⁵ It’s suggested that this person would be in the role of a mediator (see *Zerbe, Gordon. Philippians: Believer’s Church Bible Commentary*)

⁶ *Accept humiliation* – same verb as 2:8: *he humbled himself*

⁷ *Aid* – word is absent in Greek

¹⁹My God will fill all of your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To God our father be the glory, for the ages of ages, amen.

²¹Greet each of the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers and sisters who are with me send greetings. ²²All the saints send you greetings, especially those from Caesar's household. ²³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.