

Philippians

Salutation

1:1 From Paul¹ and Timothy, slaves² of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi,³ with the overseers⁴ and deacons. **1:2** Grace and peace to you⁵ from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Prayer for the Church

1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you.⁶ **1:4** I always pray with joy in my every prayer for all of you **1:5** because of your participation⁷ in the gospel from the first day until now.⁸ **1:6** For I am sure of this very thing,⁹ that the

1 **tn** Grk "Paul." The word "from" is not in the Greek text, but has been supplied to indicate the sender of the letter.

2 **tn** Traditionally, "servants" or "bondservants." Though δοῦλος (*doulos*) is normally translated "servant," the word does not bear the connotation of a free individual serving another. BDAG notes that "'servant' for 'slave' is largely confined to Biblical transl. and early American times...in normal usage at the present time the two words are carefully distinguished" (BDAG 260 s.v.). The most accurate translation is "bondservant" (sometimes found in the ASV for δοῦλος), in that it often indicates one who sells himself into slavery to another. But as this is archaic, few today understand its force.

sn Undoubtedly the background for the concept of being the Lord's slave or servant is to be found in the Old Testament scriptures. For a Jew this concept did not connote drudgery, but honor and privilege. It was used of national Israel at times (Isa 43:10), but was especially associated with famous OT personalities, including such great men as Moses (Josh 14:7), David (Ps 89:3; cf. 2 Sam 7:5, 8) and Elijah (2 Kgs 10:10); all these men were "servants (or slaves) of the Lord."

3 **map** For location see JP1-C1; JP2-C1; JP3-C1; JP4-C1.

4 **sn** The overseers (or "church leaders," L&N 53.71) is another term for the same official position of leadership as the "elder." This is seen in the interchange of the two terms in Titus 1:6-7 and in Acts 20:17, 28, as well as in the parallels between Titus 1:6-7 and 1 Tim 3:1-7.

5 **tn** Grk "Grace to you and peace."

6 **tn** This could also be translated "for your every remembrance of me." See discussion below.

7 **sn** Your participation (Grk "fellowship") could refer to Paul rejoicing because of the Philippian converts' "fellowship" in the gospel along with him, but it is more likely that this refers to their active "participation" with him in the gospel by means of the financial support they sent to Paul on more than one occasion, discussed later in this letter (4:10-19, esp. 4:15-16).

8 **tn** Several alternatives for translating vv. 3-5 are possible: (1) "I thank my God every time I remember you, yes, always in my every prayer for all of you. I pray with joy because of your participation..." (see NAB; also M. Silva, *Philippians* [BECNT], 43-44; G. D. Fee, *Philippians* [NICNT], 76-80); (2) "I thank my God because of your every remembrance of me. Always in my every prayer for all of you I pray with joy. [I am grateful] for your participation..." (see Moffatt; also P. T. O'Brien, *Philippians* [NIGTC], 58-61). Option (1) is quite similar to the translation above, but sees v. 4a as more or less parenthetical. Option (2) is significantly different in that Paul thanks God because the Philippians remember him rather than when he remembers them.

9 **tn** Grk "since I am sure of this very thing." The verse be-

gins with an adverbial participle that is dependent on the main verb in v. 3 ("I thank"). Paul here gives one reason for his thankfulness.

one¹⁰ who began a good work in¹¹ you will perfect it¹² until the day of Christ Jesus. **1:7** For¹³ it is right for me to think this about all of you, because I have you in my heart,¹⁴ since both in my imprisonment¹⁵ and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel all of you became partners in God's grace¹⁶ together with me. **1:8** For God is my witness that I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. **1:9** And I pray this, that your love may abound even more and more in knowledge and every kind of insight **1:10** so that you can decide what is best, and thus be sincere and blameless for the day of Christ, **1:11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

Ministry as a Prisoner

1:12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters,¹⁷ that my situation has actually turned out to advance the gospel:¹⁸ **1:13** The¹⁹ whole imperial guard²⁰ and everyone else knows²¹

gins with an adverbial participle that is dependent on the main verb in v. 3 ("I thank"). Paul here gives one reason for his thankfulness.

10 **tn** The referent is clearly God from the overall context of the paragraph and the mention of "the day of Christ Jesus" at the end, which would be redundant if Christ were referred to here.

11 **tn** Or "among."

12 **tn** The word "it" is not in the Greek text but has been supplied. Direct objects were frequently omitted in Greek when clear from the context.

13 **tn** Grk "Just as." The sense here is probably, "So I give thanks (v. 3) just as it is right for me..."

14 **tn** Or possibly "because you have me in your heart."

15 **tn** Grk "in my bonds." The meaning "imprisonment" derives from a figurative extension of the literal meaning ("bonds," "fetters," "chains"), L&N 37.115.

16 **tn** The word "God's" is supplied from the context (v. 2) to clarify the meaning.

17 **tn** Grk "brothers," but the Greek word may be used for "brothers and sisters" or "fellow Christians" as here (cf. BDAG 18 s.v. ἀδελφός 1, where considerable nonbiblical evidence for the plural ἀδελφοί [*adelphoi*] meaning "brothers and sisters" is cited).

18 **tn** Grk "for the advance of the gospel." The genitive εὐαγγελίου (*euangelion*) is taken as objective.

19 **tn** Grk "so that the whole imperial guard." The ὥστε (*hōste*) clause that begins v. 13 indicates two results of the spread of the gospel: Outsiders know why Paul is imprisoned (v. 13) and believers are emboldened by his imprisonment (v. 14).

20 **sn** The whole imperial guard (Grk "praetorium") can refer to the elite troops stationed in Rome or the headquarters of administrators in the provinces (cf. Matt 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28, 33; 19:9; Acts 23:35). In either case a metonymy is involved, with the place (the praetorium) put for those (soldiers or government officials) who were connected with it or stationed in it.

21 **tn** Grk "it has become known by the whole imperial guard and all the rest."

that I am in prison¹ for the sake of Christ, 1:14 and most of the brothers and sisters,² having confidence in the Lord³ because of my imprisonment, now more than ever⁴ dare to speak the word⁵ fearlessly.

1:15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. 1:16 The latter do so from love because they know that I am placed here for the defense of the gospel. 1:17 The former proclaim Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, because they think they can cause trouble for me in my imprisonment.⁶ 1:18 What is the result? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

Yes,⁷ and I will continue to rejoice, 1:19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance⁸ through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 1:20 My confident hope⁹ is that I will in no way be ashamed¹⁰ but that with complete boldness, even now as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether I live or die.¹¹ 1:21 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. 1:22 Now if I am to go on living in the body,¹²

this will mean productive work¹³ for me, yet I don't know which I prefer:¹⁴ 1:23 I feel torn between the two,¹⁵ because I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far, 1:24 but it is more vital for your sake that I remain¹⁶ in the body.¹⁷ 1:25 And since I am sure of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for the sake of your progress¹⁸ and joy in the faith,¹⁹ 1:26 so that what you can be proud of may increase²⁰ because of me in Christ Jesus, when I come back to you.²¹

1:27 Only conduct yourselves²² in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ so that – whether I come and see you or whether I remain absent – I should hear that²³ you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, by contending side by side for the faith of the gospel,²⁴ 1:28 and by not being intimidated in any way by your opponents.

¹³ **tn** Grk “fruit of work”; the genitive ἔργου (*ergou*) is taken as an attributed genitive in which the head noun, καρπός (*karpos*), functions attributively (cf. *ExSyn* 89-91).

¹⁴ **tn** Grk “what I shall prefer.” The Greek verb αἰρέω (*haireō*) could also mean “choose,” but in this context such a translation is problematic for it suggests that Paul could perhaps choose suicide (cf. *L&N* 30.86).

¹⁵ **sn** I don't know what I prefer. Paul is here struggling with what would be most beneficial for both him and the church. He resolves this issue in vv. 24-25.

¹⁶ **tn** Grk “I am hard-pressed between the two.” Cf. *L&N* 30.18.

¹⁷ **tn** Grk “But to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.”

¹⁸ **tn** Grk “the flesh.”

¹⁹ **tn** Grk “for your progress.”

²⁰ **sn** Paul's confidence in his release from prison (*I know that I will remain and continue with all of you*) implies that this Roman imprisonment did not end in his death. Hence, there is the likelihood that he experienced a second Roman imprisonment later on (since the belief of the early church was that Paul died under Nero in Rome). If so, then the pastoral letters (1-2 Tim, Titus) could well fit into a life of Paul that goes beyond any descriptions in the book of Acts (which ends with Paul's first Roman imprisonment). Some have argued that the pastorals cannot be genuine because they cannot fit into the history of Acts. But this view presupposes that Paul's first Roman imprisonment was also his last.

²¹ **tn** Grk “your boasting may overflow in Christ Jesus because of me,” or possibly, “your boasting in me may overflow in Christ Jesus.” BDAG 536 s.v. καύχημα 1 translates the phrase τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν (*to kauchēma humōn*) in Phil 1:26 as “what you can be proud of.”

²² **tn** Grk “through my coming again to you.”

²³ **tn** Grk “live as citizens.” The verb πολιτεύεσθε (*politeuesthe*) connotes the life of a freeman in a free Roman colony.

²⁴ **sn** Conduct yourselves (Grk “live your lives as citizens”). The Philippians lived in a free Roman city, and thus understood from their own experience what it meant to live as citizens. Paul is here picking up on that motif and elevating it to the citizenship of heaven. Cf. 3:20 (*our citizenship is in heaven*).

²⁵ **tn** Grk “the things concerning you, [namely,] that.” The ὅτι (*hoti*) clause is appositional to τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν (*ta peri humōn*) and therefore “the things concerning you” was not translated.

²⁶ **tn** The phrase “the faith of the gospel” could mean one of three things: “the faith that is the gospel” (genitive of apposition), “the faith that originates from the gospel” (genitive of source), or “faith in the gospel” (objective genitive).

¹ **tn** Grk “my bonds [are].”

² **tn** Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

³ **tn** Or “most of the brothers and sisters in the Lord, having confidence.”

⁴ **tn** Grk “even more so.”

⁵ **tc** A number of significant mss have “of God” after “word.” Although τοῦ θεοῦ (*tou theou*) is amply supported in the Alexandrian and Western texts (A B [D*] P Ψ 048^{vid} 075 0278 33 81 1175 al lat co), the omission is difficult to explain as either an intentional deletion or unintentional oversight. To be sure, the pedigree of the witnesses is not nearly as great for the shorter reading (†) as D² 1739 1881 20), but it explains well the rise of the other reading. Further, it explains the rise of κυρίου (*kurios*, “of the Lord”), the reading of F and G (for if these mss had followed a Vorlage with τοῦ θεοῦ, κυρίου would not have been expected). Further, τοῦ θεοῦ is in different locations among the mss; such dislocations are usually signs of scribal additions to the text. Thus, the Byzantine text and a few other witnesses here have the superior reading, and it should be accepted as the original.

⁶ **tn** Grk “thinking to cause trouble to my bonds.”

⁷ **tn** Or “But.” The conjunction ἀλλά (*alla*) may be emphatic or contrastive. If the former, the idea may be that Paul will continue rejoicing because of the proclamation of the gospel or because of his imminent release from prison (v. 19); if the latter, Paul is now turning his attention solely to this second reason to rejoice, viz., that he will soon be released from prison. In this latter view the clause should be translated, “But I will also rejoice since I know...”

⁸ **tn** Or “salvation.” Deliverance from prison (i.e., release) is probably what Paul has in view here, although some take this as a reference to his ultimate release from the body, i.e., dying and being with Christ (v. 23).

⁹ **sn** The phrase *this will turn out for my deliverance* may be an echo of Job 13:16 (LXX).

¹⁰ **tn** Grk “according to my eager expectation and hope.” The κατά (*kata*) phrase is taken as governing the following ὅτι (*hoti*) clause (“that I will not be ashamed...”); the idea could be expressed more verbally as “I confidently hope that I will not be ashamed...”

¹¹ **tn** Or possibly, “be intimidated, be put to shame.”

¹² **tn** Grk “whether by life or by death.”

¹³ **tn** Grk “flesh.”

This is¹ a sign of their² destruction, but of your salvation – a sign which³ is from God. 1:29 For it has been granted to you⁴ not only to believe in Christ but also to suffer for him, 1:30 since you are encountering⁵ the same conflict that you saw me face and now hear that I am facing.⁶

Christian Unity and Christ's Humility

2:1 Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort provided by love, any fellowship in the Spirit,⁷ any affection or mercy,⁸ 2:2 complete my joy and be of the same mind,⁹ by having the same love, being united in spirit,¹⁰ and having one purpose. 2:3 Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition¹¹ or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. 2:4 Each of you should be concerned¹² not only¹³

about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well.¹⁴ 2:5 You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had,¹⁵

2:6¹⁶ who though he existed in the form of God¹⁷

did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped,

2:7 but emptied himself

by taking on the form of a slave,¹⁸

by looking like other men,¹⁹

and by sharing in human nature.²⁰

¹ **tn** Grk “which is,” continuing the sentence begun in v. 27.

sn The antecedent of the pronoun *This* is conceptual, most likely referring to the Philippian Christians standing firm for the gospel. Thus, their stand for the gospel is the dual sign of their opponents' *destruction* and of their own *salvation*.

² **tn** Grk “to them.”

sn Paul uses the dative “to them” (translated here as *their*) to describe the coming destruction of the gospel's enemies, but the genitive “your” to describe the believers' coming salvation. The dative accents what will happen to *the enemies* (called a dative of disadvantage [see *ExSyn* 143-44]), while the genitive accents what the believers will possess (and, in fact, *do already* possess, as v. 29 makes clear).

³ **tn** Grk “this.” The pronoun refers back to “a sign”; thus these words have been repeated for clarity.

⁴ **tn** Grk “For that which is on behalf of Christ has been granted to you – namely, not only to believe in him but also to suffer for him.” The infinitive phrases are epexegetical to the subject, τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ (*to hyper Christou*), which has the force of “the on-behalf-of-Christ thing,” or “the thing on behalf of Christ.” To translate this in English requires a different idiom.

⁵ **tn** Grk “having,” most likely as an instrumental participle. Thus their present struggle is evidence that they have received the *gift* of suffering.

⁶ **tn** Grk “that you saw in me and now hear [to be] in me.”

⁷ **tn** Or “spiritual fellowship” if πνεύματος (*pneumatōs*) is an attributive genitive; or “fellowship brought about by the Spirit” if πνεύματος is a genitive of source or production.

⁸ **tn** Grk “and any affection and mercy.” The Greek idea, however, is best expressed by “or” in English.

⁹ **tn** Or “and feel the same way,” “and think the same thoughts.” The ἵνα (*hina*) clause has been translated “and be of the same mind” to reflect its epexegetical force to the imperative “complete my joy.”

¹⁰ **tn** The Greek word here is σύμψυχοι (*sumpsuchoi*, literally “fellow souled”).

¹¹ **tn** Grk “not according to selfish ambition.” There is no main verb in this verse; the subjunctive φρονῆτε (*phronēte*, “be of the same mind”) is implied here as well. Thus, although most translations supply the verb “do” at the beginning of v. 3 (e.g., “do nothing from selfish ambition”), the idea is even stronger than that: “Don't even *think* any thoughts motivated by selfish ambition.”

¹² **tn** On the meaning “be concerned about” for σκοπέω (*skopeō*), see *L&N* 27.36.

¹³ **tn** The word “only” is not in the Greek text, but is implied by the ἄλλὰ καὶ (*alla kai*) in the second clause (“but...as well”). The bulk of the Western text dropped the καὶ, motivated most likely by ascetic concerns.

¹⁴ **tc** The bulk of the Western text (D^{ac} F G K it) dropped καὶ (*kai*) here, most likely due to ascetic concerns. Strong external attestation for its inclusion from excellent witnesses as well as the majority (ⲓ⁴⁶ ⲛ A B C D² 0278 33 1739 1881 Ⲛ) also marks it as original.

tn Verses 1-4 constitute one long conditional sentence in Greek. The protasis is in verse 1, while vv. 2-4 constitute the apodosis. There is but one verb not in a subordinate clause in vv. 2-4, the imperative “complete” in v. 2. This is followed by a subjunctive after ἵνα (*hina*, translated as an epexegetical clause, “and be of the same mind”) and three instrumental participles. Thus the focus of these four verses is to “be of the same mind” and all that follows this instruction is the means for accomplishing that.

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “Have this attitude in/among yourselves which also [was] in Christ Jesus,” or “Have this attitude in/among yourselves which [you] also [have] in Christ Jesus.”

¹⁶ **sn** This passage has been typeset as poetry because many scholars regard this passage as poetic or hymnic. These terms are used broadly to refer to the genre of writing, not to the content. There are two broad criteria for determining if a passage is poetic or hymnic: “(a) *stylistic*: a certain rhythmical lilt when the passages are read aloud, the presence of *parallelism membrorum* (i.e., an arrangement into couplets), the semblance of some metre, and the presence of rhetorical devices such as alliteration, *chiasmus*, and antithesis; and (b) *linguistic*: an unusual vocabulary, particularly the presence of theological terms, which is different from the surrounding context” (P. T. O'Brien, *Philippians* [NIGTC], 188-89). Classifying a passage as hymnic or poetic is important because understanding this genre can provide keys to interpretation. However, not all scholars agree that the above criteria are present in this passage, so the decision to typeset it as poetry should be viewed as a tentative decision about its genre.

¹⁷ **sn** The Greek term translated *form* indicates a correspondence with reality. Thus the meaning of this phrase is that Christ was truly God.

¹⁸ **tn** See the note on the word “slaves” in 1:1.

¹⁹ **tn** Grk “by coming in the likeness of people.”

sn The Greek expression underlying *by looking like other men* is similar to Paul's wording in Rom 8:3 (“in the likeness of sinful flesh”). The same word “likeness” is used in both passages. It implies that there is a form that does not necessarily correspond to reality. In Rom 8:3, the meaning is that Christ *looked like* sinful humanity. Here the meaning is similar: Jesus *looked like* other men (note *anthrōpoi*), but was in fact different from them in that he did not have a sin nature.

²⁰ **tn** Grk “and by being found in form as a man.” The versification of vv. 7 and 8 (so also NRSV) is according to the versification in the NA²⁷ and UBS⁴ editions of the Greek text. Some translations, however, break the verses in front of this phrase (NKJV, NASB, NIV, NLT). The same material has been translated in each case; the only difference is the versification of that material.

sn *By sharing in human nature*. This last line of v. 7 (line d) stands in tension with the previous line, line c (“by looking like other men”). Both lines have a word indicating form or likeness. Line c, as noted above, implies that Christ only *appeared* to be like other people. Line d, however, uses a different term that implies a correspondence between form and reality. Further, line c uses the plural “men” while line d uses the singular “man.” The theological point being made is that Christ looked just like other men, but he was not like other

2:8 He humbled himself,
by becoming obedient to the point of death
– even death on a cross!
2:9 As a result God exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
2:10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee will bow
– in heaven and on earth and under the
earth –
2:11 and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord
to the glory of God the Father.

Lights in the World

2:12 So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence but even more in my absence, continue working out your salvation with awe and reverence,¹ **2:13** for the one bringing forth in you both the desire and the effort – for the sake of his good pleasure – is God. **2:14** Do everything without grumbling or arguing, **2:15** so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God without blemish though you live in a crooked and perverse society, in which you shine as lights in the world² **2:16** by holding on to³ the word of life so that on the day of Christ I will have a reason to boast that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain. **2:17** But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice together with all of you. **2:18** And in the same way you also should be glad and rejoice together with me.

Models for Ministry

2:19 Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be encouraged by hearing news about you. **2:20** For there is no one here like him who will readily demonstrate his deep concern for you.⁴ **2:21** Others are busy with their own concerns, not those of Jesus Christ. **2:22** But you know his qualifications, that like a son working with his father, he served with me in advancing the gospel. **2:23** So I hope to send him as soon as I know more about my situation, **2:24** though I am confident in the Lord that I too will be coming to see you⁵ soon.

men (in that he was not sinful), though he was fully human.

¹ **tn** Grk “with fear and trembling.” The Greek words φόβος and τρόμος both imply fear in a negative sense (L&N 25.251 and 16.6 respectively) while the former can also refer to respect and awe for deity (L&N 53.59). Paul’s use of the terms in other contexts refers to “awe and reverence in the presence of God” (P. T. O’Brien, *Philippians* [NIGTC], 284; see discussion on 282-84). The translation “awe and reverence” was chosen to portray the attitude the believer should have toward God as they consider their behavior in light of God working through Jesus Christ (2:6-11) and in the believer’s life (2:13) to accomplish their salvation.

² **tn** Or “as stars in the universe.”

³ **tn** Or “holding out, holding forth.”

⁴ **tn** Grk “For I have no one who is like-minded who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.”

⁵ **tn** The words “to see you” are not in the Greek text, but are

2:25 But for now⁶ I have considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus to you. For he is my brother,⁷ coworker and fellow soldier, and your messenger⁸ and minister⁹ to me in my need.¹⁰ **2:26** Indeed, he greatly missed all of you and was distressed because you heard that he had been ill. **2:27** In fact he became so ill that he nearly died.¹¹ But God showed mercy to him – and not to him only, but also to me – so that I would not have grief on top of grief. **2:28** Therefore I am all the more eager to send him,¹² so that when you see him again you can rejoice¹³ and I can be free from anxiety. **2:29** So welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, **2:30** since it was because of the work of Christ that he almost died. He risked his life so that he could make up for your inability to serve me.¹⁴

True and False Righteousness

3:1 Finally, my brothers and sisters,¹⁵ rejoice in the Lord! To write this again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

3:2 Beware of the dogs,¹⁶ beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh!¹⁷ **3:3** For we are the circumcision,¹⁸

implied, and are supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁶ **tn** Grk “But.” The temporal notion (“for now”) is implied in the epistolary aorist (“I have considered”), for Epaphroditus was dispatched with this letter to the Philippians.

⁷ **tn** Grk “my brother” instead of “For he is my brother.” Verse 25 constitutes one sentence in Greek, with “my brother...” functioning appositionally to “Epaphroditus.”

sn The reason why Paul refers to Epaphroditus as his *brother, coworker, fellow soldier*, etc., is because he wants to build up Epaphroditus in the eyes of the Philippians, since Paul is sending him back instead of Timothy. This accent on Epaphroditus’ character and service is implied in the translation “For he is...”

⁸ **tn** Grk “apostle.”

⁹ **tn** The Greek word translated “minister” here is λειτουργός (*leitourgos*).

¹⁰ **tn** Grk “servant of my need.”

¹¹ **tn** Grk “For he became ill to the point of death.”

¹² **tn** Grk “I have sent him to you with earnestness.” But the epistolary aorist needs to be translated as a present tense with this adverb due to English stylistic considerations.

¹³ **tn** Or “when you see him you can rejoice again.”

¹⁴ **tn** Grk “make up for your lack of service to me.”

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

¹⁶ **sn** Dogs is a figurative reference to false teachers whom Paul regards as just as filthy as dogs.

¹⁷ **tn** Grk “beware of the mutilation.”

¹⁸ **tn** There is a significant wordplay here in the Greek text. In v. 2 a rare, strong word is used to describe those who were pro-circumcision (κατατομή, *katatomē*, “mutilation”; see BDAG 528 s.v.), while in v. 3 the normal word for circumcision is used (περιτομή, *peritomē*; see BDAG 807 s.v.). Both have τομή (the feminine form of the adjective τομός [*tomos*], meaning “cutting, sharp”) as their root; the direction of the action of the former is down or off (from κατά, *kata*), hence the implication of mutilation or emasculation, while the direction of the action of the latter is around (from περί, *peri*). The similarity in sound yet wide divergence of meaning between the two words highlights in no uncertain terms the differences between Paul and his opponents.

the ones who worship by the Spirit of God,¹ exult in Christ Jesus, and do not rely on human credentials² 3:4 – though mine too are significant.³ If someone thinks he has good reasons to put confidence in human credentials,⁴ I have more: 3:5 I was circumcised on the eighth day, from the people of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. I lived according to the law as a Pharisee.⁵ 3:6 In my zeal for God I persecuted the church. According to the righteousness stipulated in the law I was blameless. 3:7 But these assets I have come to regard as liabilities because of Christ. 3:8 More than that, I now regard all things as liabilities compared to the far greater value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things – indeed, I regard them as dung!⁶ – that I may gain Christ, 3:9 and be found in him, not because I have my own righteousness derived from the law, but because I have the righteousness that comes by way of Christ's faithfulness⁷ – a

righteousness from God that is in fact⁸ based on Christ's⁹ faithfulness.¹⁰ 3:10 My aim is to know him,¹¹ to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings,¹² and to be like him in his death, 3:11 and so, somehow,¹³ to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Keep Going Forward

3:12 Not that I have already attained this – that is, I have not already been perfected – but I strive to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus also laid hold of me.¹⁴ 3:13 Brothers and sisters,¹⁵ I do not consider myself to have attained this. Instead I am single-minded:¹⁶ Forgetting the things that are behind and reaching out for the things that are ahead, 3:14 with this goal in mind,¹⁷ I strive toward the prize of the upward call of God¹⁸ in Christ Jesus. 3:15 Therefore let those of us who are “perfect” embrace this point

¹tc The verb λατρεύω (*latreuō*; here the participial form, λατρεύοντες [*latreuontes*]) either takes a dative direct object or no object at all, bearing virtually a technical nuance of “worshipping God” (see BDAG 587 s.v.). In this text, πνεύματι (*pneumatī*) takes an instrumental force (“by the Spirit”) rather than functioning as object of λατρεύοντες. However, the word after πνεύματι is in question, no doubt because of the collocation with λατρεύοντες. Most witnesses, including some of the earliest and best representatives of the Alexandrian, Western, and Byzantine texts (N* A B C D² F G 0278^{wo} 33 1739 1881 ̄ co Ambr), read θεοῦ (*theou*); thus, “worship by the Spirit of God”). But several other important witnesses (N² D* P Ψ 075 365 1175 lat sy Chr) have the dative θεῷ (*theō*) here (“worship God by the Spirit”). ̄⁴⁶ is virtually alone in its omission of the divine name, probably due to an unintentional oversight. The dative θεῷ was most likely a scribal emendation intended to give the participle its proper object, and thus avoid confusion about the force of πνεύματι. Although the Church came to embrace the full deity of the Spirit, the NT does not seem to speak of *worshipping* the Spirit explicitly. The reading θεῷ thus appears to be a clarifying reading. On external and internal grounds, then, θεοῦ is the preferred reading.

²tn Grk “have no confidence in the flesh.”

³tn Grk “though I have reason for confidence even in the flesh.”

⁴tn Grk “flesh.”

⁵sn A Pharisee was a member of one of the most important and influential religious and political parties of Judaism in the time of Jesus. There were more Pharisees than Sadducees (according to Josephus, *Ant.* 17.2.4 [17.42] there were more than 6,000 Pharisees at about this time). Pharisees differed with Sadducees on certain doctrines and patterns of behavior. The Pharisees were strict and zealous adherents to the laws of the OT and to numerous additional traditions such as angels and bodily resurrection.

⁶tn The word here translated “dung” was often used in Greek as a vulgar term for fecal matter. As such it would most likely have had a certain shock value for the readers. This may well be Paul's meaning here, especially since the context is about what the *flesh* produces.

⁷tn Or “faith in Christ.” A decision is difficult here. Though traditionally translated “faith in Jesus Christ,” an increasing number of NT scholars are arguing that πίστις Χριστοῦ (*pistis Christou*) and similar phrases in Paul (here and in Rom 3:22, 26; Gal 2:16, 20; 3:22; Eph 3:12) involve a subjective genitive and mean “Christ's faith” or “Christ's faithfulness” (cf., e.g., G. Howard, “The ‘Faith of Christ,’” *ExpTim* 85 [1974]: 212–15; R. B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ* [SBLDS]; Morna D. Hooker, “Πίστις Χριστοῦ,” *NTS* 35 [1989]: 321–42). Noteworthy among the arguments for the subjective gen-

itive view is that when πίστις takes a personal genitive it is almost never an objective genitive (cf. Matt 9:2, 22, 29; Mark 2:5; 5:34; 10:52; Luke 5:20; 7:50; 8:25, 48; 17:19; 18:42; 22:32; Rom 1:8; 12: 3; 4:5, 12, 16, 1; 1 Cor 2:5; 15:14, 17; 2 Cor 10:15; Phil 2:17; Col 1:4; 2:5; 1 Thess 1:8; 3:2, 5, 10; 2 Thess 1:3; Titus 1:1; Phlm 6; 1 Pet 1:9, 21; 2 Pet 1:5). On the other hand, the objective genitive view has its adherents: A. Hultgren, “The *Pistis Christou* Formulations in Paul,” *NovT* 22 (1980): 248–63; J. D. G. Dunn, “Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ,” *SBL Seminar Papers*, 1991, 730–44. Most commentaries on Romans and Galatians usually side with the objective view.

⁸sn ExSyn 116, which notes that the grammar is not decisive, nevertheless suggests that “the faithful/faithfulness of Christ is not a denial of faith in Christ as a Pauline concept (for the idea is expressed in many of the same contexts, only with the verb πιστεύω rather than the noun), but implies that the object of faith is a worthy object, for he himself is faithful.” Though Paul elsewhere teaches justification by faith, this presupposes that the *object* of our faith is reliable and worthy of such faith.

⁹tn The words “in fact” are supplied because of English style, picking up the force of the Greek article with πιστεῖ (*pistei*). See also the following note on the word “Christ's.”

¹⁰tn Grk “based on the faithfulness.” The article before πιστεῖ (*pistei*) is taken as anaphoric, looking back to διὰ πιστεως Χριστοῦ (*dia pisteōs Christou*); hence, “Christ's” is implied.

¹¹tn Or “based on faith.”

¹²tn The articular infinitive τοῦ γνῶναι (*tou gnōnai*, “to know”) here expresses purpose. The words “My aim is” have been supplied in the translation to emphasize this nuance and to begin a new sentence (shorter sentences are more appropriate for English style).

¹³tn Grk “to know him, the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.”

¹⁴tn On εἰ πῶς (*ei pōs*) as “so, somehow” see BDAG 279, s.v. εἰ β. n.

¹⁵tn Grk “that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.” The passive has been translated as active in keeping with contemporary English style.

¹⁶tn Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

¹⁷tn Grk “But this one thing (I do).”

¹⁸tn Grk “according to the goal.”

¹⁹tn Grk “prize, namely, the heavenly calling of God.”

of view.¹ If you think otherwise, God will reveal to you the error of your ways.² **3:16** Nevertheless, let us live up to the standard³ that we have already attained.⁴

3:17 Be imitators of me,⁵ brothers and sisters,⁶ and watch carefully those who are living this way, just as you have us as an example. **3:18** For many live, about whom I have often told you, and now, with tears, I tell you that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. **3:19** Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, they exult in their shame, and they think about earthly things.⁷ **3:20** But our citizenship is in heaven – and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **3:21** who will transform these humble bodies of ours⁸ into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself.

Christian Practices

4:1 So then, my brothers and sisters,⁹ dear friends whom I long to see, my joy and crown, stand in the Lord in this way, my dear friends!

4:2 I appeal to Euodia and to Syntyche to agree in the Lord. **4:3** Yes, I say also to you, true

companion,¹⁰ help them. They have struggled together in the gospel ministry¹¹ along with me and Clement and my other coworkers, whose names are in the book of life. **4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice! **4:5** Let everyone see your gentleness.¹² The Lord is near! **4:6** Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. **4:7** And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds¹³ in Christ Jesus.

4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters,¹⁴ whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things. **4:9** And what you learned and received and heard and saw in me, do these things. And the God of peace will be with you.

Appreciation for Support

4:10 I have great joy in the Lord because now at last you have again expressed your concern for me. (Now I know you were concerned before but had no opportunity to do anything.)¹⁵ **4:11** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in any circumstance. **4:12** I have experienced times of need and times of abundance. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment,¹⁶ whether I go satisfied or hungry, have plenty or nothing. **4:13** I am able to do all things¹⁷ through the one¹⁸ who strengthens me. **4:14** Nevertheless, you did well to share with me in my trouble.

¹ **tn** Grk “those of us who are ‘perfect’ should think this,” or possibly “those of us who are mature should think this.”

sn The adjective *perfect* comes from the same root as the verb *perfected* in v. 12; Paul may well be employing a word-play to draw in his opponents. Thus, *perfect* would then be in quotation marks and Paul would then argue that no one – neither they nor he – is in fact perfect. The thrust of vv. 1-16 is that human credentials can produce *nothing* that is pleasing to God (vv. 1-8). Instead of relying on such, Paul urges his readers to trust God for their righteousness (v. 9) rather than their own efforts, and at the same time to press on for the prize that awaits them (vv. 12-14). He argues further that perfection is unattainable in this life (v. 15), yet the level of maturity that one has reached should not for this reason be abandoned (v. 16).

² **tn** Grk “reveal this to you.” The referent of the pronoun “this” is the fact that the person is thinking differently than Paul does. This has been specified in the translation with the phrase “the error of your ways”; Paul is stating that God will make it known to these believers when they are not in agreement with Paul.

³ **tc** Although κανόνι (*kanoni*, “standard, rule”) is found in most witnesses, though in various locations in this verse (N² D² Ψ 075 30), it is almost surely a motivated reading, for it clarifies the cryptic τῷ αὐτῷ (*tō autō*, “the same”). Both the fact that the word floats, and that there are other variants which accomplish greater clarity by other means, strongly suggests the secondary nature of any of the longer readings here. Further, the shortest text has excellent and early support in J^{16:46} N* A B^{16d} 6 33 1739 co, rendering it decidedly the preferred reading. The translation adds “standard” because of English requirements, not because of textual basis.

⁴ **tn** Grk “Nevertheless, to what we have attained, to the same hold fast.”

⁵ **tn** Or “become fellow imitators with me [of Christ].”

⁶ **tn** Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

⁷ **tn** Grk “whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly and glory is their shame, these who think of earthly things.”

⁸ **tn** Grk “transform the body of our humility.”

⁹ **tn** Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

¹⁰ **tn** Or “faithful fellow worker.” This is more likely a descriptive noun, although some scholars interpret the word σὺζυγος (*suzugos*) here as a proper name (“Szyzygos”), L&N 42.45.

¹¹ **tn** Grk “in the gospel,” a metonymy in which the gospel itself is substituted for the ministry of making the gospel known.

¹² **tn** Grk “let your gentleness be seen by all.” The passive voice construction has been converted to active voice in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹³ **tn** Grk “will guard the hearts of you and the minds of you.” To improve the English style, the second occurrence of ὑμῶν (*humōn*, “of you”) has not been translated, since it is somewhat redundant in English.

¹⁴ **tn** Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 1:12.

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “for you were even concerned, but you lacked opportunity.”

¹⁶ **tn** The words “of contentment” are not in the Greek text, but are implied by Paul’s remarks at the end of v. 11.

¹⁷ **tn** The Greek word translated “all things” is in emphatic position at the beginning of the Greek sentence.

¹⁸ **tc** Although some excellent witnesses lack explicit reference to the one strengthening Paul (so N* A B D* I 33 1739 lat co Cl), the majority of witnesses (N² D² [F G] Ψ 075 1881 30 sy) add Χριστῷ (*Christō*) here (thus, “through Christ who strengthens me”). But this kind of reading is patently secondary, and is a predictable variant. Further, the shorter reading is much harder, for it leaves the agent unspecified.

4:15 And as you Philippians know, at the beginning of my gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in this matter of giving and receiving except you alone. **4:16** For even in Thessalonica¹ on more than one occasion² you sent something for my need. **4:17** I do not say this because I am seeking a gift.³ Rather, I seek the credit that abounds to your account. **4:18** For I have received everything, and I have plenty. I have all I need because I received from Epaphroditus what you sent – a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, very pleasing to God. **4:19** And my God will supply your every need according to his glorious riches⁴ in Christ Jesus. **4:20** May glory be given to God our Father forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

4:21 Give greetings to all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers⁵ with me here send greetings. **4:22** All the saints greet you, especially those who belong to Caesar's household. **4:23** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.⁶

¹ **map** For location see JP1-C1; JP2-C1; JP3-C1; JP4-C1.

² **tn** Or "several times"; *Grk*, "both once and twice." The literal expression "once and twice" is frequently used as a Greek idiom referring to an indefinite low number, but more than once ("several times"); see L&N 60.70.

³ **tn** *Grk* "Not that I am seeking the gift." The phrase "I do not say this..." has been supplied in the translation to complete the thought for the modern reader.

⁴ **tn** Or "according to the riches of his glory." The phrase "of his glory" is treated as an attributive genitive in the translation.

⁵ **tn** Or perhaps, "The brothers and sisters" (so TEV, TNIV; cf. NRSV "The friends"; CEV "The Lord's followers") If "brothers" refers to Paul's traveling companions, it is probably that only men are in view (cf. NAB, NLT). Since v. 22 mentions "all the saints," which presumably includes everyone, it is more probable here that only Paul's traveling companions are in view.

⁶ **tc** Most witnesses, including several important ones (ⱼ⁴⁶ Ɀ A D Ψ 33 Ɀ lat sy bo), have ἀμήν (*amēn*, "amen") at the end of this letter, while an impressive combination of Alexandrian and Western mss (B F G 075 6 1739* 1881 sa) lack the valedictory particle. Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rom 16:27; Gal 6:18; Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding ἀμήν in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John (and even in these books, ἀμήν is found in some witnesses). It is thus a predictable variant. Thus, on internal grounds, with sufficient support from external evidence, the preferred reading is the omission of ἀμήν.