



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Chapter 1

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Introduction

Author:

- St. Paul (Phil 1:1;1:12-14)

The Recipients:

- the church in Philippi, modern day Turkey (Phil 1:1)
 - ❖ St. Paul went there in his secondary missionary trip based on a vision (Acts 16:6-12)
 - ❖ The church was established with the conversion Lydia and the jailor believed
 - ❖ It was a church for the gentiles



Introduction

- ❖ The church at Philippi was a great source of support (Phil 4:15-16; 2 Cor 11:9)
- ❖ St. Paul visited the church at Philippi again on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:3,6)

Time and place of writing:

- Philippians is one of Paul's four "prison epistles" (Phil 1:7,13,17) (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon)



Introduction

- These epistles were written during St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome (Acts 28:16,30-31) around 61-63 A.D.
- Purpose:
 - ❖ St. Paul wants to thank them for the gift that they sent (Phil 4:10,18)
 - ❖ Also to comfort them concerning his situation in prison (Phil 1:12-14)



Introduction

- ❖ He wanted to inform them that he will send Timothy soon (Phil 2:19-2)
- ❖ He explained to them the reasons why he will send Epaphroditus back to them (2:25-30)
- ❖ Also he addressed the problem involving two women there (4:2-3)
- Theme: Rejoice in the Lord



Introduction

- In chapter 1, after his greetings
 - ❖ St. Paul explained why they were a source of joy to him
 - ❖ Also he elaborated on the believer's stand regarding persecution, death, and the purpose of life



Greeting (1:1-2)

- Timothy was with St. Paul in Rome
- Although he was his son, but he treated him as a brother
- Bondservants: by their own freewill, chose to be bondservants
- This is the only letter that St. Paul included the clergy
- Grace and peace (most needed gifts)



Thanksgiving (1:3-11)

- Are we source of joy to our fathers and clergy?
- The responsibility of the clergy in praying for their flock (Samuel the prophet)
- The success of the flock should bring to the priest's heart thanksgiving and not pride



Thanksgiving (1:3-11)

- It is their fellowship in worship and community of life that made St. Paul joyful
- He is confident that God will perfect the fellowship in them because they are always in his heart even during the time of chains and gospel defense
- They are always in his heart because of their fellowship and commitment with him in grace (chains and gospel defense)



Thanksgiving (1:3-11)

- His love to them is not from natural affection but from devotedness to Christ Jesus
- He prays (in order for their fellowship to be perfect) that:
 - ❖ Their love may abound in knowledge and discernment
 - ❖ They approve the things that are excellent



Thanksgiving (1:3-11)

- ❖ They be sincere and without offense till Christ returns
- ❖ They be filled with the fruit of righteousness:
 - ❑ Possible by the Lord Jesus Christ
 - ❑ Aiming to the glory of God

The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)



- St. Paul's imprisonment turned into the furtherance of the gospel (Rom 8:28)
- St. Paul's goal was the gospel even if the cost is his chains, this makes him happy
- Every body in the palace knew that his chains are because of the gospel
- This made them more bold and courageous



The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)

- The motives of preaching were:
 - ❖ Envy, strife, and self ambition to add (in vain) more afflictions to his chains
 - ❖ Goodwill, love, and sincerity fulfilling his mission
- St. Paul rejoiced because he was not seeking his own glory

The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)



- The joy of the faithful servant comes from the furtherance of the gospel
- St. Paul was confident of his deliverance (by life or death):
 - ❖ Because of their prayers
 - ❖ The support of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit that raised the Lord)

The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)



➤ Deliverance for St. Paul:

- ☐ In nothing he will not be ashamed of his work for God, or His work in him
- ☐ Christ will be magnified in His body as always
- ☐ By life or death (I am winner in both situation) because to live is Christ and to die is gain



The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)

- To live means more fruits in service:
 - ❖ They still need him
 - ❖ His mission is not yet fulfilled
- He will not choose, but submit completely to God's will
- It is a difficult decision: to be with Christ or to fulfill his mission

The Situation In Rome (1:12-26)



- The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he has to finish his mission:
 - ❖ For their progress
 - ❖ Joy of faith
 - ❖ Joy of fellowship (in the Lord Jesus Christ for him)
- I have glorified You on the earth, I have finished the work which You have given Me to do (John 17:4)

Steadfastness In Suffering (1:27-30)



- Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel:
 - ❖ Unity (one mind and one spirit)
 - ❖ Striving for the faith
 - ❖ Not terrified but confident
 - ☐ Sign of their salvation through God
 - ☐ Sign of the adversaries' perdition

Steadfastness In Suffering (1:27-30)



- The believer is granted:
 - ❖ To believe
 - ❖ To suffer
- Suffering is the way to glory
- It increases our faith
- And it is participation in God's grace
- St. Paul was an example in suffering for Christ



Conclusion

- What makes the heart of the shepherd rejoice?
- What did St. Paul ask for the Philippians in order to be perfect in their fellowship?
- How did St. Paul perceive his imprisonment?
- What is St. Paul's concept of deliverance?
- What is the conduct worthy of the gospel?
- What is concept of suffering in Christianity?