

The General Electric Power Company Series

Galatians | Ephesians | **Philippians** | Colossians

Lesson #13 – Philippians 1

Main Idea

If you read through the entire epistle of Philippians, it really feels like a letter. Unlike Galatians and Ephesians that often seem like a theological text, Philippians reads like a letter from one Believer to another. In some regards we need this after completing two of the more theological compelling books in the Bible. It is so easy for our knowledge of God's Word to exceed our application of it. Often churches can honor those who know the Bible at the expense of those who honor Christ with how they live. Both are critically important, but it is unacceptable for us to be people who know the Word without applying it. As James wrote (James 2:17), *In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.* In reading through Philippians 1, consider several points. First, how often do we thank the Lord for dear Christian friends? Pursuing relationships with other fellow Christians is an essential part of our pilgrimage. As Proverbs 18:24 (AKJV) says, *A man that has friends must show himself friendly.* Secondly, how much of what you do and have sacrificed has compelled others to follow Christ more deeply? One of the greatest impacts that we can have on the world is to walk with Christ and demonstrate His love to others. Through the way we live, we can challenge others to be more like Him. Actions are often so much more powerful than what we say. Lastly, because we have been called by God, we are to *conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.* The way we act says more about how we value our salvation than anything else about us.

Overview of Chapter 1

Verses 1–11 Introductory remarks

Verses 12–30 Paul's chains advance the Gospel

Questions for Consideration

1. How important are Christian friends to you? It is often easy to take Christian friends for granted. Can you imagine what your life would be like if you lived in a remote part of the world and the only Christians with whom you associated were those in your immediate family?
2. In verse 10 Paul states that his desire for the Philippians is *that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.* As we mature in Christ through love and knowledge, in what ways does our discernment increase?
3. It is not a far stretch for us to see parallels between the *fruit of righteousness* and the *fruit of the spirit*. Read Galatians 5:22 and list the fruit of the spirit. What do we learn from this list in terms of its order and it reflecting our maturity in Christ?
4. In verse 29 Paul states, *For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him.*
 - a. In Greek "granted" comes from the word *charizomai* (χαρίζομαι). It corresponds to God giving His grace to pardon; done freely and therefore not based on any merit of the one receiving forgiveness. What does the concept mean for you and me (i.e. correlate that *granted* precedes *believing*)?
 - b. In what ways do we "suffer" as Christians? If we are not suffering, what does it possibly mean?

Homework: Read Philippians 2. How can we demonstrate to others that we consider them better than ourselves?



Philippians 1 New International Version (1984)

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,
To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers^[a] and deacons:

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

Thanksgiving and Prayer

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.

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for 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.

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 until the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel

¹² Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. ¹³ As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard^[b] and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴ Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

¹⁵ It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.^[c] ¹⁸ But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.^[d] ²⁰ I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Footnotes:

- a. [Philippians 1:1](#) Traditionally bishops
- b. [Philippians 1:13](#) Or whole palace
- c. [Philippians 1:17](#) Some late manuscripts have verses 16 and 17 in reverse order.
- d. [Philippians 1:19](#) Or salvation

