The Chapters of Philippians

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SECTION OUTLINE ONE (PHILIPPIANS 1)
Paul opens his letter to the church in Philippi with a presentation of Christ as the believer's life purpose.

I. PAUL'S SUPPLICATION FOR THE PHILIPPIAN BELIEVERS (1:1-11)
   A. For whom he prays (1:1-2): Pastors, deacons, and all Christians in Philippi.
   B. When he prays (1:3): "Every time I think of you."
   C. How he prays (1:4): He prays with his heart filled with joy.
   D. Why he prays (1:5, 7-8): The Philippian believers have rendered great assistance to Paul, both in prison and out of prison.
   E. What he prays (1:6, 9-11)
      1. That God's Word be carried to its completion in every believer until the return of Christ (1:6)
      2. That they might be filled with love (1:9)
      3. That they might have the spirit of discernment (1:10)
      4. That they be filled with the fruits of righteousness (or of salvation) (1:11)

II. PAUL'S EXPLANATION TO THE PHILIPPIAN BELIEVERS (1:12-30)
   A. The report (1:12-13): Paul's imprisonment has served to advance the gospel, starting with the palace guard and spreading from there.
   B. The reaction (1:14-17)
      1. Concerning his friends (1:14, 16): Paul's chains encourage them to increase their efforts in proclaiming the gospel.
      2. Concerning his foes (1:15, 17): They, too, are spreading the gospel, hoping to make the apostle jealous.
   C. The rejoicing (1:18): Whatever the motive, Paul rejoices that the gospel is being preached.
   D. The resolve (1:19-26)
      1. Paul's dilemma (1:19-23)
         a. To remain in this life would result in additional fruit (1:19-21a, 22).
         b. To depart this life would mean being with Christ (1:21b, 23).
      2. Paul's decision (1:24-26): He will remain.
   E. The request (1:27-28): Whatever happens to him, the Philippians are to continue conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel.
   F. The reminder (1:29-30): They have been granted two wonderful privileges.
      1. To trust in Christ (1:29a)
      2. To suffer for Christ (1:29b-30)

SECTION OUTLINE TWO (PHILIPPIANS 2)
Paul presents Christ as the believer's life pattern.

I. THE CHALLENGE FROM PAUL (2:1-18): He desires that the church strive for humility.
   A. The essentials in humility (2:1-4)
      1. Unity in love (2:1-2a)
      2. Unity in spirit and purpose (2:2b-4)
   B. The example of humility (2:5-11): Paul holds up the earthly ministry of Christ.
      1. The pain (2:5-8b)
         a. Even though he was God, he did not cling to his rights as God (2:5-6).
         b. He laid aside his glory (2:7a).
         c. He took upon himself the nature of a human servant (2:7b).
         d. He humbled himself (2:8a).
e. He became obedient and died on the cross (2:8b).

2. The gain (2:9-11)
   a. God has exalted him to the highest place (2:9a).
   b. He has been given a name above all other names (2:9b).
   c. Someday all people will acknowledge that he is Lord (2:10-11).

C. The exhortation to humility (2:12-18)
   1. Let God perfect in you his salvation (2:12-13).
   2. Don't complain (2:14).

III. THE COWORKERS FROM PAUL (2:19-30): Paul promises to send two special messengers to the Philippian church.
   A. Timothy (2:19-24)
      1. Timothy, messenger of God (2:19): Paul says Timothy will minister to them.
      3. Paul, too, hopes to come visit them soon (2:24).
   B. Epaphroditus (2:25-30)
      1. The soldier (2:25): The Philippians sent this faithful spiritual warrior to help Paul.
      2. The stricken (2:26-30)
         a. Epaphroditus was desperately ill (2:26b-27a, 30).
         b. God healed him (2:27b).
         c. Paul is sending him back home (2:26a, 28-29).

SECTION OUTLINE THREE (PHILIPPIANS 3)
Paul presents Christ as the believer's life prize.

   A. Who these foes are (3:1-3): They are the judaizers, whom Paul calls dogs because they say circumcision is necessary for salvation.
      1. The true circumcision (3:3a): "We who worship God in the Spirit ... are truly circumcised."
      2. The false circumcision (3:3b) "We put no confidence in human effort."
   B. What these foes are (3:18, 19b)
      1. They are enemies of the cross (3:18).
      2. They are proud and sensual materialists (3:19b).
   C. Where these foes are headed (3:19a): "Their future is eternal destruction."

II. THE COST (3:4-8): Paul has given up two things to become a child of God.
   A. His prestige among the Jews (3:4-5)
   B. His persecution against the church (3:6)

III. THE CATCH (3:7-8): Paul gave up what he thought was important and gained the priceless knowledge of Christ.

IV. THE CROWN (3:9-14, 20-21): Paul has gained four things from becoming a child of God.
   A. A new righteousness (3:9-12)
   B. A new goal (3:13-14)
   C. A new home (3:20)
   D. A new body (3:21)

V. THE COMMAND (3:15-17): Paul says, "Pattern your lives after mine."

SECTION OUTLINE FOUR (PHILIPPIANS 4)
Paul concludes his letter with a presentation of Christ as the believer's life power.
I. UNIFYING POWER (4:1-3)
   A. The contenders (4:1-2): Two women in the church, Euodia and Syntyche, are arguing with each other.
   B. The counselor (4:3): Paul asks a godly man in the church to help reconcile these women.

II. FORTIFYING POWER (4:4-7)
   A. The prayer (4:4-6): Two rules must be observed for this power to function.
      1. We must never be stressful in anything (4:4-6a).
      2. We must always be thankful in everything (4:6b).
   B. The peace (4:7): If we obey these rules, God's peace will fortify and guard our heart.

III. PURIFYING POWER (4:8): We are to fix our thoughts on what is true, good, and right.

IV. EXEMPLIFYING POWER (4:9): Paul offers himself as a spiritual role model.

V. SATISFYING POWER (4:10-13)
   A. The satisfaction (4:10-12)
      1. Paul is content even when hungry and in need of many things (4:10, 11b-12a, 12d, 12f).
      2. Paul is content when filled and in need of nothing (4:11a, 12b-12c, 12e).
   B. The satisfier (4:13): Jesus himself is the source of Paul's strength.

VI. SANCTIFYING POWER (4:14-18, 21-23): Paul thanks the Philippians for their gifts to him, which are a "sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable to God and pleases him." He sends greetings to all the Philippians.

VII. MULTIPLYING POWER (4:19): God will meet the needs of the Philippians as he has met the needs of Paul.

VIII. GLORIFYING POWER (4:20): God uses his power to glorify himself.