

Philippians: The Mind of Christ

1:12-30: To live is Christ, to die is gain

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¹⁵ Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. ¹⁶ These proclaim Christ out of love, knowing that I have been put here for the defense of the gospel; ¹⁷ the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but intending to increase my suffering in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance. ²⁰ It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Theme #1: *Unity*

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Theme #2: Joy

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Theme #3: Preparation, growth and the end game

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Theme #4: *Selflessness and suffering*

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Theme #5: *Shame and honor*

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Paul, his friends and his enemies

Friends	Enemies	Paul
Confident in sharing the gospel	Selfish ambition	Bold and rejoicing
Goodwill toward Paul	Insincerity	Eagerly expectant; hopeful
Joy in faith	Envy	Desires to be with Christ
	Rivalry	Convinced he'll live, for their sake

- We know from *Romans* that the Roman church had Jewish-Christian and Gentile-Christian factions
- Paul in *Romans* tries to unify them by reining in Gentiles on things that don't matter, and convince the Jews of the obsolescence of Jewish boundary markers
- The enemies are likely those Jewish Christians who either are ashamed of Paul's imprisonment or who cling to the boundary markers
- Unlike later in *Philippians*, here the enemies are at least preaching a true gospel

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Introduction to Philippians

Outline:

- The Backstory
 - Philippi
- Ancient letter writing

Philippians is a prototypical

“friendship letter”

- Standard education in antiquity included over a dozen standard letter forms
- Friendship letters were a common form reinforcing an agreement of mutual support and affection
- Friendship letters had a typical structure:
 - ❖ Address and greeting
 - ❖ Prayer
 - ❖ Reassurance about the sender
 - ❖ Request for reassurance about the recipient
 - ❖ General info (body)
 - ❖ Say hi to Uncle Steve
 - ❖ Bye!

