

PHILIPPIANS

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Author, Date, Place of writing

The obvious writer of Philippians is the Apostle Paul. It was written in approx. 61 A.D. from Paul's home in Rome where he was under the constant attention of Roman guards. This accounts for Paul's referring to his being "in bonds." Paul was under house arrest in Rome, but in spite of this he was able to visit anyone who would visit and he was free to write letters and so on.

Purpose

The purpose of the epistle to the Philippians was sixfold;

1. To thank them for the gift they had given him upon hearing of his imprisonment.
2. To update them on his present circumstances.
3. To encourage them to press on in unity and faith, in spite of any opposition.
4. To commend Timothy and Epaphroditus to them as worthy men of God.
5. To assure them of God's triumph in and through Paul's imprisonment.
6. To warn the church of false teachers, and careless living.

V - 1:1 - Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:(NAS)

1. bondservants - 1401 *doulos* (doo'-los); *a willing slave having devotion to his master, a devoted servant.*

This term was often used of the apostles and portrays their absolute devotion to Christ in servitude. Willing to do the bidding of their master, and that with loving devotion.

2. saints in Christ Jesus - *gk. hagios* - meaning (most)holy, (one, thing) saint - We have been made holy by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and there is no distinction between each other in regard to who we are. We are all saints, because we are "in Christ Jesus." The meanest, the poorest and the least of gifts. We are all one on Christ Jesus, and in him we are "most holy", cleansed and sanctified in the sight of God.

Gal 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (NAS)

3. overseers and deacons - overseers, obviously different from deacons, those who oversee the flock. The same as an elder, bishop, shepherd or pastor(Acts 20:17-28, 1 Tim 3:2, Tit 1:7) Deacons, literally one who serves, a servant to the body

V-1:2-5 - Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.(NAS)

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1. This epistle is one of little correction to the church. It is one of encouragement and thanksgiving with joy as Paul recounts in his heart the believers at Philippi. Paul focuses on the real purpose of living, Jesus Christ, and the **joy** He offers in the midst of every circumstance in life. This is a letter of victory and strength through Jesus Christ. Paul portrays his affection and appreciation for this church and all of its people.

2. Paul was a changed man. Look at the difference between what Paul was before becoming a Christian, and what he is here in the letter. He went from a "blasphemer and a persecutor"(1 Tim 1:12-14), to tender loving care and concern for all the Christians. He was truly being sanctified in Christ Jesus.

V-1:6-8 - For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.(NAS)

1. Several things here.

a. Paul is confident of this.

b. God began the work.

c. It is a good work. The work of Grace is exceedingly good, and will make us good

d. God will perfect or complete the work He began.

gk. - epiteleo (to completely execute, to accomplish or finish)

e. It will be finished in the day of Jesus Christ.

f. Paul has deep affection for the Christians at Philippi.

2. Paul reassures the church of the fact that God is at work in their hearts, and that He(God) will ultimately complete the good work He had begun in them. God will bring to completion the goal of our salvation. We are in a process of "sanctification", or being made holy(Heb 10:14). And the One who saved us, is the One who will sanctify and also glorify us(Rom 8:30). This Paul says, "He is confident of." If the perseverance of the Christian depended wholly on himself, there could be no sure conviction that he would ever reach heaven. But we know that God is not only the author but the finisher of our faith, and of this we can be sure, there will be no lacking on His part in our being saved. We therefore should strive to see nothing lacking in our faith, that we may be found complete in Him.(Jude 24, John 10:27-29, 1 Peter 1:5, Jer 32:40, John 17:15, Rom 14:4, 2 Cor 1:21, Eph 1:13-14, Col 3:3-4, 1 Thes 5:23-24, 2 Tim 4:18, Heb 10:14, 1 John 5:4,11-13)

3. Here Paul is speaking of the great affection he has for the church. How he longed to have their fellowship and companionship. O how we need such a spirit of devotion in the modern church. If we could still our criticism and complaining long enough to enjoy one another, our faith would be much more fulfilling and God's love would abound in us more and more, to the praise of His glory.

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

1. Here Paul prays for the church. In this we see several things.

a. The mind of the apostle and God concerning the church.

b. Those things which are of importance concerning the spiritual well being of the church.

c. A model for interceding for our own church and the body of Christ in general.

2. Paul prays that their "love would abound." Truly the most important thing in our faith is Love. It is the greatest commandment and without it we have nothing and are nothing. Love never fails.(1 Cor 13:1-8, John 13:34-35, 1 John 2:10, 4:7-8)

3. How does love abound? Love abounds in "real knowledge and all discernment." The key to have complete and full love is to know God, because God is love. This is what Paul refers to as "real knowledge." The reality of knowing God. And this discernment is to understand or to make a proper appraisal of things in relation to God. To know God, and understand His ways and make choices according to His will is to have abounding love.

John 14:21 - "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him."

I Jn 2:4-6 - The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one

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who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

4. to approve the things which are excellent - The goal of real knowledge and discernment is to make right judgments of all things. In this then we know how to respond to God in a manner that is ***pleasing and glorifying to Him, which is the goal of our life***. And this we do in sincerity, serving God honestly from our hearts, not to please men, but God.

5. having been filled with the fruit of righteousness - Once we have the commandments of the Lord and keep them, we will have abounding love which is one of many many fruits which will come forth in our life. Another goal of our faith, that we bear much fruit.

(John 15:5-10)

6. to the glory and praise of God - All of the fruits that come forth in our lives magnify the glory of the Lord. This is why we live. To honor God with our whole lives, to honor Him in spirit and in truth from our hearts. We are ambassadors of Christ, we represent Him and His Kingdom, we are His children, we bear His name, therefore, "glorify God in your body." (1 Cor 6:19-20, Eph 1:4-6, Eph 1:11-14)

Phil 1:12-14 - Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

1. Here Paul speaks of his imprisonment in a very positive manner. It is for the "greater progress of the gospel." What a view of the sovereignty of God in his suffering. We would naturally think of the great limitation that prison would put on an apostolic ministry, but Paul sees it for the greater progress. He knows that God is at work in and through his suffering.

2. Because of Paul's great witness of Christ, it had become evident that he was in chains for Christ. He had not actually committed crime, but was bound unjustly.

3. This passage also reveals that Paul wrote the letter from Rome where he had lived by himself with a Roman guard.

Acts 28:16 - And when we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him. (NAS)

4. Paul's courage in preaching the gospel, even unto chains, caused the believers around him to be greatly encouraged and to speak the Word of God boldly.

Phil 1:15-18 - Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice. (NAS)

1. Preaching Christ from envy and strife - "Wolves" that had come in among the flock, now even in positions of leadership were obviously a great threat to the church. The fact remains, there are false teachers in the church and they threaten the healthy existence of Christians. They will reap judgment for their folly. They are motivated by pride, envy and greed.

2 Pet 2:1-3 - But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. (NAS)

2. Although the false teachers exist, it is the Word of God that has power to save. And when the Word is preached, it has power to transform lives. Even in the deception of Satan and his agents, when the Word is proclaimed, it will bring life, and in that we rejoice.

Phil 1:19-20 - For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. (NAS)

1. It is not known exactly what Paul meant by deliverance, but we do know that Paul would eventually be exalted by God for his love and service to Christ. And this the hope of every faithful believer in Christ. If we suffer with Him, we shall also partake in His glory.

2. No matter what we do, if we remain faithful to Christ, He will be glorified in our life or our death. We must be willing to die for our faith. This is the requirement of Jesus.

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Matt 16:25-27 - "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. "For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds.

Phil 1:21-24 - For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.(NAS)

1. Living for the Christian is a rich and wonderful experience. We have all of the blessing of abundant life. No matter what we do, we can enjoy the fulfillment of walking with Christ. And if we are to die, it is only a passage into glory for us. **For the Christian, death is an option, compromise is not.**

2. Paul knows that death is far greater option than to go on living. This is because when we pass on to be with Christ, we will no longer be hindered by sin, and suffering and pain. But to continue living means that we will have opportunity to continue serving Christ with our lives, and seeing much fruit come of our abiding in Christ. What a privilege our life is.

Phil 1:25-26 - And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

1. Paul knows that continuing in the ministry means fruitful labor in the church. His ministry was a powerful catalyst for the growth and joy of the Phillipian church.

Phil 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

1. Christians are to live in a manner worthy of Christ. We should possess a Christ-like attitude in what we say and do. Anything less is a shameful thing for us to do. To disobey God, is an unworthy and unholy thing which brings shame on the name of Christ.

2. We are meant to operate together in unity of mind and spirit. As this happens, we possess the power of all of us working together which produces a synergy that is very strong. That is, a cord of three strands is not easily broken.

Philippians 1:27-30 PP3 - The unity and unanimity of Christians become the gospel: Strive together, not strive one with another; all of you must strive against the common adversary. One spirit and one mind become the gospel; for there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. **There may be a oneness of heart and affection among Christians, where there is diversity of judgment and apprehensions about many things.**
(from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

Phil 1:28 - in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

1. When we live in a manner worthy of Christ, we will receive opposition to our faith.

People will see us many times as adversaries, speaking evil of us falsely, and at times possibly bringing physical harm upon us. But hear Paul's exhortation, "in no way alarmed". Paul encourages believers not to be alarmed by persecution. **Be not therefore terrified by your enemies; they can do nothing to you which God will not turn to your eternal advantage.** Adam Clarke Remember how this happened to Paul in this very city of Philippi.
(Acts 16:1-40)

2 Tim 3:12 - And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

2. Now this is a sure sign of two things;

1. That you are standing firm in Christ, which will reap salvation for you.

2. That they are truly opposing Christ, which will reap destruction for them.

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

1. We have been granted to believe and to suffer. It is a privilege to believe on Christ and to suffer for Him. God has graciously "granted as a favor" these things to us.

NT:5483 **charizomai** (khar-id'-zom-a-hee); middle voice from NT:5485; to grant as a favor, i.e. gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue:

KJV - deliver, (frankly) forgive, (freely) give, grant.

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Geneva - (10) He proves his statement that persecution is a token of our salvation, because it is a gift of God to suffer for Christ, which gift he bestows upon his own, as he does the gift of faith.

Barnes - In the behalf of Christ. In the cause of Christ, or with a view to honor Christ. Or, these things are brought on you in consequence of your being Christians.

Not only to believe on him. It is represented here as a privilege to be permitted to believe on Christ. It is so.

(1.) It is an honor to a man to believe one who ought to be believed, to trust one who ought to be trusted, to love one who ought to be loved.

(2.) It is a privilege to believe on Christ, because it is by such faith that our sins are forgiven; that we become reconciled to God, and have the hope of heaven.

(3.) It is a privilege, because it saves the mind from the tortures and the deadly influence of unbelief --the agitation, and restlessness, and darkness, and gloom of a skeptic.

(4.) It is a privilege, because we have then a Friend to whom we may go in trial, and on whom we may roll all our burdens. If there is anything for which a Christian ought to give unfeigned thanks, it is that he has been permitted to believe on the Redeemer. Let a sincere Christian compare his peace, and joy, and hope of heaven, and support in trials, with the restlessness, uneasiness, and dread of death, in the mind of an unbeliever, and he will see abundant occasion for gratitude.

But also to suffer for his sake. Here it is represented as a privilege to suffer in the cause of the Redeemer--a declaration which may sound strange to the world. Yet this sentiment frequently occurs in the New Testament. Thus it is said of the apostles, Ac 5:41, that "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Col 1:24: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you." 1Pe 4:13: "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." Comp. Jas 1:2; Mr 10:30. See Barnes for Ac 5:41. It is a privilege thus to suffer in the cause of Christ, because

(1.) we then resemble the Lord Jesus, and are united with him in trials;

(2.) because we have evidence that we are his, if trials come upon us in his cause;

(3.) because we are engaged in a good cause, and the privilege of maintaining such a cause is worth much of suffering; and

(4.) because it will be connected with a brighter crown and more exalted honor in heaven.

Phil 2:1-2 - 1 If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

1. Paul makes a plea for Christian unity. That we would be of like mind, and love, united together in purpose. This is not easy to achieve. But the basis for achieving it is expressed in the following verses. That is having the humility of Christ. Only then can we begin to be united in Spirit, looking to the interests of Christ.
2. If any comfort of love. If there be any comfort in the exercise of tender affection. That there is, no one can doubt. Our happiness is almost all centered in love. It is when we love a parent, a wife, a child, a sister, a neighbor, that we have the highest earthly enjoyment. It is in the love of God, of Christ, of Christians, of the souls of men, that the redeemed find their highest happiness. Hatred is a passion full of misery; love an emotion full of joy.
3. Intent on one purpose – Paul exhorts the Christians to be of the same; Mind, love, spirit, purpose – Such a thing is hard to find indeed among Christians, it is therefore a goal to be obtained. We must strive to find this unity of Spirit and purpose. And when obtained, the power of God working through us will be invincible. This purpose I believe is to have it in our heart at all times to do that which is pleasing to God, whatever the cost.

Phil 2:3 – 1 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself

1. If we are to ever obtain unity in the faith, we must begin to see all members of the body with the humility and compassion of Christ. We must regard all Christians as having importance above our own needs and desires, putting others first out of reverence for Christ.
2. nothing out of strife or conceit – In seeking unity and like-mindedness, we must be careful as not to do things in regard to our own selfish desires, but for the sake and interests of Christ. Do we even know what are the interests of Christ? Much less practice them.

Phil 2:4-5 – do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

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1. We see the ultimate example of this in the life of Christ. When Jesus suffered and died, it was not for His own sin, but for the sin of others. He considered others needs more important than His own. He was concerned with the needs of others above His own. This kind of love we must strive to obtain.
2. The golden rule can only be practiced with this self sacrificing love first. We can only do unto others when we have made their needs a priority above our own.
3. We are to possess the attitude of Christ. This demands an attitude of self-sacrifice. We must be willing to put the love and commandments of God first in our life if we hope to obtain the attitude of Christ.

(3.) For a similar reason, we should seek the welfare of all others in a spiritual sense. We should seek to arouse the sinner, and lead him to the Saviour. He is blind, and will not come himself; unconcerned, and will not seek salvation; filled with the love of this world, and will not seek a better; devoted to pursuits that will lead him to ruin, and he ought to be apprized of it. It is no more an improper interference in his concerns to apprise him of his condition, and to attempt to lead him to the Saviour, than it is to warn a man in a dark night, who walks on the verge of a precipice, of his peril; or to arouse one from sleep whose house is in flames. In like manner, it is no more intermeddling with the concerns of another to tell him that there is a glorious heaven which may be his, than it is to apprise a man that there is a mine of golden ore on his farm. It is for the man's own interest, and it is the office of a friend to remind him of these things. He does a man a favour who tells him that he has a Redeemer, and that there is a heaven to which he may rise; he does his neighbour the greatest possible kindness who apprizes him that there is a world of infinite woe, and tells him of an easy way by which he may escape it. The world around is dependant on the church of Christ to be apprized of these truths. The gay will not warn the gay of their danger; the crowd that presses to the theatre or the ball-room will not apprise those who are there that they are in the broad way to hell; and every one who loves his neighbour should feel sufficient interest in him to tell him that he may be eternally happy in heaven. (Barnes)

Phil 2:6-9 - 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1. He existed in the form of God – Here Paul tells us of the deity of Christ. He was in the form of God. This is a remarkable truth when you consider that Christ left the glory of heaven to come to earth and suffer and die for His people. He was humiliated in the greatest example of humiliation that ever existed. This is truly the ultimate example of humility.
2. God became man, in order to buy man back from sin. He came as suffering servant. He came to be a bond-servant, the lowliest of slaves. The King of Holiness and Purity became SIN on our behalf.
2 Cor 5:21 - 1 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
3. Jesus the Prince of Life, humbled Himself and became obedient to death. He was brutally murdered by the very men He was dying for. And in the midst of it all cried out to God saying, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Phil 2:9-11 - 9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1. Thus the Proverb is true, "Humility comes before honor."
2. He has become the center focus on the stage of creation. Christ is that which the sum total of the Scripture is written about. We worship Jesus Christ, that's what makes us Christians. We have willingly consented to Christ, and have bowed our knee and confessed that He is Lord.
3. God the Father has exalted Christ the Son. God being the highest authority, has bestowed upon Christ the highest exaltation. God has made His Christ the object of all Glory and every knee will bow in surrender to Him.

Rev 5:11-14 - 11 And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Eph 1:20-23 - 0 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

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

1. Paul commends the Philippians again for the remarkable obedience that they displayed in response to his teaching. Although this was the best response they could have, Paul urges them again to continue in this pattern.
2. work out your salvation - Here the command repeated throughout the scripture. That we should strive to enter through the narrow door. That we should continually make every effort in our lives to obey God and follow Him. There is a challenge in this life to take up our cross and follow Christ. Putting the old nature to death is not an easy endeavor, however it is a mandate. So we must strive, and even agonize at times in wrestling with God to receive His blessing.

Barnes. It is a duty because it is our own personal interest that is at stake. No other one has, or can have, as much interest in our salvation as we have. It is every man's duty to be as happy as possible here, and to be prepared for eternal happiness in the future world. No man has a right either to throw away his life or his soul. He has no more right to do the one than the other; and if it is a man's duty to endeavour to save his life when in danger of drowning, it is no less his duty to endeavour to save his soul when in danger of hell.

Luke 13:24 - Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. (ASV)

the word strive here - NT:75 - **agonizomai** (ag-o-nid'-zom-ahee); from NT:73; to struggle, literally (to compete for a prize), figuratively (to contend with an adversary), or genitive case (to endeavor to accomplish something):KJV - fight, labor fervently, strive.

3. with fear and trembling - The way of salvation is through a narrow and constricted way, and there is much at stake in entering through. It is with fear that we approach a Holy God, in reverence of His awesome power and majesty that we desire His blessing.

Mt 10:28 - And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jer 5:22 - 22'Do you not fear Me?' declares the LORD.'Do you not tremble in My presence? For I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea, An eternal decree, so it cannot cross over it. Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it. NAS

4. God who is at work in you - Here Paul again reassures the Philippians that God is working in them according to His purpose. But although this be true, he exhorts them all the more to make every effort to found worthy of our God. It is for God that we were created and it is God whom we seek to please as we worship Him with our lives. It is also our God to whom we will present ourselves for judgment on the Great Day. May we strive evermore to please Him in all that we do.

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

1. without grumbling or disputing - Grumbling is more accurate as "complaining." We are not to grumble and complain about our circumstances, but rather we should give thanks for the circumstances we have. If we recognize God's sovereignty in our lives, why then would we complain to such a gracious One as He. Do we really mean to complain against God, after His having cancelled the debt of our sins? Christians esteeming others more highly than themselves, will seldom be found grumbling and disputing.

1 Thess 5:18 - 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. NAS

2. Christians who remain continually thankful and grateful to God, magnify His glory continually. They recognize the tremendous blessing of God in Christ, and in their hearts they harbor thanksgiving and praise.

Prov 17:1 -Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it, Than a house full of feasting with strife. NAS

3. crooked and perverse generation - The world around us is crooked and perverse. It is an abomination to God and in rebellion against Him. Make no mistake, God is angry with the world and coming to bring judgment upon it.

Isa 34:2 - For the Lord's indignation is against all the nations, And His wrath against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter. NAS

4. you appear as lights in the world - Christians really are living letters, known and read by those around us. What does your letter say?

Matt 5:14 - 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Phillipians

5. holding fast the word of life - A better rendering would be, "holding forth" the word of life, that is the gospel. The Word that brings life. We as Christians have an obligation to continue to propagate the Word of God. It is our duty as His witnesses.
6. That I may rejoice. This was one reason which the apostle urged, and which it was proper to urge, why they should let their light shine. He had been the instrument of their conversion, he had founded their church, he was their spiritual father, and had shown the deepest interest in their welfare; and he now entreats them, as a means of promoting his highest joy, to be faithful and holy. The exemplary piety and holy lives of the members of a church will be one of the sources of highest joy to a pastor in the day of judgment.

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

1. poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith - The idea of a drink offering or "libation" is that it is totally and completely poured out. It is totally consumed upon the ground. This Paul uses to speak of his commitment to Christ in regard to the church. He was poured out as a libation in the service of their faith.

LIBATION. The act of pouring wine on the ground in divine worship. Sometimes other liquids have been used, such as oil, milk, water, and honey, but mostly it has been wine. Among the Greeks and Romans it was an essential part of solemn sacrifices. Libations were also in use among the Hebrews, who poured a hin of wine on the sacrifice after it was killed, and the several pieces of the sacrifice were laid on the altar ready to be consumed in the flames

2. Paul continues to urge the church to live in a worthy manner, in spite of their obedience. He knows of the tremendous peril that is in the world, and understands that the glory of God is at stake in the lives of Christians.

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

1. Paul expresses his sincere desire to know the condition of the Philippians faith. As every good minister should, Paul is genuinely concerned for their welfare. The shepherd cares for the sheep.
2. Paul refers to Timothy who alone with Paul is concerned for the welfare of the church. It is apparent that even in the 1st century church, faithful ministers were rare indeed. Paul makes that very clear here, saying that "they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus." Certainly the word all here is hyperbole, used to exaggerate the reality of this truth, but even so the problem in the early church was evident as it is today. Therefore let us test all things to see if they be of God.
3. Paul commends Timothy for his humility in his service to Paul and to the church. It was truly like "that of Christ Jesus." Timothy's example is one to be followed. He was as a child serving his father.

Phil 2:23-25 - 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall be coming shortly. NAS

1. Again Paul's great concern for the church is so evident. He was continually consumed with zeal and with prayer for the churches which were founded in his ministry. What a tremendous example of compassion and humility. He truly esteemed them more highly than himself.

Phil 2:25-28 - 25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly in order that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. NAS

1. Epaphroditus was a messenger sent from Philippi to Paul, to obviously bring him some sort of gift. Upon arriving, he became very ill and almost died. Nevertheless, Paul refers to him as a brother, and a fellow worker and soldier. He was obviously a "pastor /elder" in Philippi.
2. Behold the humility of Epaphroditus who was, "distressed because you had heard that he was sick." Epaphroditus was concerned about the Philippians because they had heard that he was sick. He was distressed because they were distressed, and he was the one who was sick. What love and compassion for his family in Christ! What selfless devotion to his church! He truly had that "attitude that was in Christ Jesus."