

# Philippians

- Author and Date
  - Paul
  - Either during the Ephesian captivity (circa AD 54), or during the Roman captivity (circa AD 62). Internal evidence supporting the Roman captivity can be found in 1:13; 4:22.
- Destination
  - Leading city of Eastern Macedonia (in northern Greece).
    - Positioned on the Egnatian Way, which connected Italy with Asia Minor.
    - Named after Philip of Macedon (Father of Alexander the Great).
    - Made a Roman military colony in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.
  - Paul spent an unknown amount of time here (possibly a couple years) during his second missionary journey. He then visited them relatively briefly once or twice on his third missionary journey. He clearly spent enough time with them to establish a very personal rapport as is evident from the letter (cf. Acts 16:12-40; 20:1-3).
  - First church to be established on the mainland of Europe.
  - Not many Jews there. Mainly settled by retired Roman soldiers and sailors.
- Purpose
  - Does not address a doctrinal, disciplinary or moral crisis. It is more a letter of thanks and encouragement to friends.
    - The Philippians have been very generous and gracious to Paul in supporting with prayer and financial assistance during his imprisonment.
  - Paul also treats a personal conflict between two women of the community, and also warns them about Judaizing missionaries that may try to pressure them into circumcision.
- Themes and Characteristics
  - Joyous, positive, and personal
  - Skips around topically like a friendly letter might, as opposed to building a substantial argument on a controversial subject.
  - Exhorts Philippians to imitate both he and Christ.
    - Portrays the Lord as the model of humility and selfless service.
    - Portrays himself as the model of patient endurance.
- Structure
  - Opening Address 1:1-11
  - Paul's Imprisonment 1:12-30
  - Imitating Jesus Christ 2:1-18
  - The arrival of Timothy and Epaphroditus 2:19-30
  - Striving the for the goal 3:1-21
  - Final Instruction and Praise 4:1-20
  - Conclusion 4:21-23