

Philippians

Thanksgiving for the Philippians [1:3-8]

- **For Participation in the Gospel [1:3-5]**

- I give thanks to my God every time I think of you,
Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνησίᾳ ὑμῶν
 - The word “thank” is from εὐχαριστεῖω (eucharisteō) which means “be thankful” or “give thanks”.
 - The phrase “my God” is a dative construct which should be translated “to my God”.
 - The phrase “in all my remembrance of you” is literally “upon every memory of you”.
 - We can express the meaning better with a non-literal phrasing, “every time I think of you”.
- always offering prayer with joy every time I pray for you all,
πάντοτε ἐν πάσῃ δεήσει μου ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν, μετὰ χαρᾶς τὴν δέησιν ποιούμενος,
 - The phrase “in my every prayer for you all” is the literal translation of the Greek.
 - We can express the meaning better with a non-literal phrasing, “every time I pray for you all”.
 - The word “offering” is a participle of ποιέω (poieō) which means “do”, “make” or “carry out”.
 - In the context of prayer, “offering” is a good way to translate this participle.
 - The word “joy” is from χαρά (chara) which means “gladness” or “joy”.
 - Thinking of the believers in Philippi gives Paul joy and that joy motivates his thankfulness for them.
- in view of your participation in the gospel *ministry* from the first day until now.
πάντοτε ἐν πάσῃ δεήσει μου ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν, μετὰ χαρᾶς τὴν δέησιν ποιούμενος,
 - The word “participation” is from κοινωνία (koinōnia) which means “sharing”, “participation”, “fellowship” or “generosity”.
 - The Philippians may have participated in the preaching of the gospel, but this is a reference to their support of Paul’s ministry [4:15-16].
 - The word “gospel” is from εὐαγγέλιον (euangelion) which means “good news”.
 - During His ministry, Jesus proclaimed the good news of the kingdom [Matt 4:23; 24:15].
 - Jesus also made clear the good news regarding the way of salvation [John 3:16; 6:29; 14:6].
 - This is the good news regarding salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ [Eph 2:8-9].
 - The phrase “first day” refers to the day the Philippians met Paul during his 2nd missionary journey.
 - The phrase “until now” indicates that the Philippians had continued to support Paul even up to the time of the writing of this letter (~10 years).

- Principles of Philippians 1:3-5
 - Even though Paul was imprisoned and had been separated from the Philippians for years, he thanked God for them every time they came to his mind [Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:4].
 - As believers, we can be difficult to be around or we can be a source of spiritual refreshment for others [1 Cor 16:17-18; 2 Cor 7:13; Phlm 7, 20].
 - The Philippians were a source of joy for Paul and it was with such joy that he offered continual prayers for these believers.
 - It has always been God's intent for all believers to be joyful in prayer [Isa 56:6-7].
 - The Philippians had participated in Paul's gospel ministry from the first time they met him.
 - We are all ambassadors for Christ [2 Cor 5:20], but we can participate in the spread of the gospel by supporting ministries that focus on reaching people with the message of salvation [2 Cor 8:3-5].

- **For God's Work in Them [1:6]**

- *For I am convinced* of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you
πεποιθώς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ὅτι ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν
 - The phrase “For I am” is not present in the Greek, but is implied by the sentence structure.
 - The word “confident” is from *πεῖθω* (*peithō*) which means “be convinced” or “be certain”.
 - The phrase “of this very thing” is *αὐτὸ τοῦτο* (*auto touto*) where *αὐτὸ* (*auto*) adds emphasis.
 - Phil 1:25 is the same phrase minus the *αὐτὸ* (*auto*) and is translated “Convinced of this”.
 - Paul then states the very thing he is convinced of.
 - The word “began” is from *ἐναρχομαι* (*enarchomai*) which is used only here and in Gal 3:3.
 - In both, the beginning is the moment of salvation.
- will continue to perform it until the day of Christ Jesus.
ἐπιτελέσει ἄχρι ἡμέρας Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ
 - The phrase “will perfect it” is from *ἐπιτελέω* (*epiteleō*) which means “finish”, “accomplish”, “perform”, “fulfill” or “complete”.
 - This is a future active indicative meaning the activity will go on continuously.
 - The phrase “the day of Christ Jesus” is *ἡμέρας Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (*hēmeras Christou Iēsou*).
 - This is distinct language from “the day of the Lord” found in 1 Thess 5:2, 2 Thess 2:2 and 2 Pet 3:10.
 - “The day of the Lord” refers to the future period including the Tribulation and Millennial Kingdom.
 - “The day of Christ (Jesus)” refers to the imminent Rapture of the Church [Phil 2:16].
- Principles of Philippians 1:6
 - The very moment that someone places their faith in Jesus Christ, God begins a work in him.
 - That work is done through the power of the Holy Spirit [John 14:26; 16:13; Rom 5:5; 15:13] in conjunction with the living, active and piercing Word of God [Heb 4:12; 1 Thess 2:13].
 - God is faithful to continue His work in us for His good pleasure [Phil 2:13] all the days of our lives.
 - God is faithful to continue His work in the Church that we might be found sincere and blameless the day Jesus Christ comes to get His bride [Phil 1:10; 1 Cor 1:4-8].
 - Paul’s confidence in God’s faithfulness to continue this work in the Philippians was one of the sources of his joy and thankfulness.

- Likewise, pastors derive joy and thankfulness knowing that God is actively working in the flock that had been allotted to their charge [1 Pet 5:3].
- Every believer should have this same confidence that God is faithfully shaping and molding him through the daily transformation accomplished by the renewing of his mind [Rom 12:2].
- This renewal occurs through reproof, correction and training in righteousness [2 Tim 3:16-17].

- **As Fellow Partakers of Grace [1:7-8]**

- For it is right for me to think this way about you all, because you have me in your heart, Καθώς ἐστὶν δίκαιον ἐμοὶ τοῦτο φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν διὰ τὸ ἔχειν με ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμᾶς,
 - The word “For” is καθώς (kathōs) which means “just as” or “in so far as”.
 - This continues the thought, “I give thanks to my God” from verse 3, so “For” is a good translation.
 - The phrase “only right” is from δίκαιος (dikaios) which means “just”, “right” or “fair”.
 - The NASB translators inserted the word “only” to add emphasis, but it is not needed here.
 - The word “feel” is from φρονέω (phroneō) which means “think” or “form an opinion”.
 - The word “feel” indicates emotional involvement whereas φρονέω (phroneō) is a thinking word.
 - The phrase “because I have you in my heart” is an interesting construction using the articular infinitive.
 - An awkward literal reading is, “because of having me in the heart you”.
 - The words με (me) and ὑμᾶς (humas) are both in the accusative, so either one could be the subject.
 - This is one case where word order in the Greek suggests which way it should be translated.
- since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and affirmation of the gospel, ἐν τε τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
 - The word “imprisonment” is from δεσμός (desmos) which means “bond” or “fetter”.
 - This is an idiomatic expression in the Greek for the circumstance of being in prison.
 - The word “defense” is from ἀπολογία (apologia) which means “defense” or “reply”.
 - This is the root of the English term “apologetics” which does not mean to apologize.
 - The word “confirmation” is from βεβαίωσις (bebaiōsis) which means “confirmation” or “validation”.
 - The idea here is that the gospel was affirmed.
- you all are fellow partakers of grace with me. συγκοινωνοῦς μου τῆς χάριτος πάντας ὑμᾶς ὄντας.
 - The word “partaker” is from συγκοινωνός (sunkoinōnos) which means “participant”, “partner” or “partaker”.
 - This word is better translated “fellow partaker” because of the sun prefix [1 Cor 9:23; Rev 1:9].
 - The word “grace” is from χάρις (charis) which means “undeserved favor”.
 - Paul and the Philippians were partakers of God’s grace and partners in Paul’s gospel ministry.

- For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
 μάρτυς γάρ μου ὁ θεὸς ὡς ἐπιποθῶ πάντα ὑμᾶς ἐν σπλάγχνοις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.
 - The phrase “God is my witness” is a bold statement made by Paul.
 - Paul was so sure of his affection for the Philippians that he called on God Himself to be his witness.
 - The phrase “long for” is from ἐπιποθέω (epipothēō) which means “long for” or “desire”.
 - This indicates Paul’s strong desire to enjoy the fellowship of the believers in Philippi.
 - The word “affection” is from σπλάγχνον (splanchnon) which means “entrails” or “innards”.
 - This word is used of the heart [Phlm 12] and describes love and affection [2 Cor 7:15; Phil 2:1].
- Principles of Philippians 1:7-8
 - Paul thought very highly of the Philippians because they supported him in defending and affirming the truth of the gospel.
 - Likewise, we should have a high estimation of other believers who uphold the truth regarding salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - Paul had affection for the Philippians because he knew they had him constantly in their hearts.
 - The fact that Paul had been imprisoned for his faith did not cause the Philippians to abandon him.
 - They were truly partners with Paul in his ministry to share the gospel with as many people as possible.
 - As a local church, we are partners with the missionaries we support financially and in prayer.
 - It is important for us to hold these missionaries in our hearts constantly because this can be a source of encouragement for them.
 - Paul had not seen the believers in Philippi for a long time, but he longed to be with them.
 - The affection Paul had for the Philippians was not merely human attraction – he had a love for them that had its source in his relationship with Christ.
 - We, too, can love our brothers and sisters in Christ with a love that is not of the flesh, but manifest in us through the Holy Spirit [1 John 4:7-21].