

Philippians

1:1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of the Messiah Jesus, to all those who have been set apart in the Messiah Jesus, who are in Philippi, including the overseers and assistants.¹ **1:2** Grace to you and shalom from God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah.²

1:3 I give thanks to my God when I remind myself of you,³ **1:4** always making a request with joy on behalf of all of you in my every request,⁴ **1:5** on the basis of your participation in the good news from the first day until now,⁵ **1:6** because I have been persuaded of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will be in the process of bringing it to its intended goal until the day of the Messiah Jesus,⁶ **1:7** just as it is right for me to think this about all of you because I have you in my heart, since, in both my imprisonment and the defense and confirmation of the good news, you all are participants with me in grace.⁷

1:8 God is my witness as to how I greatly long for you all with the affections of the Messiah Jesus.⁸ **1:9** And this I pray, that your love will increase still more and more in the midst of an accurate understanding and all discernment,⁹ **1:10** so that you may prove out to your advantage the things that are different, in order that you may be pure and without fault in the day of the Messiah,¹⁰ **1:11** because you have been filled with the fruit of justification, the fruit that is in light of Jesus the Messiah for the glory and praise of God.¹¹

1:12 Also, I want you to know, brothers, that my circumstances have resulted in more progress for the good news,¹² **1:13** so that it has become clear among the whole praetorian guard and all the rest that my imprisonment is because of the Messiah.¹³

1:14 In addition, many more brothers in the Lord have become persuaded because of my bonds to dare even more to speak the message without fear.¹⁴ **1:15** Some, on the one hand, indeed proclaim the Messiah from envy and rivalry, but some proclaim him from good will.¹⁵ **1:16** The latter do so out of love, knowing that the purpose of my existence is for the defense of the good news.¹⁶ **1:17** The former proclaim the Messiah out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can create stress for me in my imprisonment.¹⁷ **1:18** What is the upshot of all this? Only that in every way, whether people are pretending to speak truth or they fully intend to speak the truth, the Messiah is being proclaimed. Indeed, in this I rejoice. Yes, for sure I will rejoice.¹⁸

1:19 I know that, in the light of your request and the assistance of the Spirit of Jesus the Messiah, this will turn out for my salvation.¹⁹ **1:20** I know that, according to my eager anticipation and hope, I will not be ashamed in any circumstance, but in all boldness as always, even now the Messiah will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.²⁰ **1:21** Therefore, for me, to live is the Messiah, and to die is profitable.²¹

1:22 Consequently, if life in the flesh is what results, this will mean fruitful labor for me. And I do not know which I would choose.²² **1:23** Indeed, I am stressed out by these two things, while having a strong desire to depart and be with the Messiah, for this would be much

better.²³ **1:24** Yet, to remain in the flesh is more advantageous for you.²⁴ **1:25** And being persuaded of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy of belief,²⁵ **1:26** so that your boasting may abound in the Messiah Jesus because of me through my appearing again to you.²⁶

1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the good news of the Messiah, so that whether I come and see you or I am absent, I may hear about you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, struggling together in one soul with respect to belief in the good news,²⁷ **1:28** and in no way frightened by those who are opposing you, which, for them, is a sign of destruction, but, for you, a sign of salvation. And this is from God,²⁸ **1:29** because that which concerns the Messiah was graced to you—not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,²⁹ **1:30** while you have the same struggle which you saw in me and now hear to be in me.³⁰

2:1 Therefore, if there is a certain persuasion in the Messiah, if there is a certain comfort of love, if there is a certain participation of spirit, if there is a certain compassion and sympathy,³¹ **2:2** fill out my joy so that you think the same thing. While having the same love, being united, thinking one thing,³² **2:3** and not according to conflict or selfish ambition, but with humility, consider one another as being superior to yourselves.³³ **2:4** Do not watch out for your own interests but for the interests of others.³⁴

2:5 Think this way in yourselves, that which also was in the Messiah Jesus,³⁵ **2:6** who, while existing in a form of God, did not consider being equal to God something that he had to claim.³⁶ **2:7** Instead, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave. While being in the likeness of men, and with respect to his outward form, being found as a man,³⁷ **2:8** he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, indeed, death on a cross.³⁸ **2:9** Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave to him the name that is above every name,³⁹ **2:10** so that, at the name of Jesus, every knee will bend, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,⁴⁰ **2:11** and every tongue will confess that Jesus the Messiah is Lord to the glory of God, the Father.⁴¹

2:12 Therefore, those whom I love, just as you always obey, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work at your own salvation with fear and trembling,⁴² **2:13** because God is the One who is accomplishing in you both the desiring and the working on behalf of His good satisfaction.⁴³

2:14 Do all things without grumbling and arguing,⁴⁴ **2:15** so that you will be without fault and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a corrupt and perverted generation/race, among whom you shine as lights in the world,⁴⁵ **2:16** holding on to the message of life, so that I may boast in the day of the Messiah, because I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.⁴⁶

2:17 But if, indeed, I am being poured out as a drink offering for a sacrifice and an act of worship for your belief, I rejoice, and I rejoice with all of you.⁴⁷ **2:18** And you also should rejoice in the same way and rejoice with me.⁴⁸

2:19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I also will be encouraged when I learn what is going on with you,⁴⁹ **2:20** for I have no one who is like-minded, who will genuinely be concerned about your affairs.⁵⁰ **2:21** Everyone is pursuing his own affairs, not those of Jesus the Messiah.⁵¹ **2:22** And you know how he has proved

himself, that as a child serves his father, he served with me for the good news.⁵² **2:23**
Therefore, on the one hand, I am hoping for this, to send him immediately as I see about
things concerning me.⁵³ **2:24** On the other hand, I am persuaded in the Lord that I myself
will also come soon.⁵⁴

2:25 And I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow
worker and fellow soldier, as well as your apostle and minister to my need,⁵⁵ **2:26**
because he was longing for you all, and he was greatly distressed because you had
heard that he was sick.⁵⁶ **2:27** Indeed, he was sick to the point of death. But God had
mercy on him, and not only on him, but also on me, so that I would not be overwhelmed
with grief.⁵⁷ **2:28** Therefore, I sent him all the more eagerly, so that when you saw him,
you could rejoice again, and I could be less anxious.⁵⁸ **2:29** As a result, welcome him
because of the Lord with all joy, and hold such men as him in high regard,⁵⁹ **2:30** because
he came close to dying for the work of the Messiah, risking his life, so that he could
make up for what is lacking in your service to me.⁶⁰

3:1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord.

To write the same things to you is no trouble for me, and the certain truth for you.⁶¹ **3:2**
Watch out for the dogs. Watch out for the evil workers. Watch out for those who are
badly-cut [κατατομή].⁶² **3:3** For we are the well-cut [περιτομή], those who serve with a
spirit from God and who boast in the Messiah Jesus and who put no confidence in the
flesh,⁶³ **3:4** even though, indeed, I could have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else
thinks that he could have confidence in the flesh, I more so—⁶⁴ **3:5** circumcised
[περιτομη] on the eighth day, from the ethnic group of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a
Hebrew from Hebrews, according to the Torah – a Pharisee,⁶⁵ **3:6** according to zeal –
someone who is pursuing [διώκων] the gathering, according to the morality that is in the
Torah – one who has become acceptable.⁶⁶

3:7 But whatever things were profitable to me, these things I consider to have produced
loss on account of the Messiah.⁶⁷ **3:8** More than this, I consider all things to have
produced loss on account of the surpassing greatness of knowing the Messiah Jesus,
my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I consider them but garbage
in order that I may have the Messiah as my profit,⁶⁸ **3:9** and I may be found to be in him,
not having my own justification which is by virtue of the Torah, but that which is through
belief in the Messiah, the justification from God on the basis of belief,⁶⁹ **3:10** so that I may
know him and the powerful effect of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings,
while being conformed to his death,⁷⁰ **3:11** if somehow I may attain to the resurrection of
the dead.⁷¹

3:12 Not that I have already received it or I have already myself completed it
[τετελείωμαι], but I am pursuing [διώκω] it, if indeed I may reach it on the basis of which
I also was reached by the Messiah Jesus.⁷² **3:13** Brothers, I do not think of myself as
having reached it. But one thing I do—on the one hand, I forget the things that are
behind me, and on the other hand, I stretch forward towards the things that are ahead of
me.⁷³ **3:14** According to the goal, I am pursuing the prize of the upward call of God in the
Messiah Jesus.⁷⁴

3:15 Therefore, as many as are mature [τέλειοι], let us think this. And, if anyone thinks
differently, God will also reveal this to you,⁷⁵ **3:16** nevertheless to conform to the same
thing to which we have attained.⁷⁶

3:17 Become imitators of me, brothers, and pay attention to those who walk in this way, just as you have an example—us.⁷⁷ 3:18 For many, whom I often told you about and now mention while weeping, live as enemies of the cross of the Messiah,⁷⁸ 3:19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthy things.⁷⁹

3:20 For our citizenship exists in the heavens, from which we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus the Messiah.⁸⁰ 3:21 He will transform our body of humiliation so that it conforms to the body of his glory according to the activity when he exerts himself powerfully and subjects all things to himself.⁸¹

4:1 So that, my brothers whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way. Beloved,⁸² 4:2 I exhort Euodia and I exhort Suintichay to think the same way in the Lord.⁸³ 4:3 Yes, I ask also you, genuine fellow-worker, to lend help to these women, who have worked with me in the cause of the good news, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life.⁸⁴

4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, “Rejoice.”⁸⁵ 4:5 Let your gentleness become known to all men. The Lord is near.⁸⁶ 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in every situation, with prayer and entreaty along with thankfulness, let your requests be made known to God.⁸⁷ 4:7 And the shalom of God, which is better than anything that your mind can think of, will guard your hearts and minds because of the Messiah Jesus.⁸⁸

4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, what is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is well-spoken of, if something is morally excellent, if something is worthy of praise, think about these things.⁸⁹ 4:9 The things that you learned, received, heard, and have seen because of me, do these things. And the God of shalom will be with you.⁹⁰

4:10 And I rejoice greatly in the Lord that now at last you have renewed your concern for me. You indeed were concerned, but you lacked opportunity.⁹¹ 4:11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.⁹² 4:12 I know indeed how to be humbled, and I know how to have success. In everything and in all things I have learned the secret, whether to be satisfied, to be hungry, to be in abundance, and to be lacking.⁹³ 4:13 I am able to handle all things because of the One who strengthens me.⁹⁴ 4:14 Nevertheless, you did well when you joined me in my tribulation.⁹⁵

4:15 And you indeed know, Philippians, that in the beginning of the good news, when I came from Macedonia, no church participated with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone,⁹⁶ 4:16 because even in Thessalonica you sent me something more than once for my need.⁹⁷ 4:17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit which increases in your account.⁹⁸ 4:18 And I am receiving everything, and I have an abundance. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the things from you, a sweet smelling fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.⁹⁹ 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches because of the glory because of the Messiah Jesus.¹⁰⁰

4:20 Glory be to our God and Father into the ages of ages. Amen.¹⁰¹ 4:21 Greet everyone who is set apart in the Messiah Jesus. The brothers with me greet you.¹⁰² 4:22 All those

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Translation and Notes by Earle Craig

who are set apart greet you, especially those of the household of Caesar.¹⁰³ 4:23 The
grace of the Lord Jesus the Messiah be with your spirit.¹⁰⁴

¹ Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος δούλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἀγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις ἄσὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις – In Acts 16, Paul saw a vision while he was in Troas of a man imploring him to come to Macedonia. So he left for there and soon arrived in Philippi, a “leading city of the district of Macedonia.” One of the first people he met was Lydia, “a seller of purple fabrics” and “a worshiper of God.” She and her household respond with authentic belief to the message of Jesus as the Messiah. Paul, with Silas, was eventually jailed in Philippi, but God miraculously broke him out. The jailer becomes a believer, and soon afterwards Paul and Silas leave Philippi. Paul’s conversion was between A.D. 36 and 39, and he visited Philippi between A.D. 50 and 54. Eventually, he reaches Rome around A.D. 60 and is imprisoned there for two years, awaiting an audience with Caesar Nero to bring a conclusion to the case of his arrest in Jerusalem for supposedly violating Jewish Law by bringing Gentiles into the temple. In the meantime, Epaphroditus has brought a financial gift from the Philippians to Paul, and he has related to Paul the circumstances among the Christians in Philippi (4:15-19). However, somehow the Philippians have heard that Epaphroditus almost died because of the NT message, and Paul has sent him back to them with this letter so that they can be encouraged by his still being alive (2:25-30). In addition, Paul plans to send Timothy to them soon as someone whom he knows can continue to relate the NT message very accurately, so that Paul can be informed of and encouraged by all that is happening among them (2:19-24). This is Paul’s way of saying that Timothy is one of his *bona fide* apostolic co-workers with whom he trusts implicitly to convey accurately the ideas of the NT message.

² χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Paul encapsulates his overall desire for the Philippian Christians with the two words grace and shalom. The first is God’s sovereign and independent kindness towards them to change them inwardly, cause their inwardness and belief to endure, and to grant them mercy and shalom, an eternal existence of moral perfection free from any harm in the eternal Kingdom of God. The second refers to this latter eternal existence of moral perfection. It is these two words that sum up God’s love and purposes for His people, both Jews and Gentiles who have embraced Jesus as their King and Priest now that he has come for the first time.

³ Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνηίᾳ ὑμῶν – Paul’s memories of the Philippians are based upon both his initial visit to them around A.D. 50 and his other brief visits during his third missionary journey (A.D. 54-58). These memories are a pleasant reminder of not only their belief, but also God’s grace, which causes their belief, as Paul goes on to say in this paragraph. Here he is in Rome under house arrest with the possibility of being condemned to death by Nero, and his first words after his introduction in this letter refer to his gratitude for the Philippians’ biblical belief and his prayers for them to persevere until the end of their lives, a perseverance that he is convinced will happen because of God’s promise to work graciously in His people throughout their lives.

⁴ πάντοτε ἐν πάσῃ δεήσῃ μου ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν, μετὰ χαρᾶς τὴν δέησιν ποιοῦμενος – Cf. Philippians 1:8-11. And, in the light of all of Paul’s letters, most likely his request to God on behalf of the Philippian Christians is for the endurance of their belief to the end of the lives along with the growth of their understanding of the biblical message, especially the part about the Messiah. But, because of what Paul has observed of these people, that God initially caused them to believe the NT message, and now is continuing to do so ten years later, Paul has the confidence to make his requests to God on their behalf with joy, knowing that his requests will not go unanswered.

⁵ ἐπὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἀπὸ ὁτὴς πρώτης ἡμέρας ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν – When Paul first arrived in Philippi around A.D. 50-52, he observed many of the people becoming believers in Jesus as the Messiah. This was “the first day” of their belief. Eight to ten years later, after his arrest in Jerusalem and journey to Rome to appeal to Nero, he has received word that they are still believers. He implies that he has heard recently through friends who have visited him in Rome, especially Epaphroditus (cf. 4:18), that the Philippian Christians are continuing in their belief. This certainly brings joy to the heart of the apostle of the Gentiles. Ten years of persevering belief for Gentiles who were originally pagan idolators (as well as proselytes of the Judaism, like Lydia) would have certainly been a remarkable thing in the Roman Empire of the 1st century. Thus, Paul’s request with joy for God to continuing working in their hearts so that they reach in the end of their lives with persevering belief has its basis in what God has already done to get them to this point ten years down the road.

⁶ πεποιθὸς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ὅτι ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐπιτελέσει ἄχρι ἡμέρας Ἰησοῦ – Paul could be making a simple yet profound theological statement about God’s promise to cause those whom He has predestined to persevere in their belief and obtain eternal life—the intended goal of Christians. However, it makes more sense in this context that he is making this theological statement specifically in reference to the Philippian Christians, because now, ten years later, they are still believing in Jesus as the Messiah, with not much help externally other than the teaching that they received from Paul ten years earlier and during some brief visits while he was on his third missionary journey (A.D. 54-58), along with whatever their elders could continue to remind them from what Paul had originally taught them.

Therefore, Paul must be persuaded that they are receiving a tremendous amount of *internal* help from the Spirit of God and, thus, from God’s promise to sustain the belief of those whom He has chosen for eternal life. Paul has in mind that possibly these Philippian believers will live until the return of Jesus when he will destroy the Man of Lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2) and set up the Messianic government in Israel (Daniel 2, Revelation), which he calls the “day of the

Messiah.” This is Paul’s way of saying that everyone needs to be ready for the return of the Messiah, because it may occur sooner rather than later. No one knows, not even Jesus (Matthew 24).

⁷ Καθώς ἐστὶν δίκαιον ἐμοὶ τοῦτο φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν διὰ τὸ ἔχειν με ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμᾶς, ἐν τε τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου καὶ ἔν τῃ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου συγκοινωνοῦς μου τῆς ἡγάριτος πάντας ὑμᾶς ὄντας – Paul has received a nice gift in his imprisonment from the Philippians (cf. 4:18). As a result, he is encouraged as to the authenticity of their belief—by virtue of the fact that they care so deeply about an apostle of the Messiah, specifically the apostle who first told them about the Messiah! Thus, Paul expresses his genuine concern for these believers by saying that they are in his heart, i.e., he loves them genuinely as fellow Christians. He also expresses his confidence in the authenticity of their belief by saying that they participate in grace with him, which he has already mentioned on the basis of the evidence that he saw when he first visited them 10 years earlier and that he has received recently from Eraphroditus.

⁸ μάρτυς γάρ ἔμou ὁ θεὸς ὡς ἐπιποθῶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ἐν σπλάγγνοις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ – Paul is an apostle of the Messiah. Therefore, he represents the Messiah with not only an accurate and full presentation of the biblical message with respect to the Messiah, but also the sentiments and feelings of the Messiah towards God’s people, i.e. affections of love, care, and concern for their eternal well-being. In other words, just as Jesus would want to be with his people, the Philippian Christians, Paul wants to be with them too.

⁹ Καὶ τοῦτο προσεύχομαι, ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ὑμῶν ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον ἔπιπροσέυη ἐν ἐπιγνώσει καὶ πάσῃ αἰσθήσει – Paul is not explicit about the object of the Philippians’ love that he hopes increases. And, in the light of v. 8 where he mentions the Messiah’s feelings towards the Philippians, it makes sense that Paul is referring to the Philippians’ love for God and the Messiah. It is this love in particular that Paul hopes will increase with the accurate knowledge and understanding of the apostolic and biblical message that the Philippians’ will continue to gain. Thus, it is a correct knowledge of God that leads to an appropriate love for God, because a person really knows who God is.

¹⁰ εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα, ἵνα ἦτε εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ – Paul is saying that it is the Philippian Christians’ growth in love for and knowledge of God and the Messiah that will directly have an effect on how they live their lives. It will cause them to pursue morality, which will be radically different from the lives of other people in the world who remain in rebellion against God. In addition, there will be a monumental future advantage of this kind of life. God will consider them qualified for eternal salvation when Jesus returns and stands with them at the final judgment. They will lack the kind of fault, a rebellious heart, that would disqualify a morally depraved human being from acquiring God’s eternal mercy and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God. Therefore, by “pure” and “without fault,” Paul does not mean morally perfect. He means a genuine and unwavering commitment to being forgiven by God for one’s moral depravity and rebellion. In other words, it is a purity of inward commitment, not a purity of morality that God will be looking for at the final judgment and that will trigger His eternal forgiveness of a person.

¹¹ πεπληρωμένοι καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης τὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς δόξαν καὶ ἔπαινον θεοῦ – Considering that καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης is the effect of justification, i.e., of being marked by God as a person who stands to be forgiven in eternity, instead of Paul’s referring to the effect of morality/righteousness, he is saying that God continues to “fill,” that is, work powerfully within them through His Spirit, to push and motivate them towards not only continuing to believe in the Messiah now but also continuing to hope expectantly and confidently in their eternal salvation from God’s condemnation. This will be the cause their arriving at the end of their lives with authentic, eternal-life-gaining faith. Thus, Paul is explicit that their love, knowledge, belief, and moral lives are the result of God’s having forgiven them through His inward work in them and the promise of Jesus as their advocate at the judgment. God is the cause. They and their lives are the effect. And the final outcome will permit God and all His creatures to think of Him as the greatest and most magnificent being. Paul is saying that this is the whole purpose of God’s rescuing morally depraved human beings who do not deserve His forgiveness and eternal life.

¹² Γινώσκειν δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι τὰ κατ’ ἐμὲ μᾶλλον εἰς προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐλήλυθεν – Paul’s God-given responsibility is to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Therefore, even in his imprisonment in Rome, Gentiles are still coming to belief in Jesus as the Messiah as they come in contact with Paul and his obsession with talking about Jesus as the Messiah.

¹³ ὥστε τοὺς δεσμούς μου φανεροὺς ἐν Χριστῷ γενέσθαι ἐν ὄλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πάσιν – Indeed, the emperor’s own personal guards, the praetorian guards, who are Paul’s personal guards too, have obviously become aware of who Paul is and what he is all about with respect to Jesus. It seems that this news has spread even into other parts of the community close to the emperor, including perhaps more of the Roman military. Certainly, it would be impossible for anyone assigned to guard Paul not to hear the biblical message eventually. The implication here, too, is that some of these Roman guards and officials have become believers in Jesus as the Messiah (cf. Philippians 4:22).

¹⁴ καὶ τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐν κυρίῳ πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου περισσοτέρως τολμᾶν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν – Paul’s success in his imprisonment of spreading the message of Jesus as the Messiah has provided other Christians in Rome with the motivation and courage to talk about this message more in their contexts, too.

¹⁵ τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φόβον καὶ ἔριν, τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι’ εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν – There are two kinds of people who are motivated by Paul’s imprisonment and success in seeing more Gentiles come to belief in Jesus to spread the biblical message in their environments in Rome. One group are genuinely concerned about presenting the truth of Jesus as the Messiah and of God’s grace. The other group are jealous of Paul’s success among the praetorian

guard and, knowing that there are always elements hostile to Paul's message, talk about Jesus hoping to create problems for Paul in his appeal to the emperor. Perhaps, they would even like to get rid of Paul by having the emperor conclude that he is a traitor to the Roman Empire because he posits another and rival king, so that the emperor sentences him to death. Paul definitely seems aware that this is a possibility. Cf. Acts 17:6,7 – When [the hostile and unbelieving Jews in Thessalonica] did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have upset the world have come here also; and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.” Therefore, these “brothers” may be unbelieving Jews who are forced to use a different strategy from those in Thessalonica, because they cannot grab Paul and drag him before the city authorities. He is also there—ready to go before Nero, so that if the unbelieving Jews can make it even more onerous for Paul in his appeal to Nero by expressing exactly what he is saying about God, His grace, and Jesus as the eternal king, then this is what they hope to do by publicly talking about the Jesus in a completely truthful and apostolic manner. Indeed, the more accurately these unbelieving Jews express Paul's own ideas, the more difficult they can make Paul's defense before Nero.

¹⁶ οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἀγάπης, εἰδότες ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κείμεναι – Some of the brothers have a love for God such that they want to see Paul's responsibility of being the apostle to the Gentiles furthered along by their own participation with him in presenting the message of Jesus as the Messiah. Indeed, Paul's courage in the midst of imprisonment gives them courage to act like him. Thus, they are enhancing the progress of the biblical message and seeing it spread among the people at Rome.

¹⁷ οἱ δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας ὅταν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν, οὐχ ἀγνῶς, οἰόμενοι θλίψιν ἔγειρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου.³ – It would seem that the stress which Paul could encounter would include being sentenced to death by Nero.

¹⁸ Τί γάρ; ἄλλῃ ὅτι παντὶ τρόπῳ, εἴτε προφάσει εἴτε ἀληθείᾳ, Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω. Ἄλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι – Paul is sanctioning the message of the gospel that both kinds of people are presenting, but not the motives of both. He calls their message “truth.” Other letters and even Philippians 3 demonstrate that Paul can rejoice at the teaching of those who are trying to compete with him only because the information that they are presenting is actually the truth and not a perversion of it like the people whom he mentions in Philippians 3 and Galatians. Thus, while the false teachers in Philippians 1 are wanting to cause Paul distress, they are actually mimicking Paul's message perfectly, including his explanation of *God's grace* through the Messiah. As a result, Paul can honestly rejoice in their presentation of the message, because it gets at the point clearly and accurately. Cf. 1 Corinthians where he criticizes the Corinthian Christian community for following a distortion of the gospel that has resulted in their moral judgment being clouded. Thus, only the precise apostolic message is what Paul is willing to support.

¹⁹ οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Just as Paul has been praying for the enduring belief of the Philippians for the sake of their eternal salvation, he expects them to be praying for the same thing for him, even implying that his imprisonment and possible death depending upon Nero's decision is a test of his own belief. The “this” in the context are his circumstances whereby the message of Jesus as the Jewish King and Messiah is being spread by both kinds of people in the midst of his imprisonment. Then, along with the Philippians' prayers for his eternal salvation in the midst of God's promises and grace, Paul will obtain eternal salvation, and he knows it. Paul goes on to say that he looks forward to both life and death, thus making clearer that the “salvation” in this verse is eternal. He is also convinced that it is the internal work of the Spirit of God which will enable him to endure in his belief, whether through life or through death, i.e., regardless of what effect the outside proclamation of the biblical message will have on his appeal to the emperor. So, in this paragraph, Paul's focus is on eternal salvation and life.

²⁰ κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαταδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου, ὅτι ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι ἀλλ' ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματί μου, εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου – Paul's firm knowledge of the biblical message of the Messiah leads him to be eagerly excited and anticipating with confidence his own eternal salvation, which, in turn, convinces him that God will continue working in his heart to cause him to endure in his belief in Jesus as the Messiah right up to the point of his death, regardless of how it occurs. In fact, no sense of being embarrassed by such a message, which naturally produces hostility in others because of their rebellion against God, will dissuade him from boldly believing and proclaiming it, even if this results in his being put to death for it.

²¹ Ἐμοὶ γάρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος – Life and death are both viable options for Paul, because they both involve the Messiah, while death certainly will result in eternal life for him. He cannot lose either way.

²² εἰ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκί, τοῦτό μοι καρπὸς ἔργου, καὶ τί ἰαίρησομαι οὐ γνωρίζω – Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles, and this responsibility implies that he will be successful in seeing Gentiles believe in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus. Consequently, if Nero frees him, he will continue to labor in presenting the message of the Messiah, which, in turn, will result in more Gentiles coming to belief in Jesus. If he dies because this is what Nero decides, then he will existentially gain eternal life, and this option is so attractive, too, that Paul is unsure which he would choose, if forced to choose.

²³ συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο, τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων ὅεις τὸ ἀναλύσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, ἢ πολλῶ [γάρ] μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον – In fact, eternal life is actually a more attractive option than even being the apostle to the Gentiles on this earth, regardless of how much success he experiences as such. Nevertheless, the two options actually create a sense of

stress within him, because Paul has such a heart for the Gentiles to believe in the Jewish Messiah that he would want to continue being their apostle and seeing more of them become believers in the Jewish Messiah.

²⁴ τὸ δὲ ἐπιμένειν ὅ[ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ἀναγκαιότερον δι' ὑμᾶς – Certainly, for Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles to continue to exist in the present realm and to instruct and encourage the Philippian Christians in their belief would be of great benefit to them, indeed more benefit than if he died, because they would lose their authoritative source of the truth and have to rely on only one another to remind themselves of it.

²⁵ καὶ τοῦτο πεποιθώς οἶδα ὅτι μενῶ καὶ ἵπαραμενῶ πάσιν ὑμῖν εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως – Somehow Paul has become convinced that he will live and not die, so that he may be of earthly benefit to the Philippians, thus resulting in the growth of joy and belief in them.

²⁶ ἴνα τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν περισσεύῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, διὰ τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς – Assuming Paul will be released from prison when Nero makes his decision, he will then travel to Philippi at some point to visit with his readers again—for the third time in ten or so years. Thus, the additional instruction in the biblical message with which Paul will be able to provide them will enable them to brag appropriately about the Jewish Messiah, Jesus.

²⁷ Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὸν ἰακούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου – The only logical deduction from what Paul has said so far in this letter is that the Gentile, Christian readers should continue their pursuit of morality in light of the message of the Messiah that will result in their eternal salvations. And Paul assures them that this should happen regardless of whether or not he makes it back to Philippi after being released from prison. Nevertheless, Paul will hear about this, no matter where he is, that they are collectively firm in their belief in the apostolic message of the Jewish Messiah, just as he has heard now from Epaphroditus.

²⁸ καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἐνδειξις ἀπολείας, ἡμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ – Their collective and firm belief will also result in courage in the face of opposition to the biblical message, which itself says to those who oppose them that they will incur God's anger and destruction at the judgment while the Philippian Christians will receive God's mercy and eternal escape from His condemnation, which all comes from God.

²⁹ ὅτι ἡμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεῦν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν – The Philippian Christians will receive God's mercy because belief in the message of the Messiah was gifted to them through God's grace. What was also gifted to them through God's grace was the opportunity to experience the hostility of the world to this message that results in their actually suffering on behalf of the Messiah.

³⁰ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες, οἷον εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοί καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί – Because the Philippian Christians understand the wonderful, eternal effect of the biblical message, they will struggle like Paul in the midst of their own suffering on behalf of it in regard to wanting to live and continue to encourage one another in believing the message and wanting to die and experience the magnificence of moral perfection and the eternal Kingdom of God.

³¹ Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τις παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί – Assuming that the Philippian Christians will continue to live and not die, Paul encourages them to look to the biblical message for how they live. Knowing what the Messiah is all about should persuade them to hold on to this information for their eternal benefits. This message should also provide them with encouragement to love him and be comforted with respect to their eternal destinies by their love for him. This message also calls for a collective sense of the people who believe it and for its adherents to feel with one another both the joys and sorrows that each one experiences in the midst of life.

³² πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμψυχοι, τὸ ἐν φρονούντες – Paul wants the upshot of their collective participation in the biblical message to be their adherence to the *same* message and not stray from the apostolic message. This, in turn, will give him the most satisfaction with respect to them and their Christianity. Paul's responsibility is to present the Messianic message with the complete accuracy that Jesus himself presented it. Therefore, his desire is that those who have heard the message from him and believed it embrace and retain the message with the same accuracy that he enjoys. This, along with their humble love for God and for one another, will constitute their being properly unified as Christians. It would seem, therefore, that one of the things that Paul has heard from Epaphroditus about the Philippian Christians is that some of them are straying from the apostolic message, most likely towards whatever the Jewish teachers are saying about relying on a person's religious performance more than the Messiah for God's approval, an issue that Paul addresses in more detail in chapter 3.

³³ μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθειαν ἢ μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ἢ ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν – In turn, this division within the Philippian Christian community is causing those who are focusing on their external, religious behavior as that which gains God's approval to think that they are superior Christians in comparison to those who are relying strictly on the Messiah and their belief in him for their status before God. This is not unlike modern Christians' elevating pastors, missionaries, and evangelistic/missionary organizations and institutions to a level where they get more attention and accolades, even money, than obscure, unknown, and less talented (from a worldly perspective) Christians who are simply quietly living out their obedience to God without any fanfare. Paul wants the Philippians to be marked by a mutual humility towards one another whereby no one pursues acquiring a greater status within the community than anyone else's.

³⁴ μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος ἴσκολοῦντες ἀλλὰ ὅκαί τὰ ἐτέρων ἕκαστοι – The humble perspective that Paul wants them to have will also result in their genuinely serving everyone in the Christian community equally and each other's needs. It is interesting that Paul feels it necessary to say this in their light of Epaphroditus' having brought a significant financial gift to him that demonstrates how much they are genuinely serving *his* needs. But if some of them are finding an erroneous message regarding the Bible to be attractive, then he must comment on it.

³⁵ Τοῦτο τὸ φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ – The kind of life attitude towards fellow believers that Paul just described and exhorted the Philippians to adopt is the same as that of the Messiah towards his followers. Thus, to be a follower of Jesus as the Messiah is to adopt that same perspective on reality as his, including not claiming one's rights in the present realm and considering other's rights and needs more important than one's own, especially if it means progress for the purposes of God to bring about the eternal Kingdom of God, as it certainly did for Jesus and his willingness to die on the cross in order to qualify to be his followers' high priest at the final judgment.

³⁶ ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων ὄχι ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ – While Jesus was carrying out his role as the Messiah on earth during his first visit, he did not demand that people acknowledge that he was God incarnate or even the Davidic king with an authority just a little below that of the transcendent Creator to rule over the creation.

³⁷ ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἄνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθείς ὡς ἄνθρωπος – Even though Jesus was acting out the role of God in a human body during his visit, he also chose to act out the role of a common slave to the very people who were intent upon doing away with him as well as to the people who were his genuine followers. He was a real human being who was manifesting God on earth, i.e., a genuine theophany, and he was a real human being who was choosing to enslave himself to the desires and choices of his bitterest enemies, the Jewish leadership whose purposes towards him were only to get rid of him. And they succeeded by crucifying him on a cross. Thus, Jesus' humility led him simply to serve people as a real human being without their worshiping him and without demanding that they worship him.

³⁸ ἔταπεινώσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ – Jesus' humility resulted in his willfully succumbing to the hostile attitudes and actions of the Jewish leaders, so that they could succeed in crucifying him on a cross.

³⁹ διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ ὅτι ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὀνομα – Jesus' obedience to God in his role as the Messiah by being willing to die resulting in God's designating him the final Messiah and High Priest of His people (cf. Romans 1:1ff.). There is no greater role for anything or anyone within the created reality than his role.

⁴⁰ ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πάντων γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων – cf. Is. 45:23 “I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance (ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ καὶ ἐξομολογήσεται πᾶσα γλῶσσα τῷ θεῷ). The phrase “in heaven and on earth and under the earth” seems most likely to refer to authentic believers who are already in heaven, both believers and non-believers alive on the earth when this takes place, and those who have died and are in a sense left buried under the earth because they have rejected the biblical message. God's plan is for every human being who has existed to acknowledge Him and His ultimate purposes for the Messiah, whether completely willingly (believers) or grudgingly (non-believers). In other words, eventually every human being whom God has created during the history of the universe and the earth will admit the truth about God that was available to them through whatever means that God has revealed Himself to them, e.g., through the creation, through the Bible, through the detected inwardness of believers, etc.

⁴¹ καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἕξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός· εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς – Part of what all created human beings will have to admit is that Jesus is the center of God's plans and purposes for the earth and humanity, that he is the King and high priest for salvific purposes. This, obviously, will include all God's people of authentic belief, Jews and Gentiles, who will especially acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, because he was willing to suffer death on their behalf as part of his role.

⁴² Ὡστε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπήκουσατε, μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ μου, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε – Because of Jesus, Paul exhorts the Philippian Christians to be committed to living the same kind of life as Jesus, i.e., one that could result in the world's putting them to death, while they appropriately fear God and His threat of eternal condemnation towards those who persist in rebelling against Him. And Paul would have them do this whether he is physically with them or not.

⁴³ θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας – Theologically, it makes sense that the Philippian Christians commit themselves to living like Jesus in a hostile world because this is exactly what God is causing them to do in order that He may be pleased with what authentic believers do according to His eternal plans and purposes.

⁴⁴ Πάντα ποιεῖτε χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν – The circumstances of life, particularly if they involve great hardship, which may very well be the case for the Philippians who seemed to be experiencing some intense opposition to the biblical message in Philippi, may lead a person to be tempted to grumble against God and even argue with Him about how He is governing the cosmos. Paul encourages his readers to neither grumble nor argue with God, which is probably an encouragement to himself at the same time to avoid these.

⁴⁵ ἵνα ᾖ γέννησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα μέσον γενεᾶς σκολιάς καὶ διεστραμμένης, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ – Being willing to submit to God's sovereign plans and purposes, even if they involve great hardship and opposition, makes Christians innocent and faultless so to speak in the world compared to

others who remain in rebellion against God and ultimately refuse to submit to Him. This humble submission to God is a light of truth in the midst of the darkness of falsehood that other people inject into the world.

⁴⁶ λόγον ζώης ἐπέχοντες, εἰς καύχημα ἐμοὶ εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα – The Philippians' willingness not to complain against God in their difficult circumstances also indicates that they are authentically believing the biblical message that promises eternal life. Thus, their enduring in their belief will allow Paul to boast (humbly) on judgment day that all his work as the apostle to the Gentiles on behalf of the Philippians was not for nothing. It resulted, albeit by God's grace, in the eternal salvation of these people.

⁴⁷ Ἀλλὰ εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, χαίρω καὶ συγχαίρω πᾶσιν ὑμῖν – In addition to the endurance of the Philippian's belief in the midst of suffering providing Paul with a future opportunity to boast humbly about his work on earth, his suffering as an imprisoned and accused criminal in Rome, that could even result in his being executed by Nero, provides the Philippians with an opportunity to rejoice with him as God causes him to be a kind of offering to Him through his suffering. Indeed, even if God sacrifices Paul on the altar of capital punishment in Rome and thus ends his role as the apostle to the Gentiles on earth, he will rejoice in what God is doing, and he will rejoice along with the Philippians' rejoicing in what God is doing. He also would see his death as a way to worship God for the benefit of the Philippians' belief, that they could understand further that death is not an end for an authentic believer, but only the beginning of eternal life.

⁴⁸ τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ὑμεῖς χαίρετε καὶ συγχαίρετέ μοι – Paul repeats himself and says that he is rejoicing in what God is doing in his life, and, therefore, the Philippians should rejoice with him.

⁴⁹ Ἐλίξω δὲ ἐν Κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Τιμόθεον ταχέως πέμψαι ὑμῖν, ἵνα κἀγὼ εὐψυχῶ γνοῦς τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν – Paul has recently received through Epaphroditus not only a financial gift from the Philippians, but also news about them (cf 4:10-19). In addition, the gift and the news have convinced Paul that they are truly enduring in their belief in the Jewish Messiah, even 10 years after he first visited him and with only the instructions that he has given them the two times that he has visited them. Nevertheless, it seems that he is concerned about something in their circumstances, i.e., their becoming divided in terms of what message they are actually believing, that could affect them negatively so that he wants to send the only remaining traveling companion who is currently with him and supporting him to them in order to encourage them that he, likewise, may be encouraged by more news about them when Timothy returns. Obviously, this will be after they receive this particular letter through Epaphroditus' returning to them, and Paul hopes that the effect of the letter is to straighten out their belief so that it is united in the apostolic message. Then, Timothy can find this out and return to Paul with this good news.

⁵⁰ οὐδένα γὰρ ἔχω ἰσόψυχον, ὅστις γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μερμνήσει – Timothy seems to be the only long-standing traveling companion who has remained solid in his single-minded commitment to the NT message with the effect that he, like Paul, is also genuinely concerned about the Philippians' belief in the apostolic message.

⁵¹ οἱ πάντες γὰρ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Others who have been close to Paul simply are not caring as much anymore about both the Messiah and the followers of the Messiah.

⁵² τὴν δὲ δοκιμὴν αὐτοῦ γινώσκετε, ὅτι ὡς πατρὶ τέκνον σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον – Timothy has clearly demonstrated his faithfulness to the NT message by his genuine care for Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles.

⁵³ τοῦτον μὲν οὖν ἐλίξω πέμψαι ὡς ἂν ἀφίδω τὰ περὶ ἐμὲ ἐξαυτῆς – Perhaps Paul thinks that an imperial decision regarding him and his case is about to happen soon. Or there may be something else that Paul wants to find about. In any event, he wants to wait until he gets more information about his own situation before he sends Timothy to the Philippians. Thus, he can send Timothy without his needing him instead.

⁵⁴ πέποιθα δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ταχέως ἐλεύσομαι – Nevertheless, Paul also has somehow, and he does not tell us how, become convinced that Nero really will release him, resulting in his own traveling to Philippi in person and being able to help them in their belief and being unified in what message to which they adhere.

⁵⁵ Ἀναγκαῖον δὲ ἠγησάμην Ἐπαφρόδιτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου, ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου, πέμψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς – Before Paul sends Timothy, he simply cannot wait to get some information to the Philippians about especially Epaphroditus, who, as one of their own, had brought the financial gift from the Philippians and, subsequently, became so ill that he almost died. The Philippians had found out about Epaphroditus' illness and had also become stressed out over it. Therefore, once Epaphroditus recovered, Paul considered it only right that he return to Philippi so that he could show them that he was completely healthy again and alive. Obviously, Epaphroditus is carrying this letter with him.

⁵⁶ ἐπειδὴ ἐπιποθῶν ἦν ἅπαντας ὑμᾶς καὶ ἀδελφῶν, διότι ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἠσθένησεν – Epaphroditus truly wanted to go home and show his fellow Philippians that he had recovered from this near-death experience when he was ill, so that they could be comforted by this news.

⁵⁷ καὶ γὰρ ἠσθένησεν παραπλήσιον θανάτῳ ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἠλέησεν αὐτόν, οὐκ αὐτὸν δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐμέ, ἵνα μὴ λύπην ἐπὶ λύπην σχῶ – Even Paul was, from a human standpoint, going to grieve deeply if Epaphroditus died, even though he knew that Epaphroditus would thus gain eternal life. The humanly natural thing is to rejoice in the salvation and eternal life of a dear departed one, while also grieving their loss because of the way God has designed us in the present realm. Neither response should be avoided, especially if even the apostle Paul experienced both.

⁵⁸ σπουδαιότερος οὖν ἔπεμψα αὐτόν, ἵνα ἰδόντες αὐτὸν πάλιν χαρήτε κἀγὼ ἀλυπότερος ὦ – Paul was also anxious about the effect on the Philippian Christians of the bad news about Epaphroditus. Who knows, but his concern may have even been that they would think twice about sending him a gift, or helping anyone else for that matter, the next

time someone was in need if it resulted in the death of their messenger. I certainly could see them saying, “Thanks a lot God, for responding to our generosity this way—by causing us so much grief.” Clearly, Epaphroditus was as well-respected and well-liked member of the Philippian Christian community.

⁵⁹ προσδέχεσθε οὖν αὐτὸν ἐν κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε – Does Paul really need to say this? Of course they will welcome him with joy. But it seems that Paul’s emphasis is on pointing them to God and the fact that He is doing all this. Their joy is not merely because Epaphroditus is still alive. But it is because God exists and is operating within the created reality according to His own sovereign plans.

⁶⁰ ὅτι διὰ τὸ ἔργον Ἰησοῦ μέχρι θανάτου ἠγγισεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπερβαλόμενος τῆ ψυχῇ, ἵνα ἀναπληρώσῃ τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα τῆς πρὸς με λειτουργίας – In the midst of not considering anyone of them as superior to any others, they can also hold Epaphroditus in high regard because of his willingness to risk his life for the Messiah. Paul says that Epaphroditus has made up for what is lacking the Philippians’ serving him, but this cannot be a negative thing. After all, they sent him a very nice financial gift. In Colossians 1:4, Paul speaks of his suffering being that which “fills up what is lacking in the Messiah’s suffering.” But was Jesus’ suffering really not enough, so that he should have suffered more, and then Paul would not have to suffer? Absolutely not. Therefore, this must be some sort of idiomatic expression regarding someone’s doing something like that which someone else has done in such a way that it does contribute to the overall effect of what the initial person had done. It is not that Jesus’ dying on the cross truly fell short of a total amount of suffering that was necessary for him to endure, but that Paul’s suffering is right in line with Jesus’ suffering, and historically, according to God’s eternal plans and purposes, imitates Jesus’ suffering and continues carrying out God’s plans as they pertain to Jesus’ suffering. For example, here, Epaphroditus suffered in the midst of carrying out the plans of the Philippians, who sacrificed some of their income, to send a gift to Paul and meet his needs. So it is not really that the Philippians’ service of Paul fell short of some measure of fullness, but that Epaphroditus truly got to participate in their serving him by actually going through a kind of suffering the midst of carrying out their plans.

⁶¹ Τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί μου, χαίrete ἐν κυρίῳ. τὰ αὐτὰ γράφειν ὑμῖν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐκ ὀκνηρόν, ὑμῖν δὲ ἄσφαλές – The first part of this verse is the conclusion to what Paul has been talking about. He simply encourages the Philippians to rejoice in who God is and what He is doing with respect to their ultimate destiny—eternal life. This involves rejoicing in both his circumstances and theirs, and theirs include the circumstances of Epaphroditus.

⁶² Βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας, βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας, βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν –

⁶³ ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἔσμεν ἢ περιτομή, οἱ πνεύματι ἑοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες –

⁶⁴ καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον –

⁶⁵ περιτομῆ ὀκταήμερος, ἐκ γένους Ἰσραὴλ, φυλῆς Βενιαμίν, Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων, κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος –

⁶⁶ κατὰ Ἰησοῦ διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἡμεῖς, κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμειπτος –

⁶⁷ [Ἀλλὰ] ἅτινα ἔσμεν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἠγάπησα διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν –

⁶⁸ ἀλλὰ μενοῦγγε ὅτι ἠγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως ἡμεῖς Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐξημιώθη, καὶ ἠγοῦμαι σκύβαλα ἡμεῖς, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω –

⁶⁹ καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει –

⁷⁰ τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡμεῖς κοινωνίαν ἡμεῖς παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ –

⁷¹ εἴ πως καταστήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν ἡμεῖς ἐκ νεκρῶν –

⁷² Οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἡμεῖς ἢ ἤδη τετελειώμαι, διώκω δὲ εἰ ἡμεῖς καταλάβω, ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ ἡμεῖς –

⁷³ ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ ἐμαυτὸν ἡμεῖς λογίζομαι κατελιφέναι ἐν δέ, τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος –

⁷⁴ κατὰ σκοπὸν ἡμεῖς διώκω ἡμεῖς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἀνω κλήσεως ἡμεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ –

⁷⁵ Ὅσοι οὖν τέλειοι, τοῦτο φρονώμεν καὶ εἴ τι ἐτέρως φρονεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ὁ θεὸς ἡμεῖς ἀποκαλύψει –

⁷⁶ πλὴν εἰς ὃ ἠεθέσαμεν, ἡμεῖς αὐτῷ στοιχεῖν –

⁷⁷ Συμμηταί μου γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας καθὼς ἔχετε τύπον ἡμᾶς –

⁷⁸ πολλοὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦσιν οὕτως πολλὰκις ἔλεγον ἡμῖν, νῦν δὲ καὶ κλαίον λέγω, ἡμεῖς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ –

⁷⁹ ὃν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια, ὃν ὁ θεὸς ἡμεῖς κοιλία καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν, οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονούντες –

⁸⁰ ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει, ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτήρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν – with the use of the verb ὑπάρχει = exists, τὸ πολίτευμα is a metonymy referring to the place where Paul and believers will be citizens in the future, i.e., in the eternal Kingdom of God.

⁸¹ ὃς μετασχηματίζει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν ἡμεῖς σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι ἡμεῖς αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα –

⁸² Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοὶ καὶ ἐπιπόθητοι, χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός μου, οὕτως στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ, ἡμεῖς ἀγαπητοί –

⁸³ Εὐδοκίαν παρακαλῶ καὶ Συντύχην παρακαλῶ τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ –

⁸⁴ καὶ ἐρωτῶ καὶ σέ, γνήσιε ἡμεῖς σύζυγε, συλλαμβάνου αὐτάς, αἵτινες ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθησαν μοι μετὰ καὶ Κλήμεντος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συνεργῶν μου, ὃν τὰ ὀνόματα ἐν βίβλῳ ζωῆς –

⁸⁵ Χαίrete ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε· ἡμεῖς ἔρω, χαίrete –

-
- ⁸⁶ τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς –
⁸⁷ μηδὲν μεριμνάτε, ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ δεήσει μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν γνωρίζεσθω πρὸς τὸν θεόν –
⁸⁸ καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ ἑοῦ ἢ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν καὶ τὰ ἑνόηματα ὑμῶν ἐν Ἰησοῦ –
⁸⁹ Τὸ λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, ὅσα ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ, ὅσα σεμνά, ὅσα δίκαια, ὅσα αγνά, ὅσα προσφιλή, ὅσα εὐφρημα, εἴ τις ἀρετὴ καὶ εἴ τις ἔπαινος ἢ, ταῦτα λογίζεσθε –
⁹⁰ ἃ καὶ ἐμάθετε καὶ παρελάβετε καὶ ἠκούσατε καὶ εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοί, ταῦτα πράσσετε· καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν –
⁹¹ Ἐχάρην δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μεγάλως ὅτι ἤδη ποτὲ ἀνεθάλετε ἑτὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε, ἠκαιρεῖσθε δέ –
⁹² οὐχ ὅτι καθ' ὑστέρησιν λέγω, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμι αὐτάρκης εἶναι –
⁹³ οἶδα καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι, οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν ἐν παντὶ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν μεμύημαι, καὶ χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πεινᾶν καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι –
⁹⁴ πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με –
⁹⁵ πλὴν καλῶς ἐποιήσατε συγκοινωνήσαντές μου τῇ θλίψει –
⁹⁶ οἶδατε ὅδε καὶ ὑμεῖς, Φιλιππηῖοι, ὅτι ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὅτε ἐξῆλθον ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας, οὐδεμία μοι ἐκκλησία ἐκοινωνήσεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήμψεως εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι –
⁹⁷ ὅτι καὶ ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη καὶ ἅπαξ καὶ δις ἑίς τὴν χρείαν μοι ἐπέμψατε. –
⁹⁸ οὐχ ὅτι ἐπιζητῶ τὸ δόμα, ἀλλὰ ἐπιζητῶ τὸν καρπὸν τὸν πλεονάζοντα εἰς λόγον ὑμῶν –
⁹⁹ ἀπέχω δὲ πάντα καὶ περισσεύω· πεπλήρωμαι ἢ δεξάμενος παρὰ Ἐπαφροδίτου τὰ παρ' ὑμῶν, ὁσμὴν εὐωδίας, θυσίαν δεκτὴν, εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ –
¹⁰⁰ ὁ δὲ θεὸς μου πληρώσει πᾶσαν χρείαν ὑμῶν κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος αὐτοῦ ἐν δόξῃ ἐν Ἰησοῦ –
¹⁰¹ τῷ δὲ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν –
¹⁰² Ἀσπάσασθε πάντα ἅγιον ἐν Ἰησοῦ. ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἀδελφοί –
¹⁰³ ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι, μάλιστα δὲ οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καισαροῦ οἰκίας –
¹⁰⁴ Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ἑτοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν –