Outline of the Book of Philippians

Getting Acquainted with Philippi in Bible History

During the years 50 through 54 AD Paul embarks on his second apostolic tour. Paul and Silas travel through Galatia and meet Timothy in Lystra, circumcise him and take him along as a traveling companion (cf. Acts 16:1ff). Paul, Silas, and Timothy travel from Galatia to Troas in Asia Minor. Luke joins the three at this point and together the four travel through the Aegean Sea to Neapolis of Macedonia (Acts 16:10ff). Paul and his companions first come to the city of Philippi at approximately 51 AD. Paul’s general practice was to find synagogues and begin his preaching to the Jews. Philippi; however, had no synagogue. Paul and his companions ask regarding the whereabouts of a Jewish place of worship. The information gained led them to a river outside of town where women met to pray (Acts 16:13). Lydia is converted after hearing the preaching of Paul and his companions at this gathering (Acts 16:14-15).

While in Philippi, Paul is annoyed with a girl who has a “spirit of divination” within her (Acts 16:16). The girl follows the four preachers day by day proclaiming that they had words of salvation. Paul eventually commands the spirit to come out of the girl and immediately it did. The girl’s masters are incensed over the matter because they used the spirit’s powers to make money. Paul and Silas are captured, imprisoned, beaten with rods and put in stocks. The accusation against Paul and Silas was that they were preaching a message contrary to the Roman civil laws (cf. Acts 16:21). While in prison, Paul and Silas were singing songs of praise to God when suddenly a miraculous earthquake trembles loosening all the prisoner’s chains. The jailor in charge decides to kill himself due to the fact that he was responsible for all prisoners at the penalty of death if any escaped. Paul stops the jailor, preaches the gospel to him, and he is converted (Acts 16:30ff). Acts mentions only the conversion of Lydia and the jailor; however, a faithful church was established (cf. Phil. 1:1).

The Philippian brethren came to be instrumental in the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ through their monetary support of the apostle Paul. Paul states, “And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only” (Phil. 4:15).

The City of Philippi

Philippi received its name from Philip II of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. The city was originally named Krenides and occupied by the people of the island of Thasos (a small island in the Aegean Sea just south of Neapolis). The city’s history lies in the large amounts of gold that was discovered at a nearby mountain (i.e., Mt. Pangaeum). Philip II conquered the people of Thasos, took the city of Krenides, and renamed it Philippi. During the year 168 BC, Philippi was conquered by the Romans at the battle of Pydna. All of Macedonia was overtaken by the Romans and divided into four sections. Philippi was a city in the first of these four districts whose capital was Amphipolis. Philippi attained the status of Roman colony (exempt from Roman taxes) at the year 31 BC. The city remained in this state during the days of Paul’s visit (Map source = The ISBE; Vol. 3, pp. 834).

Time and Place of Writing

Philippians 1:7 states that Paul is in bonds. At Philippians 4:22 Paul states, “All the saints salute you, especially they
that are of Caesar’s household.” These two statements clearly point to Paul’s two year imprisonment in Rome (AD 61 – 63). Due to Paul stating “but I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly” (Phil. 2:24) we can estimate that Paul was in the last stage of his Roman imprisonment and fully expected to be released (~ 63 AD).

**Purpose of the Letter**

The highest priority in every Christian’s life should be to make it to heaven. A study of the book of Philippians will leave one with a sharper vision of this objective.Thematically, Paul states, “for our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:” (Phil. 3:20). Heaven will be a place comprised of people who lived life with a spiritual purpose. The mind or thinking of a heavenward bound Christian is prescribed in the book of Philippians. Three major themes in Philippians expose the mind that sincerely looks to heaven. The heavenward bound man or woman will think spiritually, fellowship spiritual instructions, and care for others’ spirituality.

People bound for heaven will have a peculiar way of thinking. Said Christian considers others above self (Phil. 2:4). When the heavenward bound Christian is treated shamefully by others, he does not seek vengeance. Said individual does not wear emotions on his sleeves to the point that he is offended by every look and statement of a spouse, brethren, and even those of the world (Phil. 2:14; 4:12). He does not hope and trust in his earthly achievements (Phil. 3:3-9). When desperate times come, he does not fall into disparity (Phil. 4:11-13). When heaven is my true objective in life, I “learn” (Phil. 4:11-12) to be somewhat detached from the cares of this world. During Paul’s day it seemed to be some people’s objective to cause him pain, yet this did not bother him because heaven was his focus (cf. Phil. 1:12, 17-21, 30; 3:11-13, 20-21; 3:15; 4:12). Whether Paul was ill treated, hungry, or doing well in life, he was content knowing that he “can do all things through him (Christ) that strengthens” (4:13). When you and I “learn” to put away the cares of this world, our relationships with God, brethren, and our spouses will be much better. We will have a different outlook in life than the world. Our objective is ever to be heaven! (see study # 40; The Focused Life).

Secondly, those whose objective is heaven will not only have a peculiar way of thinking, but they will fellowship (share in) spiritual things. The book of Philippians reveals several aspects of Bible fellowship. Bible fellowship is to exist in the areas of preaching to the lost (Phil. 1:5), the grace of God (Phil. 1:7), defending and confirming truth (Phil. 1:7), the Spirit (Phil. 2:1) (i.e. doctrinal unity) (Phil. 1:27; 2:2; 4:2), the suffering of Jesus (Phil. 3:10), sharing in each other’s afflictions (Phil. 1:7, 4:14), and supporting gospel preachers (Phil. 4:15). Paul’s hope was to “gain Christ, and be found in him” (Phil. 3:8-9). When I fellowship spiritual things, I “gain Christ.” I share in all aspects of the life of Christ when I put Him on (cf. Col. 3:12-15). The book of Philippians has indicated that various doctrines had threatened the unity of the Philippian church (cf. Phil. 1:9-11, 27, 2:2-3) and that those who stood opposed to these false teachers were being persecuted (Phil. 1:29; 3:10). Paul thereby warns the faithful not to be deluded by said teachers.

Lastly, those whose objective is heaven will desire to see others make it to heaven. Heavenward bound people will think more highly of others than self (Phil. 2:3-4), pray (Phil. 1:9-11, 19), long for (Phil. 1:8), be thankful for (Phil. 1:3), warn (Phil. 3:2, 18-19), encourage faithfulness in (Phil. 1:10, 27; 2:12), and share in each other’s afflictions (Phil. 1:7, 4:14), and be willing to support the preaching of the gospel (Phil. 2:30, 4:10, 18).

Note that in each of the above three themes of Philippians, the only individuality that the Christian has is a desire to make it to heaven. Paul says, “Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded...” (Phil. 3:15). Christ had no emotional, physical, or spiritual ties to earth other than being passionately concerned about the souls of men (cf. Phil. 2:6-8). Paul calls upon Christians to examine his life of contentment in Christ and so emulate it (Phil. 4:8-9). Today, we have godly men and women to look to for examples to follow (Phil. 3:17). When my mind is focused on heaven, those of the world, brethren, and friends may afflict me with rods or words of disparagement, yet will I press towards heaven. When my health fails and I experience agonizing pain, I will continue to press toward heaven. I may have money, friends, and good health galore, yet I will continue to press towards heaven. Let us remember that “this world is not our home, we are just a passing through...” One’s life goal of heaven should ever be the “one thing I do” (Phil. 3:13). The next time you get your feelings hurt, experience anger, jealousy, or have feelings of animosity toward someone, check your priorities and remember the book of Philippians.
Overview of Philippians:

I. Paul’s Prayer for the Philippians (1:1-12):
   A. A prayer of thanksgiving:
      1. Paul gives thanks for the fellowship he shares with the Philippians in the area of spreading the gospel message.
      2. Paul give thanks for the sharing he has with them in the area of bonds, defense, and confirmation of the gospel.
   B. Paul’s prayerful request for the Philippians:
      1. Paul prayed that the Philippians would grow in knowledge and discernment.
      2. Paul prayed for the Philippians sincerity and purity of life.

II. Paul calls upon the Philippians to live a life worthy of the gospel message (1:12-30):
   A. Paul rejoices in the fact that the gospel is preached:
      1. Brethren were motivated by his bonds.
      2. Some brethren preached of a pure and sincere disposition.
      3. Some brethren preached a pure doctrine; however, their motives were sinful.
   B. Paul desires to be a part of the Philippians progress in the gospel.
   C. Paul calls upon the Philippians to walk worthy of the gospel of Christ.
   D. God has “granted” the Christian to both believe and suffer on behalf of Christ (1:29).

III. Ten Attributes of the Mind of Christ (2:1-5):
   A. Paul reveals to the Philippians the way to emotionally handle the sufferings at hand (i.e., to have the mind of Christ).
   B. The mind of Christ is to think about others:
      1. To encourage others who suffer (consider I Thess. 5:14).
      2. Help others by making their suffering less burdensome or painful (consider II Cor. 4:16-18).
      3. Share with others in their pain and suffering for the cause of Christ (Rev. 2:10).
      4. Let the inward man be filled with compassion toward those who suffer for the cause of Christ (Matt. 23:37; Rom. 14:15).
      5. Let all be of the same mind (in doctrinal belief / having the mind of Christ) (cf. Phil. 1:27).
      6. Not factious (the party spirit) (Rom. 2:8; I Cor. 11:19).
      7. Not a person of vainglory (boastful and full of pride) (Prov. 6:16ff).
      8. Lowly in mind (filled with humility and lowliness).
      9. Counting others better than self (have the opinion that others are over you).
     10. Do not only care for the emotionally, physically, and spiritual well being of self but to others as well (James 2:14ff; I Jn. 3:17-18).

IV. Jesus our example of Selflessness (2:6-18):
   A. Jesus unselfishly gave up His glorious state in heaven to come to this earth, live as a man, and die for sinful man.
   B. The Lord Jesus was obedient to the point of death.
   C. When resurrected from the dead Jehovah God returned to Jesus all that He had divested Himself of when coming to earth. Indeed Jesus is Lord of Lords and King of Kings!
   D. Paul exhorts the Philippians to be obedient as they look to the example of Jesus.

V. Paul comforts the Philippians with news of the health of Epaphroditus and the coming of Timothy (2:19-30).
   A. The Philippians were familiar with Timothy and knew of his love for both truth and them.
   B. Paul anxiously sends Epaphroditus to the Philippians so that their anxiety over his health would be relieved.

VI. False teachers threatened the unity of faithful brethren (3:1-2):
   A. Though sinful men made the lives of many Philippians miserable Paul admonishes them to “rejoice in the Lord.”
   B. Paul warns the Philippians of the false teachings and teachers that destroy the unity of the church (cf. 3:2 compared to 1:27 and 2:2).

VII. Have no confidence in any practice that will not remove sins (3:3-16):
A. If ever there was a man that had the opportunity to put his trust in things of this world it would have been the apostle Paul.
B. Paul refers to all his accomplishments in the Mosaic system to be counted as worthless dung due to the fact that it could not remove one sin.
C. A contrast is made between “confidence in the flesh” (3:3) (which Paul refers to as “a righteousness of mine own” (3:9)) with “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus” (3:8).
D. Paul gives seven ways the Christian may be found in Christ (3:9-11).
E. Jesus lays hold on individuals to receive the prize of God; i.e., attaining the resurrection from the dead and eternal bliss in heaven. Until that day comes; however, let us all continue to give diligence to attain it (3:12-16; cf. Rev. 2:10).

VIII. Keep Heaven as your Goal and Prize in Life (3:17-21):
A. Beware of false teachers whose end is destruction of self and all others who accept them (3:17-19).
B. Patiently and faithfully await the coming of Christ (3:20).
C. The faithful will be resurrected and fashioned anew with an incorruptible body (3:21).

IX. Paul encourages the Philippian brethren to work out their Differences (4:1-3).
A. Euodia and Syntyche were not of the same mind (4:2).
B. Paul encourages the spiritual minded brethren to help these two godly women to work out their differences before it affects the whole church (4:3).

X. Paul delivers six Christian virtues to emulate that the Philippians had experienced in him (4:4-9):
A. Let not the Christian be anxious for anything but rather ready for the coming of Jesus (4:4-7).
B. Paul delivers the six Christian virtues (4:8).
C. Paul reminds the Philippians that these virtues are traits they observed in him and thereby if they emulate him they will have the God of peace (4:9).

XI. Paul expresses his gratefulness toward the Philippians for their generous and well thought out Gift (4:10-20):
A. Paul rejoiced not for the sake of the gift itself but rather because the gift indicated a genuine care on the part of the Philippians toward him (4:10-20).
B. Paul’s needs were physical; however, he had no real ties to this world. Paul’s emotional and spiritual ties were to God and His gift of heavenly citizenship (3:20; 4:12-14).

XII. Final Salutations (4:21-23):
A. Paul exhorts the Philippians to have the same mind and salute all those of like precious faith (4:21).
B. Paul’s desire was that the grace of God (forgiveness of sins / cf. Eph. 2:8 compared to Eph. 1:7) would remain with the Philippians through out their days (4:23).

Themes in Philippians:

I. In Christ Jesus:
A. Saints are “in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:1).
B. See Philippians 1:14; 2:19, 24, 29; 3:1, 3, 9, 14; 4:1, 2, 4, 7; 4:21

II. Fellowship:
A. In the furtherance of the gospel (1:5)
B. Paul’s prison bonds (1:7)
C. Defending the truth (1:7)
D. Confirming the truth (1:7)
E. The grace of God (1:7)
F. Preaching (4:3)
G. In suffering (3:10; 4:14)

III. Suffering for Christ
A. Suffering is “granted” to the Christian by God (1:29).
B. Christ suffered to the point of death (2:5-8).
C. Christians are to fellowship Christ in suffering (3:10).
D. Christians are to fellowship each other in suffering (4:14).
Outline of Philippians

Chapter 1

I. Paul affectionately addresses the Philippians (1:1-2):
   A. “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.” (1:1).
      1. If we are correct in assigning the date of this epistle at around 63 AD then Timothy is with Paul during his first imprisonment. When we look to the epistles of I and II Timothy it is apparent that Paul is in prison and Timothy is not with him. This gives proof that Paul was imprisoned two times in Rome (the second ending his life).
      2. Timothy: Paul first met Timothy as he and Silas were traveling through the southern region of Galatia (Acts 16:1). This has come to be known as the second tour or journey of Paul’s. We learn from Acts 16:1 that Timothy’s father was a Gentile and his mother, Eunice, was a Jewess. In II Tim. 1:3 we learn that Timothy’s mother and grandmother (Lois) were Godly women who instilled faith in Timothy (II Tim. 3:15). Timothy’s faith was known among the peoples he lived around (Acts 16:2). Paul and Silas circumcise Timothy and bring him along as a preaching companion (“servants of Christ Jesus”). Apparently Timothy has taken a trip to Rome to be with his friend, brother in Christ, and fellow servant of Jesus Christ to comfort and support him.
      3. This epistle is addressed to “all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”
         a. A church was established in Philippi during the year 51 AD. Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke had preached the gospel and many obeyed (cf. Acts 16). The church was comprised of “saints” (hagios) = “pure, righteous, holy, clean, moral purity” (Moulton 3). Individuals are cleansed of sins and made pure, holy, and righteous after obeying the gospel (i.e., being baptized for the remission of sins / Acts 2:38; 22:16). Said individual is “in Christ Jesus” (cf. Gal. 3:27). The idea of one being “in Christ Jesus” is a reoccurring theme in the book of Philippians (see study # 1; In Christ Jesus). The saints in any given locality are the saved (i.e., the members of the body of Christ including the preacher, elders, and deacons) (see study # 2; Church Organization).
         b. Paul mentions two offices in the church by name. First, Paul speaks of the “bishops” (episkopos) = “an inspector, overseer; a watcher, guardian” (Moulton 160). Bishops are also known as pastors, shepherds, or elders (cf. Acts 20:17-28). The elder in any church is to oversee its work that it may continue in truth. To achieve this goal the elder will feed (pastor) the church with truth as men of age who have attained a high level of spiritual maturity. These men must meet the qualifications outlined in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (see study # 3; Elders in the Church).
         c. The second office in the church that Paul mentions is the “deacon” (diakon) = “A servant, waiting man… a minister of the church, a deacon” (LS 189). “A deacon whose official duty was to superintend the alms of the church, with other kindred services” (Moulton 92). The three primary works of the deacon are to supply food and the necessities of life to the poor, sick, widows, and lonely among the saints in their locality (cf. (Matt. 25:44; Mk. 1:31; Lk. 8:3, 10:40; Jn. 12:2; Acts 6:2; Rom. 15:25). Secondly, the deacon serves the congregation spiritually by teaching the gospel (I Cor. 3:5; II Cor. 3:1-11; 6:4; 11:15; Gal. 2:7). Thirdly, the deacon is one who executes the commands of another (i.e., the elders) (Matt. 22:13; 23:11; Mk. 9:35, 10:43; Jn. 2:5, 9) (see study # 4; Deacons in the Church).
         d. The church of Jesus Christ is to thereby be organized with saints, elders, and deacons.
   B. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2).
      1. Paul’s desire for the saints, elders, and deacons in Philippi was that God’s grace would remain with them. To be a recipient of God’s grace is to have your sins forgiven (cf. Eph. 1:7 / 2:8).
      2. To experience “peace from God” is to be reconciled from our former state of alienation by having our sins forgiven (cf. Eph. 2:1ff).
II. Paul’s Prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11):

A. “I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day unto now;” (1:3-5).

1. Paul was a man of prayer (cf. Eph. 1:16; Col. 1:9; etc.) (see study # 6; The Apostle Paul). He prayed to God on behalf of the Philippians with joyous memories of them. Paul’s visit and acquaintance with the people of Philippi brought back fond memories of a people who wanted truth and desired to support all else who were of the same mind. The psalmist said, “I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that observe they precepts” (Ps. 119:63).

2. Paul was so very thankful that the Philippians were willing, from the beginning of their relationship, to “fellowship (Paul) in the furtherance of the gospel.” The word “fellowship” (koinonia) = “Communion, association, partnership, fellowship” (LS 440-441). The most common word associated with fellowship is the word “share.” Arndt and Gingrich define it as “share, have a share…in spiritual blessings” (AG 438) (see study # 5; Bible Fellowship). The sharing on this occasion has to do with the “furtherance of the gospel.” Not only did the Philippians share in Paul’s desire and work of preaching the gospel to the lost but they too supported him monetarily while he did so full time (cf. Phil. 4:15-16).

B. “being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ;” (1:6).

1. It is God that “began a good work” in the Philippians the moment they were baptized for the remission of their sins. The day of their baptism was a day they were created as new creatures in Christ Jesus (cf. II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). As newly created beings the saints were God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

2. God’s intention is for the saint to walk in His statutes and be without sin (cf. II Jn. 9; Heb. 10:1ff). The Lord makes the saint’s perfection possible by the spilling of the blood of Christ. Let us all with humble hearts pray to God for forgiveness that when the “day of Jesus Christ” (the day of his judgment) comes we will be ready to receive our heavenly home as those who are perfect in Christ.

C. “even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace” (1:7).

1. Paul’s “confidence” in the Philippians (1:6) is now stated as being “right” apparently because of Paul’s current and past knowledge of the Philippians. They have been faithful in the past and continue to occupy that reputation. So Paul’s prayer is that they would continue on such a Godly course of life because they are dear to his heart (the Philippians were the first fruits of Paul’s Macedonian labors).

2. When Paul was in bonds (i.e., prison) the Philippians were “partakers with me (Paul) of grace.” The word “partakers” (sugkoinonos) is another word associated with fellowship and means “To mix one’s self up in a thing, to involve one’s self, be an accomplice in” (Moulton 235). “Participate in with someone, be connected with something…in the sense of actually taking part” (AG 774). Apparently the Philippians were not ashamed or fearful to make it publicly known that they supported Paul spiritually and financially because they both stood for the same truth (i.e., the grace of God / cf. Titus 2:11-12). This being so, the Philippians remained in fellowship with Paul during his bonds, at times when he was defending the truth against false teachers, and confirming the word among the lost of the world through various miracles. The Philippians aided Paul in all his work (cf. Phil. 2:25) (see study # 5).

D. “For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus” (1:8).

1. The Philippians had fellowship with Paul in two ways. First, the Philippians shared in Paul’s passion to preach the gospel to the lost and secondly they shared with him their monies so that he could do this work on a full time basis (Phil. 1:5). The Philippians were not ashamed of Paul and so were partakers with him in his bonds, in defense, and in confirmation of the gospel. The Philippians were persuaded of the reality of God.
2. Due to such a mind of true faith Paul states that God truly knows how deeply he longs for them as brethren. When two people share in the same conviction they are not only brothers in Christ but close friends.

E. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment;” (1:9).

1. Not only did Paul pray to God giving thanks for this wonderful fellowship shared but he too prayed that they would gain greater incite into God.

2. Note the connection between love, knowledge, and discernment. To have Bible love is to care for other brethren’s physical and emotional needs (I Jn. 3:17) and spiritual needs (Eph. 5:1-2, 11). Bible love takes into consideration the lost of the world as well (Matt. 28:18ff). Lastly, Bible love takes into consideration my own spiritual and physical needs (see study # 7; Bible Love).

3. The word “discernment” (aesthesis) = “to have a perception of a thing” (LS 23). To have “knowledge” (epignosis) = “to arrive at knowledge from preliminaries; to attain to a knowledge of” (Moulton 155). Paul’s prayer therefore is that the Philippian’s consideration of the spiritual and physical wellbeing of brethren, the lost, and their own selves abound more and more not only in knowledge but in discernment. Knowledge of information is useless unless it is acted upon. James said, “what doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, God in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?” (James 2:14-16).

F. “So that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ;” (1:10).

1. Paul prayed that the Philippians would have knowledge and discernment of truth that they would better serve others and self in relationship to the eternal abode of the soul. When I have knowledge and discernment of truth I will “approve the things that are excellent.” Things that are “excellent” are the teachings of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil. 3:8) (See study # 8; Can We Know Truth?).

2. The excellence of the gospel lies in the fact that it has the power to save man’s eternal soul (Rom. 1:16). To “approve” (dokimazo) = “to put to the test, make trial of, scrutinize” (LS 208). Gaining knowledge of a subject takes time to gain. During the process there will be reading, scrutinizing, testing, trying, and so forth that the information becomes a part of my knowledge. This word indicates earnest effort be given on the part of every disciple to learn truth.

3. Spending time studying God’s word and gained knowledge with discernment will cause me to be “sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ.”

a. Bible sincerity is clearly defined. The word “sincere” (heilikrines) = “unmixed, without alloy, pure, Latin: sincerus… without mixture, of itself, simply, absolutely” (LS 228). Moulton defines the word heilikroneia as “sunshine,… that which being viewed in the sunshine is found clear and pure; met. Spotless, sincere, ingenuous” (117-118). The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word sincere as “not feigned or affected; true: Presenting no false appearance; honest; pure unadulterated” (AHD 1142). This verse clearly teaches us what honesty and “sincerity” (heilikroneia) is about. Far too many times we are hearing our own brethren justify other’s erroneous living and teaching by statements such as, ‘he is honest and sincere in his beliefs.’ In November of 1998, Ed Harrell wrote an article in Christianity Magazine titled “Homer Hailey: False Teacher?” Brother Harrell stated, “As I have already noted, the presumption that one becomes a ‘false teacher’ on the basis of holding one doctrine that I judge to be erroneous is loaded with consequences that none of us would accept. A false teacher is surely one whose dishonest motives and or ignorance distinguishes him from the sincere brother who has reached an erroneous conclusion (emp. mine jcr). If that is not the case, then I am surrounded by false teachers.” There is an erroneous approach to the study of who a false teacher is with such statements. One must asks what determines whether one is sincere or
dishonest with their dealings or teachings. Brother Harrell’s defense of Homer Hailey explains sincerity to be measured by whether one personally believes his dealings and teachings are honorable. **Sincerity is thereby measured by one’s own feelings and beliefs as opposed to divine revelation.** The Christian must understand that God’s word is the standard of truth (cf. Eph. 4:1ff; Jude 3). Considering the definition of sincerity (i.e., pure, absolute, spotless, honest, unadulterated) and the NT use of the word (i.e., found five times at I Cor. 5:8; II Cor. 1:12; Phil. 1:10; II Pet. 3:1; and here at Phil. 1:10) the evidence is conclusive that truth is the standard by which a man or woman is judged to be sincere or honest (cf. Lk. 8:15; I Jn. 2:4; 3:7-8). Paul clearly states the contrast between man’s “fleshy wisdom” and “sincerity” when it comes to determining truth at II Corinthians 1:12 (See study # 9; Bible Sincerity and False Teachers).

b. Paul states that a knowledge and discernment of truth will cause me to deal sincerely with God’s word as I abound in love. Secondly, such knowledge of truth will cause me to be “void of offense unto the day of Christ.” When one has an offense laid against him he is guilty of a crime. When I have knowledge and discernment of truth I will live lawfully as opposed to unlawfully until the day of the Lord (i.e., His coming and judgment). Said knowledge will move me to repent asking God to forgive me when I do violate His laws so that I may remain in fellowship with the Father (cf. Acts 8:22; I Jn. 1:8-10; 5:16-17) (See study # 10; Bible Repentance and Forgiveness).

G. **“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God”** (1:11).

1. What are the “fruits of righteousness?” Consider what Jesus said at John 15:7-10, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples. Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” Note that Jesus equates “bearing fruit” with abiding in truth, abiding in Him, and bringing glory to God the Father.

2. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22 what the fruits of righteousness are (he terms them fruit of the Spirit); i.e., “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control.”

3. To be “filled” with truth, love, joy, peace, longsuffering etc. is to be “void of offense.”

III. **The Gospel is being preached (1:12-26):**

A. **“Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel;”** (1:12).

1. Apparently the Philippians had expressed concerns regarding Paul’s imprisonment. They were not concerned about his physical well being but rather that the progress of the gospel may have now been hindered due to Paul’s mobility being limited.

2. To the contrary, Paul states that the furtherance of the gospel has continued even though he is in bonds. Consider Luke’s remarks at Acts 28:30-31, “And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.”

B. **“So that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest;”** (1:13).

1. Paul was a servant of Jesus Christ. He had no political agenda.

2. Paul’s purpose to help others be saved from the consequences of sin became known to the “whole praetorian guard and to all the rest.”

a. The Praetorian Guard: “In Rome the Praetorian was probably the quarters built by Tiberius for the imperial bodyguard, the ‘praetorian guard’ (Phil. 1:13). Ramsay (St. Paul the Traveller, p. 357) says, ‘the praetorian is the whole body of persons connected with sitting in judgment, the supreme imperial court, doubtless in this case the prefect or both
prefects of the Praetorian Guard, representing the emperor in his capacity as the fountain of justice, together with the assessors and high officers of the court.”

b. “All the rest” would have been other Roman citizens in Rome. Paul preached to whoever would give an ear.

C. “And that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear” (1:14).
   1. Churches of Christ had already been established in Rome before Paul came (cf. Romans 16). When these brethren witnessed Paul speaking boldly to high ranking officials in the Roman judicial system and making converts they were influenced to do the same.
   2. Fear and courage are often contagious. Paul’s courage was witnessed by the brethren so that without fear they preached the gospel as did Paul.

D. “Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will.” (1:15).
   1. Paul speaks of two classes of preachers. These two classes were motivated to preach the word of God due to Paul’s affective preaching in prison.
   2. The first class of preachers was the ones whose preaching was motivated by “envy and strife.” What were these preachers jealous (envious) of? Consider the word “strife” (eris) = “strife, quarrel, debate, contention... rivalry” (LS 314). Paul does not tell us much of these preachers. They were jealous of Paul and seemed to consider the work of preaching a competitive event to gain followers to Christ and thereby Paul was a rival in this work. Error was not preached by the men; however, their motivation for preaching was erroneous (see study # 11; Preachers and Preaching).
   3. The second class of preachers was those who preached “of good will.” The motivation for preaching by this class of men was the eternal soul. They did not view Paul as a threat to their position among other brethren. They were not jealous or competitive with Paul.

E. “The one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel; but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds” (Phil. 1:16-17).
   1. Paul had given thanks to God for the fellowship he shared with the Philippian brethren in the area of preaching the gospel to the lost of the world (cf. Phil. 1:5). Not only did Paul and the Philippians share in preaching the gospel but they also shared with him in the defense of the gospel message (cf. Phil. 1:7). Those who preached Christ “of good will” are those who do it “of love.” Bible love (i.e., the love for men’s souls [Eph. 5:2], physical well being [I Jn. 3:17-18], and a love for my own soul [Eph. 4:1]) is the motivation for this class of preachers.
   2. The other class of preachers (the envious and competitive) preach Christ:
      a. “Of faction” (eritheia) = “to serve for hire, to serve a party... a hired laborer... the service of a party, party spirit; feud, faction” (Moulton 166). This class of preaching brethren proclaimed Christ so that they may gain a following. They seem to not be so interested in the soul winning work of preaching as they do for numbers and followers (see study # 11).
      b. These brethren’s preaching was not done “sincerely” (hagnos) = “pure, chaste, modest, innocent, blameless” (Moulton 4). Though their preaching content was sincere (i.e., pure) their motive for preaching was not sincere (i.e., pure, innocent, and blameless). Paul discusses two aspects of sincerity. First, there is sincerity of life and doctrine (Phil. 1:10). One’s doctrine and actions are measured to be sincere (pure) by the word of God. One who preaches and or practices error cannot be termed sincere. Secondly, there is sincerity of motive. Paul states that some brethren preach truth; however, their motive for preaching is faulty. Men who preach truth for the wrong reasons are not sincere in motive. Just because one preaches truth does not make him totally sincere in the eyes of God. The true sincere man will not only have purity in doctrine and practices but his motives for said preaching will be pure. Note once again that this type of sincerity says nothing of one preaching error through ignorance and proclaiming its truths with a clear conscience (see study # 9). Consider the chart below:

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1 Unger, M. F. The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary, pp. 1024
### The Character of a Man

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sincere</th>
<th>Insincere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One who preaches truth with a pure motive</strong> (Phil. 1:15-17).</td>
<td><strong>Preaching that does not represent the whole truth</strong> done by one who has good intentions (cf. Apollos @ Acts 18:24ff / Paul @ Acts 26:9 / Disciples of John @ Acts 19:1ff).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One who preaches truth with a faulty motive</strong> (Phil. 1:15-17).</td>
<td><strong>Preaching that does not represent truth</strong> done by one who has evil motives (Acts 13:6-12).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acceptable Preaching based upon truth taught (Phil. 1:18). Unacceptable Preaching based upon untruths taught (I Jn. 4:1-6; II Jn. 9).

e. The impurity of their motive for preaching is defined as, “thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds.” Men like Timothy and Titus would have introduced the apostle Paul to new converts and made them familiar with him so that when they heard him preach they would recognize his God ordained position to speak by revelation as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Such an introduction would cause the converts to seek out Paul and hear his words as opposed to looking more to Timothy and Titus. Godly men could care less that converts look to them for guidance so long as they are growing in truth. These self seeking preachers left Paul completely out of the picture and apparently encouraged the new converts to communicate with them over questionable matters. They did not introduce them to Paul. These insincere preachers thought to bring Paul mental anguish by such activity (see study # 11).

F. “What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (1:18).

1. How could Paul rejoice when he knew that there were men who preached in “pretence” (prophasis)? The word prophasis = “that which appears in front, that which is put forward to hide the true state of things; a fair show or pretext... an excuse” (Moulton 354). “That which is alleged as the cause, an allegation... a mere pretext, a pretence, excuse... to give occasion, make an excuse... to put forward an excuse” (LS 704). The thought is complete and clear. These teachers of truth yet with faulty motives preached Christ as an excuse to gain their real desire; i.e., the preeminence among brethren. Their preaching was not about soul winning it was about gaining a popular following. Note that Paul terms the one who would preach truth with a pure motive as proclaiming truth (see study # 11).

2. Paul’s rejoicing was due to truth being preached no matter the motive. When a man or woman becomes a Christian they are a new creature in Christ. They begin their journey of studying, learning, serving, and bring God glory. Each man gives account for self. Paul knew that if a convert were made, even through faulty motive preaching, that individual had the potential to be a wonderful Christian who brings glory to God (See study # 12; Personal Responsibility).

G. “For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (1:19).

1. Many have concluded that Paul speaks of being released from his Roman imprisonment here. I do not personally see how that thought could be deduced from the context at hand. Paul
rejoiced over the preaching of truth whether that was done with good or impure motives. Approaching the verse from this angle we may see that Paul was dependent upon **three things** for his salvation like all else are:

2. The **first** thing Paul is dependent upon for salvation is truthful preaching. **Secondly**, Paul was dependent upon the prayers of brethren. **Thirdly**, Paul was dependent upon "the supply of the Spirit of Christ." The word "supply" (epichoregia) = “additional help” (LS 307). “Aid” (Moulton 163). “Support” (AG 305). How can the Spirit of Christ “help,” “aid,” or “support” the Christian in their quest for salvation? The work of the Spirit is revealing truth. Truth, when studied, will help, aid, and support one in their quest for heaven. Others have said that the supply of the Spirit of Christ here is the use of miraculous powers. Again, I disagree with this due to it just not fitting the context.

H. “According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death” (1:20).

1. Paul's salvation (and the salvation of all) is still under consideration. Paul’s expectation and hope is to be saved from the consequences of sin. He is confident that he will not be disappointed in this hope.

2. With confidence of the reality of heaven before him the apostle will boldly proclaim the truth, be dependent upon the prayers of other saints as they are dependent upon him, and look to the aid and support of the Holy Spirit through revealed truth.

3. Whether he lived or died Paul was confident that Christ would be magnified (i.e., glorified) as he lived in such a godly manner.

4. The word "magnify" (megaluno) = “to make great or powerful, to exalt, strengthen... to make great by word, to extol, magnify...” (LS 491).

I. “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (1:21).

1. Paul’s objective in life was to magnify Christ whether in life or death (previous verse). Paul’s living would result in the name of Christ being magnified due to his bold preaching.

2. Paul’s death would magnify the name of Christ as well. A martyr’s death is surely under consideration here. Paul pictures his death due to a stand in truth and a life bent on magnifying the name of Jesus.

3. Paul and those who hear him are winners whether in his death or life (see study # 6)!

J. “But if to live in the flesh, if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not” (1:22).

1. Paul seems to be thinking out loud on paper. He knows that he can magnify the name of Christ through life and or death.

2. The state of life has greater benefits; however, for those who would learn from Paul. The more Paul preached the more disciples were made to Christ (i.e., his work).

3. Considering the fact that he can magnify Christ in life or death Paul states “I know not” whether he should choose to live or die if I had the choice.

K. “But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake” (1:23-24).

1. Here is the dilemma: To die would bring Paul in the presence of Christ (a benefit to him). To live would benefit the Philippians and all others of his time.

2. Personal benefits lean toward being with Christ “for it is very far better.” Paul would not have to suffer persecution (II Cor. 11) nor physical pain (II Cor. 12:7ff) any longer.

3. Paul was a man of selfless love (see study # 6). Though being with Christ would solve a lot of his own distress he knew it was “needful” for the sake of other brethren and lost souls that he continue his work for as long as possible.

L. “And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again” (1:25-26).

1. Paul is confident that the Philippians were in need of his preaching, prayers, and revelation through the Spirit.
2. Paul is confident that he “shall abide” that the Philippians may “progress” in faith and love of truth. Paul was not being arrogant but rather speaking words of truth. The Philippians and all others who heard him would benefit from his preaching.

3. The consequence of bold truthful preaching is that its adherents would bring glory to the name of Christ.

4. Thereby Paul expected to be in their presence once again.


A. “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel;” (1:27).

1. Paul’s desire is to remain in the flesh (among the living) so that he may help the Philippians with their spiritual progress in truth. Paul fully expects to see the Philippians again to conduct the work of progressing their faith (cf. Phil. 2:24). Until that point; however, Paul request that they exercise themselves in a way that would be “worthy of the gospel.”

a. The idea of a “manner of life” (politeuomai) = “to be a citizen; to govern a city or state, administer the affairs of a state; to be governed; in NT to order one’s life and conduct, converse, live, in a certain manner as to habits and principles” (Moulton 334). “To have a certain form of polity, conduct the government, of the state, to be governed” (LS 654).

b. The Christian is to have a life governed “worthy” (axios) = “worthy (having worth; useful, valuable, honorable, deserving)” (LS 85). “Fitting, suitable, in a manner becoming” (Moulton 35).

c. Let us state the whole paraphrase now: Paul’s request is that the Philippians be governed in such a way that their words and actions are found fitting or suitable to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The truth is the Christian’s governing body of laws that determines right and wrong acts (see study # 13; The Bible against Calvinism).

2. When truth is the Christian’s law there will be unity among all true disciples:

a. True disciples will be “one spirit.” The word “spirit” can be easily defined by examining cross references of its various NT use. The word is used as a disposition, one’s character, teaching, or thinking on a matter (cf. Psalms 51:17; Jn. 4:23; I Cor. 4:21, II Cor. 7:1; 11:4; Eph. 2:1-3; I Jn. 4:1, 6 etc.). Brethren who are governed by one truth and accept that truth will naturally be “one spirit” with each other (see study # 14; Bible Unity).

b. True disciples will be of “one soul.” The Greek word for “soul” (psuche) = “breath, as the sign of life... metaphor. of things dear as life... the soul, mind, understanding” (LS 903). While it is true that the word “soul” is often times used to mark the spirit life of a man we too find a thinking side of the word “soul.” Paul used the word “soul” (psuche) at Ephesians 6:6 saying, “not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart (psuche) (or soul).” Liddell and Scott’s definition (i.e., of things dear as life) seems to hit the real idea. Doing things from the heart is to do something because I want to do it (something that is dear to me). Christians find themselves of one spirit (disposition) in that they share a common interest in life (i.e., a love of truth).

3. Christians who share in a common interest in truth will “strive for the faith of the gospel.”

a. To “strive” (sunathleo) = “to strive together for a thing... to strive or labor with others” (LS 766).

b. The Christian’s common interest in truth will cause them to labor together in it. Note that the “gospel” is termed “the faith” (cf. Rom. 1:5; Jude 3 etc.) (see study # 15; The Nature of Truth).

B. “And in nothing affrighted by the adversaries: which is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation, and that from God” (1:28).

1. There is truth to the adage, “there is strength in numbers.” When the saints of God are of one spirit and soul they make for a powerful people. Paul thereby warns the Philippians to be “affrighted” in nothing by adversaries. To be “affrighted” (pturo) = “to scare, terrify; to be terrified, be in consternation” (Moulton 356).
2. Who are the Christian’s “adversaries” (antikeimai)? The word antikeimai = “to occupy an opposite position; to oppose, be adverse to” (Moulton 32). Paul used the word antikeimai at Galatians 5:17 saying, “For the flesh lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.” The Christian’s adversaries are those who do not share in a common interest in truth and do not join the ranks of the faithful to strive for the faith. Later at Philippians 3:18, 19 Paul states, “For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things” (See study # 16; The Christian’s Enemies).

3. When the Christian “evidence” (endeixis) his or her unwavering faith in God as opposed to fear there is an affect on the enemies of the cross. The word endeixis = “a pointing out... display” (LS 259). When I display a spirit of fearlessness in relation to my adversaries it is an indication, display, or a pointing out of their “perdition” (apoleia) = “destruction” (LS 113), “to bring to nought, make void” (Moulton 45). The idea of spiritual death is often associated with perdition in the NT.

4. Secondly, when enemies of the cross see an unwavering faith in me this evidences my salvation that is from God.

C. “Because to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf” (1:29).

1. Two things have been “granted” (charizomai) to the Philippians (i.e., “to offering willingly, give cheerfully, give freely, to give up as a favor... to be pleasing, agreeable” (LS 882)). Note that these two things that have been cheerfully given as a favor to the Philippians are “in the behalf” (huper) of Christ. The Greek word “huper” = “for the sake of a person or thing” (LS 833).

2. First, Paul states that the Philippians have been cheerfully given the opportunity to “believe” in Christ. Said faith brings about eternal salvation (cf. Rom. 5:1ff). Secondly, the Philippians have been cheerfully given the opportunity to “suffer in his behalf.” While I may evidence the enemies of the cross’ perdition through my unwavering faith I will at the same time be persecuted (cf. Jn. 15:17-25; II Tim. 3:12) (see study # 17; The Suffering Christian).

a. Note that Paul told the persecuted Thessalonian Christians that said persecution and suffering was their God given “appointment” in this life (cf. I Thess. 3:1-3).

b. The apostle Peter helps us understand that when one decides to put on Christ in baptism they can expect a life of persecution and consequential suffering (cf. I Pet. 2:20-21; 4:12-13). Why? Because the world does not like to have their sin exposed and this is exactly what the gospel (cf. Jn. 16:7-10) and those who represent it do (Gal. 4:16; Eph. 5:11).

D. “having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me” (1:30).

1. Often times we are encouraged to continue or endure difficult situations in life because someone else is currently or has experienced similar things and was successful. Paul encourages the Philippians in the same manner. Paul calls to the Philippian’s remembrance the suffering he experienced in Philippi because of his love for the truth (cf. Acts 16:16ff). Again, to the Thessalonians, Paul states, “but having suffered before and been shamefully treated, as ye know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God in much conflict” (I Thess. 2:2).

2. Here is a lesson on personal work. When I preach to those who are lost in the world I will be persecuted (suffer). I know this and am therefore often timid. Paul (an apostle of Jesus Christ) is encouraging all Christians to speak up in the face of such trials. Timidity and fearfulness will only cause men to loose their souls. If I am not suffering in this life due to my preaching I may have immediate comfort; however, all the souls that I could have changed will have eternal discomfort (See study # 18; Personal Work).
Synopsis of Chapter 1

Paul offered prayers of thanksgiving on behalf of the Philippians due to their common fellowship in preaching, defending, and the confirmation of the gospel. The Philippians had also shared with Paul in his bonds of prison. Paul requests, in prayer, that the Philippians would abound in knowledge and discernment so that they may be void of offence in the day of Christ.

Paul explains to the Philippians that his prison bonds actually turned out for the betterment of many souls. He preached in Rome and consequently many heard and obeyed the gospel. When brethren saw the good results he had, while in prison, they were encouraged to do the same. Some of these preachers preached truth with the motive to gain souls while others preached truth to gain followers for their own agendas. Paul could rejoice, no matter the motive, so long as truth was taught.

Paul exhorts the Philippians to allow their actions to be governed by truth and to be of one mind in the truth. When their adversaries see their united front against error they will be convicted of their spiritual death. Said conviction will lead to Christians suffering for which God had granted them to experience in behalf of Jesus. Paul reminds the Philippians that they had previously seen his afflictions when he preached the gospel in Philippi and so they too shall now share in the same fate.

Chapter 2

I. Have the mind of Christ (2:1-5):
   A. “If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions,”
      1. “Therefore:” seeing that the consequence of exposing men’s sins is suffering, the very thing that God hath granted to the saints, Paul exhorts the Philippians to “make full my joy.” Paul’s joy would be made full when the saints were in full fellowship (one mind) through truth. There is strength in numbers. When the saints are united in the “mind of Christ” they will be individually and collectively better equipped to deal with the suffering of persecution. The issue is not whether the Christian will suffer for preaching truth but how he or she will cope with said suffering when it comes (cf. II Tim. 3:12). Paul gives the Philippians instructions that they might emulate Christ in every way of life. A major theme of Philippians is found in these verses; i.e., “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (2:5).
      2. The following attributes will be necessary for the saints to be equipped with in the coming days of their life that they may be able to endure the suffering from wicked men:
         a. “Exhortation” (paraklesis) in Christ = “a calling to one’s aid... encouragement” (LS 597). Knowing that I can call to Christ for aid in my time of need is indeed encouraging (cf. Heb. 2:18; 4:16). The Christian will need aid and help in time of persecution and suffering for righteousness sake. Let us know assuredly that “in Christ” there is comfort and gracious help in our hour of need (see study # 19; The Work of Jesus). The mind of Christ is to encourage the saint with spiritual help. The Christian with the mind of Christ will be willing to “encourage the faint hearted” during their hour of trial (cf. I Thess. 5:14).
         b. “Consolation” (paramuthion) of love = “an address, exhortation... an assuagement (to make less burdensome or painful), abatement...” (LS 600). The love we have for Christ and fellow saints will “make less burdensome or painful” our suffering for the truth we preach. Jesus makes our pain less by helping us understand our eternal reward (cf. II Cor. 4:16-18). Let us lighten our brother’s burden in the time of his persecution by enforcing thought of heaven and thereby exercise the mind of Christ (cf. Matt. 11:28-30).
         c. “Fellowship” (koinonia) of the Spirit = “communion (an act or instance of sharing, as of thoughts or feelings), association, partnership, fellowship” (LS 440). To share the thoughts of the Holy Spirit is to have association and fellowship with God (see study # 5). The work of the Holy Spirit is to deliver divine revelation (cf. Jn. 16:13ff; Gal. 1:11-12 compared to Eph. 3:5). Paul’s point is that when I read, accept, and practice truth I am in fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Said state will bring comfort to the mind knowing that our
suffering is not in vain. The promises delivered through divine revelation of my salvation inspire me to continue at the hardest moments in life. John wrote, “be thou faithful till death and I will give thee the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Exercising the mind of Christ in this area means that I believe and practice truth (fellowship HS) and so exclaim, “I can do all things through him that strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13). It seems that this attribute of the mind of Christ looks to the individual during times of suffering.

d. “Tender mercies” (translated ‘compassion’ in NM) (splagchna) = “the inward parts, i.e. heart, lungs, liver, kidneys,... metaphorically like our heart, the seat of the feelings and affections... a man’s inward nature” (LS 740).
e. “Compassion” (oiktirmos) = “compassion, compassionate feelings, mercies” (LS 547). It seems that the Greek splagchna and oiktirmos go together as another part of the mind of Christ; i.e., Let the inner man be compassionate. Let the Christian think about others during our hour suffering (Rom. 14:15). Having the mind of Christ is to be compassionate (cf. Matt. 14:14).

B. “Make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;” (2:2).  
1. Paul calls upon the Philippian saints to muster up their knowledge of Christ to gain comfort in time of suffering. Said knowledge would give them the wisdom and stamina to not falter in time of their persecution and suffering. Such a state of being would “make full my joy.”  
2. Paul reveals the secret to being comforted in Christ Jesus during times of suffering. The saints must come to be one in Christ Jesus. We must recall Paul’s statements at Philippians 1:27 where he makes the state of being “one” dependant upon “the faith of the gospel” (see study # 14):  
a. The saints must be “of the same mind” (autos phroneo). The Greek word “autos” = “the same... to denote sameness” (LS 135). The Greek word phroneo = “to think, to have understanding, to be sage, wise, prudent... to have a thing in one’s mind, mind, take heed to a thing” (LS 872). Paul calls upon the Philippian saints to have the “same understanding” of truth. Such a command infers not only the ability to understand truth but also the ability for saints to be united as one in their understanding of truth. Unity in spiritual matters is dependant upon brethren reading, studying, meditating on the one word and coming to the same conclusions.  
b. The saint of God must not only be of one mind in doctrine with other Christians but also be of the “same love” if they are going to receive comfort from Christ and other brethren during times of suffering. There must be “sameness” in “love” (agapen). Bible love takes into consideration my love for my own soul (Rom. 5:1-2; 10:17), the soul of other saints (Eph. 5:2), the physical and emotional well being of all (I Jn. 3:17). When each Christian has this same mind there will be an overwhelming care for the one who is suffering at the hands of wicked men (see study # 7).  
c. Furthermore, Paul exhorts the saints to “be of one accord” (sumsuchos) = “of one mind, at unity” (LS 765). Again, Paul is reiterating the importance of being one in mind (i.e., thinking) that is formed through truth (cf. Jesus prayer at Jn. 17). Unity of doctrinal belief will support the fainthearted in time of persecution.  
d. “Of one mind” (translated “the one thing thinking”) (NM 780). When all saints have their thinking molded by truth they will be one in thinking regarding spiritual matters.

C. “doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself;” (2:3).  
1. All things that the Christian does or thinks is dictated by truth. When one lives in truth he or she will not be moved to be factious. Paul states that absolutely no action, on the part of the Christian, is to be done with a spirit of “faction” (eritheian) = “to serve for hire, to serve a party, the service of a party, party spirit; feud, faction” (Moulton 166). The saint who gives into a party spirit no longer has the one mind of true saints that is governed by truth. One who is factious seeks to gratify self by gaining a following of brethren.
2. The party spirit is condemned as is the spirit of “vainglory” (kenodoxia) = “desirous of vainglory (Boastful and unwarranted pride in one’s accomplishments or qualities) (Moulton 228). The spirit of faction and vainglory go together it seems. Those who love to tell others of their accomplishments do so to gain a following of underlings.

3. Rather than seeking self aggrandizement and a following among brethren let the Christian have “lowliness of mind” (tapeinophrosune) = “humble-minded... lowliness or humility of mind and deportment, modesty, Acts 20:19; Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3” (Moulton 397) (cf. Col. 3:12; I Pet. 5:5).

4. Let “each count others better than self?” I am to deem (have the opinion) others as being “better than” myself (huperecho) = “to hold one thing over another... to be above, rise above the horizon... to rise above” (LS 835-836). My view of self is lower than my view of others (all are above me). Consider Paul’s attitude (cf. I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8; I Tim. 1:15). Paul stresses the fact that the Christian must avoid the high mind of thinking to much of one’s self because this leads to faction and division in the church. The conscience Christian should even be able to detect when others are trying to aggrandize him and squash it before it blossoms into faction and vainglory.

D. “not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others” (2:4).
1. When a Christian has true Bible love he will not only care about his own physical and spiritual well being but the physical, emotional, and spiritual well being of others.
2. Being a Christian is a selfless life. The more one grows in Christ the greater one sees not only his own flaws and deficiencies but his utter dependency upon the gracious mercy of God. Said state of mind drives us to see our lowly state of being rather than looking to how great we are. When one thinks too much upon self they tend to forget the “things of others.”

3. An interesting note is that Paul said, “but each of you ALSO to the things of others.” We realize that we must take care of our own; however, let us not do so to the exclusion of other’s needs.

E. “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:” (2:5).
1. Herein is a major theme of the Philippian letter. The Christian is to have the “mind of Christ.”
2. Paul reveals the mind of Christ to be:
   1. One with the Holy Spirit (and thereby the Father) in truth (cf. Jn. 17:21).
   2. Comforting, compassionate, merciful, never seeking a following, and never boasting of self accomplishments to aggrandize self in the eyes of others. Jesus’ mind was one that sought the well being of others.

II. Jesus temporarily gave up the glories of heaven so that all of mankind may share eternal glory with Him (2:6-11):
A. “Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped” (2:6).
1. Jesus is the ultimate example of a selfless individual. Jesus existed in the “form” (morphē) of God = “form, shape, figure, fashion, appearance” (LS 519) from all eternity (cf. Jn. 1:1). Paul does not mean to say here that Christ’s physical appearance was equal to that of Jehovah God but rather that His inner being (character) was in the form, fashion, or shape of God’s (cf. Jn. 14:8-9). Jesus was humble, merciful, and compassionate (cf. Phil. 2:1-5). These are attributes of God (see study # 20; Jesus). Before Jesus came into the world he was “on an equality with God.”
2. The words “counted not being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped” in the ASV is translated “subsisting not robbery deemed it the to be equal with God” in the Nestle/Marshal (NM) text and “thought it not robbery to be equal to God” in the KJV Bible. The Greek for the sentence is “huparchon ouch arpagmon egesato to einai isa theo.” This phrase is defined out as (huparchon = “to come into existence; to exist; to be, subsist” [Moulton 414] / ouch = “by no means” [Moulton 294] / arpagmon = “to seize, take away by force, snatch away, robbery, seizure... a thing retained with an eager grasp, or eagerly claimed and conspicuously exercised” [Moulton 52] / egesato = “to lead the way; to take the lead; to be chief, to preside, govern, rule... to think consider, count, esteem, regard” [Moulton 184] / to = the / einai = “to be” (NM 780) / isa = “equal” (NM 780) / theo = God). Now, let us put the whole sentence together as a
literal translation: “to come into existence by no means to seize by robbery considered or regarded the to be equal God.” The thought seems to be: “Jesus came to this earth in human form as God not considering said event as a seizure of God’s being.” Let’s see if we can make some sense of this difficult sentence:

**a.** Jesus existed from all eternity with God as the very image (or form) of God (cf. Jn. 1:1). Jesus came to earth, dwelt in the flesh, and was “equal” to God as stated above. The author of Hebrews states, “Who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (1:3). The antecedent to “his glory” would be God in this context. Jesus is the “effulgence” of the glory of God. The word “effulgence” (apaugasma) = “efflux (outward flow) of light” (LS 89). Jesus, as the Son of God, is the glory of God. Light flows outward from Christ. Consider the fact that “God is light” (I Jn. 1:5). Light in the scriptures represents purity, holiness, goodness, justice, righteousness, and a state of sinless perfection (cf. Prov. 6:23; Isa. 5:20; Eph. 5:8ff). This light is transferred to man through the gospel message (II Cor. 4:4-6). If the source of this just light is Jesus it stands that Jesus represents deity (see study # 21; The Deity of Christ). As the source of the glory of God, Jesus is “the very image of his substance” (God). No wander Jesus told his disciples that any man that had seen him had seen the Father (Jn. 14:9). The apostle Paul said, “For in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

**b.** Jesus did not rob God of His deity but rather shared in it with Him as a part of the godhead. Jesus was God; however, He gave up the glories of heaven for the sake of mankind’s souls.

**F.** “but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men” (2:7).

1. When Jesus came to earth He existed in the flesh. John said, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).

2. Such a state of flesh is termed “emptied” himself (ekenosen) KJV = “made himself of no reputation” = “empty; having nothing, empty-handed... to divest one’s self of one’s prerogatives, abase one’s self” (Moulton 228) (see study # 21). The idea of a part of the Godhead coming to earth in the flesh was to abase one’s self of the glorious state had in heaven. Jesus took the form (character) of a servant in the likeness of men. Rather than enjoying the glorious existence of the eternal God He came as a servant to offer mankind eternal salvation through the forgiveness of sins (i.e., a flesh and blood man come to offer a service as a servant). Again, this indicates the selfless mind of God (Christ). If any one could have been vainglorious it would have been Jesus; however, He was “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29) (see study # 20).

**G.** “and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross” (2:8).

1. Not only did Jesus give up the glories of heaven for earthly existence but He was obedient to the will of the godhead by giving Himself upon the cross to physically die for man’s sins.

2. Consider again the words of the author of Hebrews regarding Jesus’ obedience. At Hebrews 5 the issue of Christ being a qualified high priest is under discussion. The author of Hebrews states, “Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered;” (Heb. 5:7-8).

a. The subject here is not Melchizedek of Hebrews 5:6 but Jesus. These verses illustrate the fact that Jesus was and is a qualified high priest not only because God through His sovereignty chose Him, but because He has compassion upon those whom He is making the sacrifice for (cf. Heb. 5:2) (see study # 22; The Love of God). Indeed Jesus is the loving shepherd (Jn. 10).

b. Jesus was not only tempted to sin like as we (cf. Heb. 4:15) but He too experienced the pain of anxiety and anguish. Who can forget the prayer of great anguish while Jesus was
in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf. Luke 22:40-44)? God did not remove the trial of the cross from Jesus; however, He did comfort Him with angels.

c. Jesus was not unlike Job and many of us today who suffer for doing that which is right. God is molding and perfecting us that we may be truly qualified to wear the name Christian. Jesus was being perfected to be the high priest of all humanity.

d. God’s sovereign choice of high priest was Jesus; however, this did not make Jesus an effective high priest. God’s sovereign choice is to give salvation to Christians; however, that does not mean there is nothing for the Christian to do. Jesus was to be made perfect like as we are to be made. Through the process of time there will come trials that mold a man to perfection (cf. James 1:2ff). Jesus was no different in this respect. Remember, the author of Hebrews stated, “For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10). Part of this perfection was that Jesus was to “learn obedience by the things which he suffered.” We know that Jesus was not chastised for “disobedience” to perfection but was chastised through mental and physical anguish to achieve perfection. The state of “perfection” is identified in Hebrews 2:10 as (teleioo) = “to make perfect, complete: accomplish... to attain perfection, come to the end of one’s labors... to reach maturity” (LS 798). That which made Jesus “perfect” (complete or accomplished) was His suffering that He might serve as a “merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (cf. Heb. 2:10, 17-18) (see study # 23; Bible Perfection).

e. Now we see the completely qualified Jesus as our high priest. He gained the office of high priest by the sovereign choice of God and He is qualified to serve in such a compassionate position due to becoming perfect (completely understanding the anxiety, pain, anguish, and temptation of man) having gone through it Himself.

3. The idea of Jesus being obedient therefore is that God the Father has so chose this lot for Him throughout all eternity so that the sins of the world would be remitted through His spilled blood (cf. Eph. 1:3-4). Again, the author of Hebrews states, “And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation; named of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 5:9-10). When Jesus became flesh He gave up the glories of heaven. Said glories would be the fact that all spiritual beings bowed their knee and confessed Him Lord of all. Secondly, Jesus came to be subject to mental anguish, pain, and sin (yet never once did He sin). No man today or through all eternity could exclaim, “Jesus does not know my pain” for He, through obedience, went to the cross in all its shame, anguish, and pain as a lowly servant. Isaiah records, “He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not” (Isa. 53:3).

H. “Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (2:9-11).

1. These three verses seem to reveal what Jesus “emptied” himself of (cf. Phil. 2:7). The glorious and respected state He occupied in heaven was set aside for the work of redeeming man as a humble servant.

2. Jesus loved mankind enough to leave the glories of heaven, become a lowly servant, die a death of shame, spill out his blood in pain and agony, all so that we may be forgiven of our sins and share an eternity with Him for ever (see study # 19 and 20)!

3. When Christ died on the cross, He ascended into the heavens and once again retained His glorious state of supreme potentate (King of Kings and Lord of Lords). The glory He voluntarily set aside by experiencing flesh and blood was regained at His resurrection and ascension into heaven.
III. From Jesus’ obedience to the Philippians (2:12-18):
A. “So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (2:12).
1. It seems that Paul is confidently connecting the faithful obedience of Jesus to the Philippians by saying, “even as ye have always obeyed…”
   a. Jesus was obedient to the will of God in that He suffered pain and agony at the hands of sinful men and even went to the shameful cross. The Lord’s suffering perfected Him.
   b. The Philippians can look to Jesus, one who suffered at the hands of sinful men yet remained obedient to the task at hand (i.e., redemption of the souls of mankind through the cross) (cf. Matt. 26:53-54) and gain courage to do the same.
   c. God desires man’s obedience to His laws so that they may share in the glories of heaven with Jesus (cf. Rev. 2:10).
2. The evidence is overwhelming here as to salvation being conditioned upon our obedience. The text infers a consequence to not obeying the law of God. Paul states, “work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” If I fail to work out my salvation the consequences are eternal damnation (cf. Matt. 13:47-50; Heb. 2:1-3; Rev. 20:10-15). Said event ought to cause me “fear and trembling” (cf. II Cor. 5:11). Genesis to Revelation reveals man’s responsibility to not sin by keeping His laws through a spirit of fear (cf. Ex. 19:16 compared to Ex. 20:20).
3. Said words indicate the serious nature in which I should approach my life. Isaiah records, “For all these things hath my hand made, and so all these things came to be, saith Jehovah: but to this man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word” (Isa. 66:2).
B. “for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure” (2:13).
1. Note that God “working in you to will and to work for his good pleasure” is connected with obedience to God’s word and the Philippians working out their eternal salvation through fear and trembling of verse 12.
2. When I work out my salvation with fear and trembling through obedience to God’s word using Jesus as my example God works in me.
3. Question: Does this mean that when I study and obey God’s truths that He invades me and works in me? Consider what Paul told the Thessalonian brethren: “And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works in you that believe” (I Thess. 2:13). God works in each Christian through the guidance of truth (see study # 24; The Indwelling of the Godhead).
4. How does God’s word “work in you that believe?” The work of God’s word is the salvation of men’s souls (cf. Rom. 1:16). When I obey truth (the word of God) I will be doing the work of God which is saving men’s souls through the preaching and dissemination of truth.
C. “Do all things without murmurings and questionings:” (2:14).
1. The “all things” must be the working that God does through us by His holy word mentioned at verse 13. To murmur (goggusmos) = “to complain in low mumbling tones; grumble” (AHD 823; LS 167; Moulton 81). To “question” (dialogismos) = “contention and dispute” (Moulton 93). Let the Christian fulfill God’s commandments without complaint or contention.
2. The spirit of false teachers is to murmur and question God’s word. Jude said of said teachers, “these are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaks great swelling words), showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage” (Jude 1:16) (see study # 9).
D. “That ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world” (2:15).
1. The Christian who “obeys” God’s laws, works out their salvation with “fear and trembling,” and avoids complaining “may become blameless and harmless.” One is to blame when found in sin and one will do harm when complaining against God.
2. The idea of a spiritual “blemish” is to be guilty of sin. To obey God’s standards and do the work of God is to be blameless. Said individual will repent and ask God’s forgiveness at the
appropriate times in life. Only those spiritually clean and free from blemishes will be in heaven (cf. Rev. 21:27).

3. The “crooked and perverse generation” is the “adversaries” of Philippians 1:28 (i.e., those in sin). The sins of these people are made manifest by godly living on the part of the Christian (Eph. 5:11). The Christian is to thereby let the light of the gospel message shine bright in their lives (cf. Matt. 5:14) (see study # 25; Individual Responsibility to Watch and Warn against Sin).

E. “holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain” (2:16).

1. Another name for the gospel (Eph. 1:13), truth (Jn. 17:17), the faith (Phil. 1:27), word of God (I Thess. 2:13) is “the word of life” (see study # 15). Spiritual life is the work of the gospel message (Rom. 1:16). Each individual Christian is to “hold forth” (epecho) = “hold, retain, stay” (Strong’s 1907). Each individual is responsible for knowing and remaining in the truths of God’s word (see study # 12).

2. Paul’s glorying would be over the Philippians who made it to heaven after the great day of judgment (day of Christ) due to their faithfulness and selfless approach to life.

3. Paul’s labors among the Philippians was surely fruitful; however, if the brethren failed to make it to heaven Paul’s labor would have been in vain (i.e., useless and worthless).

F. “Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all:” (2:17).

1. Paul has given the Philippians Jesus as an example of one who faithfully suffered persecution and was thereby perfected as a merciful high priest. Now Paul gives his self, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, as an example of one who is willing to suffer to the point of death for his beloved brethren’s sake.

2. To die for the cause of Christ (to be persecuted due to a message preached to the point of death) would bring Paul joy (see study # 6).

G. “and in the same manner do ye also joy, and rejoice with me” (2:18).

1. Remembering that their suffering had been cheerfully granted unto them in behalf of Christ (Phil. 1:29) they were to rejoice in all trials of life even if it meant their death (see study # 17).

2. Paul would not have the Philippians saddened over his trials even if they bring death to him because there awaits a glorious home for the faithful.

IV. Commendation of Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30):

A. “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state” (2:19).

1. Having just discussed the probability of his death for the cause of Christ (Phil. 2:17) Paul now lets the Philippians know that his hope is to remain alive (cf. Phil. 1:25). Secondly, not only does Paul desire to remain alive for their sakes but to send his beloved Timothy to Philippi for two reasons.

a. Timothy would be able to supply spiritual sustenance to the brethren at Philippi.

b. Timothy would be able to send Paul a report regarding the welfare of the Philippian brethren (see study # 26; Purpose of Gospel Meetings).

2. Timothy was no stranger to being sent to various places on behalf of Paul and the gospel. Paul had previously sent Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica for the same purpose (cf. I Thess. 3:1-6). Again, Paul had sent Timothy to Macedonia and Corinth from Ephesus (I Cor. 16:10).

B. “For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state” (2:20).

1. Note that Paul did not say such things about Luke and Silas who also accompanied Paul to Philippi on his second tour of preaching. Apparently Paul knew that the mind of Timothy was filled with the same anxiety over the Philippian brethren as was his. Such words of commendation speak volumes as to the faithfulness and brotherly love that Timothy shared with Paul and all who call upon the name of Jesus Christ.

2. Paul states that Timothy cared “truly” (gnesios) for the Philippians. The Greek gnesios = “genuine, sincerely” (Moulton 79). Timothy was not looking for a handout from the Philippians but rather truly cared for their emotional, physical, and spiritual well being.

C. “For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ” (2:21).
1. Such a statement demands that we look carefully at others that were known to be with Paul at various times during his Roman imprisonment. Was Paul referring to Luke, Silas, Epaphras, Tychicus, or Titus here?

2. First, remember that Paul made mention regarding the motivation of some preachers at Philippians 1:15. Apparently there were men all around Paul and men who Paul was hearing reports about that caused him to say such a thing; i.e., “they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.”

3. Explanation:
   b. The last we hear of Silas is at Acts 18:5. One is left only to wander if Silas fell away from the truth (hopefully not).
   c. It seems apparent that all these good men of faith had been sent out to various places such as Ephesus, Colossi, and Philippi to encourage the brethren with epistles from Paul. The only one remaining with Paul, that was faithful, was Timothy. All other preachers were self seeking.
   d. What this does is tells us that the true saints of God, who sincerely and genuinely cared for each other and truth, were few in number (see study # 27; Few they Are that Find Salvation).

D. “But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child serves a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel” (2:22).
   1. The word “proof” (dokime) = “a test, proof, tried character” (LS 208). The Philippians had experienced Timothy’s godly character first hand. Not only did they see Timothy’s good character but Paul confirms their faith in him as a genuine and sincere soldier in truth.
   2. When it comes to the work of preaching to the lost, Timothy was like a son who follows his dad around helping him with the family work. Incidentally, this lets us know what children’s attitude toward work with the father should be (as Timothy they should genuinely care to do it knowing that it is necessary) (see study # 28; Timothy).

E. “Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me:” (2:23).
   1. Paul’s Roman trial was nearing a conclusion and a verdict was soon to be pronounced by a Roman judge.
   2. Paul was waiting to see what the outcome of the verdict would be before he sent Timothy away to them.
   3. Said words help us conclude that the epistle to the Philippians was written sometime toward the end of Paul’s two year imprisonment in Rome (~ 62 to 63 AD).

F. “but I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly” (2:24).
   1. Paul’s personal experience with the trial at hand caused him to be very optimistic regarding his release.
   2. When we turn to second Timothy we find just the opposite. There are no faithful brethren with him, save Luke, and all hope of survival seems dim (cf. II Tim. 4:6-8). Apparently II Timothy was written at a latter imprisonment.

G. “But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need;” (2:25).
1. Epaphroditus is nowhere else mentioned in the Bible save in the book of Philippians. It seems that Paul has sent this epistle by the hands of Epaphroditus to not only relieve the Philippians of their physical sufferings (telling them to have the mind of Christ) but also their emotional sufferings as they longed to see their beloved Epaphroditus.

2. Note that Paul refers to Epaphroditus as a “fellow-worker” (i.e., laborer in the kingdom of God), “fellow-soldier” (i.e., God’s warrior for truth / this indicates the battles that had to be fought for truth sake), and “minister to my need.” Paul was in need of various necessities of life and the Philippians saw to it that his needs were met. The brethren in Philippi apparently sent this aid to Paul by the hands of Epaphroditus.

II. “since he longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick; for indeed he was sick night unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow” (2:26-27).

1. Much time elapsed between Paul first coming to his Roman prison and the time of this letter (so again the latter date; i.e., 62-63 AD for the epistle is more likely). When Paul first came to Rome it was made known to the Philippians (in some unrecorded way) that Paul was in need of the necessities of life. The Philippians respond by sending Epaphroditus to Rome with the necessary help (possibly food and clothing).

2. While in Rome, Epaphroditus gets sick and nearly dies. Enough time elapses so that someone brought back news to the Philippians that Epaphroditus was very sick. The Philippians began to be filled with anxiety over the welfare of their beloved brother in Christ. Paul’s letter and the appearance of Epaphroditus will soothe their worries about him. God had mercy on Epaphroditus and allowed him to live through the sickness. God too had mercy on Paul. If Epaphroditus would have died from the sickness Paul would have had great sorrow of heart. Though Paul realizes that leaving this world and going on to comfort (cf. Phil. 2:21) it is apparent that life among the living is a great blessing to be enjoyed to its fullest in Christ (see study # 29; The Value of our Lives).

I. “I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful” (2:28).

1. These verses give incite into the character of Paul. Paul was very conscientious of other’s feelings (see study # 6).

2. Paul knew that the Philippians were worried sick over the welfare of Epaphroditus and thereby wanted to quickly send him unto them that their worries would be abated. Until that time, Paul’s mind would be filled with sorrow for the Philippians knowing that they were filled with such anxiety and worries over this beloved brother.

J. “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy; and hold such in honor: because for the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me” (2:29-30).

1. Paul used the same language when writing the Romans regarding the brethren “receiving (Phoebe) in the Lord, worthily of the saints...” (Rom. 16:1-2). Again, the brethren in Ephesus had written a letter to the brethren in Achaia, on behalf of Apollos, that they might “receive” him (cf. Acts 18:27-28). The idea of “receiving” on “in the Lord” is the idea of accepting one into spiritual fellowship. We could not receive such a one who was not in good standing with truth (cf. II Tim. 2:16-18; 4:14-15).

2. Brethren who hazard their lives for the sake of the gospel message and men’s souls are to be held in “honor.” Epaphroditus had risked his life in bringing Paul the necessities of life.

3. To “lack” (husterema) = “deficiency, need, want” (LS 850). There was a service that was deficient on the part of the Philippians to Paul. Later, Paul will explain that this deficiency on the part of the Philippians was not due to their neglecting him but rather to their lack of opportunity to help him (cf. Phil. 4:10).
The Philippians were sure to face persecutions as they went about preaching the gospel message (Phil. 1:28-30). The Philippians needed a milieu in which they could endure said suffering even though Paul states that it is “granted in behalf of Christ” (Phil. 1:29). Jesus (Phil. 2:6-8), Paul (Phil. 2:17), and latter he will mention other faithful Christians (cf. 3:17) were to be their context for suffering. Paul encourages the Philippians to exercise the mind of Christ when faced with persecution (Phil. 2:1-5). The mind of Christ is to be an encourager, able to make events less painful to endure, sharing in truth, compassionate, united with others in truth, not factious, vainglorious, but rather lowly of mind being of the opinion that others are better than self and always looking to the needs of others.

No greater example of selflessness can be found than that of Christ. Jesus existed from all eternity with God as God (Phil. 2:6 [cf. Jn. 1:1, 14, 29-30; Eph. 1:4]). The Lord “emptied Himself” so that others may be saved from the consequences of their sin. Jesus gave up the glories of heaven to live as a servant though He was a king (Phil. 2:7). The author of Hebrews terms Christ, “the effulgence of his (God’s) glory, and the very image of his substance…” (Heb. 1:3). The objective of Christ’s life on earth is given at Hebrews 2:10, “For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (see study # 19). Through the process of suffering at the hands of sinful men Jesus would be made perfect. Again, the author of Hebrews states, “Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered;” (Heb. 5:7-8).

Now we have the Lord’s obedience connected to His suffering and perfection. Paul states in Philippians 2:8, “and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.” Jesus was not unlike all of humanity in that He had to suffer persecution, trials, and temptation so that he may grow into perfection (cf. James 1:3ff). Certainly all clearly see that the idea of God voluntarily suffering persecution and temptations is a humbling of one’s self. If Jesus so desired He could have called legions of angel’s to his aid to destroy the sinful world (cf. Matt. 26:53). The perfection Jesus obtained by humbly submitting to His trials in obedience gave way to man’s perfection. The author of Hebrews goes on to say, “For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath bee in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

Furthermore, “And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation; named of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek” (5:9-10). Paul tells us that all that Jesus voluntarily gave up in heaven was regained when He went to the cross, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven (Phil. 2:9-11). The fact of the matter is that we will suffer persecution as we go through life convicting the world of sin (II Tim. 3:12). I can emotionally handle this when I have the support of other brethren of like precious faith who have the mind of Christ!

The last parts of the chapter (verses 19 – 30) are words of commendation from Paul on behalf of Timothy and Epaphroditus. Timothy was to come shortly to the Philippians and Epaphroditus immediately. Timothy would inform the brethren of Paul’s status in Rome and Epaphroditus would comfort them immediately with his being present with them. Epaphroditus brought aid from the Philippians to Paul and in the process became sick and nearly died. The brethren in Philippi were very worried about their beloved brother and so Paul wants to send him quickly to them.

The final words of Paul in this chapter help us to make a strong case for Paul being released from his Roman prison. Paul said, “but I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly” (Phil. 2:24). Note the significant change in Paul’s tone when writing II Timothy 4:6-7, “For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith:” Clearly, Paul is at a different condition when writing II Timothy. Consider the following regarding a “fifth tour of preaching” by the apostle Paul (see study # 30; Paul’s Fifth Tour).

Sequence of events after Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment:

A. Paul remained two years as a prisoner in Rome (AD 62 –63). After writing the book of Hebrews the apostle Paul, Timothy, and Titus travel to Judea to visit the Hebrew Christians (Heb. 13:23). These brethren were suffering persecution for the cause of Christ and it was Paul’s intention to comfort them (Heb. 10:32-36).
**B.** While traveling through the Mediterranean Sea (on their way to Judea), they stop at the island of Crete. A church is established and Paul leaves Titus on the island to help the new converts in their spiritual growth and to establish an eldership (Titus 1:5).

**C.** Leaving Crete, Paul and Timothy come to Judea, comfort the Christians and travel back into Asia where they visit the churches in Ephesus and Colossi.

1. Upon arrival in Ephesus, Paul finds false teachers spreading false doctrine.
2. Paul leaves Timothy in Ephesus to fight the false teaching (I Tim. 1:3) and travels through the Aegean Sea to revisit the churches in Macedonia as he had promised while in his first imprisonment in Rome (Phil. 2:24).

**D.** Leaving the area of Macedonia, Paul travels to Nicopolis where he had planned to spend the winter (Titus 3:12). “The city at which Paul instructed Titus to meet him (Tit. 3:12) was most likely Nicopolis in Epirus, sometimes rather generally referred to as Nicopolis in Achaia.”

**E.** Paul writes the first epistle to Timothy from Nicopolis (65 AD) (I Tim. 1:3).

**F.** Paul sends Artemas or Tychicus to relieve Titus in Crete (Titus 3:12).

**G.** Having heard of the troubles in Crete, Paul traveled back to the island with Titus, Erastus and Trophimus (II Tim. 4:20) before going to Rome. Crete had a city named Miletus, as did Asia.

**H.** It is likely that Paul hears of the atrocities occurring in Rome against the Christians and decides to travel there to encourage the brethren (65 AD).

**I.** Arriving at Rome, Paul is in immediate danger of being captured and persecuted. Rome was in a state of upheaval. Christians were being unmercifully persecuted. “The Emperor Nero having set fire to the city on the 10th of July, AD 64, to remove the odium of that nefarious action, which was generally imputed to him, he endeavored to make the public believe it was perpetrated by the Christians, who, at that time, were become the objects of the popular hatred, on account of their religion. For, as if they had been the incendiaries, he caused them to be sought out, and put to death in the most barbarous manner.”

**J.** Paul is soon imprisoned at Rome for a second time as a malefactor (II Tim. 2:9) (65 AD). A “malefactor” is a “criminal, vile; one doing harm, hurtful” (LS 394). This indicates a different imprisonment than the one mentioned by Luke in Acts 28. Luke describes Paul’s imprisonment at that time (AD 63) as a pleasant one. Paul was allowed to dwell in peace and preach the gospel message to all who would hear (Acts 28:30-31 [see also Phil. 2:19-24]).

**K.** While imprisoned in Rome for the second time, he makes a defense before the Roman council (II Tim. 4:16). It appears that the second epistle to Timothy was written after this defense. Timothy has remained in Ephesus the entire time (II Tim. 4:9-12 as compared with Titus 3:12 and 4:19).

**L.** Paul’s life ends in Rome.

**Prelude to chapter 3**

Chapter 3 helps us to see that we must continue to “press” (try) in life no matter the trials or sufferings we face. Paul pressed on and so must we. Heaven is at stake!

**Chapter 3**

I. **Trust and glory in the Spirit rather than in the flesh (3:1-16):**

A. “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe” (3:1).

1. Paul has told the Philippians of his prayers to God on their behalf. Paul is thankful for their sharing with him in spreading the gospel message of salvation, for their sharing in sympathy for his bonds, for their defense and confirmation of truth (Phil. 1:1-7). Furthermore, Paul prays that the Philippians would love others and grow spiritually more and more. Paul explains to the

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2 Borchert, G. L.  The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia; Vol. 3, pg. 534

3 MacKnight, J.  MacKnight on the Epistles.   A New Literal Translation from the Original Greek, of all the Apostolical Epistles; Vol. III – IV pg. 282.
Philippians that his Roman bonds have really worked out well in that others have been motivated to preach the gospel (Phil. 1:12-19). Paul tells the Philippians that he is ready to die in bonds; however, to remain alive would be more profitable to them (Phil. 1:20-25). Paul reminds the Philippians to remain united in truth and faithful even in the face of intense trials and persecutions (Phil. 1:26-30). To endure persecutions the Philippians must have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:1-5). Jesus and Paul serve as examples to the Philippians as to how they can handle their hour of suffering (Phil. 2:6-18). Paul comforts the Philippians with the news of the coming of both Timothy and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:19-30). Paul now states, “Finally, my brethren,...”

2. Paul encourages the Philippians to “rejoice in the Lord” even though they suffer at the hands of wicked men who love not the truth. Paul’s message to the Philippians is that said suffering is “granted in behalf of Christ” (Phil. 1:29) and that if they have “the mind of Christ” (Phil. 2:5) they can make it through the trial. Having Christ as their example of how to handle suffering they can certainly “rejoice in the Lord” (as all went well for Christ so it will for them eternally) (see study # 17).

3. It seems that the “same things” written by Paul are the admonitions of this epistle. Apparently those who were causing the suffering of Philippians 1:29 were threatening the unity of the saints at Philippi (cf. Phil. 1:27; 2:2). Paul continues to expose said wicked men for the sake of the Philippians unity in truth. Such warnings were neither “irksome” (troublesome / LS 550) to Paul or the Philippians. Many brethren today cannot stomach said warnings and thereby condemn the one doing the warning (see study # 25).

B. “Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision:” (3:2).

1. A battle for the souls of men was taking place on the spiritual landscape of Paul’s days as there is now (cf. II Cor. 11:3, 13ff). Here are three phrases that depict either three classes of individuals or one class of false teachers (such as the Judaizers) that have the ability to disrupt the unity and faith of the Philippian church (and any church for that matter). First, Paul states, “Beware of the dogs.”
   a. Some place signs on their fence that reads, “Beware of dog.” Said sign is to warn all would be thieves and trespassers that their unlawful presence will not be tolerated by the watching dog. Here, Paul tells the faithful Philippians to “beware of the dogs.” Said dogs are not guarding anything important but are rather a vicious threat to the Philippians faith. If the Philippians wander into the landscape of these men’s false teaching they may be torn to shreds (spiritually killed).
   b. Isaiah calls upon all the world to come feast upon Israel because they were likened to dumb, lazy, and greedy dogs who have no love of truth (cf. Isa. 56:10-11). Paul, thereby, uses the term “dogs” to represent those who do not teach or have a love for truth.

2. Secondly, Paul warns the Philippians of “the evil workers.” Teachers of false doctrines are always “hard workers.” Often said teachers outwork the faithful because their agenda is to gain a following (cf. Phil. 2:3). Numbers will comfort the erring in their false ways so the more of a following they have the more comfortable they feel in their error.

3. Thirdly, Paul tells the Philippians to “beware of the concision.” The “concision” (katatome) = “abscession (the act of cutting off), concision (a cutting apart or off), as opp. to true circumcision” (LS 417). Moulton defines the word as a “mutilation” (221). This appears to be a strong denunciation of the Christian Jews who continued to teach that circumcision was necessary for salvation even though the apostles uniformly taught against it (cf. Acts 15:1, 5; Gal. 2:3-4; 5:7-12).

C. “for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:” (3:3).

1. The antecedent to “we” is the faithful Christians. Faithful Christians “are the circumcision.” Why would Paul state that faithful Christians are the circumcision when “Circumcision is nothing, and un-circumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God”? (cf. I Cor. 7:19).
2. Paul is clearly using the idea of circumcision to illustrate a cutting away or off of sin and accepting truth in one’s life (cf. Rom. 2:28-29). Three identifying marks of the true Christians are given (see study # 31; Circumcise the Heart):

   a. The true Christian “worships by the Spirit of God.” Jesus had said, “But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:23). Those who seek to serve Jehovah God by His authority alone are marked as true worshippers (i.e., those who have circumcised the heart rather than the literal flesh). The words “Spirit of God” is a term synonymous with the Holy Spirit and used in metonymy with the truths of the Gospel. Let us remember that what is said of one part of the Godhead is to be said of all (cf. Col. 2:9). The point is that if Christ’s name is used in metonymy of truth then so is the Holy Spirit (cf. Col. 2:25-27; 3:8).

   b. The true Christian “glories in Christ Jesus.” The faithful child of God will not be “vainglorious” (Jn. 12:43; Phil. 2:3) preaching fleshly doctrines of men (Matt. 15:1-9; II Cor. 2:17) but rather will look to the authority of Jesus Christ and thereby give and bring Him glory in their lives rather than seeking it for their self (Jn. 15:7-10; Gal. 5:22-24).

   c. The true Christian “has no confidence in the flesh.” The word “confidence” (peitho) = “to prevail upon, win over, persuade, to believe or trust in a person or thing” (LS 615). The “flesh” is often times examined in light of being the seat of sin (cf. Rom. 7:25). The fleshly side of man looks for gratification of self desires (Rom. 13:14). If my desire is to gratify my lust, as opposed to having a desire to please God, I am guided by my flesh rather than by the Holy Spirit (see study # 32; The Fleshly Man’s Heart). Paul said, “For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5). Those whose desire is the flesh can in no way please God (Rom. 8:6-9). Flesh and Spirit are thereby often analyzed in the Word of God as being opposed to one another (cf. II Cor. 1:12; Gal. 5:16). Jude said of false teachers, “Yet in like manner these also in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at dignities” (1:8). The overall message is that the Christian is to be governed by truth as opposed to having confidence (being persuaded or won over by) fleshly wisdom.

D. “though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more;” (3:4).

   1. Paul had used himself as an example to the Philippians as to how to handle persecution (Phil. 2:17) and now uses himself as an example of one who very well could have glored in the flesh as opposed to Christ.

   2. If ever one had all the opportunities to glory in the flesh it would have been Paul due to his background as a Jew.

E. “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee” (3:5).

   1. Paul was meeting his adversaries (the Judaizers) on their own ground. Paul sets out to prove that though one may have a grand background no achievement, on a fleshly level, can remove one sin. The first part of Paul’s being that could cause him to boast in the flesh was his circumcision. Paul was circumcised on the 8th day of his life like as the Mosaic Law had commanded (cf. Gen. 17:12ff; Lev. 12:3). Paul was a true Jew and one who was compliant with the Mosaic Law from his days of infancy (necessarily infers that Paul’s parents were faithful to the Mosaic Law) (see study # 33; Necessary Inference).

   2. Secondly, Paul states that he is “of the stock of Israel.” To be of the “stock” (genos) of Israel is to be of the “race, stock, family” (LS 162). Israel was the name given to Jacob at Genesis 32:24ff. Paul was a direct descendent of Jacob and thereby Abraham. The Jews took great pride in their ancestral forefather Abraham (cf. Jn. 8:39ff). Abraham was known as the friend of God (cf. James 2:23).

   3. Thirdly, Paul claims to be “of the tribe of Benjamin.” Benjamin was the son of Jacob by his favored wife Rachel. The tribe of Benjamin produced Israel’s first King; i.e., Saul (I Sam. 9:1ff). Benjamin was small yet very strong with Judah as the southern kingdom (I Sam. 9:21; I Kg. 12:21).
4. Fourthly, Paul states that he was a “Hebrew of Hebrews.” This likely has to do with his maintaining the Hebrew language (cf. Acts 21:40; 22:2). While many of Paul’s contemporaries had given over to the language of the day; i.e., Greek (not learning the language of their fathers), Paul maintained his native tongue. Paul’s upbringing was totally Jewish (cf. Acts 26:4-5).

5. Fifthly, Paul states, “as touching the law, a Pharisee.” Paul had been instructed by Gamaliel (a doctor of the Mosaic Law) (Acts 22:3). Paul was at one time recognized as a Pharisee (the separate). The Pharisees were a strict sect of the Jews who were known for their knowledge of not only the Mosaic Law but the Mishna as well (a set of oral traditions passed down from the fathers) (cf. Matt. 15:1ff) (see study # 6).

F. “as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless” (3:6).

1. From a purely Jewish standpoint Paul could have put his confidence in the flesh because of his ancestry, relation to the Law of Moses, and being a man of the law (i.e., a Pharisee). Furthermore, Paul could have confidence in the flesh in that he was so zealous for the Mosaic Law that he “persecuted the church.” Christianity was known by the Jews as “the way” (cf. Acts 9:1ff). The way set out to abrogate the Mosaic Law due to its inability to forgive man of their sins (cf. Heb. 7:18-19). Such a movement was offensive to the Jews (Acts 9:1ff) even though the Law itself foretold of said event (cf. Jer. 31:31ff).

2. Paul further states, “as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.” The right ways of the Mosaic Law was to follow all its ordinances (cf. Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10). Paul is not claiming infallibility but rather he is simply making the point that to the best of his abilities he followed the Mosaic Law so that no man could say otherwise.

G. “Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ” (3:7).

1. Paul’s perceived gain (i.e., his ancestry, training, zeal for the law, etc.) actually turned out to be a “loss” (zemia) (for Christ) = “loss, damage, a penalty, fine, a mere good for nothing, a dead loss” (LS 344).

2. Apparently Paul is saying that all that which SEEMS to be great and godly actually turned out to be worthless in relation to receiving the forgiveness of one’s sins through Christ. Those Jews who currently have the zeal and pedigree that Paul once owned are loosing out on the grace of God (i.e., the forgiveness of their sins [cf. Eph. 1:7]).

H. “Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ” (3:8).

1. The “all things” that Paul considers “loss” (good for nothing) are all things which one may place their hope (confidence) in that do not remove sins.

2. Note that the “all things” of fleshly reasoning are put in contrast to “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.” The power of the gospel is that it saves men from the consequence of sin by revealing to man what they must do to receive the remission of sins (cf. Rom. 1:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Eph. 1:7 etc.). The “all things” (Mosaic Law, man’s fleshly religious ideas, etc.) can in no way remove one sin while the Law of Christ through His grace instructs man to receive the remission of sins (see study # 34; The Forgiveness of Sins).

3. When Paul became a Christian he cast the “all things” (the Mosaic Law and his fleshly wisdom) aside as though they were worthless and thereby “counted them but refuse” (skubalon) = “dung (the excrement of animals / manure), filth, refuse” (LS 735; Moulton 370). We know that the Mosaic Law is not in of itself “worthless” (cf. Rom. 3:31; 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; Gal. 3:19); however, in relation to removing sins indeed it has no power (cf. Heb. 7:18-19; 10:1ff).

4. When Paul cast off living in hope through the Mosaic system and put on the gospel message of Christ he “gained Christ” in that he received the forgiveness of his sins and thereby fellowship with Christ (Paul was in Christ / Gal. 3:27).

I. “And be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith:” (3:9).
1. The idea of seeking righteousness by any means other than Christ is recognized as “mine own” as opposed to righteousness through Christ. Paul has referred to such efforts as “confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3). The contrast between the “knowledge of Christ” (Phil. 3:8) and “confidence in the flesh” thereby continues (see study # 34).

2. True righteousness (a state of being clean and right before the eyes of Jehovah God) can only be found “through faith in Christ.”

3. This helps us to see that just because one says they believe in Christ (the Jews certainly believed in the coming of the Messiah) does not mean that such are entitled to the forgiveness of sins. There is only one faith delivered by the Spirit through the apostles and prophets (cf. Eph. 3:5; 4:1ff). Any faith apart from the one truth (standard of God) is truly worthless in relation to removing one’s sins. Can one find God’s gracious offer of forgiveness in the Baptists, Methodists, Catholic, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Pentecostal, or Islamic churches? No. Such do not teach the terms of salvation through Christ and thereby their faiths are as dung (worthless). True righteousness can only be found “from God by faith.”

4. Note that Paul continues the idea of “gaining Christ” by saying, “And be found in him.” Without the verse divisions the sentence reads, “...that I may gain Christ, and be found in him...” so that gaining Christ equals being found in him. Paul gives 7 ways to be found in Christ (see study # 1). First, “not having a righteousness of mine own” will help one get into Christ. Secondly, it is “through faith in Christ” that one gains Christ and found in Him.

J. “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death;” (3:10).

1. Paul identifies what it means to be “found in Christ” (cf. 3:9a). To be found in Christ is to reject self deluded religious ideology (cf. II Cor. 1:12; 2:17) and accept the teachings of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil. 3:9; I Jn. 2:4-5).

2. Furthermore, Paul states that being “found in Christ” means that:
   a. The third way that one may be “found in Christ” is that “I may know him.” To know Christ is to keep God’s commandments. The apostle John said, “He that saith, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (I Jn. 2:4). How can I keep God’s commandments if I have no clue as to His revelation? (II Tim. 2:15)
   b. Fourthly, to be “found in Christ” is to know “the power of his resurrection.” The power of Christ revelation is that it illustrates God’s power to forgive mankind of their sins (Rom. 1:4) (see study # 34). Jesus predicted his resurrection at John 2:19, it occurred as witnessed by many (cf. I Cor. 15:3-8), and thereby God has the power to forgive mankind of their sins (cf. Acts 2:32, 38). These facts are the gist of Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians at Ephesians 1:15-20.
   c. Fifthly, to be “found in Christ” is to experience the “fellowship of his sufferings.” This point seems to be the thread that connects Philippians chapter 1, 2, and 3. At chapter one Paul states that suffering on behalf of Christ was “granted” by God to all Christians (Phil. 1:29). Chapter two reveals the method one may overcome suffering at the hands of wicked men (i.e., by having the mind of Christ) (Phil. 2:1-5). Now at chapter three, Paul has revealed that salvation is in nothing other than the teachings of Jesus Christ. When I hold to said teachings I will expose the sins of others and thereby suffer as did Christ (cf. Jn. 7:7). When I live in such a way that I suffer for doing that which is right I have been “found in Christ” because I “fellowship his sufferings.” Such is the lot for the Christian life (cf. Acts 14:22; I Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 3:12) (see study # 17). That which causes us to continue forward in relation to said suffering is that “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward” (Rom. 8:18; cf. II Cor. 4:16ff). The Christian thereby fellowships Jesus’ suffering in many ways. We may find ourselves as an outcast at work or school because our language and way of life condemn others. We do not drink alcohol, curse, fornicate, unlawfully party, etc., the world sees our sanctification, and at the same time they are convicted of their wrong. We can suffer by simply living the Christian life. The stronger we get in the faith the more
outspoken we will become against sin and thereby the harsher our suffering at the hands of the world.

d. **Sixthly**, to be “found in Christ” is to be “conformed unto his death.” To be “conformed” to the death of Christ is to live as Christ lived to the point of death. Christ was separate from sin (Heb. 4:15) and so must the Christian be (Matt. 5:48). We thereby kill the old man of sinful interests in our lives continuously (cf. Rom. 6:1-7; 8:1-11, 29; Gal. 2:20; 6:14; Col. 3:1-4) (See study # 35; Conformed to the Image of Christ). The more we share in the suffering of Christ through godly living the more we are conformed to His life and death. Paul said that he was, “pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh” (II Cor. 4:9-11) (see study # 35). The more knowledge of Christ I gain the more like Him I become (cf. I Jn. 2:6). I will handle my sufferings like Christ. I will speak like Christ. I will react to certain situations like Christ. I will be found in places that glorify Christ. I will have “the mind of Christ” (Phil. 2:5).

K. “if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead” (3:11).

1. **Seventh**, to be “found in Christ” (Phil. 3:9) is to “attain unto the resurrection from the dead.”

2. There will be a general resurrection of both just and unjust (cf. Jn. 5:27-29; Acts 24:15). The resurrection under consideration is the glorious resurrection of the saints of God that will go home to be with Him into eternity (see context following) (I Thess. 4:13ff) (see study # 36; The Resurrection of the Dead).

3. The word “attain” (katantao) = “to come to, arrive at, to reach, attain” (Moulton 218). We know that Paul’s interest is not being resurrected to eternal torment but rather to eternal bliss. If Paul is “found in Christ” he will be resurrected to an eternal life of bliss with the heavenly Father.

4. Now that all seven ways to be “found in Christ” are given, let us note what else Paul has said about being found “in Christ.” Remember, the context illustrates the fact that “confidence in the flesh” and looking for righteousness in your “own” thinking will never remove one sin or cause one to be “in Christ.” One “gains Christ” when receiving the forgiveness of sins. The NT reveals baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be the answer to receiving the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 28:18ff; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) (see study # 34). Note that the apostle Paul tells the Galatians that baptism moves one “into Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Clearly one gets into Christ through baptism for the forgiveness of sins (see study # 1). One remains in Christ by repentance and humbly asking the Lord for forgiveness so that in the end he / she may be “found in Christ.”

L. “Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus” (3:12).

1. Paul has not “obtained” unto the resurrection of the dead and eternal heavenly bliss. Paul has not attained “perfect” status. What Paul has is the forgiveness of his sins through Christ and a true hope of heaven but he has not “obtained” eternal “perfection.” The idea of “perfection” here is in relation to one’s sins and relationship with Christ. To be “perfect” (teleioo) = “to make perfect, complete: accomplish... of persons, to bring one to perfection” (LS 797). Man can only be complete when he has accomplished this life. When I die my life is finished. How will Christ then “find me?” Paul’s prayer is to be “found in Christ” through the forgiveness of sins. Obtaining perfection is equated to attaining unto the resurrection of the dead! (see study # 36). The word “perfect” is placed in “perfect tense” (Friberg 608) (a verb form expressing action completed prior to a fixed point of reference in time). So Paul states that his perfection has not occurred before its heavenly time.

2. While we are in the flesh we wage war with Satan and sometimes loose (i.e., we sin and loose our perfection) (cf. Rom. 7:20). We regain our perfection through prayer (humbly asking Him to forgive) (cf. Acts 8:22; Jn. 1:9-10). The task at hand, while among the living, is to continue to “press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ
Jesus” (i.e., perfection / an existence without sin). While Satan is in the world I will continue to wage war against him (Eph. 6:10ff). I will win some battles and lose some (I Jn. 1:9-10). The effort itself of maintaining my perfection through Christ is the “pressing” so that I might be “found in Christ” (i.e., having my sins forgiven and perfect in His sight). To “press” (dioko) = “to pursue an object, seek after, to follow or wait for the event... to gallop, speed, run” (LS 207) (See study # 37; Quitting is not an Option).

M. “Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (3:13-14).

1. That which Paul has not yet “laid hold” of is “attaining the resurrection of the dead” (3:11) which he terms “obtaining perfection” (3:12). Until the time of his death and judgment, Paul must do as we all must do; i.e., “forget the things that are behind us and stretch forward to the things ahead” (i.e., “the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” [attaining the heavenly resurrection of the dead]).

2. It is the “goal” of every Christian to attain heavenly perfection; however, until that time comes we must continue to “pursue” (press) that objective (see study # 37).

3. These verses help us understand that one does not obey the gospel, gain the forgiveness of sins, and then sit back doing nothing (cf. Rev. 2:10). Satan is not sitting back doing nothing (cf. I Pet. 5:8). We will sin from time to time and therefore we must continue to pursue our goal of heaven with humility, repentance, and forgiveness of sins (cf. Ps. 51 all and Isa. 57:15).

4. God “calls” all into the gates of heaven who would so desire to live through the gospel message (cf. II Thess. 2:13; II Pet. 3:9).

N. “Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall God reveal unto you;” (3:15).

1. To be “thus minded” is to have the mind of pressing and pursuing the goal of attaining unto the resurrection of the dead (i.e., the prize of the high calling of God) (heaven). The one who is “thus minded” is termed “perfect” (teleios) by Paul. Teleios equals “having reached its end, finished, complete... of persons, absolute, complete, accomplished, perfect in his or its kind” (LS 797). “Fully accomplished in Christian enlightenment” (Moulton 400). The same word is translated “fullgrown” at I Cor. 2:6 and “perfect” at Colossians 1:28. The word is an adjective that describes the “thus minded” Christian (Friberg 608). Said one is pressing to attain heaven. Anyone who is “thus minded” is considered perfect. Paul tells the Colossians, “whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ; whereunto I labor also, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily” (Col. 1:28-29) (see study # 23 and # 37). Clearly it is to be the objective of every Christian to make it to heaven. Such a “goal” is revealed in the “high calling of God” (i.e., the gospel message). I am perfect when my goal is heaven and I seek to keep myself “in Christ” by having the forgiveness of my sins. When I sin, I take care of it with God to continue to press into heaven (cf. I Jn. 1:9-10). While I am in the flesh, no matter what level of knowledge I may attain in Christ, I have not met my end goal of attaining unto the resurrection of the dead. This being so, no matter who I am, I must continue to press. Bible perfection is a state of mind (Heb. 5:14-6:1), having one’s sins remitted (Matt. 5:48; Heb. 7:18-19; 10:1ff; I Pet. 1:15-16), and the future of all faithful saints (Phil. 3:12). The perfection of the saint encompasses all that one is now and will be in the future. If my future goal is glorious perfection then it must needs be a part of my now life.

2. If there are brethren who do not see the need to press then Paul is certainly confident that through time it will be made known to them and accepted.

O. “only, whereunto we have attained, by that same rule let us walk” (3:16).

1. What have we “attained?” The context demands that our “attaining” is in the realm of spiritual growth in the “high calling of God.”

2. Said “attaining” is deemed a “rule” that Christians are to “walk” after (cf. Eph. 4:1).

3. Paul is not condoning the “ignorant is bliss” ideology (i.e., the idea that we are not responsible for areas of ignorance) but rather commending the Philippians for attaining faith in Jesus Christ
and encouraging them to continued spiritual growth. Those who are “perfect” will certainly do so knowing that heaven is at stake.

II. The righteous have citizenship in heaven whereas the wicked are destined to perdition (3:17-21):

A. “Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an example” (3:17).

1. Christians today, as in earlier days, need to recognize the binding authority of the examples set forth by the apostles. Paul had told the Corinthian brethren, “... the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord” (I Cor. 14:37). The apostles teaching was inspired of God and given by direct revelation (cf. Gal. 1:11-12). Having direct revelation authorized these men to “command” brethren to do things in the name of the Lord (cf. II Thess. 3:6). Not only did the apostles represent truth in word but they too represented that truth in their actions. Paul could thereby say, “The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you” (Phil. 4:9) (see study # 38; Bible Authority / Apostolic Example).

2. Paul admonishes the Philippians to not only imitate him but to also “mark them who so walk.” To “mark” (skopeo) one is to “look at or after a thing: to behold, contemplate... to look out, watch, to look to, consider, examine...” (LS 735). The context of chapter 3 suggests that Paul is saying that the Philippians, though suffering persecution, should look to Jesus, Paul, and anyone who is continuing steadfastly in the faith with the high prize of God as their goal. The observance of others who are strong in the faith can make those of us who are weaker able to endure (see study # 39; Influence).

B. “For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:” (3:18).

1. The “walk” of faithful Christians is likened unto Christ and the apostles. Attaining unto the resurrection of the dead, the high prize of God, and the idea of a heavenly home is dependant upon one’s position to truth. When I walk in truth, grow in truth, and speak truth I am “walking” as God would have me.

2. Unfortunately, “many” do not so walk. Apparently Paul had “often” spoke with the Philippians about those who did not represent the truth (reminds us of Acts 20:31). Preaching in Paul’s day was filled with warnings to the faithful brethren in regards to false teachers and their work (see study # 25). Once again Paul brings up the subject of false teachers and this time with “weeping” in his being.

3. The book of Philippians has indicated that various doctrines had threatened the unity of the Philippian church (cf. Phil. 1:9-11, 27, 2:2-3) and that those who stood opposed to these false teachers were being persecuted (Phil. 1:29; 3:10).

4. False teachers whose teaching and manner of life will never see them or their followers into heaven are depicted as, “enemies of the cross Christ:” (see study # 9 and # 16). The cross of Christ represents the blood of Christ that was spilled out for the remission of man’s sins (cf. Col. 1:19-22; Heb. 9:22). Any teaching that does not represent truth has no power to forgive sins. When one teaches a doctrine that does not represent truth he “hath not God” (II Jn. 9) and represents the spirit of the “sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2) or “son of perdition” and “sets himself forth as God” in that he makes up his own doctrines (II Thess. 2:3-4).

C. “whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things” (3:19).

1. Four character traits of “the enemies of the cross” are given (see study # 9). First, the end of all things for the “enemies of the cross of Christ” is “perdition” (apoleia) = “destruction” (LS 113). “Eternal ruin” (Moulton 45). “Eternal destruction as punishment for the wicked” (AG 103). Note that the life of the enemies of the cross leads to eternal spiritual death while the life of the faithful child of God who “gains Christ and is found in Him” (3:8-9) is the “prize” of eternal bliss in heaven (Phil. 3:14). These men and women are termed “adversaries” at Philippians 1:28.
2. **Secondly**, the “enemies of the cross” set forth the “belly” as their god. This idea may be difficult to interpret were it not for Paul’s similar remarks to the Romans. Paul said, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent” (Rom. 16:17-18). Clearly to serve the belly as god are those who cause divisions and brethren to stumble from truth with their false doctrines. False teachers are under consideration here. With smooth speech they gain followers to their dastardly ways. Said brethren are factious and pose a threat to the unity of the body of Christ because they seek to be followed at the expense of truth. Those who follow them are simple minded and feed the egos of the erring teachers (cf. Phil. 2:3). Fleshy wisdom governs said individuals as opposed to truth (cf. Col. 2:18).

3. **Thirdly**, the “enemies of the cross” “glory in their shame.” The word “glory” was used at Philippians 3:3 to indicate an area that one places their trust or confidence. Rather than trusting in unadulterated soul saving truth these teachers put their trust in shameful things. Things which are shameful are things that do not represent godly living and truth (cf. II Cor. 4:2; Eph. 5:12). Again, fleshy wisdom (a “righteousness of mine own” [Phil. 3:9]) seems to be set in contrast to “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:8).

4. **Fourthly**, the “enemies of the cross” “mind earthly things.” To “mind” (phroneo) = “to think, to have understanding, to be sage, wise, prudent... to be minded in a certain way, to mean, intend, purpose... to have a thing in one’s mind, mind, take heed to a thing” (LS 872). Interestingly, Paul states, “Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth” (Col. 3:2). The things of the “earth” are defined at Colossians 3:5ff. False teachers are looking more to the things of this world and how they can have earthly benefits, such as gaining a following, rather than holding to truth.

D. “For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (3:20).

1. The word “heaven” is finally used and is in connection with “attaining the resurrection from the dead” (3:11), being “made perfect” (3:12), and the “prize of the high calling of God” (3:14). True citizens of the kingdom of God, His church, will represent truth in all its purity (cf. Eph. 2:19ff; Col. 1:13; I Thess. 2:12) and finally reach their goal of the eternal kingdom of God; i.e., heaven (see study # 36).

2. Until Christ comes again; however, the faithful continue to “wait” in a faithful manner all the while pressing along through the trials and sufferings of this earth (see Isaiah on “waiting on the Lord”) (cf. I Thess. 4:13-18).

E. “who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself” (Phil 3:21).

1. When the faithful “attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (3:11), Christ “shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation” (see study # 36).
   a. To “fashion anew” (metaschematizo) = “to change the form of a person or thing” (LS 504). Apparently when Christ comes again to bring home the saints into the glories of heaven He will change the form of the “body of our humiliation.” This body of humiliation is an earthly body that is subject to death and decay (cf. I Cor. 15:42-54).
   b. The change that shall take place in the resurrected body is that it will go from a state of corruption and mortality to incorruption and immortality (cf. I Cor. 15:53). At this point, our bodies will be like that of Christ’s glorious state (cf. I Jn. 3:2).

2. Said metamorphosis of our resurrected bodies will occur “according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.” As Christ will in the end have all things, including death, in subjection to Him even so He shall with power resurrect the dead and change their bodies.
Synopsis of chapter 3

Factions and church divisions threatened the faithful in Philippi due to the work of men who are guided by fleshly wisdom (cf. Phil. 1:27-28; 2:3; 3:2, 17-19). Those who stood upon the principles of truth in Jesus Christ were “granted” to suffer in behalf of Christ (Phil. 1:29). Paul encourages the brethren to exercise the “mind of Christ” during these sufferings that all will be well (Phil. 2:5). No doctrine of the “flesh” (Phil. 3:3) or the seeking of a “righteousness of mine own” (Phil. 3:9) would ever remove one sin, save one soul, or cause one to be “found in Christ” (Phil. 3:9) when Jesus comes again to fashion anew our earthly bodies to a heavenly state (Phil. 3:21). Those who “mind earthly things” (Phil. 3:19) are a threat to the unity and eternity of the members of the church (Phil. 3:17-19). Paul’s admonition is to thereby warn the Philippians against following such teachers of fleshly wisdom (Phil. 3:2, 18). Secondly, Paul encourages the faithful to continue to give effort in knowing, keeping, and perfecting oneself in the purity of truth (Phil. 3:10). There will be times of great suffering (Phil. 3:10); however, as I continue to press forward with heaven in my sight I can certainly overcome any such obstacles (cf. Rom. 8:18). Suffering is not only “granted” (Phil. 1:29) but the Christian’s “appointment” (I Thess. 3:12) and guarantee of entrance into heaven (Acts 14:22; II Tim. 3:12) (see study # 17). Saints have Christ (Phil. 2:1-5), the apostles (Phil. 2:16-18; 3:17), and other faithful Christians (Phil. 3:17) as examples to look to in times of persecution.

Chapter 4

I. Paul admonishes the Philippians to maintain their unity in Christ (4:1-3):

A. “Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved” (4:1).

1. Paul’s love for the Philippians has been brought out in this study. He was very thankful to God that the Philippians shared with him in teaching, defending, and confirming truth (Phil. 1:3-7). Paul states, “For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:8). Paul was concerned about the emotional and spiritual well being of the Philippians as they faced the onslaught of false teaching and persecution that threatened their unity and eternal heavenly abode (Phil. 1:27-29; 2:2, 15; 3:2, 18) (see study # 6).

2. The Philippians were Paul’s “joy and crown” in that he had taught them the gospel and earnestly desired to see them reach the end of their faith; i.e., a heavenly home. Philippians 2:16 is a commentary on this verse. Paul states, “holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain.” With the context looking to heaven, Paul’s earnest desire was that the Philippians would hold on to their faith until the end when Christ would come again and their bodies would be “fashioned anew” (Phil. 3:20-21).

3. To reach this goal and prize of God which is heaven the saints would need to “stand fast in the Lord.”

a. To “stand fast” (steko) = “to stand firm, be constant, persevere” (Moulton 204). Paul admonishes the Philippians to stand firm and persevere in time of persecution (Phil. 1:29; 3:10), false teaching (Phil. 3:2, 18), and evil influences (Phil. 2:15).

b. To persevere in the face of persecution, false teaching, and evil influences the Christians would need to be constant “in the Lord.” Interestingly, Paul had told the Philippians that gaining Christ and being found “in him” would come by seeking after righteousness through Christ rather than fleshly wisdom, sharing in the sufferings of Christ, and being conformed unto His death (cf. Phil. 3:3-11). As I emulate the life of Christ I am in Him through the forgiveness of sins and a righteousness revealed in the gospel message (cf. Gal. 3:27; Phil. 3:8-9). Paul is clearly admonishing the Philippians to keep reaching after the goal of heaven by remaining “in Christ” at all points of life (i.e., the perfection of the saint is a constant in life). My actions must be based on the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17). My teaching must parallel truth (II Jn. 9). I must keep myself purified from the defilements of the flesh (i.e., sin) (cf. I Jn. 1:9-10).
B. “I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord” (4:2).
1. To “exhort” (parakaleo) = “to call to aid, call in, send for, to call on, invoke... to call to, exhort, cheer, encourage...” (LS 597). Paul is calling upon, encouraging, and invoking both Euodia and Syntyche to be of the “same mind in the Lord.”
2. Euodia and Syntyche were women in the church at Philippi (cf. Phil. 4:3). Paul has spent much efforts in this epistle to have the Philippians at one mind in the faith of the gospel so that divisions and loss of souls did not occur through the work of false teachers and persecutors (cf. Phil. 1:27; 2:2).
3. Here is further identity of what being “of the same mind in the Lord” is all about. When I share a common goal of heaven with others all will seek to have their actions based on the authority of God (Col. 3:17), teaching nothing but truth (II Jn. 9), avoiding confidence in fleshly wisdom (Phil. 3:3, 9), and keeping oneself unspotted from the world (I Jn. 1:9-10). The Christian’s goal is eternal perfection and glory with Christ. When the saints have this goal they will be “of the same mind in the Lord” (see study # 14).

C. “Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life” (4:3).
1. Paul addresses an unidentified specific individual here. Paul addressed this letter to the Philippians Christians (cf. Phil. 1:1). There was one specific individual; however, that Paul knew would be reading and ministering this letter out to the brethren. Again, we are not told who this individual is (an elder, deacon, preacher, one of Paul’s traveling companions??).  
2. The only identity of this individual is that he was Paul’s true “yokefellow” (suzugos) = “paired, a comrade” (LS 757). As two farm animals would be yoked together pulling for a common cause so preaching men can be yoked together by the truth pulling for a common cause (i.e., the souls of men) (see study # 5).
3. Paul’s admonition to this individual is that he help these two women who are having a problem. Euodia and Syntyche apparently had a fall out between each other over some matter that threatened not only their being one in Christ but could too affect the church as a whole (some would side with one of the two causing a division).
4. Paul’s objective is to straighten the matter out. These women “labored with me in the gospel.” Women too shared in teaching, suffering for the cause of Christ, and being subject to evil influences (see study # 41; Bible Women). Clement is another name that we know nothing about other than the fact that he / she labored with Paul in the spreading of the gospel message. Paul reminds his unidentified yokefellow that these women are comparable to other coworkers in the faith whose “names are in the book of life.” What is the “book of life?”
   a. The phrase “book of life” occurs seven times in the New Testament (NT). All but one (Phil. 4:3) are found in the book of Revelation.
   b. The book seems to be a registry of individuals who have had their sins forgiven (cf. Ps. 69:28; Mal. 3:16; Rev. 20:12-15).
   c. Exodus 32:32-34 indicates that one’s name may be blotted out when found in sin or written again, through repentance and forgiveness, in the book of life.

II. True Peace in Christ Jesus (4:4-9):
A. “Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice” (4:4).
1. Having a proper perspective of the trials, persecutions, and suffering that are a part of one’s life will bring joy. Our perception of life ought to be that we are simply citizens of God’s kingdom awaiting with faithful patience our eternal kingdom. Until our time of eternity comes there will be many bumps and bruises yet none are so severe as to remove our joy of heavenly thoughts.
2. Our rejoicing thereby is “in the Lord” for it is through Him that all heavenly goals and prizes are made possible.

B. “Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand” (4:5).
1. “Forbearance” (epieikes) = “in moral sense, reasonable, fair, kind, gentle, good...” (LS 291). Though the ungodly of the world would bring suffering (Phil. 1:29; 3:10) and causes of warning
(Phil. 3:2) the righteous are to be fair, kind, gentle, and good. The Christian’s forbearance is not only among other Christians but “unto all men” (see study # 12).

2. The reason for said forbearance is states as “the Lord is at hand.” Whether this means that Christ is omnipresent or Christ’s second coming and judgment we are not told. Nonetheless, we ought to consider Christ’s omnipresent state when tempted to cause others pain and suffering.

We too should take into consideration the second coming and final judgment of mankind.

C. “In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (4:6).

1. To be “anxious” (merimnao) = “to care for, be anxious about, think earnestly upon, scan minutely... to be cumbered with many cares” (LS 499). Again, this verse helps us to see that my priorities must be straight in life. My life is not about the THINGS I have but rather maintaining my state of perfection before the Lord with heaven in my sights.

2. The predominant NT passage that comes to mind when contemplating said thoughts is Jesus’ words on the Sermon on the Mount (cf. Matt. 6:25-34).

3. We are to “pray” (proseuche) = “to offer prayers or vows, to address him in prayer... to offer prayers, to worship... to pray for a thing” (LS 690). We are to offer “supplication” (deesis) = “an entreating, asking: a prayer, entreaty” (LS 175). These two words; i.e., pray and supplication, are very similar and illustrate the communication that exists between the saint of God and the Lord. Christians are to make request, regarding the physical and spiritual life, to God who hears and knows all things (cf. Matt. 6:8; I Pet. 5:7) (see study # 42).

D. “And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus” (4:7).

1. The Lord is the “God of peace” (Phil. 4:9) that reconciles sinful man to Him through the blood of Christ (cf. Col. 1:20-22; Heb. 9:22). When the Christian’s priorities are spiritual they will have little anxiety over things of this world. The peace offered by God thereby is twofold. I can have peace of mind knowing that my sins are forgiven and that as long as I strive for Bible perfection (i.e., heaven) I will not be disappointed. Secondly, I can have peace of mind in relation to earthly needs for God will take care of me as He sees fit.

2. God’s peace “passes all understanding.” This does not say that one cannot understand all God has revealed to mankind that peace may be obtained (cf. Eph. 5:17). Simply put, Paul tells us that our mortal minds cannot fathom just how great God’s care and peace is for His created beings. All has not been revealed in this matter (Deut. 29:29). Truly God’s care for me is not fully understood when I sin against His laws yet He continues to forgive me as I asks.

3. The Christian’s mind (hearts and thoughts) are guarded by God’s peace when our perspective of life is correct (i.e., when I press for my future glorious perfection in the here and now). Note that Paul repeatedly mentions the Christian’s state with being “in the Lord,” “in Christ Jesus,” or “in him” (1:14; 2:19, 24, 29; 3:1, 3, 9, 14; 4:1, 2, 4, 7; 4:21). Clearly, the term indicates one’s state of being in relationship to the Lord’s authorized words (Col. 3:17).

E. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (4:8).

1. Paul encourages the Philippians to “think on six things.” The word “think” (logizomai) = “to count reckon, calculate, compute... without reference to numbers: to take into account, calculate, consider... to count, deem, consider that... to conclude by reasoning, infer that a thing is...” (LS 476). “To think upon or ponder” (Moulton 249).

2. It would be easy for the Philippians to ponder or consider their suffering (Phil. 1:29), evil influences (Phil. 2:15), dogs and evil workers (Phil. 3:2), and present problems revolving around their unity (Phil. 4:2-3). Paul encourages the Philippians to rather thing about:

a. First, let the Christian think on things that are “true” (alethes) = “unconcealed, true... reality” (LS 34). This Greek word is found several times in the NT. Its meanings vary from speaking of things that are correct as opposed to false, truth as opposed to a lie, and it is used to signify the reality of things such as God and miracles. The Christian’s mind
should ponder upon the reality of God and His truth. Heaven is real and God’s truths reveal it so!

b. **Secondly,** let the Christian ponder upon “honorable” things. The word “honorable” (semnos) = “revered, august, holy, awful... of things divine” (LS 726). The Christian’s mind is to ponder the great “revered, august, holy, and awful” name of Jehovah God. To have a mind filled with thoughts of God is to have a mind or spirit of truth (cf. Jn. 4:1-6).

c. **Thirdly,** the Philippians are encouraged to ponder upon “just” things. The word “just” (dikaios) = “regular, exact, rigid... to speak quite exactly... right, lawful, just... real, genuine, true” (LS 202). The word “just” (exact, rigid, right, lawful, just, true) infers a standard by which men are so measured. The standard is revealed in the NT to be the word of God (cf. Rom. 7:12). The word “just” often represents the state of the Christian in relationship to the standard of God’s word (cf. Rom. 5:19; Heb. 12:23). Sin can cause one to be recognized as unjust (unrighteous) and thereby the true just shall live by faith (cf. Heb. 10:38).

d. **Fourthly,** Paul encourages the Philippian brethren to think and ponder upon thoughts that are “pure.” “Pure” (hagnos) thoughts are “chaste, pure... of persons: undefiled, chaste, pure... pure from blood, guiltless... pure upright” (LS 7). My mind should ponder thoughts that represent the standard of truth as opposed to thinking upon those things that affront truth (i.e., theft, adultery, fornication, murder, envy, etc.).

e. **Fifthly,** the Philippians are encouraged to think upon things that are “lovely.” “Lovely” (prosphiles) thoughts are “dear, beloved... of things: pleasing, agreeable, grateful, dear... of persons: kindly affection(ed), grateful, well disposed” (LS 699). This is the only place in the NT that this word is found. Certainly the Christian is to think thoughts that are kind, grateful, and have a godly demeanor.

f. **Sixth,** Paul encourages the brethren to ponder upon things of a “good report” (euphemos) = “uttering sounds of good omen, or abstaining from inauspicious words, i.e. religiously silent... uttering words of religious thought, i.e. keeping a holy silence... in positive sense: auspicious (favorable or successful) ... with or in words of good omen” (LS 335). It seems to me that Paul’s thought here is that words or doctrines that do not save are not to be pondered upon. The teaching of Christ is the only set of instructions that lead one to the forgiveness of their sins. Let us think on these words for they alone will succeed in saving man’s soul.

3. Paul summarizes the six virtues listed above with the words “virtue” and “praise.”

a. The attributes of a Christian are to be “virtuous” (arête) = “virtue (moral excellence and righteousness; goodness), uprightness” (Moulton 50).

b. The attributes of a Christian are to be of “praise” (epainos) = “approval, praise, commendation” (LS 278). “Praise, applause, honor paid, ground or reason of praise or commendation... approval” (Moulton 149).

4. The six virtues listed in Philippians 4:8 illustrate the Christian’s moral excellence and approved state before God (see study # 43; Six Christian Virtues).

F. **“The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you”** (4:9).

1. The Nestle and Marshall text reads, “these things consider ye; which both things ye learned and received...” (NM 787). It seems apparent that there is a connection between the thoughts of verse 8 and 9. Paul is encouraging the Philippians to make the six virtues of moral excellence a part of their lives. When Paul was in the presence of the Philippians he so behaved himself and thereby serves as an example to them.

2. Paul taught truth, exercised reverence toward God, stood without condemnation in the presence of God, one whose thoughts were pure, he displayed affection and gratefulness toward men, and relied upon the one truth that will save men’s souls. The Philippians “learned, received, heard, and saw” these virtues in Paul and so are encouraged to make them a part of their lives.

3. The entire thought seems to be best summarized in that Paul respected God’s authority and lived in such a way to prove that love. Paul thereby serves as an example that Christians should follow (see study # 38).
III. Paul expresses his gratefulness toward the Philippians for their generous and well thought out gift (4:10-20):

A. “But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity” (4:10).

1. This thought is closely associated with Philippians 2:30 where Paul commends Epaphroditus for bringing the much needed monetary relief to Paul and states, “because for the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.” Paul, as an evangelists, had needs that were to be met by other brethren if the work of evangelizing was to continue. The apostle now explains that he understands the “lacking in service” on the part of the Philippians was not due to any uncaring spirit but rather they “lacked opportunity.” Apparently the Philippians would have sent relief to Paul sooner; however, they may not have had the funds or a messenger to send the funds to Paul. Here, Paul is careful to let them know that he understands this.

2. Receiving funds for the work of an evangelist was a touchy subject in these early days of the church as it is in many churches today. Some of the Corinthian brethren had accused Paul of preaching only for money (II Cor. 11:7-10). Others claimed Paul was trying to scam the brotherhood for funds when he set out to collect monies for the needy saints in Jerusalem (cf. II Cor. 12:16-18). This may have been a general idea that Paul had to continually fight throughout Macedonia (cf. I Thess. 2:2:5) (see study # 11).

3. Paul is thereby thanking the Philippians for the support that they have sent.

B. “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content” (4:11).

1. The word “want” is the exact same word that was found at Philippians 2:30 translated “lacking” and defined there as a “deficiency.” This seems difficult to interpret. Paul has commended the Philippians for meeting an apparent need (cf. Phil. 2:30; 4:10) yet now states that he does not say these things because of any deficiency, want, or need on his part. The interpretation seems likely that Paul is saying that he does have needs; however, it is not having the needs themselves met that gives him contentment in life. His joy comes in knowing that brethren truly did care for him (cf. Phil. 4:10). Paul’s “contentment” came not in the monetary gift but in the knowledge that heaven was his if he would but meet God’s standards (cf. Phil. 3:1, 20-21; 4:1-5).

2. Man cannot experience true joy without “learning.” Paul had “learned” how to be content even though he faced intense persecution in his life. When I study God’s word and find that hardships and afflictions are the path to heaven then I will gladly accept them with contentment (Acts 14:22) (see study # 44; Things Christian’s Must Learn).

3. When my spiritual mind views true citizenship existing in heaven then the things of this life will fall into different categories in my mind (Phil. 3:20). I will not view hardships with such a state of anxiety but rather my mind will have the bend that “it really doesn’t matter and it will not last forever.”

C. “I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want” (4:12).

1. To be “abased” (tapeinoo) = “to lower... metaph.: to lessen... to disparage... to humble, abase... in moral sense, to make lowly, to humble... to humble oneself” (LS 792). To “abound” (perisseuo) = “to be over and above the number... to be more than enough, remain over...” (LS 632). Paul’s point is that from one spectrum to the next he continues to be content. It doesn’t matter if Paul is looked at by others as nothing because of what he is teaching or what he has he is content in times of being “abased.” Neither does it really matter to Paul if he has more than he needs in relation to good and descent treatment of others. The reason Paul can approach life with such a mind is that he is not emotionally attached to the world but rather emotionally, physically, and spiritually attached to Jesus Christ. Paul has LEARNED to be this way (see study # 44).

2. Not only did it not really matter to Paul whether he was treated scornfully or loved by men but it also did not matter to him if he was hungry or filled with food. Again, Paul was not
physically attached to this world. When you and I detach ourselves, to a certain degree, from the cares of this world we too can abound in times of want.

D. “I can do all things in him that strengthens me” (4:13).
1. The secret to Paul’s detaching self emotionally and physically from the lusts of the world is that his every true spiritual need is met in Christ.
2. Paul had earlier learned that it is through weaknesses in life that one grows in the strength of Christ (cf. II Cor. 12:7-10). When my faith has attained a level that my true and earnest belief is that heaven is my home then I will not be affected by the hardships of this life. The more wicked men may afflict me the greater in the strength of Christ I will be because I know that He will save me (cf. Exodus 1:12; II Cor. 11:21-30).

E. “Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my affliction” (4:14).
1. Paul had found himself in many precarious situations in life due to the message he preached. When the Philippians accepted the teachings of Paul as being the inspired word of God they too subjected themselves to persecution.
2. Paul commends them for their willingness to “fellowship” (share with Paul) in persecution for the truth’s sake. The Philippians had been taught that persecution for one’s stand in truth is “granted” to them by God (Phil. 1:29) and that they must participate therein to “gain Christ and to be found in Him” (Phil. 3:8-10) (see study # 17).
3. We are never told specifically what the Philippians were suffering over yet the book lends evidence that they were suffering for their stand in truth as was Paul.

F. “And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need” (4:15-16).
1. It was common knowledge among the Philippians that they were the only ones to support Paul while he traveled southward through Thessalonica, Athens, and Achaia (Acts 18:1ff). No wages were received from the Thessalonian brethren (cf. I Thess. 2:9; II Thess. 3:8). Paul did not receive wages from the Corinthian churches while working among them even though he had the right to do so. Paul said, “I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you; and when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself” (II Cor. 11:8-9),
2. Paul had traveled to Macedonia on his second tour of preaching around the year 51 AD. Said “beginnings” were the start of the gospel message being preached in Macedonia. After leaving Macedonia, Paul remained in Corinth for 1 ½ years preaching (cf. Acts 18:10) (AD 52 – 53). While here in Corinth, the brethren in Philippi supported him with wages.
3. Bible fellowship exists not only in a share in preaching the gospel (Phil. 1:5), but too for the love for truth and salvation (Phil. 1:7), in the sufferings of Christ (Phil. 3:10), sharing each other’s pain in times of affliction (Phil. 4:14), and sharing our wages with those who preach the gospel (Phil. 4:15) (see study # 5).

G. “Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account” (4:17).
1. This is an interesting statement. Not all of us go about preaching, teaching, edifying members of the body of Christ, and converting souls. Even though many of us may not be directly involved with this work we continue to have the fruits of this work put to our spiritual account when we fellowship those who do.
2. The Philippians fellowshipped Paul in preaching (Phil. 1:5), suffering (3:10), affliction (4:14), and wages (Phil. 4:15). Said fellowship with one who represents truth is put to our spiritual “account” (logos) = “The word or that by which the inward thought is expressed... the inward thought itself... account, consideration, esteem, regard... to make account of a person or thing... to give an account of a thing... comprising both senses of thought and word” (LS 477). The Philippians proved their real consideration for the souls of men by fellowshipping Paul in many areas (including wages).
3. Paul cared not about the wages themselves (though he needed them to continue his work) but he cared much about the mindset of brethren. When brethren fellowshipped the apostles in truth they displayed a mind of perfection that seeks to press on into heaven and bring many along with you.

H. “But I have all things, and abound: I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God” (1:18).
   1. Though Paul does not seek after said gifts and wages he nonetheless received them and is now consequently filled (i.e., he has all he needs).
   2. Epaphroditus, the Philippian’s messenger, has brought the gift of the Philippians and thereby have fellowshipped Paul in his work.
   3. Paul considers their gift, “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.”
      a. Christians do not make sacrifices as those of the OT did (i.e., sacrificing animals and burning their fat upon the altar of burnt offering). We do; however, make spiritual offerings to God when we do those things that are pleasing to him.
      b. The author of Hebrews writes, “Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name” (Heb. 13:15).
      c. Paul writes to the Ephesians saying, “Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell” (Eph. 5:1-2).

I. “And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (4:19).
   1. The Philippians had shared with the apostle Paul in spiritual things and Paul assures these good brethren that God will supply their every need.
   2. God is “rich” in mercy and grace (cf. Eph. 1:7). The real need for all of humanity is the forgiveness of sins. God has the power to remove every man’s sins if said one would subject himself to God’s laws (II Jn. 9).

J. “Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen” (4:20).
   1. Paul winds down his letter to the Philippians with a doxological statement of the glory of Jehovah God.
   2. God’s glory will exists for ever and ever and so Paul could glory in this fact about the Lord.

IV. Final Salutations (4:21-23):
   A. “Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren that are with me salute you. All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar’s household” (4:21-22).
      1. The word “salute” (aspazomai) = “to welcome kindly, bid welcome, greet... as the common form on meeting... to embrace, kiss, caress...” (LS 124). The apostle Paul “commended” many saints in Romans 16 and prefaced his commendation with the charge that other Christians “salute” these who were “in Christ Jesus.” No such greeting can be extended to those who do not have the same mind in Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 2:9; II Jn. 9-11). The boundaries for spiritual fellowship are thereby named to be “in Christ Jesus.” One not “in Christ Jesus” is not in Christian fellowship with those who are (see study # 5).
      2. The fact that Paul states, “the brethren that are with me salute you” indicates that Paul had commended the Philippians to them. There were brethren with Paul during his first imprisonment. Some of them would have been new converts others would be men who traveled with him such as Timothy (cf. Phil. 1:1).
      3. Some of these new converts were of “Caesar’s household.” Philippians 1:7 and this verse are the strongest proofs that this epistle was written during Paul’s Roman imprisonment mentioned at Acts 28:30-31.
   B. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit” (4:23).
      1. Paul’s great desire for the Philippians is that they would be recipients of God’s gracious gift of eternal salvation.
2. God’s gracious gift of salvation begins with the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7), received through the act of baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16), and maintained through humility of heart and faithful living (Isa. 57:15; Acts 8:22; 1 Jn. 1:9; Rev. 2:10).