

PHILIPPIANS

Chapters One to Four

**Notes to use as you study through
the Book of Philippians, enabling you to receive
wonderful wisdom and revelation.**

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***Note: these studies in Philippians were presented at
Shiloh Training School September 2023,***

***We present these notes to you, to enable you to study the
book of Philippians more diligently, receiving “the spirit of
wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”
[Eph.1:17-19]***

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

When reading a book in the Bible it is **good to know the context of when it was written, who wrote the Book and who was it written to.**

In the New Spirit Filled Life Bible there are good introductions to every book which give you the author, the date when it was written, key words that appear through the book, the background, how Christ is revealed through the book and many other wonderful things to help set the scene of the book you are reading.

→ **The theme** is given as ‘Joy in Christ’ as Paul often mentions ‘rejoicing’ in Christ Jesus in whatever circumstances we are in.

→ **Philippians was written in about A.D 61**

Background

The Background includes understanding about the city of Philippi, where apostle Paul went on his second missionary journey.

Acts 16:12-40 records the founding of the church in Philippi. It was founded by Paul, Silas and Timothy.

Understanding the founding of this church includes:

- knowing about Lydia – a woman Paul met at the riverside,
- the first house church – established in the home of Lydia,
- the deliverance of the girl from a spirit of divination,
- Paul being put in prison in Philippi with Silas,
- how God delivered them from prison through an earthquake, and
- the establishing of the house church in the jailer’s house

Christ is preached in the book of Philippians

In the section ‘Christ Revealed’ in the Spirit Filled Life Bible, it says, *“For Paul, Christ is the sum and substance of life. To preach Christ is Paul’s consuming passion; to know Him is His highest aspiration; and to suffer for Him is a privilege ... Paul presents the most concise statement in the New Testament concerning Christ’s pre-existence, incarnation (God manifesting in the flesh), and exaltation. Note that Paul emphasises both the deity (Godhood) and the humanity of Christ.”*

Confession of Christ

Philippians 2:5-11 is a key passage and confession of Christ given in this book that we would do well to memorise and confess often and openly!

Real apostolic creeds include **Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:15-20, 1 Timothy 3:16** – they are confessions of what we most surely believe concerning Jesus the Christ!

The “Apostles’ Creed” was not written by apostles, but by bishops 600 years after Christ

- the “Apostles’ Creed” is not the mystery of Christ
- we need to have Scriptural confessions!

Things to Note:

Philippians was a letter, an “epistle” – this letter was written to the church in Philippi.

- Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians in an informal way, to friends.
- When Paul wrote the book of Philippians he was in prison
- The Philippian church had faithfully supported Paul financially

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Chapter One

Who wrote the Book?

Chapter 1:1a *“Paul and Timothy”* - Timothy was part of writing the letter.

- It is interesting to note that though Paul’s greeting in **verse 1** says *“Paul and Timothy”*, from the content of the book Paul writes in the personal ‘I’. [In **1 Thessalonians 1:1** where Paul’s greeting is *“Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy”*, he goes on to speak of ‘we’.]

Paul is a Bondservant

v.1a *“bondservants of Jesus Christ”*

- They were **bondservants of Jesus Christ** – in the notes of the Spirit filled Bible it says, *‘Because of his close relationship with the Philippian Christians, Paul does not need to insist upon his authority as an apostle, as he does in other epistles.’*
- Paul did not call himself an apostle to begin this letter as his manner was in most of his epistles – Paul was close to them, and they received him and supported him as an apostle.
- They received his apostolic authority.

Bondservant – Greek ‘*doulos*’ – a slave, a subject, subserviency – Paul and Timothy were *bondservants of Jesus Christ*

- From Old Testament understanding, a **bondservant** was a *voluntary [free-will] slave – a willing slave*
- They were ‘bondservants’ of Jesus Christ; this is a mature place to be in Christ
- Paul had given his life’s service to Jesus Christ voluntarily
- He was a servant of Jesus the Anointed One [Messiah, King]

Written to the ‘church’

v.1b – Paul is writing to *“the saints in Christ Jesus”* with the *“bishops [overseers] and deacons”*

- **‘saints’** = ‘holy ones’ – Paul was writing to all the members, including the overseers and deacons.
- **The church** is presented as *i) saints* – holy ones, separated to God, *ii) in Christ Jesus* – members of the Body through faith and

baptism into Christ (1 Cor.12:13, Rom.6:3-4), *iii) in Philippi* (a location/place)

- No mention of denominated groups of Christians
- Paul, as well as greeting the saints, also mentions the *bishops and deacons*

Who are the 'bishops'

- **Bishops** = "*overseers*" – in our English language today a *bishop* is someone who is often revered in a wrong way, a man loving to have the pre-eminence (3Jn.9) – it is better to use the word *overseer* as this describes the function
- This letter was not only for the 'leaders' but for all the saints *with the bishops/overseers and deacons*
- **Note:** 'Overseers' could also read as 'elders' and they were charged to shepherd the flock of God – it is in plurality as there was a team of them, not one in charge – apostles appointed elders (Acts 14:23)
- **Deacons** were ones who waited on tables, served in practical business (Acts 6:1-7), Paul says that deacons can "*obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus*" (1Tim.3:13).

Ministering Grace and Peace

Philippians 1:2 – Paul ministers **Grace and Peace** to the brethren

- There is an impartation of grace and peace to receive, it is a ministry to the saints.
- Jesus ministered peace to his disciples [John 20:19-21]; peace comes to us through the Holy Spirit
- The 'grace and peace' are from God, who is 'Father of us, and Lord Jesus Christ' [literal translation] – this is the mystery of God (Col.2:2).
- **There is a revelation of God in this verse – He is the Father, and He is the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Giving thanks for the saints

v.3-4 – it is good to give thanks for the saints, making mention of them in prayer; making requests "*with joy*"

- How is your prayer life? Paul thanks God when he remembers the saints – when particular saints come into your mind, thank God for them; these prayers are substantial.

- this is an insight into Paul's prayer life
- Paul **makes request for all the saints with joy!** It is not a burden!
- Let us make request for the saints to receive all the blessing, inheritance, wisdom and revelation that is needed.

Fellowship in the Gospel

Philippians 1:5 – there is a fellowship we can enjoy in the gospel

- Paul had joy in the Philippians because of their ***fellowship in the gospel***
- **Fellowship** in Greek is '*koinonia*' – [see Word Wealth in **Acts 2:42** in the New Spirit Filled Life Bible] means: "*unity, sharing, participation, partnership, financial contribution, intimacy*"
- the fellowship with Paul was ***in the gospel***, they shared Paul's zeal for the mission of the gospel and believed in it
- **this is Apostolic Community** – they are joined in the mission, giving into the mission and believing in the mission together

The One who began the good work, will complete it

v.6 - Paul was confident that Christ would complete the good work that He had begun in them

- Christ will complete what He began!
- **Complete** – fulfill further, accomplish, nothing will be left undone
- **Hebrews 12:1-2** – Jesus is the "*Author and Finisher/Perfecter of faith*"
- **1 Thess.5:24** says, "*He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it*".

v.7 i) "I have you in my heart"

- it was not a structured organisational leadership; Paul as an apostle carried the saints in his heart, he wanted to see them grow, not just trying to maintain a denomination.

ii) Paul was in chains because of the "*defense and confirmation of the gospel*"

- we are to **defend and confirm the gospel** and help those given to this; we are to stand up to the attacks on the gospel

iii) the Philippians were *'partakers of grace'* with apostle Paul – the same grace that was working in apostle Paul is also working in us. [see Word Wealth on *'grace'* at **2 Corinthians 12:9** in SFLB]

Paul loved the Philippians

Philippians 1:8 - Paul really loves the Philippians

- *“long for”* – *to dote upon* – loving with careful attention, intensely craving possession
- *“affection of Jesus Christ”* – tender mercy, inner affection, Paul could feel how much Jesus loved them and he shared in that
- this is a wonderful insight into the relationship the apostle Paul had with the Philippians, a heartfelt relationship, the apostolic heart

Paul's prayer for the Philippians

v.9 - he prays that their *“love may abound”*

- **love** is the Greek *'agape'* – *love by choice, self-sacrificial, God's type of love as demonstrated by Jesus dying on the Cross*
- **abound** – *superabound, have in excess, greatly surpass, excel*. [see Word Wealth at **Matthew 25:29** in SFLB]
- Paul prays for our *agape* love to *superabound and be in excess*

This is to be done:

- a) in *“knowledge”* – *full discernment* – this means our love is to be directed and intentionally placed, focused in the right area
- b) in *“all discernment”* – *perception, wisely*
 - do not waste your love in the wrong area, be clear and intentional in the direction of the love you give – invest it well.

v.10 – the *agape* love that is *abounding* is for the purpose of *“approving the things that are excellent”*

- love approves what God loves; it does not accept sin,
- *“love does not rejoice in iniquity”* **1 Cor.13:6**
- love approves marriage between a man and woman.
- we do not need to be negative and react to what is wrong but *approve the things that are excellent* – not simply attacking the wrong thing.
- Word Wealth for **'approve'** in **Luke 12:56** – *to prove, determine, to conclude the authenticity of something based on careful examination*

“till the day of Christ” – also mentioned in **Philippians 1:6** – He will complete the work He started until the **“day of Christ”**

- we are to live in view of the **“day of Christ”** – the *day* is coming!
- we are to be **“sincere** (honest, truthful, genuine, authentic) **and without offense till the day of Christ”**.
- **sincere** [see Word Wealth at **2 Peter 3:1** – *literally ‘tested by sunlight’, exposing any flaws*]
- we should pray this for each other.

Philippians 1:11 - we are to be **“filled with the fruits of righteousness”**

- some of the major fruit of righteousness is peace and joy – **Romans 14:17**
- this is **“to the glory and praise of God”**.

Christ is to be preached

v.12 – here is another mention of **“the gospel”**. In **v.5** it is the **“fellowship of the gospel”**; in **v.7** it is the **“defense and confirmation of the gospel”**.

- now in **v.12** it is the **“furtherance of the gospel”**
- even the ‘negative’ things that happen to us can be so that the gospel keeps going forward in the earth, the kingdom advances.

v.13 – even the **palace guard** is hearing the gospel – the soldiers

- do not look only at the outward situation but ask what Jesus is doing in this situation
- in spite of Paul’s chains (even in prison) the gospel is going forth!
- **evident** = *manifest, visible, plain*
- it became obvious **“to the whole palace guard”** (*Praetorium*) that Paul’s chains were in Christ
- if you are going to go to jail, make sure it is for Jesus, that you are **‘in Christ’**, not just reacting to a political or a social justice cause or any other activism – do it for Jesus
- be a prisoner for Christ!

v.14 - Paul in prison started a revival of boldness to speak the gospel. Because of Paul’s chains, other brethren were:

- **confident** – *convinced, related to the word for faith* – they were filled with more faith by seeing Paul’s persecution for the gospel
- **much more bold** – *excessively, to a greater degree*
- to **speak the word without fear**

Philippians 1:15-16 – some were **preaching Christ out of envy and strife**, competing preachers

[Word Wealth for **‘preach’** in **Acts 9:20** – *to herald, to tell abroad, to publish, to propagate, to publicly proclaim, to call out with a clear voice, to communicate*]

- Some were preaching out of **selfish ambition**, competing for followers.

[Word Wealth at **Phil.1:16** for **‘selfish ambition’** – *anyone working for pay, a hireling. Concerned only with their own welll-being, susceptible to being bribed, self-willed, seeking opportunities for promotion. Electioneering, a partisan...trying to win followers.*]

- Some people were **preaching Christ** to get something for themselves, adulation (people loving them), or for money

v.17 – **BUT** some **preach Christ out of goodwill – out of love**

- Paul knew his **appointment** – **“for the defense of the gospel”**

➔ In **Philippians 1:1-18** there are four mentions of the word **gospel**

- preaching from selfish ambition is preaching in **pretense**
- preaching in goodwill out of love is preaching in **truth**

v.18 – But Paul says that no matter what motives are there at least **“Christ is preached!”**

- Paul rejoices in this – it is a good attitude for us to have when we see so much mixture in others’ ministries
- **“I rejoice, yes and will rejoice”** – it is a decision to rejoice
- **I will rejoice** – it is an intentional choice, no matter what the circumstances are.

Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel

v. 19 – the difficulty that Paul is facing will turn out for his deliverance

- Through prayer
- And the supply of the Holy Spirit – the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ Jesus. All of us need *‘the supply’* of the Spirit to do the works of God.

v. 20 – It is according to Paul’s **“earnest expectation and hope”**

- That Christ will be **“magnified in my body”**
- This happens through the prayers of the saints

- In nothing shall we be ashamed. This speaks of the power of faithful prayer.

Make the Choice!

Philippians 1:21 – Paul makes an awesome statement:

- to live is Christ
- to die is gain!

v.22 – Paul had a deep inner tension: he is in prison – to die was attractive; but to live would bring more fruit

- Paul had this decision to make!

v.23 – Paul was *“hard-pressed between the two”* choices, *“having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”*

v.24 – *“Nevertheless”* ... he came to the decision that it was more needful for him to remain – **for the sake of the brethren**

v.25 – Paul made his decision to continue with the brethren *“for your progress and joy of faith”*.

v.26 – the rejoicing of the brethren brought Paul much satisfaction

- He even had faith that he would come to them again!

Do not be afraid of suffering for the Gospel

v.27 – *“let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ”* – in the family, everywhere, live for kingdom realities.

- i. Stand fast in one spirit
- ii. In one mind
- iii. Striving together for the faith of the gospel

v.28 – **don’t be terrified by enemies**

- there are enemies – but do not fear
- to you it is the reward of salvation
- He will bring you through.

v.29 – it is a privilege to suffer for/with Christ

v.30 – Paul had a testimony of suffering for the gospel, so he could identify with those who were also suffering for the gospel.

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Chapter Two

Five things to look for in Christ

Philippians 2:1 begins with *“Therefore”* – this links the chapter into the previous chapter where Paul has been talking of suffering for Christ.

➤ Paul says *“If there is any”* – and then he numbers five things that we can look for in Christ:

1. Consolation/encouragement in Christ
2. Comfort of love
3. Fellowship of the Spirit
4. Affection
5. Mercy

These things are available even in the midst of suffering.

How we are to behave

v.2 *“fulfill my joy ...”* – Paul is expecting joy from the church in Philippi by them being:

- likeminded
- having the same love
- of one accord
- of one mind

Joy is released when we take on these godly mindsets and attitudes

v.3 – Paul is instructing the brethren on how he wants them to behave

- not acting out of ‘selfish ambition or conceit’
- esteeming others better than themselves; in lowliness of mind we are to esteem others.

v.4 – But looking out for the *“interests of others”*

Have the mind of Christ

v.5 – *“Let this mind be in you ...”* - we are to have the mind of Christ

- **1 Corinthians 2:16** *“For ‘who has known the mind of YAHWEH that he may instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ”.*

What is the 'mind of Christ Jesus'?

Philippians 2:6 – 'being' = existing

- In the 'form' = the essential and specific form and character "of God"
- "did not consider it robbery to be equal with God"
- Jesus always existed! This is the clear point that Paul is making.
- The essence of Jesus Christ is the very same as that of the Father, for He [Jesus] is Himself God!

He humbled Himself

v.7 – this One humbled Himself and came in the "likeness of men"

- "made Himself of no reputation" – [emptied Himself of His privileges]
- He took the form of a 'bondservant'
- ➔ We were made in the likeness of God!
- ➔ Now God came in the likeness of men!

v.8 – appearing as a man, he became obedient even to death

- "even the death of the cross"

Because of this Christ is now Exalted

v.9 – begins with "Therefore" – because Christ humbled Himself

➤ God has:

1. **Highly exalted Him** – given Him honour, esteem, glory
 2. **Given Him the Name** above every other name
- This is something that God has done

'Name' - Greek 'onoma' means: rank or authority, character, reputation, representative; can actually mean a person.

Every knee will bow to Him

v.10 – "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow"

- In the demonic heavens – principalities/powers
- On the earth – all human beings
- Under the earth – the demons of hell

Every tongue will confess who Jesus is

v.11 – every tongue will confess **JESUS CHRIST LORD**

- "To the glory of God the Father".
- JESUS in Hebrew is *Yeshua*, the shorter form of *Yehoshua*
- Meaning 'YAHWEH is salvation' (see Word Wealth at **Phil.4:23**)

Further instructions to the believers

Philippians 2:12 – Begins with *“Therefore, my beloved”* – Paul is referring to the brethren as his ‘beloved’

- Paul has a love relationship with the people of Philippi
- and they have been obedient to the words of their apostle – whether he was present or absent.
- Each one is to grow in their own faith; not to rely on the ‘minister’
- Each one is to make their own decisions

v.13 – *“for it is God who works in you”*

- God works in each one of us – for His own good pleasure, ‘He will do it’ (1Thess.5:24)

v.14 – *“do all things without ...”*

- complaining = grumbling
- disputing = arguing

Shine forth as lights

v.15 – ‘blameless’ means being prepared to confess sin and to make it right; not holding on to anything for which we can be blamed.

- Taking responsibility for what we have done.
- ‘harmless’ means ‘innocent’
- *“children of God without fault”* so that we can *“shine as lights in the world”* - (John 8:12)
- Even in the midst of a *“crooked and perverse generation”*

v.16 – Hold fast the ‘Word’ [Logos] of life.

- Paul again refers to the *“day of Christ”* [previously mentioned in Chapter 1:6 & 10] – also called *“the day of the Lord Jesus”* in 2 Corinthians 1:14; and ‘the day of the Lord’ or ‘the day of God’ in 2 Peter 3:10 & 12.
- Paul wants to be able to *“rejoice”* in that ‘day’ at the fruit in the lives of the people

v.17-18 – Paul’s life is one of sacrificial service for the brethren – *“being poured out as a drink offering”*.

- He rejoices in their faith and wants them to rejoice with him also.
- The recurring theme of ‘rejoicing’ and ‘joy’ is revealed again here.

- In context of Paul pouring out his life as a drink offering, and Paul acknowledging *“the sacrifice and service of your faith* [the faith of the Philippians]” he declares that joy is the result of sacrificial ministry and service.

A biography of Timothy

Philippians 2:19-22 – Paul speaks of Timothy

1. Timothy is a **‘sent one’**, sent by his apostolic father
2. He will **bring encouragement**
3. Timothy is **like-minded** with Paul
4. He **will care for** the brethren
5. He **seeks the things that are of Christ Jesus**
6. He has a **proven character**
7. He is a **spiritual son** to Paul
8. He **served with Paul in the gospel**

v.23-24 – Paul wanted to come to them himself, but until then he could send Timothy, who would fully represent Paul’s heart for them

A biography of Epaphroditus

v.25-30 – Paul goes on to speak of Epaphroditus – [a Greek name], this brother was a Gentile

- Paul calls him **‘my brother’**
- He was a **fellow worker** with Paul
- Also a **‘fellow soldier’** – speaks of commitment/discipline
- **“Your messenger”** – this is the Greek word *‘apostolos’*;
Epaphroditus was an apostle.
- One who **ministered to Paul’s needs**
- He had a **longing in his heart for the brethren**
- He had been **“sick almost unto death”** but God raised him up
- He was **‘sent’** by Paul to visit them
- He was to be **‘received in the Lord’** and **‘held in esteem’**
- **For the work of Christ** he came close to death – not regarding his life

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Chapter Three

It is good to be reminded

Philippians 3:1 – Paul says it is “*not tedious*” for him to write the same things to the brethren.

- To leave a legacy; Peter had a similar attitude in **2 Peter 1:12** to “*not be negligent to remind you always of these things*”
- Reminding them of the “*present truth*” (**2Pet.1:12**)

v.2 – beware of ‘*dogs*’ – a derogatory term [OT #3611 a male prostitute]

- beware of ‘*evil workers*’ – people who try to discredit or spread rumours about other ministers
- beware of ‘*the mutilation*’ – doing things in the flesh. This reference is to those preachers who said that Gentiles being converted to Christ had to receive physical circumcision. Paul is very dismissive of such doctrine and practice.

v.3 – “*For we are the circumcision who ...*” This is speaking of a non-physical circumcision.

We are of the true circumcision who:

- a) worship God in the Spirit – **Jn.4:23-24**
- b) rejoice in Christ Jesus – **Phil.4:4**
- c) have no confidence in the flesh!

Our circumcision is the circumcision that comes through Christ, and in Colossians it is through baptism that we receive the circumcision of Christ [**Col.2:11-15**].

Paul’s resume [CV] - v.4-6

1. Circumcised - legally
2. Good ethnic background
3. Tribe of Benjamin
4. Hebrew of Hebrews
5. Concerning law – a Pharisee

6. Zealous – led to persecuting the church
7. Kept the law – blameless

BUT – Paul’s testimony

Philippians 3:7 – what appeared to be a good CV in the natural, actually counted for nothing when it comes to serving Christ!

v.8 – Paul counted *“all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord”*.

- [KJV – uses ‘dung’ instead of ‘rubbish’]
- to Paul everything else was as ‘rubbish’ compared to gaining Christ!

v.9 – *“and be found in Him”* – not through anything Paul had done

- but through the righteousness of faith in God

Where Paul is at now – v.10

- That I might **know Him** [Christ]
- Know the **power of His resurrection**
- Know the **fellowship of His suffering**
- Be **conformed to His death**

This is a very challenging revelation of Paul’s heart, because we want to imitate Paul.

The Goal – v.11

- To attain to [arrive at] the resurrection from the dead. This is not speaking of the final resurrection but is the outworking of **John 5:25**, which speaks of coming alive spiritually by hearing and believing the word of God.

v.12 – Choose to **press on**; to **lay hold**

- There is more for us to inherit in this life
- Have no regrets; you are free to follow Jesus

v.13 – *“forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward”*

- Put aside things from the past; don’t look back
- Look forward towards what is ahead
- These are keys to a successful life

Philippians 3:14 – the call of God is an *“upward call”*; it is *“in Christ Jesus”* - Keep climbing; don't give up!

From 'me' to 'us'

Notice that before **verse 15** Paul has been speaking in the first person, singular, sharing his testimony, but now he is speaking to us and of 'us'. Our testimonies are individual, but now we need to band together to be the corporate expression of Christ.

v.15 – *“Therefore let us ... have this mind”*.

- A mind that is willing to 'press on'
- To leave what is behind
- To reach for what is ahead
- Having a 'mature' mind = 'perfect'

God will give us the revelation of what we don't understand.

v.16 – whatever level of maturity we have come to, let us walk together; this is exhorting us as a body

Let us walk:

- ✓ By the same rule; 'rule' = standard of faith or practice; or sphere of authority.
- ✓ Be of the same mind

Follow the pattern set by the apostles

v.17 – Paul wants us to follow his example – *‘to be fellow followers [imitators] with me of Christ’*

- the apostolic company is to be a pattern for others to follow
- there is a lifestyle to follow
- the Philippians were such a people.

Don't follow the way of the world

v.18 – There are many who are *“enemies of the cross of Christ”*

- 'worldly Christians' are enemies of the cross
- Jesus is not happy with those who are 'lukewarm' (**Rev.3:16**)

Philippians 3:19 – a description of those who are *‘enemies of the cross’*

- i. their end is destruction
- ii. their god is their belly
- iii. they glory in their shame
- iv. have their mind set on earthly things
 - **Colossians 3:1-4** tells us we are to have our mind fixed on things above.
 - Make a decision, a choice, to follow Jesus

v.20-21 – *“Our citizenship is in heaven”*

- ‘citizenship’ = ‘conversation’; this has to do with our behaviour
- If we are truly a citizen of heaven it will affect our behaviour
- There will be a resurrection (**John 5:29**)
- We have a future that is eternal! Our bodies will be transformed!
- We shall be changed!

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Chapter Four

Relationships with the brethren

Philippians 4:1 – begins again with the word “*therefore*”!

- because we know we are citizens of heaven, and we “*eagerly wait for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ ...*” (Phil.3:20) – Paul exhorts the brethren to “*stand fast in the Lord*”.
- Paul calls the brethren “*beloved and longed-for*” – he esteemed the people in Philippi as his ‘*beloved and longed-for brethren*’.
- He had an intimate relationship with all the brethren, and he longed to be with them.
- He calls them “*my joy and my crown*”

v.2 – there were a couple of ministers who were not getting along

- Paul urges them to “*be of the same mind in the Lord*”
- It is important to work together with like-minded brethren
- Having relationship problems is normal!

v.3 – “*I urge you*” – Paul expresses a strong desire to have the relationship restored.

- These women had “*laboured in the gospel*” with Paul – maybe even have been on team with Paul and other “*fellow workers*”
- Paul obviously raised up workers as he speaks of Clement and “*the rest of my fellow workers*”.
- He knows there is a reward for those who labour in the gospel; their names are written in “*the Book of Life*”
- Therefore, it is important to endeavour to sort out relationship issues

Practical advice

1. Rejoice

v.4-5 – Paul exhorts the brethren to **always rejoice!**

- Act in ‘*gentleness*’ = ‘graciousness or forbearance’
- The Lord is always within reach: He is “*at hand*”!
- He is close and reachable.

2. Pray

Philippians 4:6-7 – A very meaningful prayer

- ❖ **Don't be anxious**; don't worry about anything!
- ❖ **Pray** about everything!
- ❖ **Be thankful** – expressing faith in what God has done & will do
- ❖ When you push through in prayer – **peace comes**; we know God has answered
- ❖ the peace will *“guard your hearts and minds”*
- ❖ it is *“through Christ Jesus”*

3. Meditate on good things

[*‘meditate’, translated as ‘think’ in KJV: means ‘to reckon, estimate, to take inventory’.*]

v.8 – a good guideline:

- ✓ whatever things are true
- ✓ whatever things are noble
- ✓ whatever things are just
- ✓ whatever things are pure
- ✓ whatever things are lovely
- ✓ whatever things are of good report [speech that is praiseworthy]
- ✓ anything of virtue;
- ✓ anything praiseworthy
- these are the things we need to set our mind on
- don't pollute the atmosphere with fears and negativity!

This is discipleship

v.9 – *“The things that you have ...”*

- ➔ learned – received – heard – saw [in Paul] – do [act on]
- and the peace of God will be with you.

v.10 – Paul *“rejoiced in the Lord greatly”* for the support that was given by the brethren.

- They were supporting Paul financially.

Philippians 4:11-12 – Be content in whatever state you are in

- Paul knew how to ***“be abased”*** [live humbly] and he know how ***“to abound”*** [live in prosperity]
- He had learned to accept whatever state he was in

v.13 – a famous verse often quoted: ***“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”***.

- This is a great declaration!

Taking financial responsibility

v.14 – Paul acknowledges that the Philippian church had shared financially with him.

- They had ‘adopted’ him and showed their love and concern for him by helping him financially.

v.15-16 – it seems that the church in Philippi followed Paul’s missionary journeys and sent support to him wherever he was

- They took responsibility to support Paul’s ministry financially.

v.17 – **there is a blessing that comes through tithing and giving (Malachi 3:10-12)**

v.18-19 – Epaphroditus [an apostle] brought the offering to Paul.

- That offering was as a ***“sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God”***.
- Paul saw it as God’s provision for his needs.

Final greetings and blessing

v.20 – the letter is finished, and Paul gave all the glory to God the Father

v.21 – Paul greets the saints ***“in Christ Jesus”***.

- There were also brethren who were ‘with’ Paul who sent greetings.

v.22 – there were even disciples in Caesar’s household sending greetings!

v.23 – a blessing of GRACE: ***“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”***.