

Philippians: A Translation¹

1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Messiah Jesus, to all the holy ones in Messiah Jesus who are in Philippi, including the bishops and deacons. 2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and **LORD Jesus Messiah**.

3 I give thanks to my God for my every remembrance of you, 4 always in all my prayers on behalf of all of you with joy, making requests 5 for your partnership for the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this very thing, namely that he who began a good work in and among will complete it by² the day of Messiah Jesus. 7 It is right for me to think this way about you all because I have you in my heart, both in my bonds of imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, all of you being my partners of the same grace. 8 For God is my witness **that** I long for you all in the **visceral affections** of Messiah Jesus.

9 And I am praying this: that your love may yet more and more keep on abounding, in knowledge and all perception, 10 that you continue **to appreciate (to determine and approve) the right and the best**, in order that you may be pure and free from offence for the Messiah's day, 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, that comes through Jesus Messiah, for God's glory and praise (of you).

Paul's Present Circumstances.

12 I want you to know brothers and sisters, that my circumstances have actually turned out to the advancement of the gospel. 13 So my bonds of imprisonment have become known to be in Messiah among the whole Praetorian Guard and to all the rest. 14 And most of the brethren, having gained confidence in the LORD because of my bonds, dare all the more to speak the word without fear.

1 This translation accompanies and is based on the research results set out in Crispin Fletcher-Louis, *The Divine Heartset: Paul's Philippians Christ Hymn, Metaphysical Affections, and Civic Virtues* (Wipf & Stock/Whymanity: Eugene, Or./Toddington, 2023; www.divineheartset.com/). Novel or unusual translations are highlighted **in bold**.

2 Or "at".

15 Some do proclaim the Messiah through envy and rivalry, but others through goodwill. 16 Some, that is, from love—knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; 17 others, out of **factional corruption**,³ proclaim the Messiah, with impure motives, supposing they will intensify the affliction of my bonds of imprisonment. 18 Whatever! What matters is that, whether with false pretext or in truth, Messiah is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that this will turn out for me for deliverance, through your petitions and the provision of the spirit of Jesus Messiah, 20 according to my eager expectation and hope, because in nothing will I be ashamed, but with outspoken freedom as always, and now, Messiah will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

21 Certainly, for me to live is Messiah and to die is gain. 22 And if I am to live in the flesh this (will be) for me a fruitful work. And which I prefer, I do not know. 23 I am torn between the two, wanting to be released and be with Messiah is better by far. 24 And to remain in the flesh is more necessary because of you. 25 Having been persuaded of this, I know that I am staying and will continue with you all for your advancement and the joy of the faith, 26 so that your bragging in Messiah Jesus may abound—in me, through my triumphant coming to be with you again.

Exhortations to Praiseworthy Civic Conduct

1:27 Only **actively engage in civic life** in a manner worthy of the gospel of Messiah, so that, whether I come and see you or being absent I hear of you; that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one soul **vigorously competing together** for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents; which (faith) is (on the one hand) an indication to them of (your) destruction, but is, on the other hand, (and in reality), a sign to you of your salvation. 29 For it has been given to you that for the sake of Messiah you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same contest that you saw in me and now hear that I still have.

2:1 So if there is any comfort in Messiah, any consolation of love, any participation in the Spirit, any **visceral affection** and mercies, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, soul-united and minded to one thing. 3 Do nothing out of **venal corruption**⁴ or vainglory, but in **humble-mindedness**, regarding each other as superior to yourselves. 4 **Let each of you be focused not on the interests of their own people, but rather everyone one of you on the interests of everyone**

3 For this translation of Paul's *ex eritheias* see the note on 2:3 (below).

4 Here, Paul warns against the kind of civic corruption in which individuals in positions of authority or power are bought by a party or group. The individual guilty of *eritheia* ("venal corruption") has become a "hireling". They are bribable or have already been "bought" (Fletcher-Louis, *Divine Heartset*, ch. 11, §3.5).

else. 5 [For]⁵ you should have this **heartset**—this way of thinking, feeling, and acting—in and among yourselves, which also **you think, feel, and act in Messiah** Jesus,

6 who being in God's form,
considered not **bridenapping**
the God-equal mode of being,
7 but emptied himself,
taking a slave's form,
in human likeness becoming
and **in human figure found,**
8 he humbled himself,
becoming obedient unto death
—death, even, by a cross.
9 Wherefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend (Isa 45:23)
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 *and every tongue confess* (Isa 45:23)
“LORD Jesus Messiah!”⁶
for the glory of God, the Father.

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, with fear and trembling **continue to work out** your salvation. 13 For God is the one activating you; both your willing and your acting for his good pleasure.

14 **Continue to do everything** without grumbling or arguing, 15 so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the cosmos, 16 **holding the position of life**, being reason for me to brag on Messiah's day—that I have neither run in vain nor laboured in vain.

17 But, even if I am poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and **public, priestly** service of your faith, I rejoice—and I rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also (should continue to) rejoice and rejoice with me.

In Praise of Timothy and Epaphroditus

19 Now I hope in LORD Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, in order that I too might be heartened by news of your condition. 20 I have no one **equal in affections**; who

5 Not all manuscripts have the words in brackets.

6. Or “confess that Jesus Christ is LORD.”

genuinely cares about your interests. 21 For everyone seeks after **their own people's interests**, not those of Jesus Messiah. 22 And you know his proven character, that as a child with a father he has slaved away with me for the gospel. 23 He it is, therefore, whom I hope to send as soon as I see how things turn out with me. 24 And I am confident **in LORD** that I also will come shortly.

25 Still, I have thought it is necessary to send to you Epaphroditus—my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, your apostle and minister to my need, 26 since he has been longing for you all and has been greatly distressed because you heard that he was weak with sickness. 27 For indeed he was weak and approaching death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 More eagerly⁷ therefore I have sent him, so that seeing him you might rejoice again and that I might be the less sorrowful. So welcome him **in LORD** with all joy and hold such people in honour, 30 because he drew near to death for the work of Christ, gambling his life to fill up the lack of your ministry to me.

Boasting and Conformity to Christ

3:1 Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice **in LORD**.

For my part, to write the same things to you is not troublesome, and is safe for you.

2 Watch out for **the hounds!**
 Watch out for the workers of evil!
 Watch out for the mutilation!

3 For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in/by the Spirit of God and who brag in Messiah Jesus; not in flesh putting our confidence.

4 Although, I have confidence also in flesh. If someone else **pretends or supposes themselves** to be confident in flesh, I can better them!

5 In circumcision, an eight-dayer.
 From the people of Israel.
 Of the tribe of Benjamin.
 Hebrew of Hebrews.
 According to law, a Pharisee.

6 According to **jealousy, hounder of his people's assembly**.
 According to righteousness that comes through law,
 (has) lived blameless.

7 Whatever was to my profit, these things I now consider loss because of the Messiah.
 8 More than that, I consider all things a loss because of the surpassing value of the

⁷ Or "with haste".

knowledge of Messiah Jesus my Lord, because of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and I consider them shit, in order that I might gain Messiah 9 and be found in him, not having my own righteousness that comes from law, but (the righteousness) that comes through Messiah faith, the righteousness of God unto faith, 10 (namely,) that I might know him, that is, the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, being conformed to his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

The Pursuit of Glory

12 Not that I have already obtained (all this) or have arrived at perfection, but I pursue that I also might apprehend that for which **I have even been pursued** and taken down by Messiah [Jesus]. 13 Brothers and sisters, I, for my part, do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do, forgetting the things behind me and stretching towards what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Jesus. 15 Whoever therefore is mature, let them think this way. And if in anything you think otherwise, also this God will reveal to you. 16 Nevertheless, let us walk in line with whatever we have attained to.

17 Be my fellow-imitators,⁸ brothers and sisters, and keep your eyes on those who walk after the pattern that you have in us. 18 For there are many—of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears—who walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly and whose glory is in their shame, thinking earthly things. 20 For our **governing constitution** is in heaven, from where also we eagerly await a saviour—LORD Jesus Messiah—, 21 who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of his glory according to the power that enables him to be able also *to subject all things* (Ps 8:6) to himself. 4:1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, stand firm in this way **in LORD**, (my) beloved.

Further Exhortations and Final Greetings

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind **in LORD**. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have contended side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in LORD always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your kindness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made

⁸ There is perhaps ambiguity in Paul's rare expression *symmimētai mou*. Is that "together imitating Paul" or "together with Paul imitating Christ"?

known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your **thoughts** in Messiah Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is venerable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is **fair-sounding**—if there is any **excellence**, if there is anything praiseworthy, ponder these things.

9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practise these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

10 I was made very glad in **LORD** that now once again you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be self-sufficient. 12 I know how to be humbled, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have been initiated into the ways of plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things in him who strengthens me. 14 Yet you did well sharing with me in my trouble.

15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of (the proclaiming of) the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs more than once. 17 Not that I am desperate for the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. 18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply⁹ your every need according to his riches in glory in Messiah Jesus. 20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Messiah Jesus.

The brothers and sisters who are with me greet you.

22 All the holy ones greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

23 **LORD** Jesus Messiah's grace be with your spirit.

9 Some manuscripts: "And may God supply."

by Crispin Fletcher-Louis

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