

# Philippians

## Greetings from Paul

**1** This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus.

I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders\* and deacons.

<sup>2</sup>May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

## Paul's Thanksgiving and Prayer

<sup>3</sup>Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. <sup>4</sup>Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, <sup>5</sup>for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. <sup>6</sup>And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

<sup>7</sup>So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. <sup>8</sup>God knows how much I love you and long for you

with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. <sup>10</sup>For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. <sup>11</sup>May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ\*—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

## Paul's Joy That Christ Is Preached

<sup>12</sup>And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters,\* that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. <sup>13</sup>For everyone here, including the whole palace guard,\* knows that I am in chains because of Christ. <sup>14</sup>And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers\* here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message\* without fear.

<sup>15</sup>It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ

with pure motives. <sup>16</sup>They preach because they love me, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News. <sup>17</sup>Those others do not have pure motives as they preach about Christ. They preach with selfish ambition, not sincerely, intending to make my chains more painful to me. <sup>18</sup>But that doesn't matter. Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. <sup>19</sup>For I know that as you pray for me and the Spirit of Jesus Christ helps me, this will lead to my deliverance.

### Paul's Life for Christ

<sup>20</sup>For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. <sup>21</sup>For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. <sup>22</sup>But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better. <sup>23</sup>I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. <sup>24</sup>But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live.

<sup>25</sup>Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so I can continue to help all of you grow and experience the joy of your faith. <sup>26</sup>And when I come to you again, you will have even more reason to take pride in Christ

Jesus because of what he is doing through me.

### Live as Citizens of Heaven

<sup>27</sup>Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News. <sup>28</sup>Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. <sup>29</sup>For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. <sup>30</sup>We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of it.

### Have the Attitude of Christ

**2** Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? <sup>2</sup>Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving

*\*Translation Notes* 1:1 Or *overseers, or bishops*. 1:11 Greek *with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ*. 1:12 Greek *brothers*. 1:13 Greek *including all the Praetorium*. 1:14a Greek *brothers in the Lord*. 1:14b Some manuscripts read *speak the message*.

one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

<sup>3</sup>Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

<sup>5</sup>You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

<sup>6</sup> Though he was God,\*  
he did not think of equality  
with God  
as something to cling to.

<sup>7</sup> Instead, he gave up his divine  
privileges\*;  
he took the humble position  
of a slave\*  
and was born as a human  
being.

When he appeared in human  
form,\*

<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in  
obedience to God  
and died a criminal's death  
on a cross.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, God elevated him to  
the place of highest honor  
and gave him the name  
above all other names,

<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every  
knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and  
under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue declare that  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

### Shine Brightly for Christ

<sup>12</sup>Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I

was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. <sup>13</sup>For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

<sup>14</sup>Do everything without complaining and arguing, <sup>15</sup>so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. <sup>16</sup>Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. <sup>17</sup>But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God,\* just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy. <sup>18</sup>Yes, you should rejoice, and I will share your joy.

### Paul Commends Timothy

<sup>19</sup>If the Lord Jesus is willing, I hope to send Timothy to you soon for a visit. Then he can cheer me up by telling me how you are getting along. <sup>20</sup>I have no one else like Timothy, who genuinely cares about your welfare. <sup>21</sup>All the others care only for themselves and not for what matters to Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup>But you know how Timothy has proved himself. Like a son with his father, he has served with me in preaching the Good News. <sup>23</sup>I hope to send him to you just as soon as I find out what is going to

happen to me here. <sup>24</sup>And I have confidence from the Lord that I myself will come to see you soon.

### Paul Commends Epaphroditus

<sup>25</sup>Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you. He is a true brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier. And he was your messenger to help me in my need. <sup>26</sup>I am sending him because he has been longing to see you, and he was very distressed that you heard he was ill. <sup>27</sup>And he certainly was ill; in fact, he almost died. But God had mercy on him—and also on me, so that I would not have one sorrow after another.

<sup>28</sup>So I am all the more anxious to send him back to you, for I know you will be glad to see him, and then I will not be so worried about you. <sup>29</sup>Welcome him in the Lord's love\* and with great joy, and give him the honor that people like him deserve. <sup>30</sup>For he risked his life for the work of Christ, and he was at the point of death while doing for me what you couldn't do from far away.

### The Priceless Value of Knowing Christ

**3** Whatever happens, my dear brothers and sisters,\* rejoice in the Lord. I never get tired of telling you these things, and I do it to safeguard your faith.

<sup>2</sup>Watch out for those dogs, those people who do evil, those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved. <sup>3</sup>For we

who worship by the Spirit of God\* are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort, <sup>4</sup>though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!

<sup>5</sup>I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. <sup>6</sup>I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.

<sup>7</sup>I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. <sup>8</sup>Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ.\* For God's way of making

*\*Translation Notes* 2:6 Or *Being in the form of God.* 2:7a Greek *he emptied himself.* 2:7b Or *the form of a slave.* 2:7c Some English translations put this phrase in verse 8. 2:17 Greek *I will rejoice even if I am to be poured out as a liquid offering.* 2:29 Greek *in the Lord.* 3:1 Greek *brothers*; also in 3:13, 17. 3:3 Some manuscripts read *worship God in spirit*; one early manuscript reads *worship in spirit.* 3:9 Or *through the faithfulness of Christ.*

us right with himself depends on faith. <sup>10</sup>I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, <sup>11</sup>so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

### Pressing toward the Goal

<sup>12</sup>I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. <sup>13</sup>No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it,\* but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

<sup>15</sup>Let all who are spiritually mature agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. <sup>16</sup>But we must hold on to the progress we have already made.

<sup>17</sup>Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. <sup>18</sup>For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup>They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth. <sup>20</sup>But we are

citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. <sup>21</sup>He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

**4** Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters,\* stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.

### Words of Encouragement

<sup>2</sup>Now I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, because you belong to the Lord, settle your disagreement. <sup>3</sup>And I ask you, my true partner,\* to help these two women, for they worked hard with me in telling others the Good News. They worked along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are written in the Book of Life.

<sup>4</sup>Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.\*

<sup>6</sup>Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup>Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.