

# The LETTER of PAUL to the PHILIPPIANS

## LAST GENERATION VERSION

Translation & Notes by Tim Warner

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### Chapter 1

#### *Greetings to the Congregation, Pastors, and Deacons*

**P**aul and Timothy, slaves of Jesus Christ, to all the holy ones in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with the Supervisors<sup>1</sup> and Servants:<sup>2</sup>  
2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Master, Jesus Christ.

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

3 I thank my God upon every recollection of you, 4 always, in every petition of mine over all of you, making petition with joy 5 over your partnership<sup>3</sup> into the Good-Message from the first day until now, 6 having become convinced of this same thing:<sup>4</sup> that the One having begun a good work<sup>5</sup> among<sup>6</sup> you will complete it until the Day of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> 7 Accordingly, to me it is right to have this sentiment concerning you all, because you,

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word "επισκοπος" (sometimes translated "Bishop") literally means an "overseer, manager, or supervisor." The Bible uses three terms for this office, including "pastor" (shepherd) and "elder." All three are found in reference to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-28, although "pastor" is the verb form in this passage. The same three terms are used in 1 Peter 5:1-2, where the elders are told to "shepherd" (pastor) the flock and "supervise" (the verb form of "επισκοπος"). "Supervisors" and "elders" are used interchangeably in Titus 1:5-7. "Pastor" and "Supervisor" (in reference to Christ) are used interchangeably in 1 Pet. 2:25. The *office* of the Supervisor is found in 1 Tim. 3:1. Pastors – elders – supervisors are all terms for the same office, and are always plural within a single church. The official title was "Supervisor"; the term "elder" described their primary qualification (a mature Christian man); and the term "Pastor" (Shepherd) was the metaphorical term to describe the manner in which they were to care for the flock (as a shepherd lovingly tends, feeds, and leads the sheep).

<sup>2</sup> The Greek word is "διακονος" (deacon), literally, a servant. This was an office in the local church, assistants to the pastors – elders – supervisors. The feminine form (deaconess) is found in Rom. 16:1.

<sup>3</sup> The Philippian church was the only church that consistently ministered to Paul's financial and material needs as he preached the Gospel to the nations (Phil. 4:14-16).

<sup>4</sup> Paul was convinced, by the demonstration of consistent faithful support from the Philippian church towards his Gospel ministry, that God would continue to supply the necessary means for the Gospel to be proclaimed to all nations, which was the prerequisite for the coming of the Day of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:14).

<sup>5</sup> The "good work" which God had begun among the Philippian congregation was the faithful financial underwriting of the mission to bring the Gospel to all the nations.

<sup>6</sup> The Greek clause, "εν υμιν εργον αγαθον," is best translated "a good work among you" (rather than "in you" individually). The preposition, "en" can mean either "in" or "among," depending on whether the object is a single individual or a group of people. The pronoun "you" is plural, yet "work" is singular. Paul was most likely referring to a singular "work" that God had done in the whole church. This meaning is supported in the next verse where Paul used the clause, "παντων υμων" (all of you) in apposition to "you" in verse 6.

<sup>7</sup> The good work of financially underwriting the proclamation of the Gospel to the nations, which began at Philippi, will continue until Christ returns (Matt. 24:14).

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having me in your heart, (in my shackles and the defense and confirmation of the Good-Message), you all are co-participants with me of the grace. 8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all in the compassions of Jesus. 9 And thus I pray, so that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and all perception, 10 for you to distinguish the substantial things, so that you may be genuine and faultless unto the Day of Christ, having been filled with the fruits of justice, which is through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

### *Paul's Victory, Even in Prison*

12 Yet I want you to know, brothers, that the things that happened to me<sup>8</sup> have actually advanced the Good-Message, as also my shackles in Christ are becoming evident among the whole imperial Praetorian Guard,<sup>9</sup> and to all the rest.<sup>10</sup> 14 Also, the majority of the brothers, having become bold in Christ [because of] my bonds are increasingly daring to discuss the Message fearlessly. 15 Indeed, some [people] also [discuss it] through envy and strife. Yet others are also proclaiming the Christ through good will. 16 Those announcing Christ out of strife, not honestly, intend to add trouble to my shackles. 17 But the others [announce Christ] out of love, having perceived that I am outstretched<sup>11</sup> for the defense of the Good-Message. 18 For whatever [it may be], whether in pretense or in truth, in every way Christ is being announced. And in this I rejoice, and will rejoice.

### *The Uncertain Outcome of Paul's Impending Trial*

19 For I have perceived that, for me, this will lead to my deliverance<sup>12</sup> through your petition and contribution, of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my anticipation and expectation, [and] that I shall be embarrassed in nothing. But in all boldness, as always, also now, Christ shall be extoled in my body, whether through life or through death. 21 For to me, to continue living is Christ,<sup>13</sup> and to die is gain. 22 Yet, if [I am] to continue to live in the flesh, to me this means fruit from labor. And which I will prefer, I

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<sup>8</sup> Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, his imprisonment in Caesarea, his shipwreck during his transfer to Rome, and his current house arrest in Rome for two years awaiting trial before Caesar (Acts 21-28).

<sup>9</sup> ISBE: "With regard to the expression 'en holo to praitorio' in Philippians 1:13, there is now a general consensus of opinion that 'Praetorium' here means, not a place, but the imperial praetorian guard, ten thousand in number, which was instituted by Augustus. Paul was allowed to reside in his private house in the custody of a praetorian soldier. As these were doubtless constantly changed, it must have become 'manifest' to the whole guard that his bonds were for the sake of Christ."

<sup>10</sup> The positive effect that Paul's and Silas' testimony had on the Philippian jailor was now being multiplied throughout the Roman military in the capitol city. Thus Paul wanted to encourage the Philippian congregation in general, and probably the Philippian jailor and his family in particular. See also Phil. 4:22.

<sup>11</sup> The Greek word means to lie down outstretched (middle voice). Paul seems to have used it as a figure of speech, referring to making himself a target for the furtherance of the Gospel.

<sup>12</sup> Release from prison.

<sup>13</sup> Paul considered his mission to be an extension of Jesus' own mission since Jesus personally sent him.

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am not revealing. 23 For I am squeezed from the two: having a yearning to break free,<sup>14</sup> and to be together with Christ<sup>15</sup> – a much better thing.<sup>16</sup> 24 Yet, to remain in the flesh is necessary because of you. 25 And having become confident of this, I have perceived that I shall remain, and I will abide with you all for your progress and joy of trust, 26 so that my boasting about you in Christ Jesus may increase by my coming<sup>17</sup> again unto you. 27 Only, be citizens<sup>18</sup> worthy of the Good-Message of Christ,<sup>19</sup> so that if coming and seeing you, or if being absent [from you], I may hear about you, that you are standing in one spirit, one soul, striving together in the trust of the Good Message, 28 and not being frightened in anything under the antagonists. This is indeed proof in them of destruction, but in you [is proof] of deliverance, and this from God.<sup>20</sup> 29 For to you it was granted, for

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<sup>14</sup> This is a very unusual term, its only other occurrence in the NT is found in Luke 12:36. “*And you [be] like men anticipating their own master, when **he shall break free** from the wedding [ceremonies] ...*” The Greek verb is “*αναλλω*” (literally, “up-loose”). The same verb is used once in the Apocrypha, (Sir. 3:15), where it corresponds to the melting of ice. The Latin Vulgate (and Douay Rheims version) renders Phil. 1:23 as: “*...having a desire **to be dissolved** and to be with Christ...*” The noun form is used 4 times in the LXX for “consummation” by fire. Paul also used the noun form in reference to his impending martyrdom which he likened to a blood sacrifice, (2 Tim. 4:6 CLV), “*For I am already a libation, and the period of my **dissolution** is imminent.*” Paul used this term figuratively for his impending martyrdom.

<sup>15</sup> Many suppose that Paul expected that upon his death his ‘ghost’ would immediately go to heaven to be with Christ while his body decayed in the grave. This interpretation is based on the pagan-Greek idea of “immortality of the soul,” a false presupposition that the dead are conscious, living apart from the body. But this Greek belief is soundly refuted by many Scriptures: (Job 3:11-13; Job 10:18-19; Job 14:10-14; Psalm 6:5; Psalm 115:17-18; Psalm 146:3-4; Eccl. 3:18-21; Eccl. 9:3-6; Eccl. 9:10; Isa. 38:17-19). The dead are asleep, as a multitude of Scriptures attest (Matt. 9:24; Matt. 27:52; John 11:11-15; Acts 7:60; Acts 13:36; 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 Cor. 15:6,18,20,51; 1 Thess. 4:13-15, 1 Thess. 5:10; 2 Pet. 3:4). They will be “awakened” at the resurrection (Dan. 12:1-2). Paul’s point, that to die meant being with the Lord, was based on the assumption that for those who “fall asleep” in Christ there is no awareness of the passing of time. For the deceased, the eyes close in death and in the next instant they awaken in the resurrection at Christ’s return. Martin Luther explained this concept as follows: “*Salomon judgeth that the dead are a sleepe, and feele nothing at all. For the dead lye there accompting neyther dayes nor yeares, but when are awaked, they shall seeme to have slept scarce one minute.*” (Martin Luther, An Exposition of Salomon’s Booke, called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, 1553, folio 151v). From Paul’s perspective, to die meant to immediately be in the resurrection with Christ in His Kingdom. That this is what he meant is clear from the parallel passage in 2 Cor. 5:1-10. There the context makes plain that Paul was speaking of departing in death in order to become immortal in the flesh, which only occurs in the resurrection. To impose on Paul a conscious existence apart from the body is to make him a Platonist, something completely foreign to the Jewish (Pharisaic) understanding of afterlife.

<sup>16</sup> Paul did **not** consider being a disembodied ghost – as the Greeks believed – to be desirable, and certainly not “*a much better thing.*” He wrote: “*For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, **not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.***” (2 Cor. 5:4). Being “unclothed” (living without the body of flesh) was the Greek doctrine common in Athens and Corinth, which Paul rejected and refuted. He had no desire to be “unclothed,” but to be “further clothed” with immortality in the resurrection. This was something “much better” than what the Greeks hoped for (a disembodied ghost), and certainly far better than the present condition.

<sup>17</sup> The Greek word is “*παρουσια*” (parousia), a term that referred to the arrival of a king or victor with great celebration. The term is used repeatedly in the NT of the glorious second coming of Christ.

<sup>18</sup> The Greek word is derived from the word that means “city.” Here it refers to living like citizens of Christ’s coming Kingdom. See Phil. 3:20. We are citizens of the “higher Jerusalem” which is yet to come (Gal. 4:26).

<sup>19</sup> The “Good-Message of Christ” is the message of His coming Kingdom.

<sup>20</sup> See Psalm 37

Christ's sake, not only to trust into Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same struggle which you saw in me,<sup>21</sup> and are now hearing [about] in me.

## Chapter 2

### *Exhortation to Unity of Purpose*

If, then, [there is] any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any partnership of spirit, if any compassions and condolences, 2 fill up my joy, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, united souls, being disposed to one thing. 3 Yet, [do] nothing according to strife or self-seeking, but with humility, considering one another superior to yourselves, 4 not each one watching over what is his own, but also each other's.

### *Imitate Christ's Self-Sacrifice*

5 Have this disposition in you which [was] also in Christ Jesus 6 who, being Deity in nature, did not consider equality with God [to be] plunder,<sup>22</sup> 7 but emptied Himself,<sup>23</sup> taking the nature of a slave, becoming in the likeness<sup>24</sup> of men. And having been found as a human<sup>25</sup> in form,<sup>26</sup> 8 He suppressed Himself,<sup>27</sup> becoming obedient<sup>28</sup> unto death, even death of a cross. 9 Consequently, also, God highly exalted Him and gave to Him the name above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee might bow, of celestial, of

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<sup>21</sup> This is a reference to Paul's false imprisonment in Philippi (Acts 16).

<sup>22</sup> The Word did not consider His current state in the form of God to be something that was unlawfully His. Yet He voluntarily gave up that right to become fully Man.

<sup>23</sup> Christ [the Word] "*emptied Himself*" of what was rightfully His – the unique attributes of deity not shared with humanity. The next two clauses explain how He did this: "*taking the nature of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men.*" Christ voluntarily set aside His divine nature to fully experience the human condition (Heb. 2:10-18). The modern Trinitarian view is that as Man, Christ fully retained all of the attributes of divinity while adding to Himself a fully human nature – two natures in one person (hypostatic union). Yet this passage teaches the reverse. He completely divested Himself of the former to fully take the latter. "*The Word became flesh and dwelled among us,*" (John 1:14). This is a total transformation from one state to another. "*Emptied Himself*" is the reverse of "added to Himself."

<sup>24</sup> Compare Romans 8:3. The same Greek word is used in Gen. 2:18,20, that Eve was created out of Adam's substance, and "comparable" to Adam, since none of the animals were "comparable" to Him. The sense is of the same 'kind.'

<sup>25</sup> Hebrews 2:14 & 17 "*Then since the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He likewise partook of the same ... For this cause He was obliged to become like His brothers in every way...*"

<sup>26</sup> The Greek word is σχημα (schema) from which we get the English term, "schematic" – meaning an exact pattern.

<sup>27</sup> This most likely refers to Jesus' ordeal in the Garden of Gethsemane. See also Heb. 5:7-9.

<sup>28</sup> "*Becoming obedient*" implies a process whereby Jesus eventually submitted willingly to death. This process culminated in the Garden of Gethsemane (Heb. 5:7-9). Thus, Jesus had to learn obedience, having been taught by His Father (See: Isaiah 7:14-16a LXX; Luke 2:40,49,52). This is proof that Jesus was indeed fully human, having "*emptied Himself*" of the uniquely divine attributes.

terrestrial, and of subterranean,<sup>29</sup> 11 and every tongue should acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Master to the glory of God the Father.<sup>30</sup>

*Diligence is Needed to Complete the Christian Course*

12 So also, my beloved, according as you always obeyed, not only as in my presence, but now much more in my absence, accomplish your own deliverance with fear and trembling. 13 For God is the One operating among you, to be willing and to be working on behalf of [His] good intention. 14 Do everything without grumbling and cross-examination, 15 so that you may become blameless and undiluted children of God, flawless in the midst of a crooked and corrupted generation, among which you appear as lights in the world, 16 retaining the message of life, leading to my boasting unto the Day of Christ, that I did not run in vain, nor did I toil in vain. 17 But even if I am poured out<sup>31</sup> upon the sacrifice and priestly service of your trust, I rejoice, and rejoice together with you all. 18 Now you also, rejoice in the same way, and rejoice together with me.

*The Sending of Timothy and Epaphroditus to Philippi*

19 Yet I expect, in the Master Jesus, to send Timothy to you briefly, so that I also may be encouraged, knowing about you. 20 For I have no one like-minded who will be genuinely concerned about you. 21 For all are concerned about themselves, not the things of Christ Jesus. 22 Yet you know his proven character, that as a child with his father he slaved with me for the Good-Message. 23 He, then, I expect to indeed send soon, when I may discover my circumstances. 24 Yet, I have confidence in the Master that I also shall be coming soon. 25 But I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, the brother, co-worker, and my fellow soldier, [who is] also your messenger and laborer for my need, 26 because he was yearning for you all, and depressed, because you heard that he was sick. 27 For he was sick, very close to death, but God was merciful to him. Yet not only [to him], but also to me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I dispatched him sooner, so that

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<sup>29</sup> This does not refer to the 'ghosts' of dead people praising Christ, allegedly in the mythological, subterranean domain of the god Hades. Scripture is clear that the dead cannot praise God. "For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?" (Psalm 6:5); and "The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor any who go down into silence" (Psalm 115:17), and "For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth" (Isa. 38:18). Rather, Paul borrowed this expression from the Torah which refers to all living creatures, the birds of heaven, land animals, and sea creatures which are beneath the land (below sea level). "You shall not make for yourself a carved image — any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth" (Exodus 20:4). Pagans made gods in the form of these creatures to worship. Paul's point here was that even the air, land, and sea creatures (which the pagans worshipped) will themselves bow down and confess that Jesus Christ is their Master, the ruler of all. This will occur in the Kingdom, when nature is restored to its pristine condition, and the animals obey the voice of the King (Isa. 11:6-9). The animals confessing Christ's supremacy is described in Rev 5:13: "And I heard every creature, those in heaven, and on land, and below the land, even upon the sea and all that are in them, saying: 'To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb [be] blessing and honor and glory and power unto the ages of the ages!'"

<sup>30</sup> Isa. 45:23

<sup>31</sup> a metaphor for shedding ones' blood, referring to Paul's impending martyrdom (cf. Isaiah 53:12)

seeing him again, you may rejoice and I may be worry-free. 29 Receive him, then, in the Master with all joy, and value him, 30 because he approached death through the work of Christ, risking his life<sup>32</sup> so that he might fill what was lacking in your priestly-service toward me.

### Chapter 3

#### *Beware of the Judaizers<sup>33</sup>*

**T**he rest [of you] my brothers, Rejoice in the Master! To write the same things to you is indeed not tedious, but [is being] unailing to you. 2 Watch out for the dogs; watch out for the evil workers; watch out for the cutting!<sup>34</sup> 3 For we are 'the circumcision,'<sup>35</sup> the ones offering divine service through the Spirit of God, boasting in Christ Jesus, and not having become assured in the flesh.<sup>36</sup> 4 Indeed, am I having assurance in the flesh also? If anyone else seems to have [such] assurance in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, from the family of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew among Hebrews, according to the Law – a Pharisee,<sup>37</sup> 6 according to zeal – persecuting the congregation, according to the justice of the Law – blameless.

#### *Striving to Attain the Resurrection of the Just*

7 But whatever was gain to me, these things I have considered forfeiture because of Christ. 8 But indeed, I surely also consider everything to be forfeiture because of the superiority of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Master, because of whom I forfeited everything and consider it to be rubbish<sup>38</sup> so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having my [own] justice – that which comes from the Law, but that which is through the trust of Christ – justice from God superimposed upon the trust,<sup>39</sup> 10 to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the sharing of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if somehow I might attain<sup>40</sup> unto the resurrection from among

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<sup>32</sup> literally, "soul"

<sup>33</sup> This term appears in Gal. 2:14. It refers to a group of Jewish "Christians" who insisted that Gentile Christians must observe the Jewish practices contained in the Law of Moses in order to be saved, something Paul strongly opposed.

<sup>34</sup> All three phrases refer to the Jews who professed Christ, but insisted that keeping the Old Covenant was necessary, including the sign of circumcision. The book of Galatians was written to refute their teaching. (See also Acts 15). The connection to "dogs" was probably derived from Jesus' warning in Matt. 7:6. The Jews commonly referred to Gentiles as "dogs" (Matt. 15:26-27). Paul seems to have turned this derogatory term back on his Jewish opponents, no doubt following the example of Isaiah 56:10-11.

<sup>35</sup> In baptism Christians receive the "circumcision made without hands," the "circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2:11-13).

<sup>36</sup> That is supposing that physical circumcision is a guarantee of a future inheritance in the Kingdom.

<sup>37</sup> Despite the repeated condemnation of the Pharisees as hypocrites in the Gospels, Paul held them up as the visible standard of obedience to the Law of Moses, at least in appearance.

<sup>38</sup> The Greek word literally means "dog excrement."

<sup>39</sup> See Romans 4:1-8

<sup>40</sup> Paul considered it necessary to forfeit everything in order to ensure for himself a place among those who will be raised to immortality out from among the rest of the dead. The same principle is found in Jesus' answer to the rich young ruler, and how he might inherit immortality (Luke 18:18-30).

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the dead.<sup>41</sup> 12 [It is] not that I have already attained or have already been perfected.<sup>42</sup> But, I am pursuing if I may also seize upon<sup>43</sup> that for which I was seized<sup>44</sup> by Christ Jesus.<sup>45</sup> 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself to have seized. Yet, this [one] thing [I do], forgetting what is behind, and reaching out for what is ahead. 14 I am pursuing, according to the goal, the prize of the call of God [from] above in Christ Jesus.<sup>46</sup>

### *Exhortation to Imitate Paul's Example*

15 All those, then, who are mature, we should be thus disposed. And if you are otherwise disposed, God will reveal this to you. 16 However, unto whatever [degree] we have surpassed [others], march by the same rule, [have] the same disposition. 17 Become co-imitators of me, brothers, and note those who are walking according to the pattern [that] you have of us. 18 For many are walking, of whom I have said many times, yet even now weeping I say, [they are] the enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose destination is destruction,<sup>47</sup> whose god is their stomach, whose honor is in their depravity,<sup>48</sup> who are disposed to earthly things. 20 For our citizenship<sup>49</sup> is in the heavens,<sup>50</sup> out from which we are awaiting the Savior, the Master Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform the body of our

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<sup>41</sup> The "first resurrection" to reign with Christ in His Kingdom is a privilege afforded only to some. Paul desired to be part of the "first resurrection" (1 Cor. 15:23; Rev. 20:1-5).

<sup>42</sup> Paul did not consider himself to have already been assured of the resurrection of the just. Like all Christians, he was on a journey that leads to immortality (Matt. 7:13-14). One must complete the journey without abandoning the narrow path in order to arrive at the destination. Just before his death, knowing he was about to be martyred, Paul considered himself to have successfully completed the "narrow path that leads to immortality," and attained to "the resurrection from among the dead" (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

<sup>43</sup> The imagery conveyed by the Greek could be something like tackling.

<sup>44</sup> Paul was probably referring to his Damascus Road experience (Acts 26:9-23).

<sup>45</sup> Paul was intent on completing the mission to which he was called, to bring the message of immortality to the nations. Paul wanted to be sure that he also received that which he preached – immortality. (1 Cor. 9:24-27)

<sup>46</sup> "The call of God from above in Christ Jesus" refers to the trumpet blast and shout which will awaken all of the sleeping saints, calling them forth from their graves (See: John 5:28-29; 1 Thess. 4:13-17).

<sup>47</sup> The fate of the wicked is utter destruction "... at the revelation of the Master Jesus from heaven with His powerful messengers, in blazing fire, portioning out retribution to those not having perceived God and to those insubordinate to the Good-Message of our Master Jesus Christ, who shall incur the justice of permanent annihilation from the face of the Master, and from the glory of His strength" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

<sup>48</sup> See Romans 1:24-28.

<sup>49</sup> The rights that flow from citizenship. Acts 22:28 uses this term of Paul's Roman citizenship which gave him certain legal rights wherever Roman authority extended throughout the earth. In the same way, Christians on earth have certain privileges and rights that flow from heaven. This does not point to heaven as the destiny of the redeemed, as is wrongly supposed by many. We are citizens of the "Kingdom of Heaven," which is the authority of heaven to be exercised over all the earth in the coming Kingdom of Christ. See also Phil. 1:27 & Daniel 2:44.

<sup>50</sup> Paul viewed all of the rights of citizenship in the age to come as being bound up in Christ who is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father (Psalm 110).

inferiority to become conformed to the body of His glory,<sup>51</sup> in accord with the power enabling Him<sup>52</sup> to subject everything to Himself.<sup>53</sup>

## Chapter 4

### *Exhortations*

**T**herefore, my beloved and longed-for brothers, stand firm in the Master, [my] beloved. 2 I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be mutually disposed in the Master. 3 And I am also asking you – truly ‘Syzugos’<sup>54</sup> – to assist these women who struggle together with me in the Good-Message, and with Clement, and my other fellow-workers whose names are in the Scroll of Life.<sup>55</sup> 4 Rejoice in the Master always! Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Master is close by.<sup>56</sup> 6 Do not worry about anything, but in every prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make known your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard<sup>57</sup> your hearts and your perceptions in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is loving, whatever is well-spoken, if anything is virtuous, if anything is praiseworthy, meditate on these things.<sup>58</sup> 9 That which also you learned, and received, and heard, and perceived in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.<sup>59</sup>

### *Paul Acknowledges their Sacrificial Giving*

10 Now I rejoiced in the Master greatly because finally your care for me revived again, which you were [indeed] caring, yet you were lacking opportunity. 11 I do not say this because I am lacking [anything]. For I learned to be content [just as] I am. 12 I have also discovered [how] to be suppressed; I have also discovered [how] to be abundant. Among every one and in every way I have learned also to be full and to hunger, to have

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<sup>51</sup> Our bodies will be like His (1 John 3:2). His resurrection is the proof of our resurrection (Rom. 6:5,8-9).

<sup>52</sup> Jesus’ works were performed by God through Him, as He was empowered by the Spirit (John 5:19-21). He was given the authority to raise the dead, but the power is from God (John 5:28-30) through the Spirit (Rom. 8:9-11). Jesus does not have this power by nature in His own person because He “emptied Himself” to take the form of Man (Phil. 2:5-8).

<sup>53</sup> Phil. 2:9-11

<sup>54</sup> The Greek word literally means “yoke-fellow,” but is most likely the proper name of the person whom Paul was addressing. (Otherwise, he was writing to an unnamed person, which would be confusing to his readers). He used the word “genuine” to show that his name meant exactly what he was to Paul – a companion in the work of Christ.

<sup>55</sup> This is the only place in the New Testament (apart from Revelation) where the “Book of Life” is mentioned. Since Revelation was not written until several decades later, Paul almost certainly had in mind the “Book of the Living,” mentioned in Ex. 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Isa. 4:3-4; Ezek. 13:9; & Dan. 12:1. This was a record of the names of those who will inherit immortality in the age to come.

<sup>56</sup> The Greek word can mean either close in proximity or close in time (cf. Luke 19:11 & Luke 21:30). The implication here seems to be the former, implying that the Lord is nearby, observing the Philippians.

<sup>57</sup> The Greek word means to set a Garrison or guard.

<sup>58</sup> This implies excluding from your meditation things that are opposed to these things.

<sup>59</sup> God’s presence is promised to those who meditate on good things and follow Paul’s example of behavior.

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abundance and to be in need. 13 I am strong in all [these] things through Christ, the One empowering me.

14 However, you have done well, co-participating in my tribulation. 15 Yet you, Philippians, have also seen that from the beginning of the Good-Message, when I left Macedonia, not one congregation shared with me concerning giving and receiving, except you alone. 16 Also [when I was] in Thessalonica, also once and twice you sent to my need. 17 [It is] not that I am seeking the gift, but I am seeking the fruit which increases into your account.<sup>60</sup> 18 Yet I have everything, and have been filled, receiving from Epaphroditus the things from you, a sweet aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. 19 And my God shall supply every need of yours according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.<sup>61</sup> 20 Yet to our God and Father [be] the glory unto the ages of the ages, Amen.

### *Final Salutation*

21 Greet each holy one in Christ Jesus [for me]. The brothers with me send greetings.

22 All the holy ones greet you, especially those from Caesar's household.<sup>62</sup>

23 The grace of our Master Jesus Christ [be] with all of you, Amen.<sup>63</sup>

*Written to the Philippians from Rome, by means of Epaphroditus.<sup>64</sup>*

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<sup>60</sup> Preaching and teaching about the Christian obligation for giving must always be to bless the giver with God's response to giving, not for gain.

<sup>61</sup> This promise is to those who have undertaken to support the Gospel ministry, as did the Philippian congregation. It is not a general promise to all Christians.

<sup>62</sup> Nero was the emperor at the time. His "household" here probably refers to the Imperial Praetorian Guard, many of whom had become Christians through guarding Paul and listening to his preaching (Phil. 1:13). This salute was no doubt directed to the Philippian jailor, a member of this congregation (Acts 16:25-34).

<sup>63</sup> Paul signed all of his letters with this statement, using his own handwriting, in large letters because of his poor eyesight, (Gal. 4:15; Gal. 6:11,18; 2 Thess. 3:17-18).

<sup>64</sup> This note was most likely added later by a copyist.