Philippians: Be of one mind
Philippians is a favorite among believers

• It is full of joy
• It tells us crucial things about Jesus’ mind and mission in assuming human form (in chapter 2)
• It contains many memorable and moving verses:
  ❖ “To live is Christ, to die is gain”
  ❖ “I have learned the secret of contentment in any and all circumstances”
  ❖ “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say rejoice”
  ❖ “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, ...think about such things”
  ❖ “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, with prayer and petition...”
Christians often fail to understand Philippians on its own terms

To understand any text you need to know:

1. Its *context*: Philippi was a Roman colony in Macedonia populated by veterans who had been granted citizenship and were devoted to Caesar.

2. Its *type*: Philippians is a combination of standard letter types: the *friendship* letter, a letter of mutual support and affection, and the *letter of moral exhortation*, characterized by paradigms.
Friendship letters had several consistent features

- They lack the patron-client language
- You don’t say thank you
- Friends in the ancient world had common enemies
- Friends offer mutual support and affection for one another

The Philippians church was the only of Paul’s churches to have this sort of friendship relationship, and the only one he accepted support from
Philippians is a friendship letter based on reciprocity

Chapter 1

1. Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and all the saints:
2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. I thank my God every time I remember you, 4.常与你们同在。因你们在我一切的工作上都有分，也因你们在基督耶稣里的爱。
5. For from the first day I devoted myself to the Gospel of Christ. 6. I make it my aim to preach the Gospel wherever I go, 7. whether in the region of Macedonia or Achaia.
8. For I have no one like him who will give me help in the work of the ministry.
9. I suppose I should be satisfied with the strength which God has given me.
10. For I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

11. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in your absence, 12. stir up love and good works,
13. and be sure of this, that he who is一个好的人者, the Lord will provide that you be supplied in all good things, according to your good work.
14. I have no need, for I have all things through him who supplies me with all my needs in every good work.

Chapter 2

15. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in your absence, 16. stir up love and good works,
17. and be sure of this, that he who is a good doer, the Lord will provide that you be supplied in all good things, according to your good work.
18. I have no need, for I have all things through him who supplies me with all my needs in every good work.

Chapter 3

19. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, 20. rejoiced, 21. for all the saints who have been with the Lord, 22. and I thank my God every time I remember you, 23. for your share in the gospel from the beginning of your knowledge of Jesus Christ.
24. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established, 25. as you already are firm.
26. I beg of you, then, the second time, receive us kindly, 27. for we are confident that you are doing nothing out of selfish ambition or make-up, 28. and we desire to see you again so that we may have some security among you, 29. as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church.
30. But the Lord stood beside me and gave me strength, so that I could proclaim the gospel wherever I went.

Chapter 4

31. Therefore, my dear friends, 32. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 33. Let your gentleness be evident to everyone. The Lord is near. 34. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 35. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
36. Finally, brothers and sisters, 37. pray for us. 38. Greet all the saints. The Lord’s peace be with you all.
39. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.
Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation

Address and greeting

Greetings to you, my beloved. I thank my God every time I remember you, thinking of all of you, and expressing my thankfulness, just as you have been my companions in the faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, I am now sending you Titus, my brother and fellow helper in ministry. He has been made responsible for this work by your previous affections. As I have reason to boast about those who assist me in the gospel, so I do also in Titus, who is a genuine helper in the work of Christ. For I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for的一切 healthy greeting from me to all of you, and to greet those who are with me:

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. 

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the grace of God and the faith of Christ Jesus:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, thinking of all of you, and expressing my thankfulness, just as you have been my companions in the faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, I am now sending you Titus, my brother and fellow helper in ministry. He has been made responsible for this work by your previous affections. As I have reason to boast about those who assist me in the gospel, so I do also in Titus, who is a genuine helper in the work of Christ. For I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for一切 healthy greeting from me to all of you, and to greet those who are with me:

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. 

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the grace of God and the faith of Christ Jesus:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, thinking of all of you, and expressing my thankfulness, just as you have been my companions in the faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, I am now sending you Titus, my brother and fellow helper in ministry. He has been made responsible for this work by your previous affections. As I have reason to boast about those who assist me in the gospel, so I do also in Titus, who is a genuine helper in the work of Christ. For I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for一切 healthy greeting from me to all of you, and to greet those who are with me:

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. 

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the grace of God and the faith of Christ Jesus:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, thinking of all of you, and expressing my thankfulness, just as you have been my companions in the faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, I am now sending you Titus, my brother and fellow helper in ministry. He has been made responsible for this work by your previous affections. As I have reason to boast about those who assist me in the gospel, so I do also in Titus, who is a genuine helper in the work of Christ. For I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for一切 healthy greeting from me to all of you, and to greet those who are with me:

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. 

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the grace of God and the faith of Christ Jesus:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, thinking of all of you, and expressing my thankfulness, just as you have been my companions in the faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, I am now sending you Titus, my brother and fellow helper in ministry. He has been made responsible for this work by your previous affections. As I have reason to boast about those who assist me in the gospel, so I do also in Titus, who is a genuine helper in the work of Christ. For I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for一切 healthy greeting from me to all of you, and to greet those who are with me:

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. 

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the grace of God and the faith of Christ Jesus:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Prayer

Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation.
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Paul's affairs: his imprisonment

3 Finally, my brothers and sisters, I urge you in the Lord to:

a. Try to do the things that you have begun and to complete what you are in quality of faith.

b. Make sure that your lives are so conducted that you have a good testimony before outsiders.

c. Be of the same mind; and if your mind is set on earthly things, your mind is set on earthly things.

d. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

4 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, of whom I am in prayer to God,

a. I urge you to work for his good pleasure.

b. To be rejoicing at seeing me again, and that I may be less anxious.

c. To write the same things to you is not troublesome to me, and for you it is a safeguard.

d. To help these women, for they have struggled and borne with much affliction in the Lord.

5 Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ,

a. To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi,

b. With the bishops and deacons:

c. Who are in the Lord Jesus Christ,

d. And are members of his household and fellow citizens with you in the true house of God,

6 To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons,

a. I thank my God every time I remember you,

b. For I recall with joy your obedience to the truth in the days of old.

7 Who, though he was in the form of God,

a. Did not regard equality with God

b. As something to be exploited,

But risked his life to make up for those services that you could not perform.

8 But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we await a Savior, who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

10 It is right for God to be glorified through Christ Jesus our Lord.

11 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

12 But I do not regard myself to be of importance, but in every way I take the lead, because I am the least of all the servants of God, for my life is worth nothing to me; only for you do I have value.

13 And even though I am free from all, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more, among the weak, to save them.

14 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that comes from people reflecting upon my imprisonment.

15 I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better;

b. But I stay in the world for you, so that in everything you may be made rich in every way by every means that good things are accumulated to your account.

16 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

17 I am hard pressed between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, who is far better; but to remain in the flesh is better for you.

18 And I hope to stay with you, and to work for your increase in joy with the church by news of you.

19 For you know that it is necessary for me to work, and that which is necessary for me I have worked with you all the time.

20 And I hope to stay with you, and to work for your increase in joy with the church by news of you.

21 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

22 And the life I am now living in the flesh I consider an enemy to all things, because it is hindered in my desire to depart and be with Christ, who is far better.

23 I am hard pressed between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, who is far better;

b. But to remain in the flesh is better for you.

24 And in my every prayer I make a request that I may make you rejoicing by the fulfillment of my every request.

25 Therefore my brothers and sisters of whom I am in prayer to God,

a. I urge you to work for his good pleasure.

b. To be rejoicing at seeing me again, and that I may be less anxious.

26 To all of you, that my imprisonment is for Christ;

b. And to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ;

27 And to you, that the preaching of the gospel may be known throughout the whole world.

28 And to you, that your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.
Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation.
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"Good morning, beloved. I thank God every time I remember you, because of your partnership in the work of Christ, from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is fitting for me to think this way about you, because I have you in my heart, for both how we are united in you in the faith and love we share in the truth. I pray to God on your behalf all the time, that you may be blameless..."

"Nero has become a persecutor of the faith, for he has slandered and cost you dear. He has not regarded equal with God or refused to believe in God and has given him the same. But he is..."

"Therefore, you also have to be more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus to share in his kingdom."

"But what matters is that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or under good conscience, and that the gospel is announced in every place; for I have worked and labored for the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you in the Lord. I have no one like you, but you, my brothers and sisters, have a common sympathy, love, and spirit."

"Therefore I know that I will be with you soon..."

"...for he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but also of being called by his name."

"All of these are seeking their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

"...in which you stand firm and are not moved..."

"...for the work of Christ, in order to guard the gospel..."

"Therefore we have no reason to be ashamed, but to keep our word to you, even under sufferance, for the sake of Christ..."

"...to keep their word, because they love the name of the Lord..."

"...for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself..."

"For everyone who has been of the converts to Christ..."

"...for the work of Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

"...for in every way that you are to work, work at all times with joyfulness, as a service for the Lord..."

"...for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure..."

"...in the Lord with all joy, and honor such people, for the Lord's sake..."

"...for the Lord's sake, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or..."
Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation

1 Finally, my brethren and sisters, I urge you in the Lord:

2 to do the same things in you as you did in my presence, and a like encouragement to all who are present with you.

3 I also thank my God every time I remember you,

4 and of the very grace that was with them in the days of old, and in the days of old —

5 in the days of old. The Lord shall be glorified among his people.

6 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

7 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that while you are gathered together in his name, you do not speak against one another, for these things are not suitable for the churches of God.

8 When I came to you in Macedonia, this was my reason; that I might preach the gospel at Thessalonica, and that after that I might go through in the region and provide for my need, and those of other people;

9 for a work of this kind must needs go on, that they who handle the word of eternal life might be rich in what pertains to this life also.

10 He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

11 Let each of you do just as he has determined, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

12 Let yourBy giving generously, you prove your love.
Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation

Matters of reciprocity: you took care of me, God will take care of you

1. In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Lord:

2. When there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete. So be united in the same mind, the same passion, the same attitude of mind; do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as more important than yourselves. Nothing good is produced by the foolishly completed and the empty.

3. From my children, I urge you:

4. Therefore, I thank my God every time I remember you, because of your share in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is my expectation and my hope, that in nothing I will be ashamed, but that with all boldness I will declare the gospel as it is necessary for me to speak, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything admirable, let such things be written.

6. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as more important than yourselves. Nothing good is produced by the foolishly completed and the empty.

7. In everything I have shown you that by living in accordance with the gospel, so it is now, so it is, so it will be.

8. Finally, beloved, you are told to study the scriptures, to be anxious for the salvation of all people, to make prayer for all people, to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings, for all people, for kings and for all authorities that you may lead a sensible life, being zealous for your redemption and the salvation of your soul. 

9. Take care to help the weak, and to remember those in prison, as though you were in prison, and those who are suffering for the gospel, as though you were suffering with them.

10. Finally, my brothers and sisters, farewell. Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you. All the friends send you their greetings. 

11. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

12. I urge therefore that the things that you have learned and received and heard and approved, that you do them in the presence of the Lord.

13. For even when I was in Thessalonica, your help in the things that you have sent me helped to spread the gospel, not only in Thessalonica, but in all Asia and in the world.

14. Therefore, I urge that you not be easily blemished by the insolent, but be wise regarding the foolish.

15. For even when I was in Thessalonica, your help in the things that you have sent me helped to spread the gospel, not only in Thessalonica, but in all Asia and in the world.

16. For even when I was in Thessalonica, your help in the things that you have sent me helped to spread the gospel, not only in Thessalonica, but in all Asia and in the world.

17. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.
Philippians is a friendship letter and a letter of moral exhortation

The apostle Paul writes to the church in Philippi, expressing gratitude for their support and encouragement. He acknowledges their financial gifts and spiritual encouragement, and expresses his own love and concern for them. Paul also invites them to continue their faith and maintain their endurance, reminding them of their past support and urging them to continue in that way.

In the letter, Paul also provides moral exhortation, reminding the Philippians to live in a way that is pleasing to God. He encourages them to focus on spiritual matters, to live a life of peace, and to continue to support those who are working for the Lord. Paul also expresses his own desire to visit them again, and his hope that he will be able to do so in the near future.
We rejoin Philippians in chapter 2, itself a mixture of exhortation [vv. 1-18] and friendship [vv. 19-30]

- In 2:4-11 Paul presents Jesus as *The Paradigm* of how they should be treating one another

  ✤ In contrast, as servant, to the Roman Christians who are trying to undermine Paul
  ✤ In contrast, as exalted Lord, to the Caesar Kyrios (lord) of the Philippians
  ✤ *Both* are important in equipping the Philippians to resist the forces which seek to pull them apart, without and within
  ✤ For a taste of the *exaltation*, play excerpt from Gordon Fee’s third lecture at the 2005 Vineyard National Conference, 18:00-43:00
Opening with prayer, followed by song

Be still and know that I am God,
be still and know that I am God,
be still and know that I am God.

I am the Lord that healeth thee,
I am the Lord that healeth thee,
I am the Lord that healeth thee.

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust,
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust,
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust.