

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Southern U.S.
St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church, Phoenix, Arizona

"THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS"



**Under the Auspices of
H.G. Bishop Youssef**



Chapter One

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To appreciate why the Philippians were a source of great joy to St. Paul
- 2) To learn from St. Paul's attitude concerning persecution, death, and the purpose of life

SUMMARY

St. Paul begins his epistle with his customary salutation followed by an expression of thanksgiving and prayer. The church at Philippi had been a source of great joy to St. Paul by virtue of their fellowship with him in the proclamation of the gospel. Confident that God will complete the work He began in them, St. Paul prays that their spiritual growth will continue (1-11).

His circumstances at Rome have actually been for the furtherance of the gospel, despite imprisonment and opposition by false brethren. He is confident that everything will turn out alright, and that he will even come to them again. It is not without mixed feelings, however, for he is torn between a desire to be with Christ and a realization that to remain in the flesh is more needful for them (12-26).

At the moment, his desire is that whether absent or present he may hear they are conducting themselves worthy of the gospel, by standing fast in one spirit and one mind for the gospel and not disturbed by any adversaries. They should take comfort in knowing that, like St. Paul, they have been granted the honor not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake (27-30).

OUTLINE



I. INTRODUCTION (1-11)

A. SALUTATION (1-2)

1. From St. Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ (**1a**)
2. To the saints in Christ Jesus who in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons (**1b**)
3. Grace and peace from God and Jesus Christ (**2**)

B. ST. PAUL'S THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (3-11)

1. His thanksgiving for them (**3-8**)
 - a. That every thought, every request in their behalf, is one of joy (**3-4**)
 - b. For their fellowship in the gospel from the very first day (**5**)
 - c. He is confident that God will complete the work begun in them, for they have shared with him in his chains and the proclamation of the gospel (**6-7**)
 - d. God is his witness to how much he longs for them with the love of Jesus (**8**)
2. His prayer for them (**9-11**)
 - a. That their love abound in knowledge and all discernment (**9**)
 - b. That they approve the things that are excellent (**10a**)
 - c. That they be sincere and without offense till Christ returns (**10b**)
 - d. That they be filled with the fruits of righteousness (**11**)
 - 1) Made possible by Jesus Christ (**11a**)
 - 2) To the glory and praise of God (**11b**)

II. THE SITUATION IN ROME (11-26)

A. ST. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AND OPPOSITION (12-18)

1. Imprisonment has actually created opportunities to spread the gospel (**12-14**)
 - a. Things have turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, for even among the palace guard it is evident his chains are in Christ (**12-13**)
 - b. His example has emboldened others to speak without fear (**14**)
2. Even opposition has provided opportunity for Christ to be preached (**15-18**)
 - a. While some preach Christ out of love and good will, others do so with envy and strife, hoping to make things harder

- for St. Paul (15-17)
b. Yet St. Paul rejoices that in every way Christ is preached (18)

B. ST. PAUL'S EXPECTATION OF DELIVERANCE (19-26)

1. He knows all will turn out well for his salvation (19-20)
 - a. Through their prayers and the help of the Holy Spirit (19)
 - b. He is confident that no matter what happens, Christ will be magnified (20)
2. Whether he lives or dies, it will be a blessing (21-23)
 - a. To live is Christ, to die is gain (21)
 - b. To live will mean fruitful labor, but to depart and be with Christ will be far better for him personally (22-23)
3. Knowing their need of him at the present, he is confident of coming to them once again (24-26)

III. EXHORTATION TO STAND FAST (27-30)

A. STRIVE TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL (27)

1. He pleads that their conduct be worthy of the gospel (27a)
2. So that whether present or absent, he may hear that they are standing fast in one spirit, united in their efforts for the faith of the gospel (27b)

B. DO NOT BE TERRIFIED BY YOUR ADVERSARIES (28-30)

1. For such confidence is not a sign of perdition, but of salvation from God (28)
2. They have been granted not only to believe in Jesus, but also to suffer for Him even as he does (29-30)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) What are the main points of this chapter?
- 2) Who joins St. Paul in addressing this epistle? To whom is it sent? (1)
- 3) For what is St. Paul thankful concerning the Philippians? (5)
- 4) What is St. Paul confident of concerning the Philippians? (6)
- 5) Upon what basis did St. Paul have this confidence concerning the Philippians? (7)
- 6) What four things did St. Paul pray for in behalf of the Philippians? (9-11)
- 7) What was the effect of St. Paul's imprisonment? (12)
- 8) What was St. Paul's attitude about those preaching Christ out of envy and strife, trying to do him harm? (15-18)
- 9) What was St. Paul's earnest desire and expectation that he could do with all boldness? (20)
- 10) What was St. Paul's attitude toward life and death? (21)
- 11) Between what two things was St. Paul hard pressed? (23-24)
- 12) What sort of conduct did St. Paul consider worthy of the gospel of Christ? (27)
- 13) What had been granted to the Philippians on behalf of Christ? (29)