

## To the Philippians

### Asp's Suggested Paraphrase (ASP)

#### Chapter 1

<sup>(1)</sup> From: Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.

To: All the saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi, including overseers and servant-leaders.

<sup>(2)</sup> Grace to all of you and peace from God, our father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>(3)</sup> I give thanks to my God, as I remember all of you guys. <sup>(4)</sup> All of the time, in all of my prayers for all of you guys, I pray with joy <sup>(5)</sup> because of the partnership we've all shared in the Gospel from the first day until now. <sup>(6)</sup> I'm convinced of this: that the good work which has been initiated in you guys will be carried on to completion, from now until the day of Christ Jesus.

<sup>(7)</sup> It's appropriate for me to think in such a way about all these things regarding you guys because you're all in my heart, teammates with me in grace: both in my prison sentence and in my defense and confirmation of the Gospel. <sup>(8)</sup> For God is my witness that I yearn for all of you guys with all my guts, just as Jesus Christ does.

<sup>(9)</sup> And here's what I'm praying for you guys: that your love continues to grow and overflow, more and more, in true knowledge and total insight <sup>(10)</sup> to the point that you guys carry on through — with excellence and without stumbling — <sup>(11)</sup> to the day of Christ, becoming filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ, to God's glory and praise.

<sup>(12)</sup> And I want you guys to know, my sweet family of faith, that everything which has happened to me has promoted the advancement of the Gospel; <sup>(13)</sup> it's becoming clear to everyone — even to all the Roman garrison and others — that I am in chains for the sake of Christ. <sup>(14)</sup> And many of our sweet family of faith in the Lord have been emboldened by my imprisonment to proclaim the Word even more fearlessly.

<sup>(15)</sup> Some may very well be motivated by envy and strife, but others have good intentions as they proclaim Christ: <sup>(16)</sup> motivated by love, understanding that I'm here because of my role in defending the Gospel. <sup>(17)</sup> Some proclaim Christ out of selfishness, not sincerity, supposing they will pour on extra affliction to my imprisonment. <sup>(18)</sup> But I say: So what?!? In any event, by any means necessary — whether pretense or truth — Christ is proclaimed, and all of this is cause for rejoicing.

Oh yeah, I will rejoice. <sup>(19)</sup> For I know that this situation will result in salvation. Through your collective prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Christ Jesus — coming in clutch, just like I've been eagerly hoping and expecting — I'm confident that I will in no way be put to shame. Rather, in all boldness (just like always and now) Christ will be made great in my body, whether in life or in death. <sup>(21)</sup> For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>(22)</sup> But if I am to continue to live in the flesh, it will be for the sake of fruitful labor.

As to the question of which I would prefer: I just don't know. <sup>(23)</sup> I struggle with the decision. I have a strong impulse to be released from this life in order to be with Christ, for this is much, much better. <sup>(24)</sup> But it is more necessary to remain in the flesh, for your sake. <sup>(25)</sup> And I am convinced of this; I know that I will remain and stay with all you guys, working towards your progress and joy in the faith. <sup>(26)</sup> I want you guys to overflow with your boasting in Christ Jesus, as a result of me coming to be with you guys again.

<sup>(27)</sup> Only conduct yourselves in a way that's worthy of the Gospel of Christ, so that — whether I come and see you guys, or I'm absent — I hear good things about you guys: that you are standing firm in one spirit, one soul striving together with the faith of the Gospel <sup>(28)</sup> and not being intimidated in any way by the opposition. This is proof of their destruction — but your salvation — and that comes from God. <sup>(29)</sup> For you guys were freely given, for the sake of Christ, the opportunity to not just believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>(30)</sup> having the same kind of experience you've seen in me and now you've heard from me.

## Chapter 2

<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort from love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if there is any sense of gut-level affection and sympathy — <sup>(2)</sup> fulfill my joy by coming to a meeting of the minds and holding onto that sense of unity, together with one spirit and mind. <sup>(3)</sup> Let there be no self-centeredness. Let there be no vain pride. But let there be humility towards one another. Lead in such a way that values each other's interests above your own.

<sup>(4)</sup> Don't just keep an eye on your own self-interests, but also keep an eye out for others. <sup>(5)</sup> Direct your thoughts among yourselves in such a way, as well, getting this from Christ Jesus, <sup>(6)</sup> who was found in the appearance of God but didn't hold onto that with clenched fists. <sup>(7)</sup> Instead, he emptied himself and took on the appearance of a servant, born in the likeness of humanity. <sup>(8)</sup> And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and submitted to human experience to the point of death — even death on a cross. <sup>(9)</sup> For this reason, God gave him a place of great honor and power and gave freely the name above all names, <sup>(10)</sup> in order that at the name of Jesus every knee would bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, <sup>(11)</sup> and every tongue would acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>(12)</sup> Therefore, my dearly loved friends, just as you've always obeyed — not only when I'm around, but even more so now that I'm gone — keep working out your salvation with fear and trembling. <sup>(13)</sup> For God is the one who works in you guys and to create the desires and the actions that align with his good will.

<sup>(14)</sup> Do everything without grumbling and arguing, <sup>(15)</sup> in order that you guys might become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in the midst of crooked and corrupt generation. This causes you guys to shine like stars in the world, <sup>(16)</sup> holding tightly to the word of life, bringing me pride all the way to the day of Christ that it wasn't an empty expenditure of energy or a struggle in futility. <sup>(17)</sup> But even if I'm sacrificed as an offering, on top of the sacrifice and service of you guys, I rejoice. We rejoice. <sup>(18)</sup> Let's rejoice and be glad together.

<sup>(19)</sup> But I'm hoping, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you guys as soon as possible, in order that I might be encouraged to get some news about you guys. <sup>(20)</sup> For nobody I know is as like-minded or same-souled as Timothy, who sincerely cares about you guys. <sup>(21)</sup> For everyone else seeks their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. <sup>(22)</sup> But you guys know the evidence about Timothy — that he was like a son serving with his father, working with me in the Gospel. <sup>(23)</sup> Therefore, I hope to send him, as soon as I can ascertain my situation, <sup>(24)</sup> and I am persuaded in the Lord that I myself will come soon, too.

<sup>(25)</sup> But I figured you needed Epaphroditus, who's been a brother to me, a co-laborer, and a fellow soldier. He's also your messenger, whom you sent to minister to me in my need, so I'm sending him back to you guys. <sup>(26)</sup> He's been yearning for all of you, deeply troubled because you heard he was sick. <sup>(27)</sup> And he *was* sick, almost to the point of death. But God took pity on him, not only for his sake but for my sake, as well, to spare me from the grief upon grief I would have had. <sup>(28)</sup> Therefore I'm sending him as quickly as possible, so you guys can see him again and rejoice together, while I'm also relieved. <sup>(29)</sup> So welcome him in the Lord with all joy and the honor that people like him deserve. <sup>(30)</sup> Through his work for the cause of Christ, he nearly died, handing over his life for the sake of filling the gap that you guys would not have otherwise been able to fill.

### Chapter 3

<sup>(1)</sup> Finally, my sweet family of faith, you must rejoice in the Lord. It's no bother for me to write this to you; in fact, it keeps you safe. <sup>(2)</sup> Look out for the dogs! Look out for the bad guys! Look out for the mutilation! <sup>(3)</sup> Because we are the circumcision. It's about worshiping by the Spirit of God, glorying and finding our confidence in Christ Jesus — not finding our confidence in that rotting pile of foreskins. <sup>(4)</sup> Although, I personally have a case for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else assumes to have a case for confidence in the flesh, I have *more*: <sup>(5)</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, a true child of Israel, from the tribe of Benjamin — Hebrew of Hebrews. According to the Law, a Pharisee. <sup>(6)</sup> According to zealous fervor, a persecutor of the church. According to righteousness from following the Law, a blameless creation.

<sup>(7)</sup> But whatever I had going for me — I consider it all loss, for the sake of Christ. <sup>(8)</sup> In fact, I'll go even further to say that I consider it all loss for the sake of the all-surpassing privilege of being someone to know Christ Jesus as my Lord. Through him, everything else fades away. Everything else is garbage — crap to flush down the toilet — in order that I might gain Christ <sup>(9)</sup> and be found in him. My righteousness doesn't come from the Law, but through faith in Christ, a *God-centered* righteousness built upon faith. <sup>(10)</sup> I want to know him and to know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship wrought by his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>(11)</sup> that I might somehow achieve resurrection from the dead.

<sup>(12)</sup> It's not like I've won anything yet. But I'm running in the right direction, so as to own up to that for which Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>(13)</sup> My sweet family of faith, I don't reckon that I've come into possession of all this yet. *But* one thing is clear: forgetting the ground I've already covered, leaning into that which is in front of me, <sup>(14)</sup> I'm running hard to win the prize of a heavenly calling from God in Christ Jesus. <sup>(15)</sup> So for all of us who are running veterans, let's keep thinking about things like this. And if it turns out that your collective thoughts start trending in a different direction, I trust that our God will reveal himself to you. <sup>(16)</sup> In any event, let's stay united in the miles we've already logged together.

<sup>(17)</sup> Stick with me, my sweet family of faith. Do as I do, and keep your eyes open for others who are like us, our running club. <sup>(18)</sup> For many people are walking along — as I've told you many times, and as I continue to tell you, through tears — with a sense of hostility towards the cross of Christ. <sup>(19)</sup> They will end up in ruins. Their god is the emptiness inside them, and they glorify their shame, and they always keep thinking about earthly things. <sup>(20)</sup> But our

homeland is heaven, from where our Savior is coming, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>(21)</sup> He will transform our humble, earthly body to have the same form as his glorious, heavenly body according to the energy, the power that causes all things to submit to him.

## Chapter 4

<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, my sweet family of faith whom I love and long for — my joy and crowning delight— hold steady in the Lord we love. <sup>(2)</sup> Jasmine: Come on. Sunny: Let's go. Honor one another in the Lord. <sup>(3)</sup> Yes, I beg you, my true teammates, to jump to their aid — helping these women who have strived together with me and Clement and the rest of the team, whose names are written in the Book of Life. <sup>(4)</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I repeat: Rejoice. <sup>(5)</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>(6)</sup> So don't be anxious about anything, but in everything focus your prayer and pleading, with a healthy dose of thanksgiving, letting God know about your requests. <sup>(7)</sup> And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>(8)</sup> In conclusion, my sweet family of faith, to whatever extent something is true, honorable, righteous, pure, lovely, worthy of a good word — if it is something of excellence and something deserving of praise — keep these things in mind. <sup>(9)</sup> Carry forward the things you guys have learned and picked up along the way through listening and watching me. And the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>(10)</sup> But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that you guys now, at last, revived your consideration for me. I know that you *did* keep thinking about me, all along, but you had no opportunity. <sup>(11)</sup> But I'm not speaking from a place of poverty. In fact, I have come to realize that I am content, and I now know how to be content, in any situation. <sup>(12)</sup> I know how to be in need, and I know how to be in abundance. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret, and whether satisfied or desperate, whether in plenty or in poverty: <sup>(13)</sup> in everything I am powerful in the one who empowered me.

<sup>(14)</sup> Even so, you guys shared with me in my troubles in such a beautiful way. <sup>(15)</sup> And you Philippians know that in the beginning of the Gospel initiative we undertook when I first came out of Macedonia, no other church partnered with me in the giving and receiving of the Word. Except for you guys. <sup>(16)</sup> In Thessaloniki, too, you guys came in clutch on multiple occasions when I was in need. <sup>(17)</sup> Not that I'm looking for another gift; I'm just looking for the fruit of the Word increasing in you guys. <sup>(18)</sup> But I've received everything I need, more than I need: totally supplied after Epaphroditus brought the gifts from you guys. That generosity was such a sweet-smelling fragrance, an offering that's acceptable and pleasing to God. <sup>(19)</sup> And my God will fulfill all your needs according to his riches in glory, in Christ Jesus. <sup>(20)</sup> And to God, our father, be glory forever and ever, Amen.

<sup>(21)</sup> Give my love to all the saints in Christ Jesus. The rest of the family who are with me send their love, too. <sup>(22)</sup> All the saints send their love to you guys, especially those of you from the House of Caesar. <sup>(23)</sup> May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit of you guys.