



## The Book of Philippians

### Outline of the Book of Philippians:

#### 1) Greeting and Prayer (1:1-11)

a) Salutation from Paul and Timothy (1:1-2)

b) Paul's thanksgiving and prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11)

#### 2) Paul's Reflection on His Imprisonment (1:12-30)

a) Paul's imprisonment has meant progress for the Gospel (1:12-18)

b) To live is Christ (1:19-26)

c) Encouragement to walk worthy of the Gospel (1:27-30)

### 3) Exhortation to Humble Service (2:1-30)

- a) Encouragement to unity in the faith and service to one another
- b) Christ's example of humble service (2:5-11)
- c) Living as lights in the world (2:12-18)
- d) Timothy as an example of service-centered life (2:19-26)
- e) Epaphroditus as another example of service (2:25-30)

### 4) Opponents of the Gospel: Where does righteousness come from? (3:1-21)

- a) Initial call to rejoice in the Lord (3:1)
- b) Contrast between the opponents of the Gospel and the true people of God (3:2-3)
- c) Paul's renunciation of spiritual and ethnic privileges for the sake of knowing Christ (3:4-11)
- d) Paul's progress in the Gospel: Through Christ, not the Law (3:12-16)
- e) A call to follow Paul's example of commitment to Jesus as Lord (3:17-21)

## 5) Concluding Exhortations and Thanksgiving (4:1-23)

a) Standing together for the Gospel (4:1-3)

b) Rejoicing in Faith (4:4-9)

c) Thanksgiving for the Philippians' gift; Paul's contentment in God (4:10-20)

d) Benediction (4:23)

### Introduction:

The Book of Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul to the Church at Philippi which was a Roman colony. There has been a great debate over the location of which Paul was at while scribing this letter; whether it was Caesarea, Ephesus, or Rome of which are the most commonly argued locations.

The Book of Acts 23:35 notates that Paul was first imprisoned at the Praetorium by Herod the Great in Caesarea of which is noted in Philippians 1:13 regarding his imprisonment and those of the imperial guard knowing of him.

Though there is a contention over the location of which Paul was being held, the year of this letter is noted to be around 62 A.D. of which fits best with the possibility that his place of imprisonment at this point of his life was in Rome.

The Church at Philippi was planted by Paul on his second missionary journey somewhere around 46-52 A.D. So the church was somewhere around 10-15 years old when Paul wrote this letter to them. The overarching Theme of this letter can be surmised in one word above all else: encouragement.

According to my ESV study Bible regarding the theme and emphasis of this letter, it records the following, *“Paul wants to encourage the Philippians to live out their lives as citizens of a heavenly colony, as evidenced by a growing commitment to service to God and to one another. The way of life that Paul encourages was manifested uniquely in Jesus Christ; it was also evident in the lives of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus.”*

Now regarding the history of this ancient city, there are some unique dynamics to this city to share. After their victory at the Battle of Philippi in 42 B.C., Antony and (later) Augustus re-founded this Macedonian City with army veterans. Its special status as an Augustan colony exempted the city from significant forms of taxation and gave it additional privileges of land ownership. The city encompassed good agricultural land, and it was on the Egnatian Way, an important Roman commercial road (built mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.)

The Roman ethos of the colony is evident in Philippi's Latin civic inscriptions and in the worship of Roman gods. Extant archaeological remains from Paul's day testify to the presence of a theater, a large forum (beneath the later 2<sup>nd</sup>-century-ad forum), shops, and two city gates (designated "Krenides" to the west and "Neapolis" to the east).

There is a speaker's platform (Greek-bema) in the existing second-century forum between a pair of large fountains. One small stone crypt (built over a cistern) near the forum was designated in later church traditions as the prison site of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:23-24). Other structures dating from NT times and the early centuries of the church (e.g. a sports facility, pagan temples, octagonal and basilica style churches) can still be seen in Philippi.

## Chapter 1

### 1. Greeting (Verses 1-2)

a. <sup>1</sup> Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

- b. In verse one, Paul notes himself as well as Timothy at the beginning of the letter which is reminiscent of the same point made by Paul in the letter to the Colossians; Timothy was present and played some part in the assembling of the letter itself. It is clear that Paul is the author of this letter to the Philippians.
- c. Paul is speaking to three specific audiences that he is addressing: the Saints, the Overseers, and the Deacons. The word used here for Saints in the Greek is a unique word and it is the word, “hagios” Strong’s Greek #40. This word defined interprets to mean, “set apart, holy or sacred”. This Greek word is derived from the word, “Hagos” which means “sacred”. So when Paul called them “Saints”, he is not just referring to their salvation but also their sanctification to the things of God being set apart from the world and living unto Christ and not unto self.
- d. In the second half of verse 1, Paul not only refers to the Saints who are at Philippi but he also references “the overseers and deacons”. The Greek word for overseer is “Episkopos” Strong’s Greek 1985 which interprets to mean, “a superintendent, an overseer, a supervisor; i.e. a Christian officer in genitive case charge of a church”. The Greek word for deacon is “diakonois”

Strong's Greek 1249 which interprets to mean, "an attendant, a waiter".

- e. I shared these points of information with you because I believe that it is important to note that Paul is not only addressing the Church Body but he is also addressing the Church leadership as well.

## 2. Thanksgiving and Prayer

- a. <sup>3</sup>I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup>because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup>so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of



Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

- b. It would seem easy to assume that Paul finds great joy in this Church as well as its impact upon his emotions when he reminisces of them as well as prays for them which brings joy. This joy is manifest because this Church body and its leadership have the same mission as Paul and Timothy! Their partnership in the Gospel.
- c. He goes on to encourage them in their good works until the day of Jesus Christ as well as expresses his desire to be with them because he genuinely cares about them.
- d. He goes on to pray that their love may abound as well as with knowledge and discernment in so that they may have the ability to approve and discern what is right and wrong as well as guard their witness and be blameless on the day of Christ. That their lives may overflow with the fruit of the Spirit It is easy to see that Paul is very pleased with this church and loves them very much. And may that be our hearts as well... to Love Jesus, to Love His Church, and to Love one another for if we do this, we do well.