

body, or any part of it (the hands, feet), is bound." It is an apparent contradiction that an ambassador would be shackled with a prisoner's chain. But we need to observe that the chain attached to Paul was not placed there by the government of which he was an ambassador. Hence, while bound in a literal chain by an enemy government, he might be able still to represent the sovereign in a foreign land. "The word of God is not bound" (2 Timothy 2: 9). Paul's mouth was still free, and he wished the brethren to pray for divine help that he might speak the Gospel of Christ with boldness.

Verse 21. Thayer says TYCHICUS was "an Asiatic Christian, friend and companion of the apostle Paul." Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary gives the same information, with additional notes that he carried the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

Verse 22. Tychicus was near Paul much of the time and was acquainted with the state of affairs concerning the apostle. He could comfort the hearts of the brethren by the information that Paul was standing firm in his faith.

Verse 23. Paul's manner of salutation was not always the same as it pertained to the persons addressed. Sometimes he singled out certain individuals, at others he made it general as he does in this verse. Hence there is nothing significant in the form used.

Verse 24. Paul wishes the *grace* (favor of the Lord) to be with the brethren; that is, with those who professed to love Him and who were sincere.

Philippians 1

Verse 1. The account of starting the church at Philippi is given in Acts 16, and the reader should now take time to study that entire chapter before going further with these comments. This epistle was written in Rome, under circumstances similar to those connected with the one to the Ephesians, for Paul was a prisoner in chains on account of the persecution of the Jews in Palestine (Acts, chapters 22 to 26). *Timotheus* is another form for Timothy, who was a faithful companion of Paul in his travels (Acts 16: 1-3), and hence with whom the brethren at Philippi would have some acquaintance. Paul mentions him as joining in the loving salutation to the church. The epistle is addressed to *all the saints*, which means all the Christians

in Philippi since the two words mean the same. The salutation includes both official and unofficial members, because the quality of being a saint is not an official one. However, the apostle makes special mention of the two and only classes of officials in the New Testament church. *Bishops* is another name for the elders or rulers over the congregation, which will be fully discussed at 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2. *Deacons*. The work of these officials is explained at Acts 6: 2, in the first volume of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 2. *Grace* is from CHARIS, and one part of Thayer's definition is, "kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved." This phase of the word explains why the apostle specifies that it is the grace from God he is wishing for his brethren, since all of God's favors are bestowed upon man undeserved by him. They are bestowed only through the Lord Jesus Christ. That is because the sacrifice of Christ provided the way for God to maintain his justice and at the same time extend this unmerited favor to humanity. *Peace* is from EIRENE, which is used 90 times in the Greek New Testament, and is rendered by our present word 88 times. As it applies to individuals, Thayer defines it, "peace between individuals, i.e., harmony, concord." As to disciples and the Lord he defines it, "the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatever sort it is."

Verse 3. The original Greek word for *remembrance* is so rendered 3 times in the King James Version, and by "mention" 4 times. The various translations and commentaries differ as to their preferred rendering. The truth is that the difference between them is slight. However, I believe the connection favors the marginal rendering, namely, the word "mention." In Romans 1: 9 and Ephesians 1: 16 this Greek word is used in virtually the same kind of connection, and in each of those places it is rendered "mention." The verse could well be understood as if it said: "Every time I have occasion to mention you in my prayer, it is with thanksgiving for what you have meant to me in my service to Christ." Several verses following bears out this thought.

Verse 4. *Request with joy*. The record of helpful service extended to Paul

by the Philippian brethren enabled him to expect further good work by them. Hence his requests were made with the joyful feeling that God would grant his requests for them.

Verse 5. One of the things for which Paul believed God would bless the church at Philippi was their *fellowship in the Gospel*. The first word is from KOINONIA, which means anything by which one person shares with another the same experience. This can be done either by direct joining with him in the activities concerned, or by support of the same by contribution of money and other necessities of life. *From the first day* means the first of their acquaintance with Paul in his work among them, in which he got them started as a church of Christ. *Until now* indicates they did not cease their support of him as soon as he left their community. Chapter 4: 16 shows they sent contributions to him more than once when he was in Thessalonica.

Verse 6. The pronoun *he* refers to the Lord, to whom Paul gives the credit for all the good work accomplished at Philippi. *Will perform it*. The apostle's confidence in the faithfulness of the brethren prompts him to say this, for as long as disciples are faithful, He will continue to help them in their good work. *The day of Jesus Christ* literally means the coming of Christ, but it is equivalent to saying that He would be with them as long as they lived.

Verse 7. In the preceding verse Paul expresses his confidence in the perseverance of the Philippians to the end of life, thereby obtaining the continued favor of the Lord. He now affirms that such a feeling about them is *meet* or natural, and then gives his reason for the statement, namely, that they were constant in their fellowship with him under the *grace* or favor of God. *I have you in my heart*. The marginal rendering of this is, "you have me in your heart." I have consulted a number of translations and they are about equally divided between the two renderings. However, the Englishman's Greek New Testament gives the same as the margin. Since that work is a literal word-for-word translation I would prefer its form of the rendering. The difference, though, is not great, for the thought is that Paul and the brethren had a heartfelt interest in each other with reference to the great work of the apostle. *Bonds* refers to the chain that made Paul a prisoner,

but which did not keep him from making a *defence* of the Gospel, which refers primarily to the first proclamation of it. *Confirmation* means the assurances which the apostle gave of the truth of the preaching, which he accomplished through his inspiration and miraculous power.

Verse 8. *Record* means a witness; the apostle means that God knows all about what is in his heart with reference to the brethren at Philippi. *Bowels* is from SPLAGCHNON, which Thayer defines, "bowels, intestines." But it is used figuratively in the New Testament, which Thayer explains as follows: "In the Greek poets the bowels were regarded as the seat of the more violent passions, such as anger and love; but by the Hebrews as the seat of the tender affections, especially kindness, benevolence, compassions; hence is equivalent to our heart, tender mercies, affections, etc." As the apostle uses the term, it means that he longs after the brethren with a tender affection like that of Christ.

Verse 9. A meaningless love would be of no avail for any persons concerned. Paul wishes the love of his brethren to grow according to knowledge. *Judgment* means discernment or recognition of what is morally proper. The apostle prayed for such progress to be made by the brethren, and he wrote this epistle as a help along that line.

Verse 10. *Approve* means to try or test (by the scriptural standard of right and wrong). *Excellent* denotes things that differ from others for the better. The complete thought is that they may be able to recognize what is better after making the lawful test. Such a course would prove them to be sincere, which would also keep them approved by Christ until he came again.

Verse 11. The same thought as the preceding verse is expressed in this, but in different words. *Being filled* means the brethren were working in the Master's vineyard faithfully, and the result was a full crop of righteousness. *Which are by Christ Jesus* denotes that no good works can be done except as are authorized by Him. Such works will always reflect glory and praise to God, for he has willed that all service must be done through the Son.

Verse 12. *The things which happened unto me*. This includes Paul's entire experience of persecution, begin-

ning with his arrest and binding with a chain, and the unfavorable events being thrown around him since being in Rome. He did not wish his brethren to be unduly disturbed over the report of his situation, hence he made the present explanation which might well be expressed by a familiar phrase, "evils are often blessings in disguise." Such is the meaning of his statement that the happenings had *fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel*. The several verses following give the details of his remarks.

Verse 13. *Bonds* refers to the chain by which Paul was made a prisoner, and it was *manifest* literally since he had an actual metallic chain fastened to his body. *In Christ* is said because the apostle's persecution was an account of his service to Him. *Palace* is from *PRATORION*, a military term, and is defined by Thayer at this place, "the camp of praetorian soldiers." Paul was under guard of the soldiers, even though permitted to occupy a house which he hired for himself (Acts 28: 30-31). Under these circumstances he would come in contact with a great many persons of various ranks, and to those who came within the sound of his voice he preached the Gospel, the subject because of which he was wearing the chain.

Verse 14. *Waxing confident by my bonds*. The brethren coming and going could see the chain attached to Paul's body, and could also behold his unwavering faith in Christ. Yes, they could see the chain and also hear him as he preached the Gospel to those who came near him. Such an example had the effect of strengthening their own faith, and causing them to go out among the people and repeat the sweet story of the cross. In this way Paul meant his persecutions had produced the good effect of *furtherance* (advancement) of the Gospel.

Verse 15. *Some* is general, but cannot apply to the persons mentioned in the preceding verse, for Paul speaks of them in a favorable way. Doubtless they were the Jews who had professed Christianity but who were inclined to Judaism. Such characters would naturally envy Paul's great work among the people who had heard him. *Preach Christ*. This is indefinite as to how much of the Gospel they preached. We are sure, however, that what was preached was correct, or else Paul would not have *rejoiced* in it as he does in verse 18. But these Juda-

izers spread the word that this Christ whom Paul was preaching was the Messiah of the Old Testament. This would be objectionable to the Romans since the predicted one was coming into the world as a king. With the mistaken idea that it was to be a temporal kingdom, the Romans would resent having such a king advocated among their people.

Verse 16. *The one* refers to those of the preceding verse who preach Christ from *envy and strife*. Paul adds a word to their motive which is *contentions*, and according to Thayer this word has the idea of such activities as are practiced by what is familiarly called a "politician." It is easy to see why they would do that kind of public teaching, for it would rouse the opposition of the Roman citizens. That in turn would bring forth an inquiry as to who had introduced such propaganda into the community. Upon being informed that it was Paul, it would enrage the Roman leaders (as the Judaizers thought), and cause them to do something that would *add affliction* to the bonds already fastened upon the apostle.

Verse 17. *The other* means the ones in verse 15 who preached Christ of *good will*. Seeing that Paul was *set* (determined) to proclaim and defend the Gospel, these brethren were encouraged to join in the good work.

Verse 18. *What then?* This denotes that Paul is about to draw a conclusion from the foregoing facts, namely, that in either case he is glad that Christ is preached. Great abuse has been made of this circumstance by some who wish to apologize for the erroneous methods that are used in the religious world for the spreading of the Gospel. It is claimed that if Paul would rejoice in the work of these evil persons, then we should rejoice in what is done even by unscriptural organizations for the spreading of truth. It should be noted, however, that what these envious preachers proclaimed was the truth—their motive only was what was wrong. Also, no unscriptural organization or methods were used in their work, while the modern use of this case is to justify the institutions of men in their professed teaching of the Scriptures.

Verse 19. The pronoun *this* means the same as *the things* in verse 12, with the additional items pertaining to Paul's conduct under the circum-

stances. *Shall turn [out] to my salvation.* The last word has a wide range of meaning, and the primary definition of the original is given by Thayer, "deliverance, safety, preservation, salvation." The word can apply to physical or spiritual deliverance, and to the present or eternal age. The connection in each case must determine the particular application of the term. In Paul's case it may well be taken in both the physical and spiritual sense. The epistle was written when Paul was a prisoner the first time, and we know that he was actually delivered from his chain and permitted to go out among the churches. *Through your prayer.* No doubt the brethren prayed for his deliverance as the church did on behalf of Peter (Acts 12: 5). *And the supply of the Spirit of Christ Jesus.* Of course the prayers of Christians would avail nothing except they were offered in connection with the Lord's plan. The spiritual salvation of the apostle would also be on condition that he be true to Christ regardless of how the situation might terminate

Verse 20. *Earnest expectation* is from one Greek word, and it means virtually the same as *hope* that is used here, except that it is a more intense word, implying some anxiety. The whole statement means that it is Paul's earnest expectation and hope, etc. He means to conduct himself in such a way that he would have nothing of which to be ashamed. Instead, he is determined to continue his present boldness in preaching the Gospel, regardless of whether he was permitted to live, or would be put to death by his persecutors. By submitting his body to whatever his enemies might decree against him, whether it be life or death, he would be doing honor to Christ. *Magnified* is from *MEGALUNO*, and Thayer's explanation of the word in this passage is that Christ would "get glory and praise" from the service that Paul's body would be rendering by this devotion.

Verse 21. If Paul is permitted to live in the flesh, he will use his time for the service of Christ. But if his earthly life and service are cut off by the enemy, he will not be to blame for it because he will die in a good cause. That is why he says in the last phrase, *to die is gain.* If a man loses his physical life for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, he will gain the reward of spiritual life (Matthew 16: 25).

Verse 22. The pronoun *this* refers to the service for Christ mentioned in the preceding verse. On the basis that if he lives he will serve Christ, he will expect the *gain* also mentioned as the fruit of his labor for Him; said gain to come after death. Since both parts of the proposition—life of service and gain after death—are important, Paul is undecided as to which he prefers. *Wot not* is an old expression meaning "know not."

Verse 23. *Strait* means Paul was under pressure from two different desirable experiences, which were of such a character that he could not have both at the same time. One of these is stated in this verse, which was *to depart and to be with Christ.* Of the two desirable experiences he says this would be *far better.* This gives us a very significant truth. We know that Christ was not personally on earth, and hence to be with Him it would be necessary for Paul to leave this earth. That would require him to leave the fleshly body as the next verse clearly shows. This disproves the materialistic theory which claims that man is wholly mortal, and that when he dies, everything about him dies and hence would remain wherever the body does. The passage teaches also that after a man's body dies, the part of him that *departs* from this world is conscious. Furthermore, if such a man was a faithful servant of the Lord until death, he will have an enjoyable consciousness after death, else it would not be *far better* to depart.

Verse 24. This verse states the other thing that was causing the *strait* or pressure in which Paul found himself. *To abide in the flesh* is equivalent to saying he would continue to live on the earth in his fleshly body. *More needful for you* expresses the reason why this side of the *strait* was regarded as something that was desirable in the mind of Paul. He knew that after death he could not continue to serve his brethren personally, for the only assistance they could receive from him would be the good example and teaching that he would leave in their memory. Of course such a benefit would be available to all true disciples as long as the world stands.

Verse 25. *Having this confidence.* That is, being confident of the truth of the statement in the preceding verse. Things that were "more needful" for the church would be more important than something desirable to

Paul personally. For that reason he was sure that he would remain a while longer for their *furtherance* (advancement) in the faith, and the joy that such advancement would give them.

Verse 26. Paul was made a prisoner in Rome two times (2 Timothy 4: 16), and this epistle was written when he was there the first time. He was released and permitted to go out among the churches for a while. I shall quote from Smith's Bible Dictionary as follows: "In this epistle [the one to the Philippians] Paul twice expresses a confident hope that before long he may be able to visit the Philippians in person. (Chapter 1: 25; 2: 24.) Whether this hope was fulfilled or not has been the occasion of much controversy. According to the general opinion the apostle was liberated from imprisonment at the end of two years, having been acquitted by Nero in A.D. 63, and left Rome soon after writing the letter to the Philippians." The release of Paul would be regarded as an answer to the prayers of the church. This would cause their *rejoicing* to be *more abundant*. In *Jesus Christ for me* denotes their rejoicing would be in regard to Paul and his victory through Jesus Christ over his enemies.

Verse 27. *Conversation* means conduct or manner of life, and *becometh* is defined to denote that which is becoming or suitable to a thing. The sentence means for them to conduct themselves in a way that shows respect for the Gospel of Christ. Such conduct would become known to others, so that Paul would learn about it even though he never got to see them again. The apostle did not write this in a spirit of doubt, for these brethren had already shown such kind of faithfulness (chapter 2: 12). The subject is mentioned as a kindly exhortation from a loving apostle. *Stand fast in one spirit* has the same meaning as *unity of the Spirit* in Ephesians 4: 3. *With one mind* denotes that each mind is being guided by the same rule, and that rule is the one provided for them by the inspired word. *Striving together* is from one word that Thayer defines, "to strive at the same time with another." The idea is that all the brethren would join their forces in the contest for one cause. *Faith of the Gospel* means the "one faith" Paul mentions in Ephesians 4: 5, which is made known through the Gospel.

Verse 28. A glance at the next verse will help in arriving at the meaning

of this one. The verse starts with *for*, which indicates that a reason is about to be given for the statements of the preceding passage. Since the servants of Christ are the ones who are *given* the honor of suffering for Him, the very fact that they are having such an experience, and are holding firm under it, is proof that they are the accepted of the Lord. That is why it means so much to these Judaizing enemies of the Philippians, to observe that they are *in nothing terrified* by the persecutions. It means that they (the Philippians) are the Lord's faithful servants and hence are heirs of *salvation*. By the same token it means that they (the adversaries) are threatened with perdition for their enmity against the true disciples of Christ.

Verse 29. It would be foolish to pretend that any physical enjoyment can be had from persecution, for the bodies and sensibilities of Christians are like those of all other human beings. Their joy comes from what such experiences indicate on their behalf. The thought is well stated in Acts 5: 41 where the disciples rejoiced because "they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" All of this supports the comments on the preceding verse.

Verse 30. *Conflict* is from AGON which Thayer defines, "a contest." The Christian life is likened to the athletic contests that were so common in old times. Paul means these brethren were engaged in the same contest that he had encountered in their presence (Acts 16th chapter), and in which he is now engaged as they had been informed.

Philippians 2

Verse 1. *If* does not mean Paul had any doubt of the things he is about to mention. It is used in the sense of "seeing there be," or "inasmuch as there does be," etc., then he names the things he believed assuredly to exist. All true consolation is to be found only in Christ through the kingdom (Matthew 5: 4). All who love Christ and his disciples, will find untold comfort in their fellowship with each other. *Fellowship* is from a word that means the sharing of something with another. The Spirit, through the divine law which He has dictated to the inspired writers, creates a partnership in spiritual things not to be found in the world. *Bowels* is used with reference to the affections, because the people in old times believed that part of the body was the seat of

those sentiments. See a detailed definition of the word at chapter 1: 8. The primary meaning of the original for *mercies* is pity or compassion. It will lead us to be considerate of another's misfortunes (1 Corinthians 12: 26).

Verse 2. The epistle to the Philippians contains no rebukes nor reproofs, but it has admonitions and exhortations, and much instruction intended to improve their already excellent state of spirituality. The present verse is one passage of this kind. It would make Paul's joy full for them to be *likeminded*, which means to be united in mind in their work for the Lord. (See chapter 1: 27.) *Having the same love* denotes their love for each other was to be mutually complete. *Of one accord* means to work together harmoniously for the "faith of the Gospel."

Verse 3. *Strife* is an attempt to put oneself ahead of others for the purpose of being pre-eminent. *Vainglory* is the same as self-esteem, which would cause a man to seek the pre-eminence just mentioned. In contrast to all this, the apostle would have his brethren show *lowliness of mind*, which is the same as humbleness. Instead of considering oneself worthy of special honor, he should think of his brother as being better than himself. That would cause him to push the other person forward instead of seeking to be prominent for his own gratification. (See Romans 12: 10.)

Verse 4. Christians should not be concerned in their own things only, for that would be selfishness. Instead, they should be interested in the welfare of others.

Verse 5. *This mind* does not mean that the mind of man can be equal to that of Christ. The original word is *PHRONEO*, and a part of Thayer's definition at this place is, "to seek one's interests or advantage; to be of one's party, side with him." As Jesus was unmindful of himself and thoughtful of others, we should be likeminded.

Verse 6. *Form* is from *MORPHE* which occurs only three times in the Greek New Testament. *Robbery* is from *HARPAGMOS*. I shall give Thayer's definition and explanations of this word first. "A thing seized or to be seized, booty," and he explains it to mean, "to deem anything a prize—a thing to be seized upon or to be held fast, retained." In his definition and

explanations of *MORPHE*, Thayer includes some statements pertaining to verse 7. I shall quote his definition of the Greek word, also his explanations (the parts in parentheses). "The form by which a person or thing strikes the vision; the external appearance . . . (this whole passage is to be explained as follows): who, although (formerly) he bore the form (in which he appeared to the inhabitants of heaven) of God, yet did not think that this equality with God was to be eagerly clung to or retained, but emptied himself of it so as to assume the form of a servant, in that he became like unto men, and was found in fashion as a man." My comments on the verse, based on the connection and the lexicon definitions of the words, is that Christ was willing to underestimate the great honor of being equal in form with the Father, and condescend to becoming even lower than the angels, so that He could suffer and die as a man.

Verse 7. *Made himself of no reputation* all comes from two Greek words, and they are rendered "emptied himself" by the Englishman's Greek New Testament, and four other translations that I have consulted render it the same. Paul means that Christ divested himself of the glorious form He had before he came to the earth. (See the comments on the preceding verse.) Christ became like a servant in form only, because all slaves in the various ranks were men (not angels), in order that He might be capable of death for the sake of mankind.

Verse 8. *Being found* or appearing on earth in *fashion* (form and manner of life physically) *as a man*. *Humbled himself* means Christ subjected himself to voluntary humiliation, which will be made clear by further comments on this verse. *Obedience* implies a commander giving law to be obeyed, and Jesus was subject only to his Father. *Unto* means "as far as, to the extent of," and it is used here to denote that Jesus obeyed his Father to the extent of submitting to death. *Even* used in connection with *death of the cross* is more significant than is generally realized. Jesus not only submitted to die in obedience to his Father and for the benefit of sinful man, but to die the most horrible and humiliating form of death. Smith's Bible Dictionary gives a description of this performance, which I shall quote for the information of the reader:

"Crucifixion was unanimously considered the most horrible form of death. Among the Romans [by whom Jesus was crucified] the degradation [disgrace] was also a part of the infliction, and the punishment if applied to freemen was only used in the case of the vilest criminals. The one to be crucified was stripped naked of all his clothes, and then followed the most awful moment of all. He was laid down upon the implement of torture. His arms were stretched along the cross-beams, and at the center of the open palms the point of a huge iron nail was placed, which, by the blow of a mallet, was driven home into the wood. Then through either foot separately, or possibly through both together, as they were placed one over the other, another huge nail tore its way through the quivering flesh." A little farther on in the article the author says: "A death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly,—dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic [shock] fever, tetanus [spasm caused by infection], publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of unattended wounds . . . the unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish," etc. Besides this historical description of the physical suffering, we have the statements in the Bible of the shame attached to crucifixion (Deuteronomy 21: 22, 23; Galatians 3: 13; Hebrews 12: 2). From all the foregoing information, the reader can realize the reason for Paul's use of the word *even* in connection with Christ's death on the cross.

Verse 9. God rewarded the humility and obedience of his Son by exalting him with a name that denotes authority. Matthew 28: 18 states that all power (authority) is given Him in heaven and in earth. Our present verse makes the general statement that His name is above every name. Of course it is to be understood with the exception shown in 1 Corinthians 15: 27.

Verse 10. The preceding verse gives a general declaration of the authority vested in the name of Christ; this one names the three regions in which that authority is to be recognized. The three regions include all intelligent creatures that are in existence, namely,

heaven, earth and under the earth which means Hades or place of departed spirits and demons. For a full explanation of the last place, see the comments at Matthew 5: 30, in first volume of the New Testament Commentary. A foretaste of the recognition of His authority by creatures from these three regions was accorded him when on the earth. Matthew 4: 11 shows the angels (*things in heaven*) paying their respects and serving Him. The instances of *things in earth* (men) are too numerous to need special citation. *Things under the earth* (demons) acknowledge Him (Mark 5: 1-6).

Verse 11. This verse expresses the same recognition of authority by means of the tongue, that the preceding verse does with the bended knee. An added thought is that it is all to be to the glory of God the Father. That will be true, whether the acknowledgment is made willingly by friends of the Lord, or unwillingly by enemies. But if it is by the enemies, they will get no reward for it, while the friends will have themselves confessed in the presence of God (Matthew 10: 32).

Verse 12. In chapter 1: 27 Paul exhorts the brethren to be faithful whether he is present with them or not, and in this one he acknowledges just such faithfulness on their part. Brethren cannot do more than obey, hence the words *much more* only means an expression of degree. It is more commendable for them to be obedient in his absence, for that is proof that their work is not "eyeservice" (service performed only under the eye of the master), which is condemned in Ephesians 6: 6. *Work out* comes from one Greek word which Thayer defines, "to do that from which something results." They were to do the work under Christ that would result in their *own* salvation; no person could do it for them. *Fear and trembling*. The first word means reverence and the last means anxiety. Christians should have reverence for God and be anxious to obey His law.

Verse 13. God works in his children through the inspired word. That word instructs them not only to profess the *will* to serve the Lord, but also to *do* His will; such a life will be pleasing to God.

Verse 14. *Without murmurings* means to do one's duty cheerfully, not secretly resenting the task required. The original for *disputings* is defined

by Thayer, as "hesitating, doubting." Disciples should not question the right of the Lord to command them, nor be curious as to why He has given them the duty.

Verse 15. *Blameless* denotes a life against which no charge can be truthfully made. *Harmless* is rendered "sincere" in the margin, and the lexicon agrees with it. The fuller definition would be "without mixture" with the evil things of the world. The sons of God should be *without rebuke*, which they will be if they comply with the forepart of the verse. *Crooked* and *perverse* mean virtually the same, and are used for the purpose of emphasis. It refers to people who will not walk in the straight path of righteousness, but stubbornly persist in doing that which is evil. Christians must live in such a nation while in this world, but they should not live *as* such a nation lives. Instead, their lives should reflect the light of divine truth by practicing the good works directed by Christ (Matthew 5: 14-16).

Verse 16. *Holding forth the word of life* means to hold the Gospel up before the world so it will be seen as the truth coming from the apostle. In 1 Timothy 3: 15 Paul says the church is the pillar (or support) of the truth, and the Lord does not permit any other organization to offer His word to mankind. Paul gave the Gospel to the Philippians, now he expects them to continue the good work by holding it up in their lives and teaching. *Labored in vain*. No preacher's salvation depends on the faithfulness of his converts if he is himself faithful in teaching them their duty. But if they do not carry out their part of the great plan, their salvation will be a failure. Such a result would make Paul's work among them *in vain* as far as they are concerned. If they are faithful to the end, it will give Paul a cause a rejoicing on their behalf, and such rejoicing would constitute the "reward" such as 2 John 8.

Verse 17. This verse contains a very beautiful thought concerning the unselfishness of Paul. *Offered* is from SPENDO which means literally "to be poured out." Paul did not know how his present situation would terminate (verse 23), or whether he would have to give up his blood on the executioner's block (as he finally did after the second arrest according to 2 Timothy 4: 6). However that may be, he was willing to make such a sacrifice if

called upon to do so. But even such a service was regarded by him as small in comparison with the services of the church at Philippi. The figure of being *offered* ("poured out") is drawn from a service under the law of Moses. (See Exodus 29: 40, 41; Leviticus 2: 1, 6; 23: 13, 18, 37.) These liquid offerings were "poured" upon the main sacrifice to combine a service to God. They might well be called a minor offering or sacrifice, and that upon which they were poured a major one in comparison. Paul was willing to represent himself as a minor sacrifice, poured upon the major one of the faithful service of the Philippians. Even that humble service would cause him to *joy and rejoice* with the brethren.

Verse 18. Paul bids the Philippian brethren to share his joy with him, which would constitute one of the finest examples of fellowship in Christ that is possible.

Verse 19. *Trust in the Lord* is equivalent in thought to "if the Lord will" in James 4: 15. Everything Paul expected to do was subject to the will of the Lord. Timothy had been with Paul as a "companion in tribulation," and the apostle desired to send him to the church at Philippi to get first hand information concerning conditions there. Paul's general confidence was strong, but he craved the satisfaction that comes from a direct report. That would be especially true when coming from one who would take sincere interest in the welfare of the brethren, as he believed Timothy would.

Verse 20. *Likeminded*. Paul means he had no other person with him with a mind like that of Timothy, namely, would *naturally* (sincerely) care about their state.

Verse 21. *All* is used in the sense of the general rule; there were exceptions, such as Timothy. But most people were self-concerned and not much interested in the things that belong to Jesus Christ. This is an instance that shows that when a man is concerned with the welfare of the church, it is counted as for Christ. (See Matthew 25: 45.)

Verse 22. *The proof of him*. The conduct of Timothy gave the proof of the correctness of Paul's estimate as just stated, namely he had been as near and attentive to Paul as if he had been his father. And all this service was on behalf of the Gospel for

which they both were devoting their lives.

Verse 23. Paul did not plan to send Timothy at once; not until he saw how it went with him. This means the case that was pending before the Roman authorities.

Verse 24. This verse indicates one reason Paul wished to retain Timothy until his case was decided. If he should be released, he might find it possible to make the journey to Philippi with him; at least he hoped to make the trip soon after.

Verse 25. He did not retain *Epaphroditus* for further developments as he did Timothy. That was because he was in Rome as a personal messenger between the church at Philippi and Paul, sent to take him necessary supplies. It was appropriate to send him back home to report on his mission.

Verse 26. Here is an unusual case of worrying; that is, the cause for it. As a rule a person worries over his own situation. But here is man who is very sick (or has been), and yet he is not concerned about himself. Instead, he knows his brethren back home have heard about his sickness, and he is grieved for fear they are overly worried. It is a striking case of unselfishness and suggests 1 Corinthians 12: 26.

Verse 27. *Sick nigh unto death*. The question might arise why Paul did not heal him since he had miraculous power. Such a query overlooks the primary object of miracles, namely, the making of believers (John 20: 30, 31). Unless some good reason for using miraculous healing existed in a given case, it was the Lord's will to let it depend on the provisions of nature; hence a miracle was not always resorted to. A similar case of this kind is mentioned in 2 Timothy 4: 20.

Verse 28. To relieve the tension was another reason for sending *Epaphroditus* back to Philippi at this time, besides the one mentioned at verse 25. When the brethren saw their messenger in their midst again, recovered from his serious illness, they would have the load of anxiety lifted and all parties concerned would rejoice together.

Verse 29. *Receive him* does not imply any doubt about their attitude toward this messenger, but rather it is a friendly recommendation from Paul, induced by his appreciation for the good services that the messenger had rendered to him while in Rome. *Hold*

such in reputation means give him the honor that his faithful services deserved.

Verse 30. This verse tells the cause of the serious sickness of this messenger. After arriving in Rome, he was detained for some time because the supplies from Philippi were not sufficient to care for Paul, and he had to do some kind of secular work to obtain the needed things. Just what caused the situation is not revealed, but we know it was not through any fault of the brethren at Philippi, for chapter 4: 10 says they "lacked opportunity." And we know this has reference to the temporal necessities of life, for several verses following the one just referred to show clearly that Paul was writing on that subject in this part of his epistle.

Philippians 3

Verse 1. *Finally* is from *LOIPOS* and one term Thayer uses in his definition is "moreover," signifying that Paul has something more to say; or, that he is going to repeat what has been said previously. *Rejoice in the Lord*. There are two important thoughts in this expression. One is in the first word, and indicates that Christians should be joyful. The other is that it is in the Lord that rejoicing may be had. *To write the same things*. To repeat what has been said at various times, giving such wholesome exhortation as this one about rejoicing in the Lord. Such a repetition was not any unpleasant task for Paul, and besides it was a safe kind of advice for the readers.

Verse 2. *Dogs* is from *KUON*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "a man of impure mind, an impudent man." The editor of Thayer's lexicon says the word is always used in a reproachful sense when it is used figuratively. Robinson gives the same definition, and says it is used figuratively in Philippians 3: 2, "where it is spoken of Judaizing teachers." Paul literally calls them *evil workers*. The original for *concision* is *KATATOME* which Thayer defines with the one word "mutilation." We know Paul is writing about the rite of circumcision, but he designates it by the other word because of the unlawful use that the Judaizers were making of it. Circumcision was given to the descendants of Abraham as a national mark, and later was included in the Jewish system as a religious ordinance. When

that was replaced by the Gospel system, the religious feature of circumcision was taken away and the rite was left just where it was in the beginning, namely, a fleshly mark for the Jews only. The Gentiles were never given the rite for any reason, hence it is unlawful to perform it on any of them. When a doctor circumcises a new born infant he violates the law of Christ, and Paul would accuse him of mutilation.

Verse 3. *We are the circumcision.* The original word for the rite in this phrase is the one for the fleshly act, but Paul is using it in a spiritual sense. The Judaizers taught that fleshly circumcision was necessary to make one a part of God's true people. The apostle is teaching that since physical circumcision has lost its religious significance, true circumcision is of a spiritual kind. It is the action of those who *worship God in the Spirit*, or according to the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8: 2), and not after "the law of sin and death," which called for fleshly circumcision, and which was the system the Judaizers were trying to impose upon the Gentile Christians. (See Romans 2: 29; Colossians 2: 11.)

Verse 4. *Confidence in the flesh.* This phrase occurs in the preceding verse as well as the present one. Such an expression usually refers to the evil desires of the carnal mind. However, such desires have been regarded as wrong all through the Bible. But Paul is using the phrase in a special application, based on the fleshly relation the Jews bear to Abraham, which is indicated by the rite of circumcision, a fleshly performance. The Jews laid much stress on this relationship and even felt such a "confidence" in the time of John the Baptist (Matthew 3: 9). The Judaizers might say that Paul's attitude against them was from envy, or prompted by the feeling that is familiarly expressed by the figure, "sour grapes." He asserts that such is not the case, but that instead, he could truthfully boast of greater accomplishments while professing the religion that included this fleshly rite, than others; he then proceeds in two verses to enumerate them. (See also the comments at Galatians 1: 13, 14.)

Verse 5. *Circumcised the eighth day* (Leviticus 12: 3). The parents of Paul had attended to this rite according to the detail as to the exact age when it should be done. Even Moses

was not that faithful (Exodus 4: 24-26). *Stock of Israel* or Jacob. He was the descendant of Abraham who was selected even before he was born to be in the blood line for the Messiah. (See Romans 9: 7-12.) *Tribe of Benjamin.* He (Benjamin) was the son of Rachel, of tender memory, and his tribe gave the nation its first king (Acts 13: 21). *Hebrew of the Hebrews.* Both parents of Paul were of that race, whereas some members of the nation were not full blooded (Acts 16: 1). *Touching the law, a Pharisee.* Among the various sects of the Jews, the Pharisees were regarded as the most exacting in their demands of religious duty. (See Acts 26: 5.) There is a lengthy comment on this sect at Matthew 16: 12, in the first volume of the New Testament Commentary, which also includes information concerning the Sadducees.

Verse 6. The Greek word for *zeal* is used in both a good and bad sense in the New Testament. When used in the former, it means ardor or enthusiasm, and that is its meaning in this verse. The reader may be surprised that I would say this, when Paul used his zeal in *persecuting the church*. Yes, he had the right *kind* of zeal, but made a wrong use of it, even as a man might have the right kind of money but make a wrong use of it. Paul believed the church was an unscriptural institution, and to be consistent, he was required to oppose it. *Blameless.* This means Paul lived up to all requirements of the law, which proves that it was not physically impossible to do so as some teach. The parents of John the Baptist lived up to them according to Luke 1: 6.

Verse 7. In the lexicon the original for *gain* is defined "advantage," and that for *loss* is defined "damage." There was a time when Paul thought it was a great advantage to have all of the fleshly accomplishments named above to his credit. But after learning what it means to have Christ, he could realize that it would have been a disadvantage or *loss* to him, had he clung to them. Indeed, the "damage" would have been to the extent of losing the grace or favor of God (Galatians 5: 4).

Verse 8. The first half of this verse repeats the thoughts of the preceding one, and Paul extends it to include *all things*, not only those Jewish claims which he once trusted. He became aware of this great advantage through *the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord*, *Suffered the loss of all*

things. This denotes a complete sacrifice by Paul of whatever would hinder him from wholehearted service to Christ, regardless of how near and precious they may have seemed. Yea, he did not count his own life valuable enough to sacrifice Christ for it (Acts 20: 24). *Do count them but dung.* The last word is used figuratively, meaning something that is worthless and objectionable. It is not enough for a disciple of Christ just to "ease up" or lessen his interest in the things of the world, he must spurn them as he would a vessel of filth.

Verse 9. *Be found in him;* now or at any time the Lord calls him to account. Paul's desire was to be found acceptable to his Lord, in that he would not be having or holding on to the form of *righteousness* that was prescribed by the law. He designates this form as *mine own righteousness*, although he says it *is of the law*, a document that came from God. Here is set forth a very significant principle. When God changes his own law and calls upon man to receive the new one, if that man persists in clinging to the old one, he is guilty of wanting to have his own way.

Verse 10. The word *know* means more than a mere acquaintance of one's identity; it includes a personal realization of whatever is being considered. Paul wanted to know what it means to have experimental knowledge of Christ by serving Him wholeheartedly. *Power of his resurrection.* That power first demonstrated itself by inducing man to repent of sin and follow a spiritual life in Him. It will be finally demonstrated when it brings the "dead in Christ" from the grave to die no more. *Fellowship of his sufferings.* A faithful Christian will suffer persecution for the sake of Christ, and in so doing he is a partner (having fellowship) with Him in his tribulations. *Conformable unto his death.* Christ died for sin, and if Paul serves Him faithfully even with the possibility of dying in the Cause, his experience would partake of a like death.

Verse 11. *Resurrection of the dead.* The resurrection of all mankind whether good or bad, is clearly taught in John 5: 28, 29; Acts 24: 15. Since this will not depend on the kind of life a man has lived, we know Paul is using the word in a special sense. He therefore means the resurrection of the just as mentioned in the passages cited in this paragraph. In order to

take part in that kind of resurrection, one must die in Christ; and that will be true only of those who have been faithful until death.

Verse 12. The *gain* or advantage that Paul obtained immediately upon his becoming a Christian, was not considered as the complete experience he expected. Lest his readers might get the wrong impression, the apostle explains that he had not yet attained to it, or that he was *perfect* which means complete as regards the good things to be enjoyed through Christ. *Follow after* is from the Greek word *dioko*, and the Englishman's Greek New Testament renders it, "am pursuing." *Apprehend* is from *KATALAMBANO*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "to lay hold of so as to make one's own, to obtain, to attain to." Christ Jesus had laid hold upon Paul, and through the obedience to the Gospel, He wished that the convert would finally "lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6: 12). Paul is declaring that his reason for this "pursuing" is that he may lay hold upon the reward for which Christ had laid hold on him.

Verse 13. The first sentence of this verse is a repetition in thought of the preceding verse. The apostle makes no claim to a victory he has not won, but he can and does affirm what are his determinations. *Forgetting* means to cease cherishing a memory of the things he once loved, not that his memory would become a blank on the subject. The apostle now adopts the ancient foot race for an illustration of the Christian life. *Reaching forth* is from *EPEKTEINO* which Thayer defines, "to stretch out to or towards." A runner in a race will lean toward the goal for which he is contesting.

Verse 14. *Press* is from the same word as *follow after* in verse 12, and is a somewhat stronger word than the one for *reaching forth* in the verse preceding our present one. That term indicates the direction toward a man's goal, while the one here denotes that he will use pressure in progressing toward that goal. Every foot race has a goal which the contestant wishes to reach in time to win the prize or stake. That is what is meant by the *mark* in this verse. Needless to say that no literal thing or specific date constitutes that mark or goal in the Christian race. It may well be expressed by the words, "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2: 10). This passage

states the goal (death), and also the prize which is the crown of life. A *calling* is a man's chief occupation in life, and the one Paul had chosen was the service for Christ. It is called *high* because it came from God through Christ. This occupation does not promise any temporal prize or reward, but assures every "faithful" (not successful) worker a prize that is fadeless.

Verse 15. *Perfect* means mature in spiritual matters, such as those described in Hebrews 5: 14. Paul believed such disciples were able to be *thus minded*; that is, were prepared to make the same resolution that he just declared for himself. *Otherwise minded*. If some among them had not yet reached that point in their Christian growth, they need not despair; if they will continue partaking of the truth of God, this advanced thought possessed by Paul will finally be *revealed unto them*.

Verse 16. *Nevertheless*, as to those who have not attained that degree of *perfection* or maturity of thought that Paul has, they should use what knowledge they have to guide them in their *walk*. *Same rule and same thing* means that their conduct must differ in degree only, and not in kind.

Verse 17. To be a *follower* means to be an imitator. Paul told his brethren at Corinth to be followers (imitators) of him as he was of Christ (1 Corinthians 11: 1), and the same restriction holds good on our present verse. *Mark* means to take note of certain ones who were walking *so*—were following the pattern set by Paul—as *ye have*, or since ye have the apostles as examples.

Verse 18. Not all professed Christians were walking after the example Paul was setting before them. The conduct of some was so evil that it caused the apostle to weep as he told them about it. It was not because of any personal loss to him that he wept, but because such characters were *the enemies of the cross of Christ*.

Verse 19. *End* means fate or final outcome, and that which is awaiting those characters described in the preceding verse is eternal destruction. The word *god* should not be capitalized, for it refers to a wrong object of devotion, namely, the *belly*. The original Greek word has different shades of meaning, but it is here used in reference to the fleshly desires. Some

people are more devoted to such interests than they are to the true God, who wishes His children to make their devotion to Him first in their lives, and all other matters (even those that are right of themselves) secondary. *Glorify in their shame*. Not that they admit having pride in their shame, but Paul is asserting that the things these evil workers take glory in, are truly shameful. The reason such people act as here described is due to the fact they *mind (care) earthly things*.

Verse 20. *Conversation* is from *POLITEUMIA*, which is not used anywhere else in the Greek New Testament. Thayer defines it, "a state, commonwealth." Robinson defines it in virtually the same way, then adds the following explanation of his definition: "Figuratively, of Christians in reference to their spiritual community, the New Jerusalem in heaven." The idea is well expressed by some words of an old hymn: "I'm but a stranger here; Heaven is my home." (See Hebrews 11: 13-16; 13: 14; 1 Peter 2: 11.) Our stay on the earth should be used in preparing for the eternal residence in our true Home, for this world is to pass away. *From whence* denotes that Jesus is now in that Country, but will come from it sometime to call His own from the earth.

Verse 21. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15: 50), hence the fleshly bodies of faithful children of God must be changed from a fleshly to a spiritual form. This will apply to both the living and the dead when Christ comes (1 Corinthians 15: 51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4: 14-17). *Change* is from *METASCHEMATIZO*, which Thayer defines at this place, "to change the figure of, to transform." The original for *vile* is defined by Thayer, "lowness, low estate"; it is applied to the body because it is fleshly and subject to decay. Let it be noted that *it* (the body) is to be changed and fashioned like unto that of Christ. The possibility of making such a change is accounted for by the fact that He has been able to *subdue all things unto himself*.

Philippians 4

Verse 1. *Therefore* indicates a conclusion, and it is drawn from the wonderful truths expressed by the closing verses of the preceding chapter. This verse is in the form of a kindly exhortation, but really it is telling the Phi-

lippians that they have much reason to *stand fast in the Lord*. The record of Paul's work in starting this church, also the constant devotion the brethren had shown him, will fully explain the words, *dearly beloved and longed for*. They were a *joy* to him because of their faithfulness in the cause of the Lord. *Crown* is from *stephanos*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "that which is an ornament and honor to one." Paul felt honored by the faithfulness of these brethren, since they were the product of his labors, and their continued devotion was due to their respect for the truth he had delivered to them.

Verse 2. To *beseech* means to plead earnestly, hence it is a stronger word than a mere request, but not as strong as an admonition. *Be of the same mind in the Lord* means they should be united in their work for Him, regardless of any personal difference they might have. *Euodias* and *Syn-tyche* were sisters in the church at Philippi.

Verse 3. *Intreat* has practically the same meaning as "beseech." The *yoke-fellow* evidently was Epaphroditus, for in chapter 2: 25 he is referred to as Paul's "companion in labor." This man was sent to Philippi with an epistle which contained a request for himself. *Those women* are the ones named in the preceding verse. In some way they had assisted Paul in his work of the Gospel, but just when or how they did it is not revealed. Young calls *Clement* "A fellow laborer with Paul at Philippi." He is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament. *Names are in the book of life*. No literal book is meant here, but whatever and wherever the book is, we know it is possible for man to do something to get his name written in it, since it is mentioned in a manner that implies responsibilities. See Luke 10: 20; Hebrews 12: 22, 23; Revelation 3: 5; 13: 8; 20: 12.

Verse 4. See the comments at chapter 3: 1 for the explanation of this verse.

Verse 5. Thayer defines the original Greek for *moderation* as follows: "equitable [just], fair, mild, gentle." An act might be technically right according to the knowledge of a Christian, but it would not appear so to the public. This instruction means for a person not to do that which would raise doubts in the minds of others. The same thought is expressed in Ro-

mans 12: 17 and 2 Corinthians 2: 21. *The Lord is at hand* means that He is always near, beholding all that is done by His disciples.

Verse 6. *Careful* is from *MERIMNAO* which has a variety of meanings. Thayer defines it at this place, "to be anxious; to be troubled with cares." Paul does not mean that Christians should be indifferent about the responsibilities of life, but they should not permit such things to absorb their minds so that it will detract them from useful activities. Instead, they should trust in the Lord and make their troubles a matter of prayer. (See 1 Peter 5: 7.)

Verse 7. *Peace of God* denotes the peace that He grants to those who are faithful to the divine law. Man will not be the judge in the last great day, hence it is unimportant whether a disciple is at peace with him or not. *Passeth* is used in the sense of "surpasseth," because the peace that comes to those who form their lives according to the law of God, is far beyond anything the mind (*understanding*) of man ever thought of. Such a state of contentment will keep the servants of God in a settled attitude. *Hearts* and *minds* refers to the same part of the human inner man, but to different characteristics of his being when used as separate terms. The first refers to the sentiments and the second to the reasoning faculty.

Verse 8. The words *true*, *honest* and *just* are not used with any new meaning, the point being as to the standard by which they should be measured. (That will be shown in the next verse.) *Pure* means "unmixed," and requires that the principles of right living should not be adulterated with the things of the world. *Lovely* has reference to things that a Christian has the right to love, too numerous to name here. *Of good report* is from one Greek word, and Thayer defines it, "sounding well; uttering words of good men," and this also is subject to the next verse. *Virtue* means "moral excellence" according to Thayer's lexicon. *Praise* applies to things worthy of being commended. *Think on these things* means to consider them; meditate on them; give them serious attention.

Verse 9. This verse completely rules out the idea that man is to decide for himself as to what comes under the list of things named in the preceding verse. They are restricted to and

bound by what has been received from Paul (or any other inspired man). They may have been received either by his example (*seen in me*), or by his words (*heard*). *God of peace* means the peace described in verse 7, which is promised only to those who comply with the conditions just stated.

Verse 10. *Care* and *careful* are from the same Greek word, and have a different meaning from "careful" in verse 6. (See the comments at that verse.) In the present verse it means to be mindful of the welfare of others. Something had interfered with the support the church at Philippi was giving Paul (chapter 2: 30), but the hindrance was removed, whatever it was. As soon as they had the opportunity, they *flourished* or revived their support of the apostle. He rejoiced *in the Lord* because he regarded all good things as coming from Him.

Verse 11. Paul's expression of joy in the preceding verse might leave an impression that his motive was a temporal one; he hastens to explain that such is not the case. He had already become accustomed to the various circumstances of life, so that he was contented with whatever came upon him. The cause of his rejoicing in this case will be explained at verse 17.

Verse 12. The apostle would not pretend to see something favorable where nothing of the kind existed. The terms *abased* and *abound*; *full* and *hungry*; *abound* and *need*, are sets of opposite terms that are used figuratively, intended to enlarge upon the thoughts of verse 11.

Verse 13. Human strength alone cannot surmount the difficulties that one may encounter in life's pathway, hence Paul explains he does the things of his experience *through Christ which strengtheneth me*.

Verse 14. Paul's life and even his comfort did not depend upon the contributions of the Philippians. For their own sakes, however, it was the right thing for them to come to his aid, for in so doing they *communicated* (had fellowship) with him in his affliction, and it entitles them to the favor of Christ as in Matthew 25: 40.

Verse 15. *Beginning of the Gospel* refers to its beginning in Macedonia, recorded in Acts 16. Before leaving that province, some other churches were started, as may be seen in Acts 16 and 17. *Communicated* means to have fellowship with another, and it

could apply to any subject in which both were interested; hence Paul explains that he is applying it to the subject of financial support. Many churches think their obligation on this matter pertains to their own locality only. Here we see that none of the Macedonian churches supported Paul beyond their borders, but the Philippians.

Verse 16. *Thessalonica* was Paul's next field of labor after leaving Philippi (Acts 17: 1). We do not know how long he remained in that city, but it was long enough to require extra supplies for his living. He did manual labor in order to relieve the brethren of the burden (1 Thessalonians 2: 5-9; 2 Thessalonians 3: 7-9). But even with his own toil, he was unable to secure sufficient for his needs. That is the reason the Philippians *sent once and again unto his necessity*.

Verse 17. This verse repeats the statement in the forepart of verse 11, then adds the reason for Paul's attitude. He wished the brethren to receive credit from the Lord for having done something for His disciples. While Paul was the one who received the temporal benefit from the *fruit* of their liberality, yet it would *abound* (add to) the *account* or record of good deeds done by the congregation at Philippi.

Verse 18. Paul would have been satisfied, as far as his personal interests were concerned, had he not received any provisions from Philippi. Yet he wished to have the contribution from them for the reason shown in the preceding verse. Now that a full supply was sent from them, the apostle wishes to make full and grateful acknowledgment of it. Epaphroditus was the messenger by whom the supplies were sent, and the disciple who personally contributed to the apostle's needs by his manual labor (chapter 2: 25-30). *Odor* and *sweet smell* are used figuratively, based on the use of sweet incense that was offered to God under the Old Testament system (Exodus 30: 1-8). Paul calls it a sacrifice *well-pleasing to God*. Since the apostle is writing about the necessities of life that were given to him, why does he speak of it as if it were given to God? It is on the principle mentioned before, namely, Matthew 25: 40.

Verse 19. This verse is similar in thought to Matthew 6: 33. The Philippians were chiefly interested in the

kingdom of God, which is the reason they gave of their means to Paul, so he could continue to advance that kingdom. In turn, he assures them that God will take care of their needs. He teaches the same principle in 2 Corinthians 9: 8-10, where he is exhorting those brethren to contribute for the relief of the needy ones in Judea. *Riches in glory*. God is the giver of all good things (James 1: 17), and He bestows the divine favors through Christ Jesus.

Verse 20. *God* and *Father* are the same person; the first refers to His eternal, self-existent and infinite power. The other to His affectionate relation to the creatures of His care. The term *for ever* actually covers as long a period as *for ever and ever*. The words are used for the sake of emphasis, and the significance is that God is worthy of endless glory. For an explanation of *amen*, see the comments at Romans 16: 24, in the first volume of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 21. *Salute* and *greet* are from the same Greek word. It has a wide scope of meanings, but the central thought is that all Christians should manifest a friendly attitude toward others, whether it be by word of mouth on personal meeting, or by a friendly word in writing; a *saint* is the same as a Christian. The brethren that were with Paul (personally) requested him to *greet* the brethren at Philippi for them.

Verse 22. This is the same kind of salutation as in the preceding verse, but is more general in its source. It comes from the *saints* (Christians) throughout the area where Paul was located since coming to Rome, and is based upon expressions he had heard from them in various conversations. He was especially impressed with what he had heard from the group he calls *Caesar's household*. The last word is so general that it could mean either the immediate members of Caesar's family, or his servants or attendants. In any case, it means persons closely connected with the emperor of Rome. It indicates the good influence and standing Paul had, in spite of his humiliating situation.

Verse 23. This verse is a kindly wish that the *grace* (favor) of Christ would be with the brethren at Philippi. The word *amen* is explained at verse 20.

Colossians 1

General remarks. The date and by whom the church at Colosse was planted is uncertain. I have consulted a goodly number of reference works, and nothing more definite than "perhaps" or "maybe" was found in any of them. We know it was not by Paul, for chapter 2: 1 indicates he had not even seen those brethren when he wrote this epistle. A little information about conditions in Colosse as it pertains to religion and social life, will help to understand the various passages in the epistle. The Colossians were mostly Gentiles, but some Judaistic teachers had come among them. In addition to this, some theories of philosophy had been injected among them. Smith's Bible Dictionary refers to such a condition in the following words: "The main object of the epistle is to warn the Colossians against a spirit of semi-Judaistic and semi-Oriental philosophy which was corrupting the simplicity of their belief." Summing up, a mixture of Judaism, philosophy, idolatry, and a form of extreme bodily self-denial, had to be encountered when Paul wrote this epistle.

Verse 1. An *apostle* means one who is sent by another on a mission. Paul was sent into the world by Jesus Christ on the mission of preaching the Gospel, hence he was His apostle. The entire arrangement was according to the authority of God, which caused it to be by His will. *Timotheus* is another form of Timothy; he was with Paul and joined in the salutation to the Colossian church.

Verse 2. *Saints* and *faithful* are not different people. The second term is just one description of the first. A saint is a person who has accepted the Gospel through obedience to its commands, and who has promised to continue in the service consistently. The term *faithful* is added to show that these brethren were actually making good their promised loyalty to Christ. *Grace* is the unmerited favor of God, and *peace* is that state of mind that is made possible by accepting the salvation coming from God, and bestowed upon man through the *Lord Jesus Christ*.

Verse 3. It is important to note that God is called the Father of Christ. This refutes the doctrine of Rome, and most of the denominational world, that God and Christ are one and the