

Exegetical Notes – Philippians 1:1-11

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Philippians 1:1-11

Verses 1-2

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- This letter was sent to the Philippian Church by Paul and Timothy. Timothy was Paul's "son in the Lord" (see 1 Timothy 1:18, 2 Timothy 2:1 and also Acts 16:1-5.) Timothy had assisted Paul in the founding of this church. Together, they wrote this letter.
- Philippi was a military outpost of the Roman Government. The church had been supportive of Paul in his ministry and had demonstrated its support by sending him monetary gifts (see 4:16). Scholars believe that this letter is basically a thank you note to the Philippians for their support of his ministry.
- The letter is addressed to the congregation in Philippi and their "overseers and deacons." Overseers are their Elders. Deacons are those who perform the acts of ministry among the people of the church. This is the same form of government in place at Cornerstone.
- "Peace" is the normal greeting in a letter of the time. Paul always adds "Grace." It is by grace that we are saved and this is God's gift to the faithful everywhere. It is received by faith in the name and power of Jesus.

Verses 3-6

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

- Paul says that he thanks God whenever he thinks about the Christians in Philippi and that he remembers them with joy because of the partnership he has had with them in ministry. He says that they have always supported him from the beginning of his ministry until the moment of the writing of this letter.
- He is confident that this relationship with them will continue until Jesus comes.

Verses 7-8

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸ God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

- Paul says that it is right for him to feel this way about the Philippians because he holds them in his heart and they stand with him in ministry when he is actively preaching the Gospel or is locked up for preaching the Gospel.
- He says that God, himself, knows how deeply he and Timothy love the Philippian Christians.

Verses 9-11

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

- Paul prays that the Philippians may grow in knowledge and insight so that they will be able to discern what is best. He prays that they will understand more fully the nature of God's love for them so that they will be able to choose best for themselves what the will of God is. This increased knowledge will lead them to better living. Their lives will be blameless and pure when Christ returns. They will be filled with the "fruit of righteousness." What they know will influence how they live! And together, what they know and how they apply it to how they live will bring glory and praise to God.

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