

PHILIPPIANS

Author :

Paul an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Date :

Sometime about 60 AD.

Themes :

Paul had founded this Church during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:12-40). Now he is in prison, being persecuted for preaching the gospel of Christ. However the key words of this letter are "joy" and "rejoice." Though encountering many troubles and dangers Paul did not give in to discouragement, did not complain about anything. He was rejoicing and he encouraged others to rejoice. Another theme of this letter is the proclamation and spread of the gospel (1:4,7,12,18,27; 2:15,22). For the sake of Christ's gospel Paul renounced his own aims and desires and patiently endured all things that he might make it known. He found his joy, his ability to endure and persevere, his righteousness, his strength and power in Christ alone, and revealed to the believers at Philippi (and to us) the way of life that is satisfying and fruitful, the kind of life that brings glory to Christ. Another important theme is renunciation – 2:5-8; 3:8-10.

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1 Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

2 Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God at every remembrance of you, 4 in every prayer of mine for all of you I pray with joy, 5 because of your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will go on performing *it*, until the day of Jesus Christ.

7 So it is right for me to think this of all of you, because I have you in my heart. For both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all share with me in *God's* grace. 8 For God is my witness how greatly I long for you with the tender affection of Jesus Christ.

9 And I pray that your love may overflow still more and more, in knowledge and *in* complete discernment, 10 that you may approve things that are excellent, and that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, for the glory and praise of God.

1:1 "Timothy" – Acts 16:1. Timothy did not help Paul in the composition of this letter but possibly wrote it down as Paul dictated it. Compare Rom 16:22.

"Servants" – Rom 1:1.

"Saints" – Rom 1:7.

"Philippi" – Acts 16:12-40.

"Overseers" – Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:3; 1 Pet 5:2.

1:2,3 Rom 1:7,8.

1:4 "In every prayer" – Rom 1:10.

"Joy" – so me churches were at times a source of grief to Paul. In 1 Corinthians or Galatians there is no mention of his joy in them. The church at Philippi was quite different from those churches. Joy is a keynote of Philippians – it appears more in this short letter than in any other letter Paul wrote – 1:18,25,26; 2:2,17,18,28; 3:1; 4:1,4,10.

1:5 Here is the reason for Paul's thanksgiving and joy – there had been no break in the fellowship and mutual helpfulness they experienced – 4:14-16. The gospel of Christ had united them in mind, heart, and action.

"Gospel" – Paul defines the gospel in 1 Cor 15:1-8. The whole letter to the Romans is a fuller description of it.

1:6 "Confident" – 2 Cor 1:14,15; Gal 5:10; 1 Thess 1:4,5; Heb 6:9,10.

"He who has begun" – God. Let us learn from this verse the following:

True Christians are a work of God – Eph 2:10; 2 Cor 5:17. He is the one who begins the work of salvation in them (Jam 1:18; John 3:5-8; 6:37,44), and He is the one who carries the work on – 2:13; 1 Cor 12:6; Col 1:29; Heb 13:21.

This is a "good" work.

This is an inner work ("in you"), a work in the heart, the mind, the inner being – 2:13; Gal 2:20; Eph 3:16,20.

It is a work God finishes – Rom 8:29,30. Men may begin a work and leave it unfinished for one reason or another. Not God. When He begins the work of salvation in anyone He intends to complete it and will do so. Paul was confident of this and so should we be. In 2:12,13 we see that we must cooperate with God in this work. See notes there.

"The day of Jesus Christ" – Christ's second coming.

1:7 "In my heart" – 2 Cor 3:2; 6:11; 7:3.

"Chains" – v 13; Eph 4:1; 6:20.

"In the defense" – God's servants should know how to defend the gospel as well as to preach it, defend it against attacks, objections, slanders, misunderstandings, etc.

"Grace" – note at John 1:14; Rom 1:7. It was God's grace which made them believers in Christ and brought them into the true Church the body of Christ.

1:8 Christ was in Paul and Paul's loving was Christ loving through him – Gal 2:20. We will not learn to love as he did unless we learn Christ as he did – Eph 3:17-19. Love is a fruit of God's Spirit in believers who live in obedience to Christ – Gal 5:22.

"I long for you" – here he reveals the heart every Christian worker should have. See also 4:1; Rom 1:11; 2 Cor 2:4; Gal 4:19,20; 1 Thess 2:17; 2 Tim 1:4.

1:9-11 Compare Paul's prayers for the Ephesians – 1:17-19; 3:16-19, and Colossians – 1:9-12. In Paul's prayers, inspired as they were by God's Spirit and recorded for our instruction, we can learn what God wants to do for us and in us. We can also learn how to pray for others.

1:9 "Your love" – he means their love for God and for fellow believers and for all mankind. He wants their love to increase in the right ways. They should know more and more what real love is and how to show this love to others in action. This love should not be blind but full of the knowledge of Christ and His love – Eph 3:17-19.

1:10 "Approve things that are excellent" – he is speaking of their lives together in one church as believers. He mentions some of these excellent things in 2:1-5,14,15; 4:8,9.

1:11 "Fruits" – Matt 7:17; Rom 6:22; 7:4; Gal 5:22; Eph 5:9.

"Of righteousness" – Heb 12:11; Jam 3:1;8 – fruit that comes from a right relationship with God.

"By Jesus Christ" – only through Him can there be any fruit acceptable to God (John 15:4,5).

"For the glory and praise of God" – Eph 1:6,12,14.

12 I want you to understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* to me have really turned out for the advancement of the gospel, 13 so that it has become clear among all the palace guard, and ever other *place*, that my chains *are* for Christ, 14 and many of the brethren in the Lord, becoming confident because of my chains, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ out of envy and strife, but some with good will. 16 The former preach Christ out of selfish motives, not sincerely, thinking to add trouble to my chains, 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. 18 What, then, *is the result*? Only that *in* every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is being preached. And in that I rejoice, yes, and

1:12 What happened to him was his arrest and imprisonment. This did not discourage him or cause him to murmur or complain. Compare Gen 50:20. He believed what he wrote in Rom 8:28.

"Advancement" – what some may consider an obstacle to the advance of the gospel might actually serve to advance it, and seeming disasters may turn into blessings. In God's hands all events in a believer's life serve a good purpose.

1:13 Paul was a witness for Christ to the soldiers who guarded him, soldiers who served the Roman emperor or governor or king as the case may be (we are not sure where Paul was in prison when he wrote this). So the gospel advanced in places it had not gone before. Compare 2 Tim 2:9.

"My chains are for Christ" – everyone came to understand that Paul was no criminal, no law-breaker, but was in prison because he preached Christ's gospel.

1:14 They knew it was a bold thing for Paul to preach to the authorities and guards who held him captive. His example of boldness made them more bold. And this too caused the gospel to advance.

1:15-17 Not everyone then who preached the gospel did so with good motives. Some were envious of Paul's greatness and success and considered themselves his rivals. Selfishness governed their outlook and ministry. The same is true today also. Some preachers want to be popular, want to succeed for their own sakes, want to put down other preachers and even cause them trouble if they can. But some now as then preach Christ sincerely, out of love for Him and for the souls of men.

1:18 Paul did not consider himself in competition with anyone. He wanted Christ and His gospel to be known everywhere. He could rejoice even if those who disliked him and caused him trouble preached Christ, and even if their motives were bad. It was not himself he wanted to see exalted but Christ. There is a great lesson here for all preachers. Of course Paul was referring to those who preached the truth about Christ and His gospel, not to those he warned against in

will rejoice.

19 For I know that this will turn for my deliverance, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 20 *This is* in accordance with my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that I will not be ashamed in anything, but *that* with complete boldness, now also, as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live *is* Christ and to die *is* gain. 22 But if I live on in the body, this *will mean* fruit from my labour. But I do not know what to choose. 23 For I am held between *these* two: I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, 24 but to remain in the body *is* more necessary for you. 25 And being convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you

other letters (2 Cor 11:13-15; Gal 1:7,8; etc).

1:19 Probably Paul is speaking of deliverance from the accusations against him and so deliverance from death at that time – vs 25,26.

"Through your prayer" – Philemon 22; Rom 15:30-32.

"Spirit of Jesus Christ" – see Rom 8:9 and note.

1:20 He was full of hope that he would not lose his boldness to speak for Christ at any time in any situation. Compare Eph 6:19,20.

"Christ. . . exalted" – this had always been the result of Paul's life and ministry from the time he speaks of in Gal 1:16, and this was still his aim and expectation. There can be no greater purpose than this in either life or death.

"In my body" – Christ was exalted by Paul's actions, by his day to day behavior, by the words of his mouth, not merely in his thoughts and desires.

1:21 "To live is Christ" – Gal 2:20. Paul lived by Christ's life in him, not his own. He served by Christ's power, not his own. His aim was Christ's glory, not his own.

"To die is gain" – Paul had no fear of death (see Heb 2:15). He knew the truth of Ps 116:15. He was sure that Christ would be exalted in him whether he lived or died – v 20. But, as v 23 shows, at least part of the gain he was thinking of was the joy of going to be with Christ. Is it true of everyone that to die is gain? No – only of those who live for Christ. No one whose life is self will find death a gain. Death is an enemy of all who do not know Christ.

1:22-24 "Fruit from my labor" – Rom 1:13; 7:4. Observe his confidence that his labor for Christ would be successful. This was born of the knowledge that it was Christ in Him doing the work – Col 1:29.

"What to choose" – both living and dying were very acceptable to him. He could hardly decide which he wanted most.

"Be with Christ" – 2 Cor 5:8; Luke 23:43. A believer at death goes into the presence of the Lord Jesus.

1:25 "I will remain" – personally he would

for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you, or be absent, I may hear about you that you are standing firmly in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not at all afraid of your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of *their* destruction, but to you of *your* salvation, and that of God. 29 For it has been given to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, 30 finding yourselves in the same conflict which you saw in

my case, and now hear *to be* in me.

2 If *there is*, therefore, any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender affections and mercies, 2 then make my joy full by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing *be done* through selfish motives or self-esteem, but in humbleness of mind let everyone consider others better than themselves. 4 No one should look *only* to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did

prefer to die and go to Christ. To him this was far better than remaining on earth. But as usual what he wanted was not the important thing to him. The need of others – this is what determined his actions and prayers. Compare 1 Cor 9:19-23; 10:24,33. But how could Paul know he was not going to die at that time? God had given him assurance that prayer for his deliverance was going to be answered – v 19; 2:24.

"Progress. . . in the faith" – Eph 4:12,13. Joy will accompany progress in the faith. Every believer should be more concerned with progress in the Christian faith than with progress in anything of this world.

1:27 "Worthy" – Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:12.

"Standing firmly" – Eph 6:11,14.

"One spirit", "one mind" – 2:2; Eph 4:2; 1 Cor 1:10; Rom 12:16.

"Striving" – v 7; Jude 3. Believers must never weakly submit when the gospel is under attack, must never compromise with error and false teaching. The truths of the gospel are worth struggling for, and we must do so with all the wisdom and spiritual strength and ability (and love) God gives us.

1:28 "Not at all afraid" – vs 14,20; Matt 10:28; Heb 13:6.

"Your opponents" – v 30.

"Sign" – their boldness in Christ would be evidence that God was with them. Compare Acts 4:13; 2 Thess 1:4-7. Their opponents would be able to recognize that if God was with Christ's believers, He was not with themselves who opposed them.

1:29 "Given. . . to believe" – faith is a gift of God – Eph 2:8. "To suffer" for Christ is also a gift of God. It is one of the great privileges we can have on earth. Happy are those who know this. See 3:10; Acts 5:41; Rom 5:3; 2 Cor 1:5; 1 Pet 5:13,14,16. Is it not an honor to suffer for the Lord Jesus who suffered and died for us? Love answers "yes", and will not try by every possible means to escape discomfort, hardship, persecution, trouble or suffering for His sake.

1:30 "In my case" – for some of Paul's difficulties in Philippi see Acts 16:19-40. There were still many opponents of the gospel in that place and believers there were still suf-

fering at their hands.

2:1,2 Paul was concerned about the lack of harmony in the church there – 1:27; 4:2. He appeals to them on the basis of what they have as believers in Christ.

"If" – he is not doubting that they have the things he now lists. The meaning is "since you have these."

"In Christ" – John 17:20-23; Rom 6:5; Eph 4:15,16.

"Comfort" – 2 Cor 1:3,5,7.

"Fellowship" – 2 Cor 13:14.

"Tender affections and mercies" – qualities every believer should have toward other believers.

2:3 "Ambition" – 1:17; Jer 45:5; 1 Cor 13:5; Gal 5:20.

"Consider others better" – Rom 12:10,16; Gal 5:26; 1 Pet 5:5,6. See an example of this in Paul himself – Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15.

2:4 Rom 14:19; 15:21; 1 Cor 10:24.

2:5-11 Paul puts before them the greatest possible example of the humility and love for others he has been speaking of. Is it possible for believers to have the same attitude as Christ, to think as He does? Certainly it is possible or Paul would not have written v 5. See 1 Cor 2:16; Rom 8:5. Christ is in believers, and when He is the master in their hearts (Eph 3:17) He can fill their minds with the thoughts and attitudes they should have. When this happens strife and selfishness and conceit and arrogance among them will end.

In these verses Paul gives a brief summary of truth which the New Testament teaches in other places. Remember that Paul's aim here is practical. He is teaching truth he wants believers to apply to their lives. Jesus left the full glory and riches of heaven behind for His time on earth and lived a life of humble service. All believers must learn to renounce the false and contemptible glory and riches of this world and spend their lives here humbly serving God and others.

2:6 "Being in the form of God" – the Greek here can mean only one possible thing: Christ has the very nature of God. Jesus is called God in other places in the Bible. See Isa 9:6; John 1:1; 20:28,29; Acts 20:28;

not think it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made himself of no reputation and took the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death,

even the death of the cross.

9 Therefore God has also highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee would bow, of *those* in heaven, and *those* in earth, and

Rom 9:5; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:8; 1 John 5:20. Besides these there are other places which indicate that Christ is God. See Matt 1:23; 2:11; 3:17; 10:37; 11:27; 12:8; 14:33; 18:20; 22:41-45; 28:17,19,20; John 5:17-26; 8:19; 9:38; 10:30-33; 11:25; 14:7,10,23; 17:1-5; Acts 3:14,15; Rom 1:7; 8:9,10; 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 4:4; 13:14; Eph 3:17-19; Col 1:15-17; 2:9; 1 Thess 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1; 3:16; Heb 1:3,10,12; 1 Pet 3:15; 1 John 1:3; 2:22; Rev 1:4,5,8 (with 22:12,13); 1:17; 5:8,13,14; 19:16; 21:6. Other verses reveal that He is the incarnation of Jehovah (God's name in the Old Testament). See vs 10,11 and other references at Luke 2:11.

"Did not think it robbery to be equal with God" – the Greek here has been translated in various ways. For example, "did not consider equality with God something to be grasped", "did not cling to his equality with God." No doubt it is difficult to bring out the exact meaning of the Greek phrase. The word translated "robbery" is related to a Greek verb meaning "to seize" or "to carry away by force." It may mean either the act of seizing, or the thing seized. However that may be, from the wording here, the context, and from the teaching of the Bible as a whole, we can say the following:

In nature and attributes God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are equal, and this is not something that one of them can either grasp or give up. So in this sense, for Christ to consider Himself equal with God the Father is certainly not robbery. But the three members of the Trinity are not equal in position in the Godhead. The Father has the highest place. See John 5:19-23; 14:28; 1 Cor 15:27,28. Christ the Son of God did not try to seize an equal place with God the Father. Quite the opposite. He was happy for the Father to be the Father and Himself to be the Son in obedience to the Father – v 8; John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; 9:4; 14:31; 15:10; 17:4. Observe the clear distinction in this verse between the Father and the Son before the Son came to earth.

2:7 "Made himself of no reputation" – the Greek here too has been variously translated. For example, "emptied himself", or "made himself nothing." The Greek verb has the meaning of "to empty", but we should be careful not to misunderstand how it is used here. The meaning is clear from the words which follow. Jesus did not empty Himself of deity – this is an impossible thing. He did not stop being God when He came to earth. But He emptied Himself of the glory that He had with the Father (John 17:5), of the rights and privileges He had as God's own Son. He deprived Himself of His heav-

enly dwelling and all that this meant (2 Cor 8:9). He put Himself in a position where men could count Him nothing, as a person of no reputation. He who made mankind was willing to become despised and rejected by men – John 1:10,11; Isa 53:3; Matt 8:20; 12:24; Mark 6:3; John 18:30.

"Made himself of no reputation" is a fitting way to describe the huge step down from the heights of power and glory in the universe to a lowly position among men on earth.

"Servant" – Rom 15:8; John 13:3-5; Luke 22:27; Matt 20:28.

"Likeness" – John 1:14; Rom 8:3; Heb 2:14. Jesus is both God and a person with real human nature.

2:8 "Appearance" – outwardly Jesus seemed to be a man like other men and nothing but a man. His divine nature and the glory He had before He came to earth were concealed from the eyes of men.

"Humbled himself" – this was true all through His life (Matt 11:29), but His humility appeared most vividly at the time of His death – Isa 53:7,8; 1 Pet 2:23,24. He did not insist on His rights as the Son of God, did not proudly resist those who falsely accused Him, mistreated and killed Him.

"Obedient" – this means obedient to God the Father – Matt 26:39; John 18:11; Rom 5:19; Heb 10:7; John 10:17,18.

"Cross" – Paul says "even the death of the cross" because the cross was the most humiliating way for a person to die. Public execution on a cross was the way Romans dealt with criminals.

2:9 "Therefore" – God rewarded Him for His renunciation, humility and obedience. This is in accordance with Christ's own teaching – Matt 23:12.

"Highly exalted him" – Acts 2:33; Eph 1:20,21; Heb 1:3; Rev 3:21. No one ever humbled himself as low as Jesus, none was ever exalted so high. He has the highest place because He alone is worthy of it.

"Name" – what is this name above all – "Jesus" (v 10), or "Lord" (v 11)? Paul probably means "Lord" because the name Jesus was given before the Father exalted His Son from the place of humiliation and death, and Paul seems to be referring to a name God gave Jesus at the time of His exaltation. Compare Acts 2:36. "Name" can signify authority. See John 14:13,14. It can also be used in the sense of "title" – Isa 9:6.

2:10,11 "Lord" – the Greek word here translated "Lord" in the New Testament ("kurios") is the word used to indicate Jehovah, the Old Testament name of God (see Luke 2:11; Ex 3:14,15). Knees should bow only to Him – Isa 45:22-24; Matt 4:10. God the Father has given this name, this title to Jesus. That

those under the earth, 11 and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Therefore, my dearly loved ones, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God who is working in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

14 Do everything without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and sincere, the sons of God, without fault, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding forth the word of life. Thus I will be able to rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, or laboured in vain. 17 Yes, and even if I am being poured out

is, He has declared to the universe that Jesus who became man and suffered death is the Lord of the universe, the incarnation of Jehovah the great God of all (Acts 2:36; 1 Cor 8:6; Matt 28:18), and that Jesus is worthy of worship. See other references which show that Jesus is Jehovah at Luke 2:11.

"Confess" – believers now gladly confess that Jesus is the mighty Lord with all authority in heaven and earth. The time will come when everyone will have to confess this, willingly or not.

"Glory of God the Father" – when Jesus is exalted and confessed as Lord the Father is glorified. Compare John 5:23; 1 John 2:23.

2:12 "Therefore" – in the light of the truth given above.

"Obeyed" – he means they obeyed God's revealed truth (Rom 6:17; 1 Pet 1:22). This is of the utmost importance – Jam 1:22-25. Christ was obedient to God – v 8. So must they be, whether Paul was with them or not. So must we be wherever we are.

"Work out" – Paul does not say "work for salvation." He well knew that salvation cannot be earned by good works and human effort – Eph 2:8,9; Rom 3:28; 4:4,5; 6:23; 11:6. He is saying believers should work out in their lives the salvation they already have. They should have the same attitude Christ had and apply the truth to every part of their lives.

"Fear and trembling" – Isa 66:2; Jer 5:22. The work is extremely important and has eternal consequences; it means dealing with the God of the universe. So it demands reverence and fear and carefulness and trembling. See notes on the fear of God at Gen 20:11; Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10; Prov 1:7.

2:13 "God . . . is working in you" – see 1:6; Eph 2:10. Because God works in believers we are not to think we have nothing to do. Instead we are to work with Him in the living out of the inner spiritual life He has given us. We are not puppets or robots. God is active in us. He is directing us with a good will toward a good goal – He wants us to be

as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service *that come* from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18 For the same reason you also must be glad, and rejoice with me.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be encouraged, when I know your state. 20 For I have no one *else* of the same mind, who will sincerely care about you. 21 For everyone seeks his own *interests*, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father, he has served with me in the gospel. 23 Therefore I hope to send him presently, as soon as I see how things will go with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself will come shortly.

25 But I have considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in

more and more like Christ (Rom 8:29). We should cooperate with Him in this most sublime work.

2:14-16 Here are two very serious sins – complaining against God and the leaders He has appointed (Ex 16:2-8; Num 11:1; etc), and disputing with each other (Rom 14:1-4; 1 Cor 3:3,4). Instead of behaving like that, believers must become like Christ. Only then can we be "blameless" (1 Thess 2:10; 5:23; Matt 10:16; 2 Cor 11:2), and "without fault" (Matt 5:48).

"Perverse generation" – Matt 17:17; Acts 2:40; Gal 1:4; Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-19. Every generation is a perverse, depraved generation.

"Lights" – Matt 5:14-16.

"Word of life" – God uses His word to give spiritual life to those who believe (Jam 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23).

"Not . . . in vain" – if they live as they should, he (the founder and teacher of the church there) would have reason to be proud of them when Christ returns. Compare Gal 4:11; 1 Thess 2:19,20.

2:17,18 "Drink offering" – see Ex 29:40. Paul is speaking of the possibility of death and probably death by violence (2 Tim 4:6).

"Faith" – their faith in Christ had produced loving service toward Paul (and others – 4:14-16; 2 Cor 8:1-4). This was like a sacrifice (see 4:18; Heb 13:16). If he should die for the service of Christ and be like an offering poured out to God he will rejoice. And if things turn out like that they should rejoice too.

2:19 "Timothy" – 1:1; 1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; 1 Thess 3:2.

2:20 "Of the same mind" – he means no one in the place where he was at that time. Timothy was with Paul at the very beginning of the work in Philippi – Acts chapter 16.

2:21 This is the state of things in the world and all too often among Christians as well.

2:22 "Son" – Paul considered Timothy like a son in spiritual matters – 1 Tim 1:2. Compare 1 Cor 4:14,15; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:11.

2:23,24 See 1:25,26.

2:25 "Brother" – he means brother in spiri-

the work, and fellow soldier, who is your messenger, and the one who ministered to my needs. 26 For he has longed for all of you, and has had a heavy heart, because you heard that he had been sick. 27 And indeed he was sick almost to death. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I have sent him the more eagerly, so that when you see him again, you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and hold such *men* in esteem. 30 Because *it was* for the work of Christ that he was near death, not regarding his life, to make up any deficiency in your service toward me.

tual matters, a fellow believer.

"Companion in labour" – in God's work (1 Cor 3:9).

"Fellow soldier" – 2 Tim 2:3,4; Eph 6:11.

"My needs" – 4:18. Probably Epaphroditus, after bringing the gift of money to Paul, helped him in prison in various ways.

2:26 "Has longed" – 1:7,8.

"Sick" – he did not want the believers in Philippi to be grieved because he was sick. **2:27** "To death" – evidently Paul who had healed many people (Acts 19:11,12; 28:8,9) was not able to heal him immediately. See also Gal 4:13; 1 Tim 5:23; 2 Tim 4:20. But eventually God healed him ("had mercy on him").

"Sorrow" – joy is a major theme of this letter (1:4). But on earth the joy of believers is often mixed with sadness – 2 Cor 6:10; 1 Pet 1:6.

2:28-30 The church had sent Epaphroditus to be a help to Paul while he was in prison. But Epaphroditus fell ill because of the work of Christ and longed to return to the church in Philippi. Would the church there think he had failed in his mission and was deserting Paul in his time of need? Paul is careful to assure them that this was not the case.

"Esteem" (v 29) – such men are more worthy of honor than anyone else on earth, and God Himself will honor them – John 12:26.

"Not regarding his life" (v 30) – Acts 20:24; Rom 16:4; 1 John 3:16.

3:1 "Rejoice" – 1:4; 4:4. The believer's rejoicing is not to be in his circumstances, in his successes, in his possessions, in his worldly hopes, but "in the Lord". See Hab 3:17,18.

"Same things" – perhaps Paul is referring to his repeated exhortation to rejoice; or perhaps to the warning against evil men in the verses which follow – previously he may have given them similar warnings.

3:2 Paul here speaks of the same sort of people he wrote about to other churches – 2 Cor 11:13-15; Gal 1:7; 2:4; 5:12. See also Acts 15:1,2,5.

"Dogs" – the Jews regarded dogs as unclean animals and called Gentiles "dogs." Paul says the Jews who rejected Christ and

3 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you *again* is no trouble for me, and for you *it is* safe.

2 Beware of dogs! Beware of evil workers! Beware of the mutilators!

3 For we are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. 4 Though I too might have confidence in the flesh. If any one else thinks he has reasons for trusting in the flesh, I *have* more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; as for the

tried to confuse Christians were the real unclean animals.

"Evil workers" – trying to pervert Christ's gospel and to turn Christians from the truth is the greatest of evils. It has to do with eternity.

"Mutilators" – he refers to circumcision – Gen 17:10-14. Some Jews were trying to compel Gentile Christians to submit to this ceremony. He uses sarcasm here because the unbelieving Jews who opposed the gospel of Christ did not live up to the meaning of circumcision (Rom 2:25-29), and so with them the rite of circumcision became an empty and meaningless cutting of the flesh.

3:3 "We" – he means believers in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles. Though they may not be circumcised they are "the circumcision" – that is, they have the inner reality which the old ceremony of circumcision pointed to. See Rom 2:29; Col 2:11. Paul now defines true believers.

"Worship God in the Spirit" – John 4:23,24.

"Rejoice in Christ" – or "glory in Christ" or "boast in Christ" – 1 Cor 1:30,31.

"No confidence in the flesh" – the false teachers taught that ceremonies performed on the body, human merit, good works, etc, could make people acceptable to God and earn salvation. Paul completely rejects this idea. He knew what human nature is like – Rom 7:18; 8:5-8. True Christians put their confidence in Christ, not in themselves or what they can do, or in what others can do to them or for them – Gal 2:16; 5:24; Eph 2:8,9.

3:4-7 The Jewish false teachers put their confidence in themselves and in the observance of their religion. See Rom 2:17-20. Paul looks back at his past and says that he was in no way inferior to any of them. But, unlike them, he had learned to reject all that confidence in self and in religion. He lists seven ways in which he had been (in the eyes of the Jews) an ideal Jew.

"Eighth day" – Lev 12:3.

"Israel" – God's chosen nation (Rom 9:4,5).

"Benjamin" – a tribe which the Jews regarded with much esteem. Jerusalem was located in territory belonging to Benjamin.

righteousness that is in the Law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yes, indeed, and I count all things *as* loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them *as* rubbish, that I may gain Christ, 9 and be found in

"Hebrew of the Hebrews" – this means he had learned the Hebrew language and had followed the old customs of the people.

"Pharisee" – he was of the most orthodox and conservative sect of the Jews (note at Matt 3:7).

"Zeal" – he was zealous for what he thought was the truth and hated any teaching that seemed contrary to his religion (Acts 8:3; 9:1,2). Because of this the Jewish leaders regarded him highly.

"Blameless" – he means outwardly he did not break God's law given through Moses (he did not worship other gods, or make idols, or steal, or commit adultery, etc). He observed its external requirements. He could find no fault in his own behavior (later on he learned that inwardly he was guilty of breaking one of the ten commandments – Rom 7:7-11). It is safe to say that no one ever tried harder than Paul as a Jew to be saved by his own efforts, to be righteous, to be acceptable to God.

3:7 This new view of things began with his experience on the Damascus road – Acts 9:3-6. He was enlightened as to the true value of things. What he had considered spiritually profitable he now saw was loss. Self-confidence and pride had kept him from Christ. Now he renounced it all – pride of birth, pride of race, pride of religion, pride in attainments. With the opening of his spiritual eyes, what had been pleasing to him became useless and vile. Self had been the center of Paul's life. Now Christ became the center. So it will be with all those who are truly enlightened and come to know Christ.

3:8 "All things" – not just the things he names in vs 4-6. In his eyes everything connected with himself, everything that religion can offer, everything in the world became as loss, useless and empty of value. Compare Matt 10:39; 16:24-26. Knowing Christ was the great prize that made everything else seem like rubbish. Compare John 17:3; 2 Cor 4:6. Paul means far more than merely knowing about Christ. He is speaking of a personal acquaintance and fellowship with Christ. For this he let everything else go into the garbage heap. It is sad that the majority of people on earth live for what Paul knew to be rubbish.

"The loss of all things" – Luke 14:33. If a person loses all things and gains Christ he is gaining far more than he loses, and should not dream of feeling sorry for himself. For in Christ is wisdom, righteousness, holiness, redemption, and every spiritual blessing – 1 Cor 1:30; Eph 1:3. What does it cost to be a real Christian? Everything a person has. What does a person gain by

him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God by faith; 10 that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death; 11 if by any means I might attain to the resurrection from among the

becoming a real Christian? Everything God has – 1 Cor 3:21; Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 6:10; 8:9.

3:9 "My own righteousness" – v 6; Rom 10:3. This is the only righteousness many people try for. It is all they know. But it will not be sufficient when they stand before God to be judged. Compare Luke 18:9-14; Isa 64:6.

"Righteousness. . . though faith" – Rom 3:21-26,28; 5:1; 10:10; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 2:16.

3:10 "That I may know him" – v 8. Paul wanted to know Christ better and better. He is speaking about a knowledge resulting from personal experience, not mere head knowledge gained from reading about Him. Compare 2 Pet 3:18.

"Power of his resurrection" – Paul knew something of this power, more than most men ever know (Col 1:29). But he wanted to experience more of it. Compare Eph 1:19,20; 3:20; Rom 6:4.

"Fellowship of his sufferings" – 1:29; Col 2:24; Rom 8:17. Paul had suffered much for Christ, more than most men ever do – 2 Cor 11:23-29. He wanted to know even more of this. He knew that to share Christ's life in His Body the Church, to enter more fully into his fellowship, meant to share His sufferings as well. And he did not think this was something to be avoided at all cost (as some seem to think). See Col 1:24. At one time in his life Paul made Christ suffer – Acts 9:4,5. Now he wanted to share the sufferings of Christ which continue as long as His people are on earth. Sharing in the power of Christ's resurrection means to share in His sufferings also. Sharing in His sufferings means to share in His comfort and peace now (2 Cor 1:5-7; John 16:33), and in His inheritance hereafter (Rom 8:17).

"Conformed to his death" – 2:8. Christ's death meant complete humility, obedience, and abandonment of Himself to God's will. Paul wanted to experience this more and more in himself. Compare 2 Cor 4:10-12; Gal 2:20. God's life in us comes out of our death to ourselves. See John 12:24,25.

3:11 "Resurrection from among the dead" – this implies that when some are raised others will not be. In other words, Paul is here speaking of the resurrection of believers (1 Cor 15:50-54; 1 Thess 4:14-17; Rev 20:5). But is this resurrection something to be "attained"? Was Paul in doubt whether he would "attain" it? There is no reason to think he was in doubt – 3:21; 1:6; Rom 5:8,9; 8:38,39; 2 Cor 5:1,2; 2 Tim 4:18. But he knew that the resurrection of believers came at the end of a life of faith, and that it was necessary to choose Christ and

dead.

12 Not that I have already attained, or have already been made perfect. But I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not consider myself as having laid hold of it. But one thing *I do*: forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Therefore, let us, as many as are fully

continue to choose Him, to believe and go on believing to the end – Col 1:23; Heb 3:6,14. Growing in the knowledge and fellowship of Christ, becoming more and more like Him, insured that this would be the course of his life. This perseverance in faith is one of the great themes of the letter to the Hebrews (indeed of the whole Bible).

3:12 "Not . . . obtained" – v 10. He knew something of Christ's power and fellowship but not all it was possible to experience.

"Perfect" – perfection was his aim, but not yet his experience. See notes on perfect at Matt 5:48. There may have been some in Philippi who claimed a kind of perfection and looked down on other believers (Paul wrote what he did in each of his letters to fit the spiritual condition of those he wrote to). If there were any there, Paul wanted them to know that he did not claim perfection for himself. If Paul the great apostle had not become perfect, we may be quite sure that we have not.

"I press on" – Heb 6:1,11,12.

"Lay hold" – he wanted to become all that Christ wanted him to become when He saved him and called him. He wanted to become as holy, as humble, as obedient, as loving, as fruitful as it was possible for a believer on earth to become. He was not content with his present spiritual condition. Past accomplishments did not satisfy him. He still wanted more of Christ in his life.

3:13 "One thing I do" – he had no divided heart, no double-mind about the spiritual life (compare Jam 1:8).

"Forgetting" – this does not mean blotting altogether from the memory. Such a thing is hardly possible to us. Paul meant that he deliberately and continuously refused to dwell on the past. To him the future was the important thing and he was willing to leave the failures and successes of the past behind him and press on. He did not want his failures to discourage him or his successes to make him self-satisfied and complacent.

"Stretching" – or "straining" – this word indicates great effort, like the effort of a runner using all his strength to win a race.

3:14 "The goal" – see 1 Cor 9:24-27; Acts 20:24.

"Prize" – he does not say what this will be. He knows it will be something tremendous – as great as the God of the universe can make it. On rewards see Matt 5:12;

mature, have this same mind. If you think differently in anything, God will reveal this also to you.

16 In any case, in *the measure* we have already attained, let us conduct ourselves by the same rule, let us have the same mind.

17 Brethren, you have us as an example, so join others in following me, and take note of those who walk so. 18 (For many walk *as* enemies of the cross of Christ. I have often told you of them, and now tell you even weeping. 19 Their end *is* destruction, their God *is* their stomach, and their

10:41,42; 16:27; 1 Cor 3:8,14; Heb 10:25; Rev 11:18; 22:12.

"Upward calling" – v 20; Heb 3:1.

3:15 "Mature" – or "perfect" – 1 Cor 2:6; Eph 1:13-15; Col 1:28; 4:12; Heb 5:14; 6:1. Paul did not claim perfection in the sense of being sinless or without flaw – v 12. But he knew that he was a mature believer, grown up spiritually in Christ. All such believers should take the view on perfection he has been setting forth – Paul knew that his teaching on perfection in the above verses was a revelation from God and he was praying that God would open their eyes to understand it (1:9,10), and he was confident that God would hear his prayers.

3:16 Believers should live up to the light they have. If they do so, God will surely give them more understanding of the truth.

3:17 "Example" – note and references at Acts 20:18. Paul not only taught believers how they should live, he showed them.

"Take note" – v 2; Rom 16:17.

3:18 "Weeping" – Acts 20:31. Paul wept because many who professed to believe in Christ proved by their behavior that they were Christ's enemies. It seems that everywhere a local church began such enemies of the cross soon appeared – Acts 20:29,30; Rom 16:17; 2 Cor 11:13-15; Gal 1:7; 6:12; Col 2:8,16; 2 Tim 3:1-7; 4:1-5. They had a form of godliness but denied its power – 1 Tim 3:5.

3:19 "Destruction" – Matt 7:13; John 17:12; Rom 9:22; 2 Thess 1:9.

"Stomach" – the word as used here probably stands for the "flesh", the whole life of the body in contrast to spiritual life (Rom 7:5). Some people worship and obey this "god." They are willing to lie, cheat, and steal for it. They say they are followers of Christ, but follow their own desires and lusts – Rom 16:18; 1 Tim 6:5; 2 Pet 2:3. A full stomach is what they want – not the fullness of God's Spirit.

"Shame" – in their terrible spiritual ignorance they boast about things which should make them ashamed. Compare 1 Cor 5:1,2,6; 2 Pet 2:18; Jude 16; Ps 10:3; 52:1. The only glory they have is what Paul knew to be rubbish and filth.

"Earthly things" – Rom 8:5-8. Their desires are not for spiritual things (no matter how much they may speak or preach about them), but for the passing things of this world (1 John 2:16). Money, possessions,

glory *is* in their shame, *and* their mind *is on* earthly things.) 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from there we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body, that it may become like his glorious body, according to the power that enables him to subdue all things under himself.

4 Therefore, my brethren dearly loved and longed for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord, *my* dearly loved *ones*.

2 I plead with Euodias and plead with Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 And I beg you also, true colleague, to

prestige, popularity, satisfaction of the desires of the body – these they love and pursue. This is the broad way which leads to destruction.

3:20 Believers are in the world, but they do not belong to the world – John 17:6,11, 14,15. Their city, their country is above – Heb 11:10,16; 13:14; Gal 4:26. They belong to heaven. Their hopes, their desires are fixed on it. God is their King. They look forward to the return of their Saviour – Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 4:14-18; Heb 9:28.

3:21 "Transform" – 1 Cor 15:50-53.

"His glorious body" – 1 Cor 15:42-44,49; 1 John 3:2; Rom 8:23-25.

"Subdue" – 1 Cor 15:24,25; Heb 2:8; Eph 1:19.

4:1 "Longed for" – 1:7,8.

"Joy and crown" – 2:16; 1 Thess 2:19 – a joy to him then, both a joy and a crown afterwards.

"Stand firm" – Eph 6:11,13,14; etc.

4:2 We do not know who these two Christian women were, but their quarrel alarmed Paul. He begged them to settle their dispute. Compare 2:1,2. He well knew what factions and divisions can do to a group of believers – 1 Cor 1:10-13; 3:3,4.

4:3 "True colleague" – we do not know who this was. Paul evidently considered him able to help bring peace between the two women.

"Book of life" – compare Ex 32:32; Ps 69:28; 139:16; Luke 10:20; Rev 3:5; 20:12-15. How did Paul know their names were in the book of life? By observing their deeds and words. Compare 1 Thess 1:4-10.

4:4 See 3:1; Neh 8:10.

4:5 "Gentleness" – 2 Cor 10:1; 1 Tim 3:3; Jam 3:17.

"The Lord is at hand" – this may mean He is near to believers now (Ps 145:18; Matt 28:20; Heb 13:5), or perhaps that His second coming is near (Jam 5:8; Rev 1:3).

4:6 Here is God's way for us to have continual peace of mind and heart in all circumstances of life (except when sinning – that will always rob believers of their peace).

"Anxious" – anxiety reveals that trust in God or understanding of His truth is weak. Worry and faith are like oil and water; they do not mix. See Matt 6:25-34.

"Nothing" – we should refuse to worry

help those women who laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* my other fellow workers, whose names *are* in the book of life. 4 Rejoice in the Lord always, *and* again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord *is* at hand. 6 Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make your requests known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* honest, whatever things *are*

even in the most difficult or alarming situations. If we are believers, God is in us, near us, around us, with us. He is our Father who loves us beyond our ability to grasp, and has power without limit to use in our behalf. Our part is to cast all our care on Him by faith and to rest in Him and in His promises – 1 Pet 5:8.

There are different kinds of prayer and Paul here uses four different words to indicate some of them.

"With thanksgiving" – see notes at Gen 18:32; Lev 7:12,13; Ps 7:17; 50:14,15; Eph 6:18; 1 Thess 5:17,18; Heb 13:15. Without giving thanks to God can we imagine that the other forms of prayer mentioned here will be effective? Will not a lack of thanksgiving contribute to anxiety of heart?

"Requests. . .to God" – not to people. See also Matt 7:11.

4:7 The peace of God means here the peace He gives. It is like His own peace. God does not worry about anything. In the believer peace results from submission to God and trust in Him – Isa 26:3. See also John 14:1,27; 16:33; Col 3:15. This peace is like the "rest" Jesus promised in Matt 11:28-30. Believers can have peace in situations where others could never have it, and they will not be able to understand how they have it and will wonder at it. This peace of God will act as a guard at the door of their minds and hearts, and will keep out the anxieties, worries, and disturbing thoughts that so greatly trouble those without this peace.

4:8 "Think on these things" – our mind, our thoughts are exceedingly important in the spiritual life. To a large extent they will determine our actions. Believers should have minds made new – Rom 12:2. They should set their thoughts on heavenly things – Col 3:2. They should keep their thoughts on the things of God's Word. See Ps 1:1,2. Sinful things, worldly things, evil things are attractive to the sinful nature in us – Gal 5:16,17. If we let our thoughts dwell on such things we may be overcome with the desire for them. If our thoughts are always on true, pure, and excellent things we will be better able to reject and subdue sinful desires. So we should be very careful what we read, what sort of things we watch, what kind of music

just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue, and if *there is* anything praiseworthy, think on these things. 9 Those things that you have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

10 But I greatly rejoice in the Lord, that now at last your care for me has flourished again. Before you certainly cared, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking about *my* needs. For I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. 12 I know both what it is to have little, and I know how to have plenty. Everywhere and in everything I am instructed both *how* to be full and to be hungry, both to have plenty and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

14 However, you have done well, in that you shared in my trouble. 15 Now you Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel *there*,

when I was leaving Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you. 16 For even to Thessalonica you sent again and again for my need. 17 Not that I am seeking a gift. I seek to have fruit going abundantly into your account. 18 But I have everything in abundance. I am full, having received by Epaphroditus the things from you. *They are* a sweet-smelling aroma, a sacrifice acceptable *and* well-pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now to our God and Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, chiefly those who belong to Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all.

Amen.

we listen to, where we allow our imaginations to take us. If we fill our minds with things unworthy for believers in Christ we may soon be living lives unworthy of Christ. **4:9** God set Paul forth as an example to believers. We can learn from him what we should think, believe and practice – 3:17.

"God of peace" – Rom 15:33; 16:20; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20. Only if the God of peace is with us can we have the peace of God in us – v 17.

4:10 "Rejoice" – 1:4,5. He was not happy for his sake, because he had received something. He was happy because it meant a reward for them from God – v 17. This is a wonderful attitude to take toward those who give to us.

4:11,12 See 1 Tim 6:6-8; Heb 13:5; Luke 3:14. Who is the truly rich person on earth? He who is content with what he has. Contentment is something Paul "learned", not something he had by nature. Contentment goes along with the peace of God which guards the hearts of those who trust Him. For some of the situations in which Paul learned to be contented see 2 Cor 4:8,9; 6:4-10; 11:23-27. He was not writing this letter from a mansion, in the midst of plenty, but from prison – 1:12,13. The desire of some Christians to pile up money, possessions, luxuries, etc, is contrary to God's Word and exceedingly harmful to the spiritual life.

4:13 "All things" – he felt he was able to face any circumstance of life, any task, any difficulty and come through victoriously.

"Through Christ" – Rom 8:37; 2 Cor 2:14; 3:4-6; Eph 1:19; 3:20. Paul's confidence was not in his own strength, or in self-control or self-discipline (though he practiced these – 1 Cor 9:25-27).

"Strengthens" – Ps 73:26; Isa 40:31; 2 Cor 12:8,10. Every believer should learn, and can learn, what Paul learned here, and

should never feel that he or she can do nothing.

4:14-16 See 1:5. In the matter of giving they were an ideal church. See also 2 Cor 8:1-5.

"Thessalonica" – Acts 17:1.

4:17 Verse 10.

4:18 "Sweet-smelling aroma" – compare John 12:3; Matt 26:10; Lev 1:9; 2:2; etc.

"Sacrifice" – 2:17; Heb 13:16.

4:19 They had met Paul's needs – v 18. This was out of their great poverty – 2 Cor 8:2. God would meet their needs according to His great riches. There is a principle at work in this matter which we should all learn and put into practice. See Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 9:6-8.

"All your need" – not all we may want, but all that He sees we really need. Matt 6:33; 7:9-11; Ps 23:1; 37:25. God supplies all our spiritual needs also – v 23; Eph 1:3; 3:16-20.

"Riches" – Rom 2:4; 9:23; Eph 1:7,18; 2:7; 3:8,16. Do believers need to be anxious as though God did not have enough to supply their needs? Absolutely not – v 6; Matt 9:29. If it is necessary to beg people for anything, God can do this on the believer's behalf. That is, He can move the hearts of His people to help those in need much more successfully than they can. We should learn to leave these matters in His hands where they belong and to trust Him only. We should never imagine that God cannot do anything or will not do anything. See also Num 11:23.

4:20 Rom 16:27; etc.

4:21 "Saint" – Rom 1:7.

4:22 "Caesar's household" – 1:13. He probably means those in the service of the emperor or civil servants or government officials.

4:22 "Grace" – Rom 1:7; 16:20. This is how all our needs are met.