

Summary of Paul's Letter to the Church at Philippi

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I. Introduction.

- A. Greeting and encouragement (1:1-2).
 - 1. Paul and Timothy sent the letter (1:1).
 - a. Paul does not call himself an apostle
 - b. He thinks of himself and Timothy as servants of Jesus
 - 2. The letter is sent to saints, supervisors (bishops) and deacons of the church at Philippi (1:1).
 - a. He begs for them grace and peace (1:2).
 - b. The source of grace and peace is God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1:2).

II. Paul's Thank You Letter (1:3-4:23).

- A. Paul's thankfulness for the brethren in Philippi (1:3-11).
 - 1. Paul prayed for them with joy (1:3-4).
 - 2. His prayer included many things (1:5-11).
 - a. Thankfulness for their participation in his work of advancing the gospel, being confident they would continue (1:5-6).
 - b. They helped him to defend and confirm the gospel (1:7).
 - c. God knew how much he loved them (1:8).
 - d. Paul wanted their love to grow in knowledge and discrimination (1:9). (Love is not sentiment only but is connected with reason and judgment.)
 - e. Understanding would enable them to know truth and approve what is right (1:10-11).
- B. Results of Paul's imprisonment at Rome (1:12-30).
 - 1. The gospel was preached (1:12-19).
 - a. Among the praetorian guard (1:13).
 - b. Brethren made bold to speak the word (1:14).
 - c. Some acted for unworthy reasons (1:15-16).
 - d. Paul was happy the good news of salvation was taught regardless of the motive of the teacher (1:18-19).
 - 2. Paul's only purpose in life was to honor Jesus (1:20-26).
 - a. He wanted to boldly magnify Jesus (1:20).
 - b. "To live is Christ, to die is gain" (1:21).
 - c. Paul hoped to see them again in this life (1:22-26).
 - 3. He urges them to behave like citizens of heaven (1:27-30).
 - a. United and laboring for the one true faith (1:27).
 - b. Unafraid and hopeful (1:28).
 - c. Thankful for the gifts of salvation and suffering (1:29).
 - d. Paul once suffered in a Philippian jail and was now suffering in a Roman jail (1:30).
- C. Instructions to perform various duties (2:1-30).
 - 1. There is in Christ consolation of love, fellowship of the Spirit, tender mercies and compassion (2:1).
 - a. Paul urges them to make his joy full (2:2).
 - b. He wanted them to be of the same mind and love, being of one accord and mind (2:2).
 - 2. The example of Christ (2:5-11).
 - a. Jesus was equal with Jehovah (2:6).
 - b. He gave up the glory of eternity to assume the limits of human flesh (2:7-8).
 - c. He was offered as a sacrifice for sin (2:8).
 - d. In consequence of his gruesome death--his perfect obedience to the Father's will--he is today exalted (2:9-11; Heb. 5:8-9).
 - 3. Imitate Jesus example (2:12-18).
 - a. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling (2:12).
 - b. Regardless of your condition God can work in you (2:13).
 - c. Do not murmur (2:14).
 - d. Do right in an evil world (2:15).
 - e. Preach and defend the revealed word so as not to make Paul's life meaningless (2:16).
 - f. I rejoice to be sacrificed for your faith (2:17).
 - g. You should also be happy because it works for you an eternal reward (2:18).
 - 4. The sending of Timothy (2:19-23).
 - a. He wanted to know their condition (2:19).
 - b. Timothy was good and faithful (2:20).
 - c. Others did not have Timothy's qualities (2:21).
 - d. Timothy helped in advancing and guarding the gospel (2:22).
 - e. He would send Timothy to Philippi as soon as he knew

- the outcome of his imprisonment (2:23).
 - 5. If released, Paul would personally come to Philippi (2:24).
 - 6. Epaphroditus brought relief to Paul from Philippi (2:25-30).
 - a. Epaphroditus had been sick to the point of death (2:26-28).
 - b. Epaphroditus' health was recovered and Paul sent him back to Philippi (2:29-30).
 - D. Encouragement to holy living (3:1-3).
 - 1. Be happy and faithful (3:1).
 - 2. Watch out for false teachers--they are dogs, evil workers and mutilators (3:2).
 - 3. Worship God, glory in Jesus, have no confidence in the flesh and you will be right with God (3:3).
 - E. Paul's life (3:4-21).
 - 1. His early life and education (3:4-6).
 - 2. He renounced everything to gain Christ (3:7-11).
 - a. Earthly assets were rejected (3:7).
 - b. Worldly things are nothing when compared to eternal rewards (3:8).
 - c. Paul was not righteous because he kept the moral law of God perfectly, but was pure because of his obedience of faith (3:9).
 - d. Paul depended on Jesus' sacrifice for his salvation (3:10-11).
 - 3. Paul still had work to do (3:12-17).
 - a. Paul was not already safe in heaven, but was still struggling on earth to receive the final reward (3:12).
 - b. Paul wanted to achieve the prize for which Jesus claimed him (3:13).
 - c. He forgot the past and looked to the future (3:13).
 - d. He pressed on toward the goal (3:14).
 - e. All who want to be saved should do the same (3:15).
 - f. We must walk by the rule God has given us (3:16).
 - g. Follow Paul as he followed Christ (3:17).
 - 4. False teachers (3:18-19)
 - a. Many--not few--false teachers are in the world (3:18).
 - b. False teachers are enemies of Christ and will end up in hell (3:19).
 - c. They worship their own belly and glory in their own shame and think only of fleshly lust and desires (3:19).
 - 5. The saint is noble (3:20-21).
 - a. The saint belongs to heaven and is waiting for the coming of the Lord (3:20).
 - b. Jesus will reward the child of God with a heavenly home, crown and throne (3:21).
- III. Final Exhortations
- A. Stand fast in the one Lord (4:1-3).
 - 1. Commands Euodia and Syntyche to stop fussing (4:2).
 - 2. Wants the church to help these women (4:3).
 - B. Be happy--it is your duty--and be faithful (4:4-7)
 - 1. Rejoice--rejoice (4:4).
 - 2. Let everyone see your gentleness (4:5).
 - a. Be good (4:5).
 - b. Jesus could come again at any time (4:5).
 - 3. Do not be worried about earthly things (4:6).
 - 4. The warrior peace of God guards your thoughts and hearts (4:7).
 - C. Think on noble things (4:8-9).
 - D. Paul was grateful for their kind contribution to his material needs (4:10-19).
 - 1. They remembered him (4:10-13).
 - a. He knew how to be content with or without food (4:11-12).
 - b. With Jesus help, Paul could do what he had to do--either rejoice in the gift, or go without necessities (4:13).
 - 2. Still, it was good for them to send money to his relief (4:14).
 - 3. They had a long partnership with Paul (4:15-16).
 - 4. Paul's only interest was in their spiritual health (4:17).
 - 5. They had supplied his physical needs and he was happy (4:18).
 - 6. God would reward them (4:19-20).
 - E. Closing remarks (4:21-23).