

# Philippians – 4 Chapters

## Title:

The Epistle to the Philippians – because it is written to the church in Philippi. Philippi was a major city in Macedonia. It was a Roman colony, prosperous and enjoying the benefits of Roman citizenship. And it was the first city Paul evangelized in Europe. This church was in a loving close relationship with Paul from the time he started the church. And they were a regular support for his missionary ministry.

## Author:

Written by Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was a strict Pharisee in Jerusalem until he had a revelation of Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul spent the rest of his life as a missionary proclaiming Jesus to Gentiles around the Mediterranean. Paul wrote 13 of the Books of the New Testament.

## Occasion and Purpose:

The primary occasion is the Philippian church sending support to Paul, who was in a Roman jail because of his ministry. Their messenger, Epaphroditus, fell ill while with Paul and almost died. Paul sent this epistle to thank them for their gift, but also to reassure them both about Epaphroditus, and about his own imprisonment. He also uses the occasion to address a few problems in the Philippian church of which he was aware: He addressed their disunity, and he warned them to remain firm against the false teaching of legalism, and against persecution. In all of these things, Paul expresses his affection and care for this church, and his joy in the Gospel.

## Themes:

1. **The Gospel is Not Hindered** – Even if Paul is in prison, in chains, the Gospel is not chained. Others are proclaiming the Gospel, for which Paul rejoices. And even Paul's jailers are hearing the Good News. Prison cannot hold back God.
2. **Unity/Humility** – Paul calls the Philippians to follow Christ's example of putting others first and humbly serving them. He encourages certain quarreling individuals to reconcile, and for the church to pursue unity.
3. **Partnership in the Gospel** – Paul thanks the church for their support and for their continuing partnership with him in his ministry. The Philippians did not go as missionaries, but they helped and supported Paul with money, encouragement, prayer, etc. In doing so, he reminds them, they are not just supporting Paul, but they also are participating in God's mission to save the world.
4. **Joy/Rejoice in the Lord** – This book is full of joy. Paul has joy in all circumstances, and he regularly encourages the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord. Joy is always the appropriate response to Who God is and what He has done, and His people should rejoice always.
5. **V for Victory** – This means that the Christian life can be represented by a "V" shape, in imitation of Christ. Just like Jesus went down in humility, taking the form of a servant and dying on the cross, His people are to humble themselves and serve others. And in the same way, just as God exalted Christ and gave Him the Name above every Name, His people can expect that, as they humble themselves, God will raise them up and they will share in Christ's victory.

## Summary:

Paul expresses his appreciation for the Philippian church, which helped him when he was imprisoned. He encourages them not to worry about him, because the gospel is moving forward, and because he will rejoice in Christ, whether he lives or dies. He encourages them to live as appropriate for the Gospel, by standing firm against persecution, by being humble and serving others, by working out their salvation and being witnesses. He encourages them to resist legalism, and instead, to boast in Christ, and His righteousness, and to pursue the goal of knowing Christ, like Paul himself is doing. They are to stand firm, in unity, and focus on what is good by the power of Christ. And finally, Paul thanks them for their monetary gift, making sure they know that he is not manipulating them for money – he does not need their money, yet at the same time, he rejoices that they are generous, because this is pleasing to God.

## Organization:

<b>1:1-11 Intro and Prayer</b>
1:1-2 Salutation 1:3-8 Thanksgiving 1:9-11 Prayer
<b>1:12-26 The Gospel is not Hindered</b>
1:12-18c The Gospel is Proclaimed because of Paul's Chains 1:18d-26 Paul's Desire that Christ Be Glorified in Any Circumstance
<b>1:27-2:30 Live Worthy of the Gospel</b>
1:27-30 Conduct Yourself in a Manner Worthy of the Gospel 2:1-11 Follow Christ's Example in Serving the Interest of Others 2:12-18 Work Out Your Salvation 2:19-30 The Example of Timothy and Epaphroditus
<b>3:1-4:1 Stand Firm in the Gospel</b>
3:1 Rejoice in the Lord 3:2-11 Glory in Christ, not in the Flesh 3:12-16 Press Toward the Goal 3:17-4:1 Stand Firm in the Lord
<b>4:2-19 Exhortation and Thanks</b>
4:2-3 Have the Same Mind as One Another 4:4-9 Think About and Practice What is Good 4:10-19 Thanks for the Gift
<b>4:20-23 Conclusion</b>

## Key Verses:

1:12, 18; 1:20-21; 1:27; 2:1-11; 3:4, 7-11; 4:4; 4:6-9