

# Philippians

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## Commentary

Aids for teachers, preachers and laymen.

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## Introduction

Philippians is a book of enthusiasm. The words “joy”<sup>1</sup> or “rejoice”<sup>2</sup> are mentioned fifteen times in this short book. Indeed, we have much to celebrate.

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<sup>1</sup> Phil 1:4, 1:25; 2:17; 2:18; 2:29; 4:1

<sup>2</sup> Phil 1:18 (2x); 2:17; 2:18; 2:28; 3:1; 4:4 (2x)

## Philippians 1

*Philippians 1:1-2, "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

v1: **bond-servants**---The Greek word "doulos" means "slave"---whether voluntary or involuntary. The idea of "bondsslave" is not in the original.

v1: **Christ Jesus**---"Christ" ["Christos" NT:5547] is the Greek equivalent of "Messiah"---"the anointed one."

v1: **the saints**---["hagios" NT:40] means "consecrated to God, holy, set apart, sanctified, separated, devoted, perfect, pure, clean, sacred." We should ask ourselves: "Is that an accurate description of myself?"

v1: **in Christ Jesus**---[Greek "en" NT:1722] "**Abide in Me, and I in you.**"<sup>3</sup> This is one of the most important concepts in the Bible.

v1: **including the overseers and deacons**---This is poorly translated; "Including" is better translated "In union with." This is the Greek word "sun" [NT:4862] which has a beautiful meaning: "a nearer and closer connection than 'with.'"<sup>4</sup> It implies a Siamese-twin type of connection. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all our saints were joined in union with our elders and with Jesus so we could be of one mind and heart?

v1: **deacons**---a church needs to have deacons so the elders can be freed from mundane administrative duties in order to attend to the spiritual direction and needs of the church.

v2: **Grace**---Greek "charis" [NT:5485]. This is the same root word as "gift" and "charismatic."

v2: **Peace**---Equivalent to the Hebrew "shalom."

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<sup>3</sup> John 15:4

<sup>4</sup> The Complete Word Study Dictionary

v2: **Grace to you and peace**---This is a greeting that Paul uses frequently in his epistles.<sup>5</sup> Peter also used it<sup>6</sup> and so did John.<sup>7</sup> Since it is used these 17 times, it must be important! Are we fully experiencing God's **grace and peace**<sup>8</sup> or is it something we need to learn more about? I know that I for one sure need to experience it more.

v2: **from God**---"from" is the Greek "apo" [NT:575], a preposition denoting the source of something. Likewise, "God" and "Father" are in the Greek Genitive Case also meaning that they are the source. Therefore "grace and peace" are available from God as gifts for us to accept.<sup>9</sup> All we have to do is receive them thankfully by faith.

v2: **our Father**---How beautiful! Abba.<sup>10 11</sup> He is our father because He redeemed us; then He adopted us as His sons.

v2: **Lord**---Greek "kurios" [NT:2962] "Supreme in authority, master, owner." This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Jehovah."

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*Philippians 1:3-5, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now."*

v3: **I thank my God**---This we should do always.<sup>12 13</sup> Is anyone giving thanks for you?

v3: **remembrance of you**---Paul expresses this same thought in other passages too.<sup>14 15 16 17 18 19 20</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3

<sup>6</sup> 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:2

<sup>7</sup> 2 John 3; Rev 1:4

<sup>8</sup> Rom 5:1, Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor 1:4, I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,

<sup>10</sup> Rom 8:15, For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

<sup>11</sup> Gal 4:6, Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

<sup>12</sup> 1 Thess 5:18, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> Eph 5:20, always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.

<sup>14</sup> Eph 1:15-16, For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;

<sup>15</sup> Col 1:3, We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.

<sup>16</sup> 1 Thess 1:2, We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;

<sup>17</sup> 2 Thess 1:3, We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater

v4: **always offering prayer**---Paul prays for them continuously. What a blessing. I often thank God for people who are praying for me and I ask Him to bless them for their faithfulness. Paul's prayers are so different from the way we often pray; we pray for a house to sell, for a new job, for acceptance into a specific college, etc. Paul prays for them to know Christ fully.<sup>21 22</sup>

v4: **with joy**---It is a delight to pray for those we love.

v5: **your participation in the gospel**---First they believed Paul's message then they participated in spreading the gospel. This is our privilege too.

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*Philippians 1:6, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."*

**confident**---persuaded, convinced, assured, trusting. How many of us can say this about our relationship with our Lord?

v6: **He who began a good work in you will perfect it**---<sup>23 24 25 26 27</sup> The word "perfect" is the Greek "epiteleo" [NT:2005] which is formed from the intensifier "epi" [NT:1909 super] and "teleo"

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<sup>18</sup> Philem 4-5, I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, 5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints.

<sup>19</sup> Rom 1:8, First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

<sup>20</sup> 1 Cor 1:4, I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,

<sup>21</sup> Eph 1:17-19, ...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

<sup>22</sup> Eph 3:16-19, ...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

<sup>23</sup> Phil 2:13, for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

<sup>24</sup> 2 Thess 2:13, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

<sup>25</sup> Titus 3:5, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>26</sup> Heb 13:20-21, Now the God of peace...equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight.

[NT:5055 to complete, to finish, to accomplish]. Notice that He does it---not us---but we can facilitate the process by abiding in Him.

v6: **until the day of Christ Jesus**---This refers either to the end times<sup>28 29 30</sup> or to when we die and see Him face to face.

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*Philippians 1:7-8, "For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. 8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus."*

v7: **For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all**---Paul has total confidence in their outcome because they have demonstrated their genuine faith by means of good works.<sup>31 32</sup>

v7: **because I have you in my heart**---He loves them. We too can't help but love those who respond to the Gospel.

v7: **since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me**---As we will see in the next few verses, they have repeatedly sent gifts and messengers to encourage him---even in prison. What does it mean to you to be a "partaker off grace?"

v8: **I long for you all**---"long" is the Greek "epiptheo" [NT:1971] which is derived from the intensifier "epi" ["super"] and "potheo" ["to yearn"]. It implies desperation to be with them.

v8: **with the affection of Christ Jesus**---"We love (with His love) because He first loved us."<sup>33</sup> Both "Christ" and "Jesus" are in the Greek Genitive Case meaning He is the source of that love.

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<sup>27</sup> 1 Peter 1:3-5, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

<sup>28</sup> 1 Cor 1:7-8, ...so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>29</sup> Phil 1:10, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

<sup>30</sup> Phil 2:15-16, ...you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory....

<sup>31</sup> James 2:17, Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

<sup>32</sup> James 2:14, What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

<sup>33</sup> 1 John 4:19

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*Philippians 1:9-11, "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; <sup>11</sup> having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."*

v9: **And this I pray**---Paul's prayers are sure different than ours. He prays for their spiritual growth whereas we usually pray for physical healing, or for a job, or to sell our house, etc.

v9: **that your love may abound still more and more**---He is speaking of "agape" love---committed, unconditional love. "**Abound**" is the Greek "perissos" [NT:4053] which means "superabundant, exceed, excel, superior, excessive, beyond measure." It seems that there is no limit to love since God Himself is love<sup>34</sup> and He is infinite; therefore love can be infinite.

v9: **in real knowledge**---This is the Greek "epignosis" [NT:1922] which is made up of the intensifier "epi" and "gnosis" [NT:1108] which means "experiential knowledge, penetrating insight." This word is used at least 20x in the NT.<sup>35 36 37</sup> It implies deep, internalized understanding---relationship.

v9: **and all discernment**---this is the Greek "aesthesis" [NT:144] meaning "perception, to apprehend, to understand"

v10: **so that you may approve**---this is the Greek "dokimaso" [NT:1381] which means "to test, to try, to put to the proof (either true or false) something." It implies we are to test things to see if they are true or not.

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<sup>34</sup> 1 John 4:7-8, Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

<sup>35</sup> Eph 1:17-18, ...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...

<sup>36</sup> Eph 4:13-14, ...until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

<sup>37</sup> Col 1:9-10, For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

v10: **things that are excellent**---This is a weird word and no one seems to know what it means. It is translated numerous different ways.

v10: **in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ**---Satan loves to blame us and rub our noses in what we have done wrong. My very favorite verse is Jude 24 which says we are **blameless**.<sup>38</sup>

v11: **having been filled**---This is in the Greek Perfect Tense (completed action with continuing results).

v11: **with the fruit of righteousness**---Is this the same as the fruit of the Spirit?<sup>39</sup>

v11: **which comes through Jesus Christ**---He is the source of everything.<sup>40</sup> Again, both “Christ” and “Jesus” are in the Greek Genitive Case meaning He is the source of righteousness.

v11: **to the glory and praise of God**---This should be the goal of everything we think or do.

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*Philippians 1:12-18, "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. 15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; 16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; 17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice."*

v12: **my circumstances**---One of my friends says when she asks someone how they are doing and they reply “Fairly well, under the circumstances,” she then asks them “What are earth are you doing under there???” Paul tells us to rejoice no matter what the circumstances may be.

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<sup>38</sup> Jude 24-25, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

<sup>39</sup> Eph 5:8-10, Walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

<sup>40</sup> Col 1:16, For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.



v12: **have turned out**---This is not happenstance. God tells us He will work everything for good for those who love Him.<sup>41</sup> We sometimes think something is not good (cancer, automobile accident, job loss, etc.) but if we trust God, He will work it out “according to His purpose.”

v12: **greater progress of the gospel**---It is a known fact that the gospel spreads the fastest when Christians are under persecution.

v13: **praetorian guard**---This was Caesar’s personal guard. In other words, the gospel has reached even into the center of power.

v14: **have far more courage**---Because of Paul’s example and because of the success of the gospel, they are encouraged to speak out. I’m encouraged, too, when I see people responding.

v14: **the word of God**---If we really believed it to be the word of God Himself, wouldn’t we speak up and share it?

v15: **from envy**---Even today this happens. Some preachers want to be known for their influence and the size of their church.

v16: **do it out of love**---Everything we do should be from love rather than obligation, duty or to get fame.

v16: **the defense of the gospel**---Sometimes we try to defend God when He doesn’t need defending.<sup>42</sup> We just need to proclaim the gospel rather than getting in arguments.

v17: **selfish ambition**---Some pastors are envious of anyone who seems to have more success than they do. They want to be the ones on the platform at conferences.

v18: **Christ is proclaimed**---We sometimes look down on those who preach a “tweaked” gospel but at least some of what they preach is correct and the Holy Spirit will use that.

v18: **in this I rejoice**---Paul rejoices even when the gospel is preached for the wrong motives. We should too and we should be less critical of other denominations. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ was once criticized for using the Four Spiritual Laws. His response to his critic was, “Well, what method do you use to share the gospel???”

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<sup>41</sup> Rom 8:28, And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

<sup>42</sup> Judges 6:31, If he is a god, let him contend for himself.

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*Philippians 1:18-21, "Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."*

v18: **Yes, and I will rejoice**---Paul anticipates his readers' wonderment that he could rejoice in such circumstances so he repeats it for emphasis.

v19: **my deliverance**---He knows he will be delivered either from death or through death<sup>43 44</sup> (see also verse 21). Either way he trusts the Lord.

v19: **provision of the Spirit**---We seldom use the word "providence" but it is a great word that means God provides for all our needs.<sup>45</sup>

v19: **Spirit of Jesus Christ**---The words "Jesus" and "Christ" are in the Greek Genitive case which means He is the source of the "Spirit." He said He would send His Spirit to us.<sup>46 47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Isa 57:1-2, The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. 2 Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death. (NIV)

<sup>44</sup> 2 Chron 34:28 and 2 Kings 22:20, "Behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, so your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place and on its inhabitants."''

<sup>45</sup> Matt 6:25-33, "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? 28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>46</sup> John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

<sup>47</sup> John 15:26, "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me."

v20: **earnest expectation and hope**---Our “**hope**” is definitely “**earnest expectation**”--it is not wishful thinking---it is anchored firmly in the faithfulness of God’s promises.

v20: **Christ will even now**---even when in prison, even when he is facing death, even when other people are distorting the gospel.

v20: **be exalted in my body**---My body belongs to Him.

v20: **whether by life or by death**---In every way we should exalt our Lord.

v21: **to live is Christ**---This should be our life verse.

v21: **to die is gain**---There is nothing to fear about death (except the process!).

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*Philippians 1:22-26, "But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again."*

v22: **fruitful labor**---Proclaiming the gospel.<sup>48</sup>

v22: **I do not know which to choose**---I often wish I could choose but God is the One who chooses---not me.<sup>49</sup>

v23: **hard-pressed from both directions**---As Shakespeare said, “To be or not to be; that is the question.” Life is hard!<sup>50 51 52 53 54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Eph 2:10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

<sup>49</sup> Ps 139:16, Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

<sup>50</sup> Ps 34:19, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

<sup>51</sup> Ps 71:20, You who have shown me many troubles and distresses will revive me again, and will bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

v23: **depart and be with Christ---To be with Christ** <sup>55</sup> sounds wonderful but many verses seem to indicate that we will be in a sleep state <sup>56 57 58 59 60</sup> until the Rapture. <sup>61 62</sup>

v23: **very much better**---Even if we are asleep, it will be better than this life of pain.

v24: **yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake**---Paul wants to help them gain an even greater relationship with Christ. Boy, I wish Paul could mentor me. Actually he is doing exactly that through his Philippian letter.

v25: **progress and joy in the faith**---It is so sad when people get stuck and fail to grow. <sup>63</sup> Since our Lord is infinite, we will never tire of learning more and more about Him and His love.

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<sup>52</sup> Heb 10:32-33, But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, <sup>33</sup> partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.

<sup>53</sup> John 16:33, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (KJV)

<sup>54</sup> 2 Tim 3:12, Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

<sup>55</sup> 2 Cor 5:6-9, Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord — <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight — <sup>8</sup> we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.

<sup>56</sup> Isa 57:2, Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death. (NIV)

<sup>57</sup> Matt 27:52, The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised

<sup>58</sup> John 11:11-14, This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." <sup>12</sup> The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." <sup>13</sup> Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. <sup>14</sup> So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

<sup>59</sup> Acts 13:36, "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay."

<sup>60</sup> 1 Cor 15:18-20, Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

<sup>61</sup> 1 Thess 4:13-17, But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

<sup>62</sup> 1 Cor 15:51-52, Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet [the Rapture]; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

v26: **proud confidence in me**---This is the Greek “kauchema” [NT:2745] which means “boast.” They are boasting about him and the gospel he preaches.<sup>64 65 66 67</sup>

v26: **my coming to you again**---We do not know whether Paul ever saw them again face to face (probably not) but he did bless them through his letter.

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*Philippians 1:27-29, "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 in no way alarmed by your opponents — which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. 29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me."*

v27: **conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ**---Good advice.

v27: **whether I come and see you or remain absent**---It is said that the true measure of a man's character is what he will do when he knows no one is watching.

v27: **standing firm**---Like a warrior who will not give ground to the enemy.

v27: **in one spirit**---Unity.<sup>68 69 70 71</sup>

v27: **striving together**---This is the Greek “sunathleo” [NT:4866] which is derived from “sun” [NT:4862] (together with) and “athleo” [NT:118] (wrestle) from which we get the English word

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<sup>63</sup> 2 Peter 3:16, “...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

<sup>64</sup> 2 Cor 5:12, We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart.

<sup>65</sup> 2 Cor 7:4, Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf.

<sup>66</sup> Phil 2:16, ...holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

<sup>67</sup> 2 Cor 9:3, But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case.

<sup>68</sup> Ps 133:1, Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwelt together in unity!

<sup>69</sup> John 17:23, I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

<sup>70</sup> Eph 4:1-3, Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

<sup>71</sup> Col 3:14, Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

“athletic.” “Sun” is a very close association---almost like Siamese twins joined at the hip. This is how we should spread the gospel together.<sup>72</sup>

v28: **in no way alarmed**---Fear not.<sup>73</sup>

v28: **by your opponents**---We will have opponents but that’s OK.

v29: **to suffer for His sake**---Yuk, but God knows best.<sup>74 75 76 77 78</sup>

### ***What has God revealed in chapter 1 about Himself and His character?***

1. We are set aside (sanctified) for His use---v1
2. Jesus is the Christ (Messiah)---v1
3. He offers us:
  - a. Grace---v2
  - b. Peace---v2
4. God is our Father---v2
5. Jesus is our Lord---v2
6. We should thank Him---v3
  - a. with joy---v4
7. He began the good work in us--v6
8. He will perfect us---v6
9. Jesus is coming again---v6
10. God is our witness---v8

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<sup>72</sup> Jude 3, ...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

<sup>73</sup> Matt 10:31, "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

<sup>74</sup> Rom 8:16-17, The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

<sup>75</sup> Rom 8:18, For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

<sup>76</sup> 2 Cor 1:5, For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

<sup>77</sup> 2 Cor 1:7, ...knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.

<sup>78</sup> 1 Peter 4:12-13, Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

11. He will give us:
  - a. super-knowledge---v9
  - b. discernment---v9
  - c. so that we will:
    - i. test and prove good things---v10
    - ii. be sincere---v10
    - iii. be blameless---v10
    - iv. have the fruits of righteousness---v11
    - v. glorify Him---v11
    - vi. praise Him---v11
12. He works all things out for good---v12
13. He is trustworthy---v14
14. The gospel is His word---v14
15. He makes sure that Christ is preached---v18
16. He answers prayer---v19
17. He provides us with the Spirit of Christ---v19
18. He can be exalted in my body---v20
19. Life is about Christ---v21
20. We get to be with Christ in death---v23
21. Salvation is from God---v28
22. He destined for us to suffer with Christ---v29

## Philippians 2

Philippians 2:1-11, ***"Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, <sup>2</sup> make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose."***

v1: **Therefore**---Based on the information in the previous chapter we can conclude the following.

v1: **if any**---He uses this phrase four times in this verse. He is expecting a positive answer (in the same way as a rhetorical question does). Because that is true, it could be replaced with the English word "since":

1. Since there is **encouragement in Christ**
2. Since there is **consolation of love**
3. Since there is **fellowship of the Spirit**
4. Since there is **affection and compassion**

v2: Because these wonderful things are true, then **make my joy complete**.

v2: How? By:

1. **being of the same mind**
  2. **maintaining the same love**
  3. **united in spirit**
  4. **intent on one purpose**
- 

Philippians 2:3-4, ***"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup> do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."***

v3: **Do nothing from selfishness**---This is the Greek "epitheia" [NT:2052] which means "contention, strife, rivalry, self-interest, mercenary interest." We saw this same word back in chapter 1 verse 16 where it said "some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife."



v3: **or empty conceit**---This is the Greek word “kenodoxia” [NT:2754] which means “empty-glorying, self-conceit, desire for praise, pride.”

v4: **do not merely look out for your own personal interests**---Paul is not telling us to disregard taking care of ourselves. That would be bad stewardship of what God has given us.

v4: **but also**---He is telling us, that in addition to taking care of ourselves, we should also look out for others.

v4: **the interests of others**---As members of the body of Christ, we are mutually interdependent <sup>79</sup> and we need each other. <sup>80 81 82 83</sup> This is how we show love to others and also to Jesus. <sup>84 85</sup>

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Philippians 2:5-8, ***"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."***

v5: **Have this attitude in yourselves**---Apparently this is something we can choose to do. We are not the victims of our feelings but instead we can decide to have this **attitude**. Perhaps this is what a mature relationship with the Lord is all about. The word attitude is the Greek “phroneo” [NT:5426] which means “mind.” We saw it translated as “same mind” and as “one purpose” in verse 2 above.

v6: **He existed**---Eternally, <sup>86</sup> from before time existed.

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<sup>79</sup> 1 Cor 12:20ff

<sup>80</sup> 1 Cor 10:24, Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.

<sup>81</sup> Rom 15:1-3, Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. 2 Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. 3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME."

<sup>82</sup> 1 Cor 9:22, To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.

<sup>83</sup> 1 Cor 10:30, ...just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many,

<sup>84</sup> Matt 25:45, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me."

<sup>85</sup> Matt 25:38, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me."

<sup>86</sup> John 1:2, He was in the beginning with God.

v6: **in the form of God**---He is God.<sup>87</sup>

v7: **emptied Himself**---He gave it all up all the power and position of God and came to earth as a baby born of a woman.

v7: **taking the form of a bond-servant**---Literally a slave, a servant<sup>88</sup> (not necessarily a bond-slave). The point here is that since Christ Himself came to serve, then we too should serve each other.

v7: **being made in the likeness of men**---He actually became flesh<sup>89</sup> just like us.<sup>90</sup> This is incredible and means He knows what it is to be human<sup>91</sup> and He can empathize with us.<sup>92</sup>

v8: **He humbled Himself**---We are told to do the same thing.<sup>93 94 95</sup> Humility is having an accurate appraisal of ourselves: neither too good or too bad.

v8: **by becoming obedient**---Obedient to the instruction of God. This presupposes that we know what His desire is.

v8: **to the point of death**---There is no holding back---no exceptions.

v8: **even death on a cross**---This is the most awful tortuous mode of execution ever devised. How could this be God's will? But it was.<sup>96 97</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> John 1:1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>88</sup> Matt 20:28, the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

<sup>89</sup> "the point of the passage is to contrast the pre-incarnate glory of Christ with His incarnate humility and lowliness." (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

<sup>90</sup> Heb 2:17, Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

<sup>91</sup> Heb 2:18, For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

<sup>92</sup> Heb 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin

<sup>93</sup> Matt 18:4, "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven..."

<sup>94</sup> James 4:10, Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

<sup>95</sup> 1 Peter 5:6, Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time...

<sup>96</sup> Luke 22:42, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."

<sup>97</sup> John 12:27, "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."

Philippians 2:9-11, ***"For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."***

v9: ***God highly exalted Him---***<sup>98 99</sup>

v9: **the name which is above every name---**The names<sup>100 101</sup> of God are a beautiful study.

v10: **EVERY KNEE WILL BOW---**<sup>102 103 104</sup>

v10: **in heaven---**<sup>105 106</sup> Even the four cherubim and the twenty-four elders worship Him.<sup>107</sup>

v10: **on earth---**<sup>108</sup>

v10: **under the earth---**<sup>109</sup> This also probably refers to the demons who will be forced to bow to Jesus. Bear in mind they already believe<sup>110</sup> but they are in rebellion.

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<sup>98</sup> Matt 23:12, "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

<sup>99</sup> Acts 2:33, "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

<sup>100</sup> Eph 1:21, And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

<sup>101</sup> Ex 3:13-14, Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM".

<sup>102</sup> Isa 45:23, "I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance."

<sup>103</sup> Rom 14:10-12, For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." 12 So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

<sup>104</sup> Rev 5:13, And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

<sup>105</sup> Heb 1:6, "...AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

<sup>106</sup> Rev 4:10, ...the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne

<sup>107</sup> Rev 5:8, When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

<sup>108</sup> Ps 66:4, "All the earth will worship You, and will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name."

<sup>109</sup> John 5:28-29, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. "

v11: **every tongue**---Willingly or unwillingly, every tongue will someday have to confess that Jesus is Lord.

v11: **to the glory of God the Father**---Confessing Jesus brings glory to the Father.<sup>111 112</sup>

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*Phil 2:12-13, "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."*

v12: **my beloved**---It's wonderful to be loved.

v12: **not as in my presence only**---As was mentioned above in chapter 1 verse 27, the true measure of a man is what he does when he knows no one will ever find out.

v12: **but now much more in my absence**---Paul is commending them that they are obeying even when he is not there. That is more important---it reveals good character.

v12: **work out your salvation**---Paul knows that salvation is a free gift<sup>113</sup> and is not the results of works. So now they are saved, he is telling them to grow<sup>114</sup> to maturity; understand and rejoice in what Christ has done; get closer to Him; learn to give thanks in all things; etc. This verse could be expanded to be a whole sermon.

v12: **with fear and trembling**---In other words, recognize that this is serious, eternal stuff and is not to be taken lightly.

v13: **for it is God who is at work in you**---God himself is abiding within us and producing His fruit in our lives.<sup>115</sup> We just need to cooperate with the process.

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<sup>110</sup> James 2:19, You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

<sup>111</sup> John 8:54, Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'."

<sup>112</sup> John 17:5, "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

<sup>113</sup> Eph 2:8-9, For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

<sup>114</sup> Eph 4:15, ....speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.

<sup>115</sup> Heb 13:20-21, Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, 21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

v13: **both to will and to work**---He gives us the desire<sup>116</sup> and the energy<sup>117</sup> to do that which pleases Him.

v13: **His good pleasure**---Our goal should always be to bring Him pleasure.<sup>118 119 120</sup>

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*Phil 2:14-16, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain."*

v14: **Do all things without grumbling or disputing**---Aw shucks!

v15: **prove yourselves to be blameless**<sup>121 122 123 124 125 126 127</sup> **and innocent**<sup>128 129</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> 2 Chron 30:12, The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the Lord.

<sup>117</sup> 2 Cor 3:5-6, Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit.

<sup>118</sup> Ps 149:4, For the Lord takes pleasure in His people.

<sup>119</sup> Hos 9:4, Their sacrifices will not please Him. Their bread will be like mourners' bread; All who eat of it will be defiled for their bread will be for themselves alone; It will not enter the house of the Lord.

<sup>120</sup> Mal 1:10, "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you," says the Lord of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from you."

<sup>121</sup> Gen 17:1, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless."

<sup>122</sup> Deut 18:13, "You shall be blameless before the Lord your God."

<sup>123</sup> 2 Sam 22:33, "God is my strong fortress and He sets the blameless in His way."

<sup>124</sup> Job 1:1, There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

<sup>125</sup> Ps 101:6, My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; He who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me.

<sup>126</sup> Ps 119:80, May my heart be blameless in Your statutes, so that I will not be ashamed.

<sup>127</sup> Jude 24-25, Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

<sup>128</sup> Matt 10:16, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves."

<sup>129</sup> Rom 16:19, For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

v15: **children of God above reproach**---<sup>130 131 132 133 134</sup>

v15: **crooked and perverse generation**---The word “generation” does not necessarily mean a definite interval of say 40 years. It is the Greek word “genea” [NT:1074] which means “*a period of time*” or “*literally space of time, circle of time, which only in a derived sense signifies the meaning of a time, a race; then generally in the sense of affinity of communion based upon the sameness of stock.*”<sup>135</sup> Thus it could readily refer to the time in which we are living---the two-thousand year period since the Resurrection.

v15: **lights in the world**---<sup>136</sup>

v16: **holding fast the word of life**---In other words, holding fast to Jesus since He is the Word of life.

v16: **in the day of Christ**---As we saw above in chapter 1 verse 6, this either refers to the end times or when we die. In either case, we will be with Jesus.

v16: **I will have reason to glory**---Paul doesn’t boast about himself but he boasts about them because they are following Jesus.

v16: **I did not run<sup>137</sup> in vain nor toil in vain**---He is referring back to the “fruitful labor” of chapter 1 verse 22 above.

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<sup>130</sup> Isa 25:8, He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

<sup>131</sup> Col 1:22, He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

<sup>132</sup> 1 Tim 6:14, ...keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>133</sup> Titus 1:7-9, For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

<sup>134</sup> Titus 2:7-8, ...in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

<sup>135</sup> The Complete Word Study Dictionary

<sup>136</sup> Matt 5:14-16, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

<sup>137</sup> 1 Cor 9:24, Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

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*Phil 2:17-18, "But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. 18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me."*

v17: **I am being poured out as a drink offering**---He thinks his blood will be spilled soon when he is executed.

v17: **I rejoice and share my joy with you all**---Even while facing death, he rejoices!

v18: **rejoice in the same way**---Wow! He is asking them [us] to have the exact same attitude even if facing death for their [our] faith.

v18: **share your joy with me**---It is so exciting to share joy with our brothers and sisters.

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*Phil 2:19-24, "But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. 20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly."*

v19: **I hope in the Lord**---Although he is making plans, he is asking the Lord for guidance and trusting Him if things change. Likewise, we are not just passive (like the feeble analogy of us being the glove and Him being the hand) but we use our God-given intellect to make good decisions while depending on Him.

v19-20: **to send Timothy**---Even though Timothy is Paul's right-hand man and the only one who is **genuinely concerned** for them, he is willing to strip himself of Timothy's support in order to encourage them in their faith. He is sending him on a very long and hazardous journey---whether by sea or by land. It's a long way from Rome to Philippi.

v21: **they all seek after their own interests**---Nothing has changed! However, if we were truly selfish and informed, we would realize that the thing that is best for us is to please our Lord. His rewards (both here in this life and afterwards) are beyond our imagination.<sup>138</sup>

v22: **proven worth**---How do you prove [try] gold? You melt it in a blazing hot furnace and any impurities float to the top to be skimmed off. Similarly, we are tried in the furnace of affliction. It may not be pleasant but it is worth it.

v22: **he served with me**---This is the ideal way to mentor someone.

v23: **Therefore**---Since he has been proven to be a faithful servant, Paul feels confident to **send** him to them. Likewise, when we have been proven to be faithful servants of the Lord, He will **send** us on His business.

v24: **I trust in the Lord**---Although he trusted the Lord that he might be found innocent and therefore released from prison, apparently that wasn't the Lord's plan. Even though it seemed logical and appeared on the surface to be the best plan, evidently God had something better in mind. And Paul was OK with that. I want to have that same attitude.<sup>139</sup>

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*Phil 2:25-28, "But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of 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. 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you."*

v25: **send to you**---Epaphroditus had brought Paul a monetary gift from the Philippians and now Paul is going to have him return to Philippi with news of Paul's condition.

v25: **Epaphroditus**---<sup>140</sup> The name means "handsome."

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<sup>138</sup> 1 Cor 2:9, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

<sup>139</sup> Phil 3:15, Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you.

<sup>140</sup> Epaphroditus was the delegate of the Christian community at Philippi, sent with their gift to Paul during his first Roman imprisonment. Paul calls him "my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier." On his arrival at Rome, Epaphroditus devoted himself to "the work of Christ" (v.30), both as Paul's attendant and as his assistant in



v25: **my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier**---Paul had high regard for this man and considered him as close as a brother.

v27: **sick to the point of death**---

v27: **God had mercy on him, and me**---On this occasion he was healed but God does not always answer our prayers the way we would like Him to. We need to trust Him no matter what the outcome. Job said, **"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."** <sup>141</sup>

v27: **sorrow upon sorrow**---That is what Satan likes to do. He heaps one thing after another until we are overwhelmed. But God only allows him permission up to a limit and God will use it for our good.

v28: **eagerly**---Amazing! Paul is eager to send encouragement (even if he loses his valuable support) to them so that they can **rejoice** with him.

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*Phil 2:29-30, "Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me."*

v29: **hold men like him in high regard**---Yes. Those who selflessly serve the Lord and His people should be respected.

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## ***What has God revealed in chapter 2 about Himself and His character?***

1. He encourages us---v1
2. We can fellowship with the Spirit---v1
3. He wants us to have unity:
  - a. same mind---v2

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missionary work. So assiduously did he labor that he lost his health and was "near to death" (v. 27). He recovered, however, and Paul sent him back to Philippi with this letter to quiet the alarm of his friends, who had heard of his serious illness. Paul sought for him an honorable and joyful reception by the church. (from International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)

<sup>141</sup> Job 13:15 (KJV)

- b. same love---v2
  - c. same spirit---v2
  - d. same purpose---v2
4. He wants us to be:
- a. selfless---v3
  - b. humble---v3
  - c. looking out for others---v4
5. Jesus is God---v5
6. He became a servant---v7
7. He took the form of man---v7
8. He humbled Himself---v8
9. He was obedient---v8
10. The Father exalted Jesus---v9
11. His name is above every name---v9
12. Every knee will bow to Him:
- a. in Heaven---v10
  - b. on earth---v10
  - c. under the earth---v10
13. Every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord---v11
14. This will glorify the Father---v11
15. He wants our obedience---v12
16. He wants us to work out our salvation---v12
17. He is at work in us:
- a. to will---v13
  - b. to do---v13
  - c. to accomplish His good pleasure---v13
18. He wants us to be:
- a. blameless---v15
  - b. innocent---v15
  - c. above reproach---v15
  - d. lights in the world---v15
19. He is returning---v16
20. Our lives can be a sacrifice to God---v17
21. God is merciful---v27

## Philippians 3

*Phil 3:1, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you."*

v1: **Finally**---He's only halfway through the letter and he's saying finally!

v1: **brethren**---This is the Greek word "adelphos" [NT:80] which means literally "from the womb." These Philippians are as close to his heart as a blood brother.

v1: **To write the same things again is no trouble**---<sup>142 143 144 145</sup>

v1: **safeguard**---<sup>146</sup>

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*Phil 3:2-6, "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; <sup>3</sup> for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless."*

v2: **Beware of the dogs**---He is calling false teachers "dogs." In that day dogs were not the loveable friends we have today but they were feral, vicious, running in packs like wolves and tearing into livestock or children. False teachers are as dangerous as dogs.

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<sup>142</sup> 2 Tim 1:6, For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

<sup>143</sup> 2 Peter 1:12, Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.

<sup>144</sup> 2 Peter 3:1-2, This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, <sup>2</sup> that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

<sup>145</sup> 2 Peter 1:13, I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder...

<sup>146</sup> Heb 5:12, For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

v2: **beware of the evil workers**---He is also warning them about those who work to undermine the faith.

v2: **beware of the false circumcision**---The false circumcision is the Jewish Law; the true circumcision is faith in Jesus.<sup>147</sup> Circumcision is not of the flesh but of the heart.<sup>148 149 150</sup>

v3: **worship in the Spirit of God**---Wow! I wonder what true worship looks like. Singing praise choruses sure is feeble compared to the worship that God deserves. The word translated “worship” is the Greek word “latreuo” [NT:3000] which means “to serve, to minister to.” It refers particularly to performing the Levitical service in the Temple. This word occurs 90 times in the LXX and 21 times in the NT.

v3: **glory in Christ Jesus**---Literally “to boast”<sup>151 152</sup>

v3: **put no confidence in the flesh**---The Jews thought that they were special to God because they were “children of Abraham” since they were circumcised.<sup>153</sup>

v4: **I far more**---Paul had the equivalent of a PhD in Judaism. He even studied under the famous rabbi Gamaliel.<sup>154 155</sup>

v5: **circumcised the eighth day**---This is what the Law required.<sup>156</sup> Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day too.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Look ahead to the next verse: Phil 3:3, “for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.”

<sup>148</sup> Rom 2:28-29, For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

<sup>149</sup> 1 Cor 7:19, Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

<sup>150</sup> Gal 5:6, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

<sup>151</sup> 1 Cor 1:31, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

<sup>152</sup> Gal 6:14, But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,

<sup>153</sup> Luke 3:8, ...do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

<sup>154</sup> Acts 22:3, I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.

<sup>155</sup> Acts 5:34, ...a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people...

<sup>156</sup> Lev 12:2, On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

v5: **a Pharisee**---A very strict, legalistic sect of Judaism.

v6: **as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless**---However,<sup>158</sup> all this did is to prove our need for grace.<sup>159 160 161</sup>

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*Phil 3:7-9, "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him..."*

This is a very long run-on sentence so I'm going to break it in half to make it easier to understand.

v7: **But whatever things were gain to me**---That is, his status as a respected Pharisee and as a Jew and as one who had authority to persecute the Christians.

v7: **those things I have counted as loss**---He has "written them off" just like a businessman does with worthless inventory.

v7: **loss for the sake of Christ**--- In fact, he probably saw them as liabilities that were hindering him from having fellowship with Jesus.<sup>162</sup>

v8: **More than that, I count all things to be loss**---Not only does he consider his Jewish culture, the respect, the financial status, his reputation, etc, as loss but he says everything here on earth is worthless in comparison to knowing Christ.

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<sup>157</sup> Luke 2:21, And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

<sup>158</sup> Rom 9:31-32, Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works.

<sup>159</sup> Rom 3:19-20, Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

<sup>160</sup> Rom 5:20, The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more...

<sup>161</sup> Rom 7:7, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law.

<sup>162</sup> Matt 19:23-24, And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

v8: **for whom I have suffered the loss of all things**---Paul is not speaking loftily or hypothetically, he actually has lost everything---but still he rejoices! Would we?

v8: **count them but rubbish**---the word translated “rubbish” is the Greek “kusibalon” [NT:4657] from the conjunction of two Greek words “kusi” (“dogs”) and “balon” (“throw”). In other words, it is something thrown at those wild feral dogs. Some translations use the word “dung.” That which most men consider important, Paul considers to be as worthless as garbage compared to **gaining Christ**. I like his perspective. That’s what I want.

v8: **so that I may gain Christ**---There is an interesting concept here. The word translated “so that” is the Greek “hina” which means literally “in order that”---cause and effect. Is Paul saying that we must consider all things loss in order to gain Christ? Is this a requirement? Or is he saying that now he has Christ, all other things seem to be rubbish? Remember the verse about it being impossible for a rich man to enter Heaven.<sup>163</sup> Also Jesus says, **"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."**<sup>164</sup>

v9: **and may be found in Him**---This is where I want to be found: abiding in Him and He in me.<sup>165</sup>

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*Phil 3:9-11, "...not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."*

v9: **not having a righteousness of my own**---My righteousness is as filthy rags.<sup>166 167 168</sup>

v9: **derived from the Law**---Impossible!<sup>169 170 171 172 173 174</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Matt 19:23-24

<sup>164</sup> Matt 16:25

<sup>165</sup> John 15:4, "Abide in Me, and I in you."

<sup>166</sup> Isa 64:6, "And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment."

<sup>167</sup> Rev 3:17, "...you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked..."

<sup>168</sup> Rom 7:18, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not."

<sup>169</sup> Rom 4:13, For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

<sup>170</sup> Rom 4:15, the Law brings about wrath.

<sup>171</sup> Rom 3:19, by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

<sup>172</sup> Rom 5:20, The Law came in so that the transgression would increase.

v9: **but that which is through faith in Christ---**<sup>175 176 177</sup>

v9: **the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith---**<sup>178</sup>

v10: **that I may know Him---**<sup>179 180 181 182 183 184</sup> This is our ultimate goal in life.

v10: **the power of His resurrection---**<sup>185 186 187 188</sup>

v10: **the fellowship of His sufferings---**Wow, this doesn't sound like fun! However, if we are going to abide in Him and He in us, we must participate in all that He experiences.<sup>189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199</sup> Does God allow our sufferings?<sup>200 201</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Rom 7:7, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law;

<sup>174</sup> Gal 3:10, For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."

<sup>175</sup> Gal 3:22, But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

<sup>176</sup> Rom 3:21-24, But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

<sup>177</sup> Rom 10:4, For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

<sup>178</sup> 1 Cor 1:30, But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.

<sup>179</sup> John 14:17, you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

<sup>180</sup> 1 John 5:20, And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ.

<sup>181</sup> John 17:3, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

<sup>182</sup> 1 John 2:3-4, By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him

<sup>183</sup> Matt 7:23, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'"

<sup>184</sup> John 8:19-20, Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

<sup>185</sup> Mark 13:26, "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory."

<sup>186</sup> Acts 10:38, You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

<sup>187</sup> Rom 1:3-4, ...concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord

<sup>188</sup> 1 Cor 6:14, Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.

<sup>189</sup> Phil 1:29-30, For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

v10: **being conformed to His death**---<sup>202 203 204 205</sup> Dead to sin but alive to Christ.<sup>206 207</sup>

v11: **in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead**---Hasn't Paul already attained that? It almost sounds like he needs to do all these things in order to receive the promise. Isn't it by grace rather than by our works? I think this refers back to verse 10 where the only prerequisite is that we "know Him." If we know Him, everything else follows naturally.

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<sup>190</sup> Rom 8:16-18, The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

<sup>191</sup> Luke 9:22, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."

<sup>192</sup> Luke 24:26, "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"

<sup>193</sup> Acts 5:41, So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.

<sup>194</sup> 2 Cor 1:5, For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

<sup>195</sup> 2 Thess 1:5, This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.

<sup>196</sup> 2 Tim 1:8-9, Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, <sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called us with a holy calling,

<sup>197</sup> James 5:13, Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray.

<sup>198</sup> 1 Peter 2:21, For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.

<sup>199</sup> 1 Peter 4:12-13, Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; <sup>13</sup> but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

<sup>200</sup> 1 Peter 4:19, Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

<sup>201</sup> 1 Peter 5:10, After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

<sup>202</sup> Gal 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ."

<sup>203</sup> Rom 6:6, ...our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with...

<sup>204</sup> Gal 5:24, Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

<sup>205</sup> Gal 6:14, But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

<sup>206</sup> Rom 6:11, Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

<sup>207</sup> Matt 16:25, "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."



*Phil 3:12-16, "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; <sup>16</sup> however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained."*

v12: **Not that I have already obtained it**---Actually, Christ has already obtained it for Him [us] and sealed him [us] by the Holy Spirit<sup>208 209 210 211</sup> as a guarantee that he [we] will receive it.

v12: **or have already become perfect**---Will we ever be perfect? The word translated "perfect" is the Greek "teleio" [NT:5048] which means "complete, mature."<sup>212</sup> However, one day we will be transformed (metamorphed) into the image of Christ.<sup>213 214 215</sup> Look ahead to verse 21.<sup>216</sup> This word also connotes "consummated"---something that will happen at the Heavenly marriage as the bride of Christ.<sup>217</sup>

v12: **I press on**---This should be our life goal!

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<sup>208</sup> 2 Cor 1:21-22, Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, <sup>22</sup> who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

<sup>209</sup> Eph 1:13, In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

<sup>210</sup> Eph 4:30, Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

<sup>211</sup> Rev 7:4, And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.

<sup>212</sup> "Particularly with the meaning to bring to a full end, completion, reaching the intended goal, to finish a work or duty" (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

<sup>213</sup> 2 Cor 3:18, "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.'

<sup>214</sup> 1 Cor 15:51-52, "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."

<sup>215</sup> 1 Cor 15:42-44, So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; <sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

<sup>216</sup> Phil 3:20-21, "...the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."

<sup>217</sup> Rev 19:7, "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

v12: **so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus**---Paul wants to fulfill his “raison d’être”---his purpose in life. What is that purpose? To know Jesus (verse 10). As said above, if we know Jesus, everything else follows naturally: good deeds, the fruits of the Spirit, etc.

v13: **I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet**---Paul is not saying he hasn’t “**laid hold of Christ**”---he is saying he has not fully laid hold of Him. The verb (which is negated) is in the Greek Perfect Indicative which means the action has been completed. So Paul is saying that it is not completed; there is more to have. We will never completely “**lay hold**” of Christ since He is infinite. No matter how much we know and enjoy Him, there is still more! We are the only ones limiting the relationship.

v13: **but one thing I do**---He is single minded, focused, intent.<sup>218</sup>

v13: **forgetting what lies behind**---In this context, Paul is ignoring all the things he has given up in order to have Christ because he is concentrating on what lies ahead. In the broader context, we need to “forget” our past (no matter how terrible) and concentrate on what lies ahead (Heaven with Jesus). It will more than make up for the wrongs we have suffered or the pain we have experienced.<sup>219</sup>

v13: **reaching forward to what lies ahead**---What really lies ahead? Eternal life with Jesus; being welcomed by the Father; total peace; transfigured bodies; no pain; being transformed into the image of Christ; being joint-heirs with Him....

v14: **I press on**---we should too. We have everything to gain and nothing of worth to lose.

v14: **toward the goal**---Paul uses the analogy of a race where we exert maximum effort to reach the goal---the finish line.<sup>220 221</sup>

v14: **for the prize**---This prize is far better than the wreath awarded at a race.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Ps 27:4, One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to meditate in His temple.

<sup>219</sup> Rom 8:18, For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

<sup>220</sup> 1 Cor 9:24, Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

<sup>221</sup> Hab 2:3, "For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it, for it will certainly come, it will not delay."

v14: **the upward call of God in Christ Jesus**---Our prize is Christ Himself!

v15: **Let us therefore have this attitude**---This is a choice---something that we can decide to do---a life goal. He is repeating a theme he mentioned back in Philippians 2:5.<sup>223</sup>

v15: **as many as are perfect**---I guess this leaves me out since I am a long way from perfect! However, the word translated “perfect” actually means “mature” rather than without any fault at all. Therefore I guess it does include me.

v15: **if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you**---God’s Holy Spirit will bring to mind areas that need improvement. Our job is to abide in Christ and not get too self-absorbed.<sup>224 225</sup>

v16: **let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained**---Don’t slip backwards.

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*Phil 3:17-21, "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."*

v17: **join in following my example**---I wish I could say this.<sup>226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> 1 Cor 9:25, Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

<sup>223</sup> Phil 2:5, Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus...

<sup>224</sup> 1 Cor 4:3-4, I do not even examine myself. 4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord.

<sup>225</sup> 1 John 3:21, Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God

<sup>226</sup> 1 Cor 11:1, Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

<sup>227</sup> 1 Cor 4:16, Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.

<sup>228</sup> 2 Thess 3:7, For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you...

<sup>229</sup> 2 Thess 3:9, ...in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.

<sup>230</sup> Phil 4:9, The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>231</sup> 1 Thess 1:6, You also became imitators of us and of the Lord...

v17: **observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us**---The word “walk” means a pattern of life. So Paul is saying for us to conduct our lives according to the pattern of faith and good deeds that he exemplified. <sup>235</sup>

v18: **For many walk... they are enemies of the cross of Christ**---How sad that some would not only reject God’s unconditional love for themselves but actually try to prevent others from entering in to His love. <sup>236 237 238 239 240</sup>

v19: **whose end is destruction**---<sup>241</sup>

v19: **whose god is their appetite**---<sup>242 243 244</sup>

v19: **whose glory is in their shame**---<sup>245 246</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> 1 Tim 4:12, ...show yourself an example of those who believe.

<sup>233</sup> Titus 2:7, in all things show yourself to be an example...

<sup>234</sup> 1 Peter 5:3, ...proving to be examples to the flock.

<sup>235</sup> 2 Cor 4:2, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

<sup>236</sup> Gal 1:7, ...there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

<sup>237</sup> Acts 20:29-30, "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them."

<sup>238</sup> Matt 7:15, "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves."

<sup>239</sup> 2 Peter 2:1-2, But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. 2 Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned.

<sup>240</sup> 3 John 10, For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

<sup>241</sup> Matt 7:13, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it."

<sup>242</sup> Rom 16:18, For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites.

<sup>243</sup> Hos 4:10, They will eat, but not have enough; They will play the harlot, but not increase, because they have stopped giving heed to the Lord.

<sup>244</sup> Isa 65:13, Therefore, thus says the Lord God, "Behold, My servants will eat, but you will be hungry. Behold, My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty. Behold, My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame."

v19: **who set their minds on earthly things---**<sup>247 248 249</sup>

v20: **For our citizenship is in heaven---**<sup>250 251</sup>

v20: **we eagerly wait---**<sup>252 253 254 255 256</sup>

v21: **who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory---**<sup>257 258 259 260</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> 1 Peter 4:3-4, For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. 4 In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you.

<sup>246</sup> Rom 1:32, ...and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

<sup>247</sup> Mark 8:36, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"

<sup>248</sup> Rom 8:5-8, For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>249</sup> Col 3:2, Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth

<sup>250</sup> Eph 2:19, So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household...

<sup>251</sup> 2 Cor 5:20, Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

<sup>252</sup> 1 Cor 1:7, you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ...

<sup>253</sup> 1 Thess 1:10, ...wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

<sup>254</sup> Titus 2:13, ...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus...

<sup>255</sup> Heb 9:28, ...so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

<sup>256</sup> 2 Peter 3:12, ...looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God...

<sup>257</sup> 2 Cor 3:18, But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

<sup>258</sup> 1 Cor 15:42-44, So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

<sup>259</sup> Matt 17:2, And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

<sup>260</sup> Mark 9:2-3, And He was transfigured before them; 3 and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

v21: **by the exertion of the power that He has**---His power<sup>261</sup> is infinite. He created all things.<sup>262</sup>

v21: **to subject all things to Himself**---<sup>263 264</sup>

### ***What has God revealed in chapter 3 about Himself and His character?***

1. We can rejoice in Him---v1
2. He warns us about evil workers---v2
3. He says we are the true circumcision---v3
4. He wants us to:
  - a. worship through the Spirit---v3
  - b. glory in Christ---v3
  - c. have no confidence in our flesh---v4
  - d. count everything as loss or rubbish except Christ---v7 & v8
  - e. gain Christ---v8
  - f. be found in Him---v9
  - g. only have Christ's righteousness based on faith---v9
  - h. know Him--v10
  - i. be conformed to His death---v10
  - j. attain resurrection---v11
  - k. press on for Christ---v12-v14
5. He will destroy His enemies---v19
6. He has made us citizens of Heaven---v20
7. He will transform us---v21
8. He will subject all things to Himself---v21

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<sup>261</sup> Eph 1:19-21, These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

<sup>262</sup> Col 1:16, For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.

<sup>263</sup> Col 1:19, For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him.

<sup>264</sup> Eph 1:22-23, And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

## Philippians 4

*Phil 4:1-3, "Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."*

v1: **Therefore**---On the basis of all that has come before...

v1: **my beloved**---This is the committed love "agape."

v1: **brethren**---From the Greek "adelphos" [NT:80] which means literally "from the womb" ("a" = "from" and "delphus" = "womb").

v1: **whom I long to see**---Paul says this plaintively because he loves them and, if he were with them, he wouldn't be in this prison.

v1: **my joy and crown**---As he has said repeatedly above, they are his joy. They also are his crown that he gets to place at the Master's feet someday. <sup>265 266 267 268 269 270 271</sup>

v1: **in this way stand firm**---Immoveable like a soldier defending his position.

v1: **in the Lord**---This is the only way we are able to stand firm. We can't do it in our own strength.

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<sup>265</sup> 1 Thess 2:19-20, For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? <sup>20</sup> For you are our glory and joy.

<sup>266</sup> Isa 62:3, You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

<sup>267</sup> Zech 9:16, For they are as the stones of a crown, sparkling in His land.

<sup>268</sup> 1 Peter 5:4, And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

<sup>269</sup> 2 Tim 4:8, In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

<sup>270</sup> James 1:12, Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

<sup>271</sup> Rev 2:10, Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

*Phil 4:4-7, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

v4: **Rejoice in the Lord always**---This is so hard when we think things aren't going well. What we forget is that God is always in control and that in His love He is able to make everything work out for good. However, it may not be in this lifetime.

v4: **again I will say, rejoice!**---It is definitely worth repeating.<sup>272</sup>

v5: **Let your gentle spirit be known to all men**---Even when we have been wronged, we are to be gentle.<sup>273 274 275 276</sup>

v6: **Be anxious for nothing**---Ouch! This is one of my weaknesses. I tend to worry even though I have a God that loves me passionately.

v6: **by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving**---It's OK to ask but we should not expect God to answer exactly as we have requested. He knows best so we should give **thanksgiving** no matter how He answers.

v6: **requests be made known to God**---He already knows what our requests will be but He wants us to ask in faith. We are not informing Him, but we are exercising our trust which is good for us.

**the peace of God**---The peace He gives us is so much better than any peace we could experience.

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<sup>272</sup> 1 Thess 5:16-18, Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>273</sup> Prov 15:1, A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

<sup>274</sup> 1 Tim 3:2-3, An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money.

<sup>275</sup> Titus 3:1-2, Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

<sup>276</sup> 1 Peter 3:3-4, Your adornment must not be merely external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.



v7: ***which surpasses all comprehension***---Mind blowing!

v7: ***will guard your hearts and your minds***---What will it **guard** us from? Being anxious. When it **guards our hearts**, that's our fears; when it **guards our minds**, that's our worries. I am prone to both things.

v7: ***in Christ Jesus***---That is the key! These things will occur if we are abiding **in Christ Jesus**.

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*Phil 4:8-9, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."*

v8: ***Finally***---That's what he said back in chapter 3 verse 1!

v8: ***dwell on these things***---Good advice. When we are being tempted, change the subject! **Dwell** on good things and the temptation will be replaced by praise.

v9: ***practice these things***---In other words, let this be a habitual way of life.

v9: ***the God of peace will be with you***---He is always with us but we are not always aware of His presence.

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*Phil 4:10-14, "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. 14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction."*

v10: ***I rejoiced in the Lord greatly***---Paul is demonstrating through his own life the advice he gave us earlier in verse 4.

v11: ***I have learned to be content***---We all need to be **content** and trust our Lord that He is doing what will be best for us, His adopted children.

v13: ***I can do all things***---Really? He will enable us to accomplish whatever He wants us to do.

v13: ***through Him***---This is the key again.

v13: ***who strengthens me***---This means literally to empower me; to give me the strength that is beyond my ability.

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*Phil 4:15-20, "You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen."*

v15: ***at the first preaching of the gospel***---This was in Acts 15:12ff.

v16: ***you sent a gift***---Paul usually worked as a tent maker<sup>277</sup> to earn money and not be a burden on those he preached to.<sup>278</sup>

v17: ***the profit which increases to your account***---Paul is saying that their gifts were credited to their account in Heaven.<sup>279</sup>

v18: ***a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God***---These are the kinds of works that please God---taking care of those in need. He of course is contrasting their giving from the heart to the Old Testament sacrifices and works.

***God will supply all your needs***---True. I have personally experienced this many times.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Acts 18:2-3, He came to them, 3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

<sup>278</sup> 2 Cor 11:9, ...when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.

<sup>279</sup> Matt 6:20, "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal."

<sup>280</sup> Matt 6:30-34, "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or

v19: **according to His riches in glory**---Wow! His riches are infinite! <sup>281 282 283</sup>

v20: **glory forever and ever**---Until the end of time itself!

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*Phil 4:21-23, "Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."*

v21: **every saint**---Literally someone who is set aside for God's use.

v21: **in Christ Jesus**---This key phrase has occurred eight times<sup>284</sup> in this short book. It must be really important. More than that, it is essential! It occurs 50 times in the New Testament---every time by Paul.

v21: **brethren**---Literally a brother from the womb.

v22: **Caesar's household**---This is the Praetorian guard spoken about in chapter 1 verse 12.<sup>285 286</sup>

v22: **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ**---Paul often ends his letters with this benediction.<sup>287</sup>

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'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

<sup>281</sup> Ps 50:10, "For every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. "

<sup>282</sup> Rev 5:12, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

<sup>283</sup> 1 Tim 6:17, "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy."

<sup>284</sup> Phil 1:1; 1:26; 2:5; 3:3; 3:14; 4:7; 4:19 and 4:21.

<sup>285</sup> Phil 1:12-13, Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else.

<sup>286</sup> 2 Tim 2:9-10, I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

<sup>287</sup> Rom 16:20; Rom 16:24; 2 Cor 13:14; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; 1 Thes 3:18; Philem 25.

***What has God revealed in chapter 4 about Himself and His character?***

1. He has put our names in His book of life---v2
2. We are to rejoice in Him always---v4
3. He is near---v5
4. He will give us peace in our hearts and our minds---v7
5. He will be with us---v9
6. He strengthens us---v13
7. He is pleased with our works---v18
8. He will supply all our needs ---v19
9. His storehouse is infinite ---v19
10. All these good things are in Christ Jesus---**Error! Not a valid link.**
11. He deserves glory forever---v20
12. He can reach even into the households of emperors---v22
13. His grace is available to our spirits---v23