PAUL'S PASTORAL PRAYER IN PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11:
AN APPLICATION TO TODAY'S MINISTRY

A Thesis Project Submitted to
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

Hyun David Chung

Lynchburg, Virginia
May, 2001
## CONTENTS

Chapter

### I. INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Need and the Purpose of this Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan of this Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Assumptions and Limitation of this Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### II. AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF PAUL'S INTERCESSORY PRAYER (PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Survey of Paul's Thanksgiving (1:3-8)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual Study of the Intercessory Prayer</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercessory Prayer Generated by Gratitude and Love</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual Analogies in Other Pauline Epistles</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Exegesis of the Intercessory Prayer (1:9-11)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discerning the Best by Love and Insight (1:9-10a)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing the Eschatological Perfection (1:10b-11)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analogies in Other Pauline Epistles</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary: Four Main Concepts of the Intercession</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### III. THE FOUR MAIN IDEAS OF THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER EXPANDED IN THE BODY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>True Knowledge and Spiritual Discernment</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Paul's Life and Ministry</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a Prerequisite for Christian Life</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a Goal in Christian Life</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Lifestyle as a Result of True Love and Spiritual Discernment</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ as the Key to Christian Life</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatological Motivation</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusion</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV. A HOMILETICAL OUTLINE THROUGH THE FOUR LENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Joy That grace and peace brings (1:1-2)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Joy That the Fellowship in the Gospel Brings (1:3-8)</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Joy That Dynamic Love Brings (1:9-11)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study starts with an understanding that the apostle Paul was a pastor. Even though he was not like some pastors, today, who serve a particular church for a period of some 20 years,\textsuperscript{1} he still showed the genuine heart of a pastor and exemplified how a pastor should behave in ministry setting. He was involved in ministry, knew ministry and transmitted the divine revelation from God Himself to the church of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul was not only a prolific writer but also a “prolific” pastor in that he started many churches mainly through the three missionary journeys. And he stabilized some\textsuperscript{2} of them to a certain degree. In some cases he revisited them\textsuperscript{3} and in one other case he summoned the leaders to himself and instructed them.\textsuperscript{4} In still

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1} Paul stayed in Corinth for 18 months (Acts 18:11), and in Ephesus (Acts 19:10) for two years. Paul stationed in Rome for two years in a house arrest situation (Acts 28:30-31). Other than these cases, Paul was more an itinerant preacher. But his continuing concern, after church planting, for his converts is unmistakable, and many of his epistles are evidence for this very fact.

\textsuperscript{2} Acts 14:23

\textsuperscript{3} Acts 15:36; 18:23

\textsuperscript{4} Acts 20:17-38.}
some other cases he delegated his authority or had one of his spiritual proteges, such as Timothy and Titus, to oversee the church. After all, he wrote the “Pastoral Epistles.” So, the apostle Paul can and should be regarded as a pastor.

The Need for and the Purpose of this Study

There is a consensus that prayer is important not only in the spiritual life of individual Christians but also in the ministry from a pastor’s perspective. What a pastor prays for his flock reflects and determines the direction and the substance of his ministry.

In writing his Epistle to the Philippians, as in many other of his epistles, Paul follows the contemporary Greek letter structure: opening, body, closure. Yet as one can find in the Epistle to the Philippians, and other Pauline epistles, his distinctively Christian

\[\text{[Footnote]}\]

\[\text{[Footnote]}\]

---

\[\text{[Footnote]}\] The term “Pastoral Epistles” was first introduced by D. N. Berdot in 1703 and popularized by Paul Anton in 1726. D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1990), 607. The term better serves for grouping purpose than reflecting the contents of the three epistles. 1 Timothy is most “pastoral,” and 2 Timothy is very much personal, while Titus is in between.

\[\text{[Footnote]}\] Hellenistic letter structure may be outlined as follows: (1) opening (sender, addressee, greeting; prayer for good health) (2) Body (with introductory formulae) and (3) Closing (greetings, final wishes, occasionally dating). Ronald Russell, "Pauline Letter Structure in Philippians," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 25 (September 1982): 297.
thanksgiving-intercessory prayer is unique\(^7\) and is issued from a pastoral concern for his readers.\(^8\)

Since the intercessory prayer is an expression of the apostle Paul's genuine concern for the spiritual need of the Philippian believers, a careful study of his intercessory prayer will greatly enhance the understanding of the purpose and contents of the Epistle as a whole.

But not much has been done on the relationship between the contents of the intercessory prayer and the body of Philippians in detail. Thus this thesis will try to clarify the function of the intercessory prayer in the whole Epistle, through the threads of the four main ideas that are prominent in the intercessory prayer based on an inductive and exegetical study of the Greek text of Philippians.

Through this process, one will become more familiar with what Paul had in mind for the Philippian believers in terms of their spiritual status when he was making that intercessory prayer. A careful study of his intercessory prayer will enhance the understanding of Paul's

---

\(^7\) Stanley K. Stowers differentiates the Apostle Paul from his contemporary philosophical groups in terms of their character-building through hortatory letters. (1) Paul's focus is not on the individual character but on building the community. Individual virtues are to contribute to the edification of the community. (2) In Paul this achievement of community life and Christian life are attributed to God. *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), p. 42.

\(^8\) In his thorough study on the introductory thanksgivings in the letters of Paul, P. T. O'Brien suggests four functions of the intercessory report: (1) the epistolary function, (2) the didactic function, (3) the exhortatory function, and (4) pastoral concern. *introductory Thanksgiving in the Letters of Paul* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), pp. 37-40.
genuine concern for the Philippian believers' spiritual health. His prayer without doubt reflects his heart toward the Philippian believers' spiritual health, even under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Put in other words, his prayer for them reflects his genuine concern for them as their pastor, and the biblical concern that every contemporary pastor should have for his flock with which God has entrusted him.

Coming back to the contemporary situation, however, contemporary ministers sometimes fail to pay proper attention to and turn away from the biblical models of pastoral purpose, biblical pastoral philosophy and biblical pastoral strategy. This thesis will study a Spirit-inspired pastoral prayer as recorded in Philippians 1:9-11 and try to provide the basis for pastoral purpose, philosophy and strategy for contemporary ministers of the Gospel.

The Plan of this Study

In chapter two, the context of the intercessory prayer (1:9-11), especially in relation to the preceding thanksgiving (1:3-8), will be dealt with, with a view to find out what occasioned the intercessory prayer. Then follows an exegetical analysis and synthesis of the intercessory prayer itself. An attempt will be made to determine the key ideas framing Paul's intercession.
In chapter three, an effort to integrate the whole Epistle will be made through the threads of the four prominent themes found to be prevalent in the intercessory prayer, by way of locating those themes that recur in the body of the whole Epistle based on an exegetical analysis.

In chapter four, a homiletical outline will be presented with a purpose of highlighting how the four main ideas are distinctively repeated and play an important role in the exposition of the Epistle. The homiletical outline and the main messages for each passage are the results of a careful exegetical study. The contents of this chapter will be a homiletical application of Philippians 1:9-11 to the whole Epistle. The distinctive theme and purpose of each passage will be articulated. Chapter five will serve as the summary and conclusion to this study providing the basis for pastoral purpose, philosophy and strategy for the contemporary ministers of the Gospel.

Some Assumptions and Limitation of This Study

There are two assumptions taken by this thesis on introductory matters. First, Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Philippians is accepted without any reservation. The great majority of scholars accept Pauline authorship as indisputable with the possible exception of the composition of the hymn in 2:6-11. Even concerning
the authorship of this hymn, Pauline authorship will be maintained in this study, regardless of whether he composed it prior to or at the same time of writing the rest of Philippians.10

The second assumption is the integrity of the whole Epistle. Since the seventeenth century a number of scholars have maintained that the Epistle to the Philippians consists of two or three fragments which were originally independent from each other and that they were put together at a later stage by a "redactor."11 But this partition theory is unnecessary and unconvincing.12 The integrity of Philippians will be presupposed and its integrity will become more evident and will be reinforced at the end of the study.

This study will have limitation. This thesis will provide a biblical basis for pastoral purpose, philosophy and strategy for contemporary

---


ministers of the Gospel, but will not try to provide the specific details for ministry in local church settings as a pastoral manual would pursue.
CHAPTER II

AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF PAUL'S INTERCESSORY PRAYER
(PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11)

Paul’s thanksgiving period (1:3-11) consists of two parts: the thanksgiving (1:3-8), and the intercessory prayer (1:9-11). The first part of this chapter will deal with Philippians 1:3-8, and the second half Philippians 9-11.

A Survey of Paul’s Thanksgiving (1:3-8)

First of all, it will be necessary to take a look at the context in which the intercessory prayer finds itself, before an exegetical understanding of the intercessory prayer itself. In order to determine what occasioned the intercessory prayer, its contextual relationship with the thanksgiving will be taken into consideration. Then will follow some analogies from other Pauline Epistles.

Contextual Study of the Intercessory Prayer

After his customary greetings (1:1-2), Paul expresses his thanksgiving toward God in behalf of his Philippian readers (1:3-8). The occasion of the thanksgiving is introduced by the phrase
“in all my remembrance of you” \(^1\) meaning “whenever Paul thinks of his Philippian believers.” Some render this prepositional phrase as “for all your remembrance of me.” \(^2\) But the debate over these two options will not be so profitable for the practical purpose of the whole discussion, though the former is to be preferred. \(^3\)

Paul mentions two specific reasons for his thanksgiving to God. First, he thanks God for the Philippians’ cooperation with him in ministry for the Gentiles (1:5) \(^4\), which is to be understood in a wider sense than the monetary support. \(^5\) Second, he thanks God for the

---

\(^1\) All the scriptural quotations are from *New American Standard Bible*, unless noted otherwise. Cf. *Revised Version*, "Upon all remembrance of you".

\(^2\) P. Schubert strongly argues for the causal force of \(\epsilon\tau\mu\) here and asserts that the first thing that has occasioned this letter is Paul’s gratitude for the Philippians gift, the *money* gift. "Form and Function of Pauline Thanksgiving," *ZNTW* Supplement 20, Berlin, 1939, pp. 71-82. Also O’Brien takes \(\epsilon\tau\mu\pi\sigma\eta\tau\mu\mu\nu\epsilon\alpha\) as the first reason for Paul’s thanksgiving in addition to the following two. *Introductory Thanksgiving*, pp. 23f, 41-46. Moffatt’s translation nicely reflects this interpretation.

\(^3\) In Romans 1:9; Ephesians 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; and Philemon. 4, the genitives used with \(\mu\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha\) are the objects of Paul’s remembrance, not the subject of it. The \(\epsilon\tau\mu\) phrase in verse 5 with causal force does not necessarily demand the causal force of the \(\epsilon\tau\mu\) of verse 3. See the temporal force of \(\epsilon\tau\mu\) in 2:17; 2 Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 4:26; 1 Thessalonians 3:7b. See William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979), 288.

\(^4\) The causal force of \(\epsilon\tau\mu\) is not disputed here, even though the reasons for \(\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\alpha\riph\varepsilon\tau\eta\nu\) in Pauline corpus are expressed more often by other prepositional phrases or causal clauses \(\eta\tau\mu\) or \(\upsilon\theta\varepsilon\) with genitive as in Ephesians 1:16; Colossians 1:3; and 1 Thessalonians 1:2 or \(\delta\tau\eta\) as in Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:14; and 2 Thessalonians 1:3, 2:3).

\(^5\) A wider sense of the Philippians’ support is also admitted by O’Brien, *Introductory Thanksgiving*, p. 24.
conviction that God will complete His good work in the Philippian believers until (άχρηστος)⁶ the day of Christ (1:6). “πεποίηθεν” (“For I am confident of this very thing”) is a causal participle. And it, being a present perfect, expresses a present certainty or conviction.⁷ And it refers to the "assurance, built on the experience of the past," that "enables the Apostle to anticipate matter for thankfulness."⁸

The first reason is based upon the Philippian believers' efforts in their Christian life to live out the truth that they received through Paul. On the other hand, the second reason is based on God's faithfulness toward His people, in this case, the Philippian believers. In other words, the former reason is derived from Paul's past experience with his readers' faithfulness and the latter is from his future hope rooted in God's sovereign faithfulness and His faithfulness demonstrated thus far as well.

Then 1:7 provides the basis for Paul's⁹ unwavering and optimistic conviction expressed in 1:6. Hawthorne points out that

⁶ The same preposition is used in 1:5 to describe the temporal aspect of the Philippian believers' faithfulness to the Gospel.


⁹ Dative ἐμοί is quite personal and emphatic here: "I, who know you so well and the one with whom you all are the partakers of grace." J. Hugh Michael, The
καθώς not being followed by ὁτως has the meaning of "because" here as in Romans 1:28, 1 Corinthians 1:6; 5:7, Galatians 3:6, Ephesians 1:14, and Philippians 3:17. It is just natural for him to have that kind of conviction because of (διὰ) his genuine affection toward them, καρδια being understood as the seat of one's emotions. And again the reason for him to love them with that kind of love is because they have shared his suffering for the sake of the Gospel both in the proclamation of it and in the defense of it, even during his imprisonment.

Then γάρ of 1:8 introduces an objective proof of his genuine concern and love for them. Ellicott calls it an "earnest confirmation of the foregoing verse, more, especially διὰ τὸ ἔχειν μὲ ἐν τῇ καρδιᾷ

---


12 The verb φοβοῦν "signifies sympathetic interest and concern, expressing as it does the action of the heart as well as the intellect." Michael, Philippians, p. 14.

13 BAGD, p. 403, 1. b. c.

14 διατασ is taken as a causal participle.

15 "An exact parallel is Romans 1:9-11, μάρτυς γὰρ μοῦ ὁ θεὸς ... ὃς ἀδιαλείπτως μνεῖαν ὑμῶν ποιεῖται ... ἐπιποθῶ γὰρ ὑδεῖν ὑμᾶς. Such adjuration of God he uses only in solemn personal appeals; cf. Galatians 1:20." H. A. A. Kennedy, "The Epistle to the
Nothing can substantiate more strongly and sincerely the “subjective” expression of his love than the combination of the phrases “God is my witness” (μάρτυς γάρ μου ὁ θεός) and “with the affection of Christ” (ἐν σπλάγχνωσι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). Paul’s inner state of mind is that of homesickness (ἐπιθυμεῖν), longing to see them in person. This desperate yet noble desire naturally leads to the outpouring of an intercessory prayer that follows.

It will be necessary to make clear where the intercessory prayer starts and ends. There is a mention of Paul’s prayer in 1:4 “always offering prayer . . . in my every prayer” (ἐν πάσῃ δεήσει μου . . . τὴν δέησιν πολούμενος), but the actual prayer begins from 1:9: “and this I pray” (καὶ τοῦτο προσεύχωμαι). Again it is quite obvious that the prayer ends with 1:11. This is confirmed by the following observations. First, 1:12 introduces a new section informing of his current situation.

---


18 Here τοῦτο is kataphoric, referring to what follows. A. T. Robinson, Grammar, p. 699.

19 See, for a form-critical study concerning the transition from the thanksgiving period to the body of a Pauline letter, J. T. Sanders, “The Transition
Second, in verse 10, as in many introductory intercessory prayers the thought moves to an eschatological climax. Third, the doxology of 1:11 “to the glory and praise of God” (εἰς δόξαν καὶ εὐανειόν θεοῦ) is a fitting conclusion to the prayer.

Intercessory Prayer Generated by Gratitude and Love

The survey done above can be rewritten in the form of a table as follows:

I. Paul’s Thanksgiving Report (1:3-8).
   A. The Fact of Paul’s Thanksgiving (3a)
   B. The Circumstance of Thanksgiving (3b-4)
   C. The Reason # 1 for the Thanksgiving Given (5):
      Paul’s Gratitude for His Readers’ Faithfulness for the Sake of the Gospel
   D. The Reason # 2 for the Thanksgiving Given (6-8):
      Paul’s Confidence in God’s Faithfulness in Their Christian Life Confirmed by Paul’s Love for Them that was Verified by God Being His Witness
      1. The Reason # 2 for Thanksgiving (6):
         Paul’s Confidence in God’s Faithfulness in Their Christian Life
      2. The Confirmation of His Confidence (7):
         Paul’s Genuine Love for Them
      3. The verification of His Love for Them (8):
         God is His witness

II. Paul’s Intercessory Prayer Report (9-11).

---


Details to be dealt with in the latter half of Chapter 2.
Now it becomes quite obvious that the thanksgiving and the intercessory prayer are connected back to back without any break in between. Actually the thanksgiving and the intercessory prayer form one larger unit and this is consistent with Paul’s contemporary Greek letter style.\textsuperscript{22}

The transition from the thanksgiving to the intercessory prayer is made in 1:8, which is full of Paul’s fervent love for his readers and is at the same time a solemn testimony of its sincerity. The emotional aspect of Paul’s thanksgiving reaches its climax when he opens his heart and declares his genuine love. In other words, the intercessory prayer is an outburst of Paul’s Christ-like love toward them. It seems contextually better to take \textit{καὶ} (1:9a) with its consecutive force, almost having the force of “therefore,” rather than the mere copulative.\textsuperscript{23} It becomes clear that it was nothing but the Apostle’s genuine and fervent love toward them that motivated the intercessory prayer of 1:9-11.

There lies another factor behind the intercessory prayer that prompted it. Looking at the whole thanksgiving report, what is

\textsuperscript{22} See p. 2, n. 6.

\textsuperscript{23} On the \textit{καὶ} of Colossians 1:9, which is almost a parallel to the phrase in question in the sense that both are connecting the thanksgiving and the intercessory prayer, Lightfoot comments, citing 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and Ephesians 1:15, “in all these cases the \textit{καὶ} denotes the \textit{response} of the Apostle’s personal feeling for the favorable character of the news; ‘we on our part’” (emphasis is original), \textit{St. Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians and Philemon} (London: 1890; reprint ed., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), p.137.
occupying Paul’s mind is gratitude that could be easily read from the phrases like “in view of your participation in the gospel” (ἐπὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) of 1:5 and “in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of grace with me” (ἐν τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος πάντας ὑμᾶς ὑμῖν) of 1:7. Strictly speaking, the former phrase describes the reason for his thanksgiving to God and the latter phrase for his love toward them. It is doubtless, however, that their participation in the Gospel and sharing of Paul’s labor for the sake of the Gospel, of course, including their monetary support, must have been appreciated by him. And this occasioned not only the writing of the Epistle in general, but also that of the intercessory prayer in particular. Therefore the intercessory prayer of 1:9-11 is a natural overflow of Paul’s heart full of love and gratitude toward them.

Contextual Analogies in Other Pauline Epistles and Summary

Paul’s intercession for the addressees is found in most of the thanksgiving reports. Especially the intercessions of Colossians 1:9-14, Philemon, Ephesians 1:15ff and 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 are the closest parallels to that of the Philippians in that the intercessory prayer immediately follows the thanksgiving and is the natural development of his thanksgiving.
In Colossians 1:9, as O'Brien observes, Paul picks up the mention of his petition for them left off at 1:3. The cause for Paul's thanksgiving to God is the Colossian believers' spiritual progress, that is, their living out of the faith and the love that were rooted in the hope as they were indoctrinated through the word of truth. And this fact also prompts his intercession for them: “for this reason also, . . . we have not ceased to pray for you” (διὰ τὸντο καὶ ἡμεῖς . . . οὐ πανομέθα ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι) (Colossians 1:9).

In the case of the Epistle to Philemon, although the thanksgiving period is proportionately brief, the same structure is found along with the same relationship present in the relatively longer Epistles. Verse 4 contains the declaration of Paul's thanksgiving and the mention of his petition. Verse 5 provides the reason for verse 4 and then verse 6 reports the intercessory prayer. Here the content of the intercessory prayer is introduced by ὁπως, which is a stylistic variation of ἵνα employed in Philippians 1:9, Colossians 1:9, Ephesians 1:17 and 2 Thessalonians 1:11.

24 Introductory Thanksgiving, p. 20.

25 This strengthens the tie of the thanksgiving and the intercession all the more.

26 It is plain that τὸντο is anaphoric here and refers to the whole of 1:3-8.

27 This emphatic use of the pronoun ἡμεῖς stresses the identification of those who make intercession with those who have given thanks and thereby reaffirms the close relationship of the thanksgiving and the intercession. cf. O'Brien, Colossians, Philemon, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word Books, 1982), p. 20.
And this ὅπως clause is grammatically dependent on the participial phrase “making mention of you” (μνείαν σοι πολούμενος) of verse 4 and thus further expresses the content of the intercession. Then this participial phrase “making mention of you” is again dependent on the main verb “I thank” (εὐχαριστῶ). So Gordon P. Wiles' comment is very well pointed: “The intercessory prayer in this letter is interwoven more closely than usual within the thanksgiving period, both through syntax and through context.”

The same structural characteristics are found in the thanksgiving period of the 2 Thessalonians (1:3-12). 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 can be analyzed as follows:

I. Thanksgiving Report (1:3-10)
   The Declaration of Thanksgiving (3a)
   The Cause for Thanksgiving (3b)
   The Consequence of Thanksgiving (4)
   The Vindication of 2all Thanksgiving (5-10)

II. Intercessory Prayer Report (1:11-12).

And except for the unusual aspect of it being preceded by a Beracha, the same thing can said about the thanksgiving period of

---


29 In the case of Ephesians, the thanksgiving period (εὐχαπιστέεω period) is preceded by the beracha (εὐλογητός period), following the Jewish custom of opening
the Ephesians (1:15-23). Even the Beracha provides the ground for Paul's thanksgiving, together with the faith and love of the addressees.

Thus far it has been observed that the thanksgiving and the intercessory prayer are very closely related and that contextually and grammatically the latter is built upon the former as its natural development. The thanksgiving provides the reasons for Paul's intercessory prayer: (1) Paul's gratitude toward them for their participation in the Gospel ministry with him, and (2) his fervent and sincere love toward them in Christ. And these features are also found in some other Pauline Epistles like Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and 2 Thessalonians as characteristics of Paul's letter writing.

An Exegesis of the Intercessory Prayer (1:9-11)


object (1:9), its conceived result (1:10a); the immediate purpose (1:10b); its conceived result (1:11a); and the ultimate purpose (1:11b).

Discerning the Best by Love in Knowledge and Insight (1:9-10a)

The Apostle now moves, into his intercession for his beloved Philippian believers. What follows in 1:9-11 is not an actual prayer but a report of it.\(^{31}\) An attempt to connect "this I pray" (καὶ τὸ τοῦτο προσεύχομαι) with "long for" (ἐπιποθῶ) of the previous verse, so as to read "how I long for and how I pray," weakens all the force of verse 8. "And" (Καὶ) at the beginning of verse 9, of course, not being severed from what precedes, rather wraps it up\(^{32}\) and opens a new topic, i.e. content of his intercession.

"This" (τὸ τοῦτο, kataphorically used) as the grammatical object of "pray" (προσεύχομαι)\(^{33}\) calls attention to the subject of the prayer: "this which follows is what I pray."\(^{34}\) The ἵνα clause here introduces not the purpose of the prayer but its content\(^{35}\) requested by the Apostle. His

---

\(^{31}\) See p. 2, n. 6.

\(^{32}\) Here καὶ has more than a "simple copulative sense" as Ellicott assumes (Philippians, p.26).

\(^{33}\) O'Brien points out that προσεύχομαι, which recalls the words of τὴν δέντον ποιούμενος of verse 4, refers to petitionary prayer in every instance of its use in thanksgiving period. Introductory Thanksgiving, p. 29, and p. 30 n. 50.

\(^{34}\) Vincent, Philippians, p. 11.

\(^{35}\) For similar uses of ἵνα see Luke 1:43; John. 15:8,13; 1 John. 3:11,23; cf. also 1 Corinthians 7:29, 9:18; 2 Corinthians 2:9; Philippians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:4; see
prayer is that the Philippian believers' love may increase in knowledge and insight. In many passages of Pauline Epistles 
\( \dot{a}y\dot{a}p\eta \) appears as one of the reasons of Paul’s thanksgiving.\(^{36}\) Even Paul’s gratitude toward the Philippian believers in the previous verses presupposes their love for him which was already appreciated by him.

Yet their love is to increase still more and more (\( \epsilon\tau\iota \ \mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\ \kappa\alpha\iota \ \mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron \ \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\sigma\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\eta \)). The accumulation of the comparatives and the progressive force of the present \( \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\sigma\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\eta \)\(^{37}\) puts stress on the on-going, persistent aspect of their growth in love.\(^{38}\)

Some take this \( \dot{a}y\dot{a}p\eta \) as mutual love among the readers. O’Brien provides the following arguments for this view: 1) lack of Paul’s thanksgiving for their mutual love which is a basis for Paul’s thanksgiving in his other epistles; 2) the existence of disunity and fault-finding among the Philippian community; 3) the necessity of prayer on Paul’s part in light of their love-lacking situation; and 4) the impression of Paul’s repeating the idea of 1 Thessalonians 3:12 where Paul prays for their mutual love.\(^{39}\)

---

\(^{36}\) For example, Colossians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:3.

\(^{37}\) Some MSS (B, D, \( \psi \), 81, 2464, 2495, pc) have aorist \( \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\sigma\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\eta \). But both external and contextual evidences support the reading of the present.


But the ἀγάπη here is to be understood in its most comprehensive way. It is not qualified or limited by any object attached to it, while in 1 Thessalonians 3:12 it is specified with “for one another” (εἰς ἀλλήλους). That they are lacking in love in the community is true to a certain degree and there is a need of correction. But the ἀγάπη here is not and cannot be limited to a mutual love. The alleged rebuke in this expression brings in the contradiction to what Paul says about his emotional state as he prays an intercession for them, that is, “with joy” (μετὰ χαρᾶς) of verse 4. "They are already abounding."

Paul wants to see their love ever-increasing, not for a negative reason that they are lacking in it. “Abound” (περισσεύω) has the connotation of “overflowing and rich abundance” and it is, Hawthorne maintains, a Pauline word characterizing the new age opened up by

---

40 Paul’s repeated exhortations for the unity of the community (2:3-4; 4:2) reflect some kind of dissension that is due to lack of mutual love among the members.

41 Hawthorne's comment, "(this phrase] gently opens up the subject of the problem that exist in this community through a lack of love-problems he intends to deal with more directly later on . . ." (Philippians, p. 26), does not necessarily limit ἀγάπη to a mutual one.


43 See the parallel in 1 Thessalonians 4:1.
Christ. To abound in love still more and more is a way of "reaching forward to what lies ahead" (3:13). Paul’s prayer for the increase of love in them does have a positive reason: "for this (ἀγάπη) is a good of which there is no satiety." Yet in order for this love to be protected from being ill-judged and misplaced, it requires “real knowledge” (ἐπιγνώσις) and “discernment” (αἴσθησις). The prepositional phrase with two dative nouns specifies the sphere in which the ἀγάπη to operate.

The first factor to safeguard the love (ἀγάπη) is “real knowledge” (ἐπιγνώσις). This word was used in a limited way only to religious and moral things. It should be differentiated from “knowledge” (γνώσις) which is illustrated well by Paul’s uses of the two terms in Romans 1:21 (γνώσις), 1:28 (ἐπιγνώσις) and 1 Corinthians 13:12 (both appear here). The meaning adopted in Romans 1:28 is a closer parallel to

---


45 Chrysostom, cited by Vincent, Philippians, p. 11.

46 BDF, § 95; and Robertson, Grammar, p.510.

47 BAGD., P. 291

48 On the meaning of ἐπιγνώσις of Romans 1:28 in comparison with γνώσις of Romans 1:21, C. E. B. Cranfield comments, “... A strong sense is required here by the context. It must denote a knowledge which goes beyond that indicated by γνῶσις τοῦ θεοῦ in verse 21, and which in fact includes the δοξαζοῦν and εὐφαγοῦσεν to which that verse refers. What they refused to do is seriously to take God into account.” The Epistle to the Romans, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 2 vols., 1:128.

49 In the case of 1 Corinthians 13:12 the meaning of "exact, complete, or thorough knowledge" (BAGD, p. 291, 1. a.) seems to better fit the context. Also
that of the present context. 'Επιγνώσις refers to more than an advanced or fuller knowledge. Paul uses the word with a special reference to the practical knowledge with a sense of appropriation.\(^{50}\) It is rather knowledge of the heart than mere knowledge of the head. It is "used especially of the knowledge of God and of Christ, as being the perfection of knowledge."\(^{51}\)

The second factor that is to regulate the love is ἀλήθής. It is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament and its cognate word ἀλήθητήριον, is used in Hebrews 5:14, ("have their senses trained to discern good and evil"). ἀλήθής means "insight, experience, denoting moral understanding."\(^{52}\) It is an ability to discern the matters in terms of the spiritual, Christian life. So it is more concerned with the practical applications of the ἐπιγνώσις which deals with general principles.\(^{53}\)

---


\(^{50}\) Vincent, *Philippians*, p. 12.

\(^{51}\) Lightfoot, *Colossians*, p. 138. Cf. Proverbs 2:5; Hosea 4:1, 6:6; Ephesians 1:17, 4:13; 2 Peter 1:2, 8, 2:20. Bultmann also comments that it "has become almost a technical term for the decisive knowledge of God which is involved in conversion to the Christian faith.", γνώσις *TDNT*, 1:707.

\(^{52}\) Ibid.

\(^{53}\) Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 86.
It is modified by an adjective πᾶσας. In light of the practical characteristic of the word, its intensive force⁵⁴, rather than the extensive one (that is, "all"), better fits the present context: "every kind of", "all sorts of".⁵⁵ Therefore it "operates in manifold ways, according to the various relations of the subject to the facts of experience."⁵⁶ Also Hawthorne, "... in the midst of a vast array of differing and difficult choices that are constantly presenting themselves to the Christian."⁵⁷ So, it is supposed to touch every aspect and area of the believer's life.

The content of Paul's intercessory prayer for his readers is that their love may abound and increase all the more, always being guarded from its misuse, by way of being exercised in every situation of their daily living with the practical discernment that is available through the true knowledge of God which equals to the intimate personal relationship to God and Christ.

Now Paul’s prayer moves on to its conceived result. The conceived result (1:10a)⁵⁸ of Paul’s intercession for their growth in love

⁵⁴ RSV opts for this rendering: "all discernment".

⁵⁵ BAGD, p. 631, 1. a. b.

⁵⁶ Vincent, Philippians, p. 12.

⁵⁷ Philippians, p. 27. See O'Brien, "... it points to insight for all kinds of situations as they arise." Introductory Thanksgiving, p. 34.

⁵⁸ The infinitive phrase with the preposition εἰς here is to be regarded as the conceived result in light of the immediate purpose clause of verse 10b led by the
in true knowledge and discernment is that they utilize it so that they may accept as proved the things that really matter for their spiritual life. The verb “approve” (δοκιμάζω) can mean either "to test or examine" or as a result of such a test, "accept that which is proved to be good, approve."

And the phrase “the things that are excellent” (τὰ διαφέρουντα) is also split in its meaning among the NT usage. In places like Matthew 6:26, 10:31, 12:12; Luke 12:7, it means “to excel”, while in 1 Corinthians 15:41, Galatians 4:1 and 2:6, "to differ".

Hence “so that you may approve the things that are excellent” (εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέρουντα) means either “so that you may put to the test the things that differ” or “so that you may accept as proved the things that are excellent” (ex bonis optima). The latter conjunction ἐνα, and the phrase, εἰς δοξαν καὶ ἐπαλων θεου, denoting the ultimate purpose of the whole intercession of Paul.

59 This word was used for assaying metals (cf. LXX, Proverbs 8:10,17:3; Sir. 2:5; also 1 Corinthians 3:13, 1 Pet. 1:7, Vincent, p. 12) or for testing the genuineness of the coin. (Plato, Timothy, 656, cited by Hawthorne, p. 27). In Luke 14:19 it was used in a wider sense.

60 For example, 1Corinthians 16:3; 2Corinthians 8:22; 1Thessalonians 2:4


option is better because to make distinctions between the things that
differ significantly is rather an easy task compared to the task of
choosing with conviction the things that are really excellent with
regard to the Christian living. In light of the emphasis of \( a\i\sigma\theta\iota\varsigma \) on
the practical life setting, there should be “always in the background
the notion of approval that follows upon testing,”\(^{63}\) or in other words,
there should be a decision on what is “worthy of adoption in
practice”.\(^{64}\)

Now the thoughts implied in the content and the conceived
result of Paul’s intercession can be as follows: “May your love increase
and abound in ripe knowledge and perceptive power, that you may
apply the right tests and reach the right decisions”\(^{65}\) on what is really
morally and spiritually important and excellent in their pursuit of
spiritual maturity - not merely good, rather than bad, but “the best
among the good, whose excellence none but the more advanced can
perceive.”\(^{66}\)

\(^{63}\) Collange, *Philippians*, p. 55.

\(^{64}\) A. Plummer, *A Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians*


Experiencing the Eschatological Perfection (1:10b-11)

The purpose of the increase of the love in true knowledge and insight, which will consequently result in their being equipped with the ability to properly determine the importance of matters in the life situation, is conveyed in the ἵνα clause of 10b: "in order to be sincere and blameless until the Day of Christ."

Paul wants to see them first be sincere or pure (εἰλικρινεῖς). Though its etymology is uncertain, εἰλικρινεῖς and its cognates always denote moral purity. 67 It connotes the sense of being unmixed, separated from the evil, and even unadulterated (reflected in the Latin rendering sincer). 68 They are expected to live lives that are "transparent" 69 before God and other people.

The second goal Paul wants to see in their development of Christian character is for them to be blameless (ἀπρόσκοπο). This adjective can mean either intransitively "undamaged, blameless" or transitively "giving no offense to others." 70 1 Corinthians 10:32, the only other place where Paul uses this word, helps to understand the word

---

67 Cf. 2 Pet. 3:1; 1 Corinthians 5:8, 2:7. "εἰλικρινής/εἰλικρινεῖς, "Buechse, TDNT 2:397-98. Εἰλικρινεῖς is "a favorite term in Plato for pure intellect and also for the soul purged from sense . . . (And it was) naturally transferred to the moral sphere." Kennedy, Philippians," p. 422.

68 H. C. G. Moule, Philippians, p. 17.

69 Moffatt's translation.

70 BAGD, p. 102.
with the transitive meaning: "not causing others to stumble".71 Also Paul's emphasis on the unity of and harmony between the readers in this epistle renders support for the transitive meaning of the word.

Therefore, while the first adjective εἰλικρινείς mainly deals with their relationship with God, the second adjective ἀπρόσκοπτοι focuses on their relationship to others in and outside of their believing community: "in order that they may be pure and sincere before and in personal relationship to God, and be never offending others in their horizontal relationship."

Each of the items of the intercessory prayer studied thus far, its contents (1:9), its conceived result (1:10a) and its immediate purpose (1:10b) hangs on the short phrase “until the day of Christ” (εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ). A similar expression has already appeared in verse 6 (εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ). The preposition used there is ἀχρί and here εἰς. Εἰς has more than what the temporal ἀχρί does.72 Since the Day of Christ is the Day of Judgment the meaning of "in view of" or "against" is prominent.73

---

71 Against BAGD, p. 102. 1.; and H. C. G. Moule, who insists that "the Apostle is mainly concerned with the inward life of the Philippians; he prays that they may be so 'sincere' to God as never to 'stumble over' a wrong motive." Philippians, p. 17.

72 Against BAGD, p.228, 2. a. a.

73 The preposition has here not its temporal, but its ethical force." Ellicott, Philippians, p. 29. So Hawthorne, Philippians, p.28; Michael, Philippians, p. 23; O'Brien, Introductory Thanksgiving, p. 35.
On the Day of Christ, everything will be laid open for a thorough scrutiny by the Judge and their relationship to God and their treatment of others will be the object of the believers' Judgment. And Paul's expectation from and exhortation toward the Philippian believers in the form of an intercession, is in view of and against this very Day of Christ. So the phrase “until the day of Christ” (εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ) “lends direction and seriousness to ethics.”

Yet another aspect of the Day of Christ that it is the time of hope and redemption is really encouraging and functions as the motivational factor to their pursuit of love in knowledge and insight with all its practical implications and consequences. All the believers whose lives are painted with that kind of sincere pursuit will stand the judgment triumphantly and will be comforted beyond description.

The phrase “to the glory and praise of God” (εἰς δόξαν καὶ ζαυνον

---

74 It is also referred to as the Day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6); the Day of our Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:8); the Day of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:2); the Day of Judgment (1 John. 4:17); the Day (1 Thessalonians 5:4); that Day (2 Timothy 1:12); and the Day of Wrath (Revelation 2:5). The concept of the Day of Christ has as its origin the OT concept of the Day of Yahweh (Joel 2:2; Amos 5:20) and the idea of Judgment is its main feature. Cf. W. Kramer, Christ, Lord, Son of God. Trans. by B. Hardy (Naperville: A. R. Allenson, 1966), p. 139. But it is to be noted that for the believing saints it is not a matter of life and death but a matter of reward or prize.

75 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

76 Collange, Philippians, p. 50.

77 This aspect is reflected in passages like Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
expresses the ultimate purpose of Paul's intercessory prayer. It is, however, preceded by the conceived result clause of "having been filled with the fruit of righteousness" (πεπληρωμένοι καρπόν δικαιοσύνης) in verse 10b. Some take it as the third adjectival predicate following εἰλικρινείς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι of 1:10; thus further defining the immediate purposes of the prayer. But the fact that “having been filled” (πεπληρωμένοι) is a participle with an accusative noun breaks the structural parallels between the three adjectival forms and makes that choice awkward. And it is better to take the participle as an adverbial denoting the result of the preceding ἵνα clause: "that you may be pure and harmless until and in view of the Day of Christ, and thereby be filled with the fruit of...”

Their application of the spiritual insight that they would gain from God through Paul's intercession will result in producing the fruit of righteousness. “Righteousness” (Δικαιοσύνης) is not appositional, meaning "fruit that consists in righteousness" but a genitive of origin with an accusative of the remote object, meaning "the fruit that the righteousness produces." It refers to a righteousness in the sense of moral rightness rather than in Paul’s more usual, technical sense of


righteousness by faith." 80. "It is the concrete actualisation of righteousness," which is in Christ, "into which the believer comes, in which he lives and shares, and to which he submits." 81

Thus this fruit can be produced only in and through Jesus Christ (τὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The reference of the definite article τὸν is not δικαιοσύνη but καρπὸν. The use of τὸν modifying the καρπὸν with its defining force is quite emphatic and reminds one of the fact that the Christian virtues and good qualities of life are only possible through Jesus Christ. The passive voice 82 of the participle reinforces that Jesus Christ is the agent 83 of fruit-bearing in the Christian life. This is a Pauline version of John 15:4: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither {can} you, unless you abide in Me."

The perfect aspect of the participle πεπληρωμένοι reflects Paul's anticipation of the Day of Christ mentioned in verse 10, when the process of their being filled with the fruit of righteousness will be consummated. And yet it also betrays Paul's sincere desire for the

80 Collange, Philippians, p. 50; H. C. G. Moule, Philippians, p. 17.


82 Beare takes the participle in the middle sense in preference to passive. Philippians, p. 55,

83 In genitive with διὰ.
Philippian believers to vigorously pursue the full completion of the process even in the life here and now.

Finally the ultimate purpose of the whole intercessory prayer is spoken out: "for the glory and praise of God." The doxology is really an important element in the prayer as Jesus Himself has shown by His own example. This doxology puts to an end the whole intercessory prayer following the custom of the Old Testament and Jewish prayers (2 Samuel 22:50; Ps. 21:14, 35:28, 41:13; Ecclesiasticus 39:10; Prayer of Manasseh 15; 1QSB. 4:25). This doxology is very fitting as a conclusion of the petition.

The whole discussion thus far can be rewritten in a summary fashion as follows: Paul prays for the incessant increase of love in true knowledge and spiritual insight so as for them to be equipped with the ability to discern even the best in their spiritual life, in order that they may live out lives recommendable both before God and fellow-men being filled with the fruit that the imparted righteousness produces only in and through Christ. They are being encouraged and motivated by the coming Day of Christ which will bring in both judgment and ultimate redemption. All these are to the glory and praise of God, and God alone.

84 John 17:4; Cf. Other examples of Paul’s doxology in Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14.

Analogies in Other Pauline Epistles

Several points can be found as common between the intercessory prayer reports of Philippians and those of other Pauline epistles in terms of their structure and themes. The intercessory prayer of the Epistles to the Colossians and to the Ephesians will be briefly surveyed.

In the intercession of the Epistle to the Colossians, the object of the intercession is described in 1:9b. The same word ἐπιγνώσις is found there too as the key object of the prayer, which is to be regulated by and transferred into practice through the spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the practical aspects of the intercession, that is, its immediate and ultimate purposes are recorded in 1:10-12. The immediate purpose is their walk in a manner worthy of the Lord (περιπατῆσαι ἀξίως τοῦ κυρίου), which is explained in detail by the following four participles (καρποφοροῦντες, αὐξανόμενοι, δυναμοῦμενοι, εὐχαριστοῦντες). And the ultimate purpose is again to please Him in all respects of life (εἰς πᾶσαν ἁρεσκείαν).

Finally the reference to the eschatological reality of God's work of qualifying them for the share in the inheritance of the saints (1:12) and of transferring them to the Kingdom of His beloved Son (1:13)
provides encouragement and motivation for the exhortations to spiritual growth expressed in the form of an intercession.

The intercession in the Ephesians is basically for a spiritual enlightenment of the readers. The terms like "wisdom" (σοφία), "revelation" (ἀνοκαλύψις) and "knowledge" (ἐπιγνώσις) are again the objects of the prayer. And these faculties are designed to open their spiritual eyes for them to appreciate the eschatological blessings that are already guaranteed for and available to them.

Apparently, in this report of intercession, concrete practical exhortations seem to be lacking, but it paves a way to the exhortations in such an impressive way, that no one can get away from its seriousness. The last three chapters of the Ephesians, especially, are filled with practical exhortations that characterize the readers' lifestyle in the pagan surroundings. The tone of these chapters is "be what you ought to be in daily living situation."

Summary: Four Main Ideas of the Intercession

According to the above exegetical study, the report of Paul's intercessory prayer can be divided into two: 1) the object of prayer, that is, the increase of love in knowledge and insight with the conceived result of their being equipped with the ability to discern and appropriate the best in their spiritual life (1:9-10a); and 2) the
immediate and the ultimate purposes of the intercession with the conceived result of the immediate purpose in between (1:10b-11).

The first half of the intercessory prayer emphasizes the importance of and necessity for a right mental and spiritual for a righteous practical living. And the second half is demands a righteous practical living as a result of the right mental and spiritual attitude. In other words, the former delineates the Apostle's earnest desire for and the need of the Philippian believer's growth in love in knowledge and discernment. And the latter expresses his eager expectation that “the true knowledge and spiritual discernment” (ἐπιγνώσει καὶ αἰσθήσει) be actualized through their righteous living as the result and answer of his intercession from God.

The Apostle, however, makes it so very clear that “the fruit of righteousness . . . comes [only] through Jesus Christ.” And there is a time set for the judgment and the redemption, which functions as the motivational factor to their pursuit of love in knowledge and insight with all its practical implications and consequences.

Based on the previous study, four main concepts can be detected from the Apostle’s intercession: (1) spiritual discernment to be gained from the ever-increasing love in true knowledge and spiritual discernment (ἡ ἁγάπη ἐν ἐπιγνώσει καὶ πάση αἰσθήσει) resulting in “their accepting as proved the things that are excellent”
(τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα) (verses 9-10a), (2) Christian life style to be lived out according to “the true knowledge and spiritual discernment” (εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι) resulting in “having been filled with the fruit of righteousness” (πεπληρωμένοι καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης) (verse 10b, and verse 11a), (3) Christ as the key to that kind of Christian life, “through Jesus Christ” (τὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) (verse 11b), and (4) the eschatological motivation” (εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ) (verse 10c) for the life filled with the fruit of righteousness.
CHAPTER III

THE FOUR MAIN IDEAS OF THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER EXPANDED IN THE BODY

The four main ideas, mentioned at the end of chapter 2, are developed and expanded in more specific, concrete and practical ways along as the Epistle progresses. Now they will be examined one by one - how each of these main ideas are expressed in the body of the Epistle. A key to this investigation will be the same or similar term(s) and concept(s) occurring in the text.

True Knowledge and Spiritual Discernment

In both descriptions of his own Christian experiences and exhortations for his readers, Paul assumes true knowledge (ἐπιγνώσις) and spiritual discernment (αἰσθήσις) as prerequisite for or a goal to pursue in the process of Christian experiences. All of these experiences are possible only when things are perceived through the eyes of true knowledge and spiritual discernment.
In Paul's Life and Ministry

As he informs his readers of his current situation, Paul rather invites them to join his rejoicing because of the furtherance of the Gospel in spite of his imprisonment in 1:12ff. Some preachers with wrong motives, however, threatened to rob him of that rejoicing and even to add distress to his current condition, only to prove Paul to be a man of spiritual discernment.\(^1\) His rejoicing consists not in those preachers' "subjective motives"\(^2\) but in the "objective fact" of Christ being preached (1:18). This kind of perspective is possible only with those who have gained the true knowledge and spiritual discernment. Paul himself provides an example of the spiritual maturity in terms of attitude toward the surroundings.

Another example of his true knowledge and spiritual insight can be seen from his judgment that he would remain for the sake of their progress and joy in the faith (1:24-25). For his meeting the needs of brothers has the priority over filling his own desire. This kind of spiritual judgment is just what he wants to see among his beloved readers.\(^3\)

---

\(^1\) The present aspect of the infinitive εγείρομαι of verse 17, which describes the intention of his opponents, is best understood as conative present signifying "an act begun but interrupted". Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 880.

\(^2\) Hawthorne, *Philippians*, p. 38. φθοράς ἐπὶς and ἐπιθέω of 1:15, 17, 18 are the terms frequently found with other vices that are to be avoided in Christian life (Romans 1:29; Galatians 5:20-21; 1 Timothy 6:4).
Paul's humble yet persistent and strenuous pursuit for maturity (3:12-14) is another proof that he gained the true knowledge and spiritual discernment. His eyes are still fixed on the heavenly prize, never boasting on or being satisfied with what he has already accomplished up until now. This is to be contrasted to the attitude of those who think they have already attained perfection or possibly to that of those in 3:15.

Finally, Paul's triumphant exclamation of 4:13 reflects his spiritual maturity gained through true knowledge and spiritual discernment. Surely this is the most frequently abused passage due to the negligence of the context. Very plainly verse 12 comes before verse 13 and verses 7 and 9 precede verse 12. Paul's "flexibility" of verse 12 is the precondition of verse 13. And at the same time it is the result of the peace of God that guards his heart and mind (as promised in verse 7) and the presence of God of peace (verse 9). These two are described as something to be obtained as the result of asking (verse 7) and of pursuing (verse 9). Thus verse 13 is an outward expression of the excellent judgment over the matters of life by a person, equipped with true knowledge and insight and also spiritually experienced.

\[3\text{ This attitude of seeking for the other's good first, which is issued out from the spiritual discernment, is again reflected in the exhortation to the Philippians in 2:4.}\]
As a Prerequisite for Christian Life

While exhorting them to stand firm striving together for the faith of the Gospel (1:27), the Apostle Paul reminds them that they were also called to the suffering for the sake of Christ when their faith was granted them. And he presents his own life that has been experiencing conflict⁵ as an example (1:29-30). Here their spiritual eyes need to be opened wide enough to be able to see clearly, accept as a privilege and live triumphantly with⁶ the conflict as an indispensable part of the believer's experience, which is at the same time, a sign of salvation.

In 3:1-3 one faces Paul providing some spiritual discernment on how to cope with the false teaching of the Judaizers,⁷ backing it up again with his own experience of enlightenment⁸ (3:4-11). Putting aside the confidence in the flesh, which is the key motive to false

---


⁵ The Greek ἄγων literally refers to a contest in an arena, or to struggle, fight in general. But in the NT it is used only figuratively referring to struggle inward (Colossians 2:1) or outward. BAGD, p. 15. Paul is here referring to the sufferings and oppositions that he has experienced as he was carrying out his task for the Gospel.

⁶ The expression τὸν αὐτὸν ἄγων, the same conflict with that of Paul was arguably meaningful and encouraging to those who so dearly regarded Paul.

Judaism, really requires a total revolution in value system, the very thing that the Apostle experienced on the way to Damascus. The object of his gain now became Christ. To worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ (3:3) is the progressive aspect of “to gain Christ.”

Again his warning against the antinomian life style is based upon the insight into the realization of their present spiritual status as the citizens of heaven (3:17-21). By way of constantly being reminded of this fact and appropriating this knowledge and transforming it into an eager expectation of the hope of glory, which constitute portion of true knowledge and spiritual discernment as were revealed by God through the apostles and eventually in written words by inspiration, they will be safeguarded from falling away from following Paul’s exemplary life style.

---

8 This is true of both the false teachers at Philippi and Paul in his pre-conversion days (3:4, 7). regardless of whether μον of verse 7, (“Whatever things were gain to me, . . .”), is taken either as a dative of advantage meaning that it was an advantage de facto for Paul to have those things, or as an ethical dative meaning that he thought them, probably falsely, to be helpful to his religious life.

9 Κέπδως and its cognate verb κερδαίνω are used in verse 7 and verse 8 respectively.

10 Hawthorne adds to his comment on ‘to gain Christ’, “it must also have embraced the idea of communion with Christ in an ever deepening relationship that will continue until it reaches its consummation at the parousia.”, Philippians, p. 140. The same concept is shared by Kennedy, Philippians, p. 453.

11 See for more the “Eschatological Motivation” section below.
As a Goal in Christian Life

In 4:6-7 Paul exhorts them to pray with the peace of God in mind as the end result.\(^\text{12}\) This peace of God surpasses every human wisdom and thought in such a way\(^\text{13}\) that it will guard the whole person, that is referred to by the combination of hearts (καρδία) and minds (νοημα), that is, one's emotions, thoughts and moral choices. To submit one's emotions, thoughts and moral choices under the control of God's peace through Christ is the goal of prayer. In this passage the spiritual discernment is presented as a goal to be sought after from God through Christ.

Christian Lifestyle as a Result of True Knowledge and Spiritual Discernment

A rather general exhortation for a sincere and harmless lifestyle (verse 10b), that will result in a life being filled with the fruit of righteousness (verse 11a), is spread out all through the Epistle being expressed in more specific terms for a variety of situations of life. It

\(^{12}\) Kai is consecutive, "and then, and so".

\(^{13}\) R. Sauer takes the phrase ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοημ as amphibological, "admitting two different interpretations both of which are true. The participial clause means that (1) the peace of mind bestowed by God in times of anxiety is so wonderful that it exceeds man's ability to understand it (cf. E 3:19 where Christ's love is said to exceed man's ability to understand it); and the clause also means that (2) divine peace far surpasses man's understanding of the anxiety and his ability to cope with and solve it (cf. E. 3:20 where God is described as being able to do more than we can ask and think)." "The Epistle to the Philippians,' Class Notes. Lynchburg, Va.: 1984, p. 66. (Typewritten).
covers all the practical exhortations poured out from the heart of a pastor who loves his sheep so much as to give away his own life as a sacrifice for the progress of their faith (1:17). A real pastoral care underlies all these exhortations.

In 1:27, the imperative to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ sounds almost like (1:17) a repetition of the general exhortation to be pure and harmless in the introductory intercession.\textsuperscript{14} The verb \textit{πολιτεύεσθε} (translated “conduct yourselves”) signifies how they should live as citizens of heaven.\textsuperscript{15} This expression emphatically highlights the Philippian believers’ status as heavenly citizens living in this world. This command sets a general tone of what follows. It functions almost as the theme of the practical exhortations in all of the Epistle to the Philippians.

The Apostle makes it concrete in accordance with the situation they are in. There are opponents in existence among them. Paul specifically uses the strong word “opponents” (\textit{ἀντικειμένων}) (1:28). The readers are commanded to contend corporately\textsuperscript{16} for the faith of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{περιπατεῖν} is used with \textit{δίκαιος} to describe in a summary fashion (Colossians 1:19) or to introduce (Ephesians 4:1) a life style that the readers are supposed to live.
\item \textsuperscript{15} This verb is used only here and in Acts 23:1, where Paul is using it before Sanhedrin to describe his life as a flawless one without violating the Law (Acts 23:3) as a citizen of the nation Israel under divine Law.
\item \textsuperscript{16} The prefix \textit{συν}' of \textit{συναθλοῦντες}, the two numerical noun \textit{έν} and \textit{μιᾶ} of verse 27 build up the concept of corporateness very strongly.
\end{itemize}
Gospel. In this case a doctrinal purity, as well as moral, is involved.\(^{17}\) The cause of Christ lies at the center of this command. They are instructed and reminded of the fact that they belong to the kingdom which Christ Himself is the King. The kingship and rule of Christ must be visibly expressed and demonstrated in their daily living.

In the call for unity (2:1-4; 4:2-3), humility and selflessness, rather than selfishness (ἐρωθεία) or empty conceit (κενοδοξία), are introduced as motives for a pure and harmless living before God and men. “In Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ) or “in the Lord” (ἐν Κυρίῳ) is described as the sphere in which for them to live in harmony (4:2).\(^ {18}\) Furthermore, the proposition ἐν can also signify the idea of “by virtue of” or “for the sake of.” So all the more inevitable becomes the seriousness of this call for unity. Therefore, disunity is not only an offense to fellow men but also to the Lord.

The exhortation to work out their salvation (2:12-16)\(^ {19}\) also contains the idea similar to that of being “sincere and blameless”

---

\(^ {17}\) See 3:2-4:3 with R. Jewett, "Conflicting Movements in the Early Church as Reflected in Philippians."

\(^ {18}\) "[With τῷ ἀυτῷ φρονεῖν]. In that accord of which the Lord is the bond: each individually in Christ, and each therefore at one with one another." Vincent, Philippians, p. 131.

\(^ {19}\) The phrase τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε mainly refers to the corporate efforts for the unity in the Philippian church in light of the wider context in which this phrase finds itself. (Hawthorne, Philippians, pp. 98f.; Martin, Philippians, pp. 110f.). But it cannot be restricted to that aspect only. The corporate effort for the unity is Just one of a variety of areas of their life, whether corporately or individually, that they should continue to work on for improvement as a way of working out their salvation.
that should be seen in the process of and as the result of that kind of effort, even though the same vocabularies are not used. The expressions such as “blameless” (ἀμεμπτοι), “innocent” (ἀκέραιοι), and “children of God above reproach” (τέκνα θεοῦ ἀμωμα) describe the characteristics that are blameless both before God and men, inwardly pure and unadulterated and reflecting the moral and ethical qualities of God as His children.

Then follows Paul’s invitation to join his rejoicing that never quenches even in self-sacrifice\(^20\) (2:17-18). This is really following the example of Christ who imparted His righteousness to the Apostle Paul and his readers through the sacrifice of His own flesh and body, as is reflected in 2:6-11. The purpose of His life on earth was to give Himself even to death for the lives of others.\(^21\) And now the Apostle is trying to follow this example of Jesus Christ and find in it the real joy of living for others. This kind of reproduction of the “model living” constitutes the fruit that is expected to be seen in the lives of those who were granted the righteousness through the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul’s exemplary lifestyle provides a strong validity to the

---

\(^{20}\) θυσία refers to the thing sacrificed and is used for the flesh and body of Jesus Christ in Ephesians 5:2 and for the believer’s life in a figurative sense in Romans 12:1. And λειτουργία is used to describe the priestly performance in ritual service (LXX Numbers 8:22). In the NT it used for a variety of services. But in light of the use of θυσία he must be referring to the sacrificial service in a figurative way. Hence Paul’s sacrifice of himself. _BAGD_, p.366, 2; p. 470.

\(^{21}\) Mark 10:45.
doctrine of justification by faith alone and the walking in the newness of life by those who have been justified by God’s grace.

In 2:19-30 Timothy and Epaphroditus are presented as examples for the Philippian believers to follow. The theme of self-sacrifice found in Christ’s death and imitated in Paul is still traceable in the lives of these two young disciples of Christ.\(^\text{22}\) Paul’s sincere desire for the Philippians believers to continue the chain of following these examples can be easily sensed between the lines.

In 3:2 the Apostle’s tone drastically changes into a solemn and rather a severe tone. Three types of false teachings by Judaizers (3:2-11), perfectionists (3:12-16), and antinomians (3:17-21) occasioned the Apostle to write an urgent response to the Philippians. Against the Judaizers’ influence, Paul exhorts\(^\text{23}\) them, first, to serve by being initiated and enabled by the Spirit of God (οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες),

\(^\text{22}\) Both of these are getting full credit from the Apostle. Timothy is described as the one with genuine concern for them and the work of Christ, and as his spiritual son. Epaphroditus is depicted συνεργὸς καὶ συνισταμένος with the Apostle, willing to risk the life for Christ’s sake.

\(^\text{23}\) In fact 3:3 is a descriptive sentence. Exhortations are by implication. Three participles, governed by one definite article, are regarded as components of one description.

\(^\text{24}\) λατρεύοντες can also be translated “worship“, but in light of the lack of the dative to which the action of worship is given, and in light of the mentions of the “services” rendered by Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus all of which are presented as models they are to follow after, the meaning of “serve” in a general sense (as in Luke 1:74 and Romans 1:9), unlike most commentators, seems better.

46
second, to glory only in Christ Jesus (αὐχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησούς), and third, not to trust in the flesh (οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες).

Against the false teaching of the “perfectionists,” with a touch of irony, Paul calls the mature to think the same way as he does in 3:12-14 (3:15). Even though different opinions are not excluded, Paul has the conviction that God will correct even those different opinions. Finally against the false teachings of the antinomians, warning against the terrible destiny of them, he urges the Philippian believers to be imitators of himself longing for Christ's transforming work of the mortal body into a glorified one.

The final exhortation (4:8-9) is to “reckon up, think over, estimate aright, fill their minds with all things good and true, and then rise up and put into practice the demands of the Christian gospel.”

The survey thus far made on the exhortations by Paul throughout the Epistle does not intend to be comprehensive. Its


26 Σόφη: "pictures man at his highest and best, striving to achieve an adequate status before God, but without dependence upon God." Hawthorne, Philippians, pp.127-28.

27 H. C. G. Moule, Philippians, p. 69.

28 Τέλεια, as in Mt. 5:48, speaks of relative perfection while τετελειωμένος of 3:12 of absolute perfection.

29 First conditional clause, εἴ τι ἐτέρως φρονεῖτε, expects different opinions.

30 Adjunctive use of καί.

31 Hawthorne, Philippians, p. 190.
intention is to show how the general definition of Christian life style, pure before God and never offending to men, thereby bearing the fruit of righteousness—is specifically explained and applied in the real life settings of the Philippian believers.

**Christ as the Key to Christian Life**

When the Philippian saints are exhorted to be filled with the fruit of righteousness, Paul makes it clear that it is only possible through Jesus Christ. It is a call not only to participation in the kind of life that Christ has already exemplified during his days on earth but also to union with the heavenly Christ. This theme, the essential role of Christ for a "righteous" Christian life, reoccurs, in a more expanded way, in the Epistle and proves itself to be of great importance in and for Christian life.

For Paul, Christ is the goal of his life. When he says, "for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain," (1:21) he really means it. Almost the same idea is found in his desire "to be found in Him" at the cost of everything he might have cherished before and in his persistent pursuit for perfection (3:7-14). That which motivated him for such a faithful and laborious career of the Gospel ministry in both of his personal and public life is nothing but the love and zeal for Christ.
And they are well expressed in the body of the Epistle, resulting in arousing the same love and zeal in the hearts of the readers.

The very life setting of the Apostle in which he was writing this Epistle was imprisonment for the cause of Christ (ἐν χριστῷ, 1:13). His uncompromising commitment to Christ through this imprisonment has aroused boldness and eliminated fear in other believers. In the following verses (1:15-21), his dedication to Christ is depicted in unequivocal terms. His personal interests are submerged into the cause of Christ being preached and his physical life is already given up for the cause that Christ be exalted.

In 1:28-29, the Apostle confesses that his life has been one of conflict, one of suffering for Christ's sake. But all these conflicts and suffering are understood and welcomed by the Apostle as a part of God-given peace together with the gift of faith. In all the statements above concerning the Apostle's relationship to Christ his Lord, the theme of fellowship with the Apostle himself in suffering for Christ's sake is traceable to a certain degree and functions as a strong encouragement for and call to Christian suffering. Christ is the focal point for the Apostle's life and the same should be the case for every believer.

32 The verb χαρίζωμαι is a cognate of the noun χαρις, and it signifies "the conception of suffering from the Christian point of view." Vincent, Philippians, p. 35.
In several other places Christ Jesus is presented as the sphere of the Christian's activity in the broadest sense. Being the sphere of every Christian activity, Jesus Christ safeguards any possible wrong that could otherwise happen. He and He alone, not any other person or thing, is the one toward whom the pride or boasting of the Philippian believers, if any, is to be directed and the Apostle was at work for this very thing (1:26).33

The Apostle's plan to send Timothy and his desire to see them in person are both conceived and awaiting their realization in the Lord (2:19, 24). Again in 2:29 they are told to receive Epaphroditus “in the Lord” (ἐν κυρίῳ), and in 4:21, the Apostle himself wants to greet every saint in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ), that is, with the same perspective of the Lord.34

Sometime the sense of sphere is mixed with that of cause of the action involved. Even some of the above examples may belong here.35 The Lord is, of course, their sphere of rejoicing. Yet in light of all the trials or frustrations that they might be going through, the concept of

---

33 In 1:26, two dative phrases are used side by side with the same construction: ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and ἐν ἑμοί. It is better to take ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ as the sphere in which their confidence rests and ἐν ἑμοί as instrumental dative signifying Paul’s efforts (cf. 1:14). Even in the other option (their confidence in Paul may abound in Christ Jesus), Christ is the sphere within which their confidence in Paul should remain.


35 In 2:29 ἐν κυρίῳ may also imply the reason for their welcoming him (κυρίος, at least indirectly, referring to the labor for the work of Christ that Epaphroditus has rendered, by way of metanomy of adjunct.
“in the Lord” (ἐν κυρίῳ) also functions as the cause of their joy regardless of their outward environmental circumstances.36

Finally, it needs to be noted that Christ Himself is set as the standard or model according to which they should aspire to live. The well-known Christ-hymn of 2:6-11 is the highlight of the Epistle. It focuses and concentrates on the Person and work of Christ Jesus. To be noted is the striking parallel found in verse 5 that introduces the hymn by way of command to imitate Him: “in you” (ἐν ὑμῖν) and “in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). ἐν ὑμῖν does not mean "among you." It is more individually focused than corporately.37 Just as humility and self-denial saturated the person of Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), so should they do the person of each individual reader without any exception (ἐν ὑμῖν). The very qualities that characterized Him 38 are now expected to be found in each of them. Christ is never lost sight of in this Epistle.

The above study now shows the centrality of Christ in the lives of Christians reoccurring here and there in the Epistle to the Philippians. The essential role of Christ in Christian life reflected in the idea of διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is also conveyed in the expressions and concepts of the phrases like “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ), “in Christ Jesus”

36 Compare the case of Paul in 2:17-18 and his triumphant declaration in 4:13.

37 For a corporate understanding, see Martin, Philippians, p. 95.
(ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), and “with Christ” (συν Χριστῷ). Jesus Christ is and should remain as the goal, the sphere, the (enabling) agent, the motivation and the guidance in the life of each and every Christian believer. The idea of Jesus Christ as the key to Christian life entails all the ideas expressed and demanded in the doxology of 1:11b.

**Eschatological Motivation**

The eschatological perfection, which is promised and guaranteed but yet to be realized, is another prominent feature embedded in the introductory intercessory prayer of this Epistle. Assurance and expectation of the day of Christ, when all human history will be consummated and the believer's ultimate redemption will be realized, make valid all of Paul's exhortations for a pursuit of a righteous living and provide real comfort and encouragement for those who strive for such a living.

In 1:27-28, as he commands them to stand firm for the sake of Gospel against the antagonistic and difficult situation, the Apostle reminds the Philippian readers that the present conflict between them and their opponents is the sign for the different final destinies of each group: salvation or destruction. And this fact eliminates any reason or

---

38 Καί is ascensive, "even", so "the very attitude that was in Christ Jesus," His example being the epitome of its kind. So Kennedy, *Philippians," p. 287.
possibility for the believers to be embarrassed or threatened by their opponents' existence and wrong doings.

In 2:16, he points to the Day of Christ exhorting them to live distinctively in this earthly life. A sharp contrast is expected and even required to be demonstrated in the believer's life, as lights, up against the streams of this crooked and perverse generation. In this passage, the Day of Christ has something to do with the judgment on the labor of the Apostle himself. Apparently it may seem to have only indirect relevance to the readers. The following two verses of 2:27-28, however, demonstrates that the Apostle is more concerned about their blameless and innocent living as children of God above reproach in light of the Day of Christ than his own things.

As for the Apostle himself, the prize of the upward call (3:14) is a motivational factor for his strenuously pressing on toward the spiritual maturity. But it is to be noted that the essence of the eschatological motif for Paul in this case is not the prize itself but the One who calls and gives that prize\(^ {39} \) and the relationship that the prize implies between Christ and himself.\(^ {40} \) So the eschatological motivation does not so much lie in the transformation of the circumstances as in

\(^ {39} \) τοῦ θεοῦ is best taken as a subjective genitive.

\(^ {40} \) εν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ can be taken in a variety of ways but the significance of Christ Jesus remains the same.
the transformation of the relationship of a believer to God and Christ into the most intimate and perfect one.

In 3:20-21, very graphically, the Philippian believers are encouraged to live as citizens of heaven ($\pi\omicron\omicron\lambda\imath\tau\varepsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$)\textsuperscript{41} even on this earth with an eager expectation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, when the transformation of their body will occur. Here again the focus is laid upon the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who will transform our body into a glorious one.

Finally, the phrase “the Lord is near (ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς) of 4:5” which could also be understood as spatial,\textsuperscript{42} “signifies the shortness of time and nearness of salvation” and thus “heightens the earnestness of the exhortations.”\textsuperscript{43}

The Apostle Paul uses the eschatological hope as a motivation for the 'successful' Christian life, which is hard to accomplish when looking around the human world. The Apostle himself has been motivated by it to carry out the though tasks involved in the Gospel ministry and to cultivate his own spiritual maturity. Then he also urges his readers to participate in a firm and clear grasp of the glorious eschatological hope and to benefit from it.

\textsuperscript{41} This is a cognate of the verb $\pi\omicron\lambda\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\theta\epsilon\varsigma$ of 1:27.

\textsuperscript{42} With reference to space, His nearness will both help and prompt their spiritual growth, and prevent their spiritual digression.

\textsuperscript{43} Hawthorne, Philippians, p.182. So Beare, Philippians, p. 146; Martin, Philippians, p.168.
Summary and Conclusion

The four main ideas defined in chapter 2 are spread out through the Epistle to the Philippians and each of them is developed and reiterated in the various passages of the body of the Epistle. In many cases they are translated into a practical language touching the readers' real life settings.

These four ideas are not independent from each other but rather compose a whole by which the Christian believer's life should be governed and guided. And the four main ideas are infiltrated into the body of the Epistle in such a way that the whole Epistle remains as an organized entity, not a collection of unrelated materials.
CHAPTER IV
A HOMILETICAL OUTLINE THROUGH THE FOUR LENSES

This chapter will propose a homiletical outline of the Epistle to the Philippians through the four lenses gained from Paul’s intercessory prayer as already discussed. It should be admitted that in an attempt like this there is always a danger of falling into homiletical “eisgesis” at the expense of grammatical and historical exegesis. Being aware of this danger, all possible efforts have been made to avoid that fallacy in the process.

Each unit consists of four parts: 1) the sermon title that reflects the main message of the passage; 2) the purpose of the sermon that each passage distinctively has in focus; 3) the main message based on exegetical study and analysis and 4) the homiletical outline of the passage conveying the expository principles of the passage.
1. THE JOY THAT GRACE AND PEACE BRINGS (1:1-2)

PURPOSE:

We as believers in Christ are called to enjoy a life filled with joy. One of very prevalent myths among people, Christians and non-Christians alike, is that Christian life is a boring one, lacking any excitement or vitality. But the Bible teaches to the contrary, especially the Epistle to the Philippians. As an introduction to the series on the Epistle to the Philippians, this sermon will try to get the audience ready for the exposition of the Epistle as a guide to true joy in Jesus Christ.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The Epistle to the Philippians begins with Paul’s customary greetings that include the introduction of the writer, the recipients and the “grace and peace” salutation. As the first in a series, this sermon will try to familiarize the audience with the church in Philippi by explaining some introductory matters.

Then the message will prepare the audience for biblical formulae for a life filled with joy. True joy, which is
to be distinguished from happiness that depends on the outward circumstances and situations, is available to every believer in Christ, and only to the one who is in a right relationship with Christ, the Source of true joy.

Finally, to enjoy the true joy in Christ, one should be willing to submit his or her will to the biblical principles that will be presented through the series on this Epistle. This requires one’s sincere commitment to obey God’s will expressed in detail for various situations in this Epistle.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

In order for us to experience the joy that grace and peace brings us in Christ Jesus:

1) We need to understand our spiritual position: “we are in Jesus Christ.”

2) We need to confirm our relationship with Christ: “We are to enjoy the presence of peace and grace in ourselves.”

3) We need to check our attitude toward the authority of the God’s word: “we need to understand and submit our will to the biblical and spiritual principles that are delineated in this Epistle.”
2. THE JOY THAT THE FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL BRINGS
   (1:3-8)

PURPOSE:

The first step to appropriate the true joy in Christ is participating in or having fellowship with the gospel of Christ. This sermon will teach the audience the meaning of “participating in the gospel” and enable them to set up and/or involve themselves in the spiritual environment that they are to live in.

MAIN MESSAGE:

This sermon will explain the meaning of the fellowship in the gospel and how that participation/fellowship works in our daily lives. The assurance of salvation has the day of Christ as the destination of our spiritual journey, and that journey is secured by God’s active involvement in the life of a believer to complete it until the day of Christ. This is the objective aspect of the assurance of salvation.

On the other hand, it has the subjective aspect. The
assurance of salvation can be felt and experienced through an active participation in the gospel ministry. Believers participate in the gospel, first by believing in the gospel and then by sharing it with others around them and then by supporting the missionary endeavors in remote places. And this kind of active participation sets the boundary of the believers' spiritual environment in which they can appropriate the joy that the gospel brings.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Am I enjoying the assurance of salvation? (1:6-8)
   a. The assurance of salvation (1:6)
   b. The basis of assurance (1:7-8)

2) Am I participating in the fellowship of the gospel? (1:5)
   a. By believing in the gospel
   b. By sharing the gospel
   c. By supporting the mission

3) Am I giving thanks to God? (1:3-4)
   a. Am I including thanksgiving in my prayer?
   b. Am I a reason for thanksgiving of other people?
3. THE JOY THAT DYNAMIC LOVE BRINGS (1:9-11)

PURPOSE:

One of the most neglected areas of biblical teachings is the importance of “true knowledge” and “spiritual discernment” which is very much highlighted in this intercessory prayer of Paul’s. The structure and the logic that lie behind this intercessory prayer need to be clearly demonstrated so that the audience should be able to understand the true intention of this prayer.

MAIN MESSAGE:

In this passage, one finds what occupies the heart of the Apostle Paul who so dearly loved the Philippian believers. This prayer sets a pattern for them to live a Christian life that will surely glorify God.

The principle still remains the same. Even today, love is the key to a successful Christian life. That love needs to be guided by true knowledge and spiritual discernment and then it will lead them to spiritual maturity, which in turn bring glory and praise to God.
Some pulpits try to change and improve the outward lifestyle of their flock without putting due emphasis on the change of the inward value system. The logic of this prayer dictates the pulpit to emphasize on and try to change the way they think before their outward lifestyle. Biblical thinking precedes Christian lifestyle!¹

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) The main power in Christian life (1:9)
   a. Love that abounds still more and more
   b. Love with real knowledge
   c. Love with all discernment

2) The dynamics of maturation in Christian life (1:10-11a)
   a. Step one: spiritual discernment
   b. Step two: mature character
   c. Step three: life bearing fruit of righteousness

3) The ultimate goal in Christian life (1:11b)
   To glorify and give praise of God.

¹This teaching is very important in the thought of the Apostle Paul. The most significant passage on this concept seems to be 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (the emphasis is added). The character should be built based on and guided by the four major functions of the scripture. And then a Christian will be ready to produce “every good work” reflecting that of Christ Himself.
4. THE JOY OF TURNING STUMBLING BLOCKS INTO STEPPING STONES (1:12-18)

PURPOSE:

This passage provides a classic example of how to exercise the true love in real knowledge and all discernment previously mentioned in 1:9, in the daily life situation. True wisdom should be learned through the example that Paul demonstrates in the tough situation this passage describes.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Since Paul is totally committed to the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ, his perspective takes a totally different approach to life from that of ordinary people. He shows the wisdom of turning his adverse situation to an opportunity of advancing the cause of the gospel. This is a classic example of how to exercise the true love in real knowledge and all discernment prescribed in 1:9.

His love toward Christ gives Paul the strength to overcome the vicious attacks from those who lack the true love in real knowledge and all discernment. And that love enables him even to rejoice in the fact that Christ is being
preached, even though he suffers from the wrong people's wrong motives. This is the kind of wisdom that all the believers in Christ should learn to obtain.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) When we face adversity in the fellowship of the gospel (1:12-14):
   The fact and result of Paul's imprisonment
   a. We become the focus of other people's concern
   b. It becomes an opportunity of testimony
2) When we are zealous for the gospel (1:15-17):
   Two kinds of zeal in the gospel ministry
   a. We need to examine our inner motive
   b. We need to examine our external attitude
3) When we get discouraged in the fellowship of the gospel (1:18):
   Paul's concern and joy
   a. We need to focus on Jesus, the glory of the gospel
   b. We need to regain our joy in and through Him
5. THE JOY THAT SPIRITUAL CROSSROADS BRINGS (1:19-26)

PURPOSE:

Paul, through his own personal experience of having come to a point of making a decision in the spiritual crossroads, reveals the way how he comes to a conclusion. In order to be able to maintain the true joy, it is crucial to learn how the Apostle handles that kind of situation and to follow his procedure full of spiritual wisdom.

MAIN MESSAGE:

This passage again demonstrates how Paul reasons and finds out God’s will at the life’s crossroads. Here the question is whether Paul is going to die in prison or his life will continue even after being freed out of the prison in which he is now imprisoned.

The way how Paul thinks and reasons under this situation is very impressive. Personally he prefers to die and be gone to be with the Lord. But he is convinced that his continuing ministry will result in benefiting the Philippian believers spiritually. Through this kind of thinking process, Paul comes to an understanding that for
him to continue his ministry for them is God’s will, against his personal preference.

Then he willingly accepts God’s will for him and gets himself ready for that task, of course, with joy and enthusiastic expectation. Behind this lies the prayer of his beloved Philippian believers and the help of the Holy Spirit.

Right perspective on life, willingness to put God’s will before his own, and prayer bring a man on the spiritual crossroads to a right decision that pleases God Himself.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Our future is totally in God’s hand (1:19)
   a. We are to pray to understand God’s will
   b. We are to depend on the Spirit and experience His help

2) A right decision comes from a right value system (1:20-21)
   a. What is the goal of our life?
   b. What is the basis of our value system?

3) We need to apply biblical perspective on our crossroads of life (1:22-26)
a. We face the crossroads of life and death (1:22-24)
b. We are to make a decision from a biblical perspective (1:25-26)


PURPOSE:

In order to live a life worthy of the gospel, according to the present passage, the believers need to understand the conflict between the gospel and the world and then to equip themselves with a proper biblical perspective toward the world, the fellow-believers and Christ.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Living a life worthy of the gospel hangs on our perspective toward the world, toward the fellow believers and more importantly toward Christ. It requires a correct and biblical understanding of the world's spiritual condition. Behind this lies the understanding of the call we have received from the Lord, which is both to grace and to suffering.
The suffering is an evidence that we are living under God’s grace and leading a godly life (2 Timothy 3:12). It is so because of the spiritual nature of the world in which the believers are to live. There is a stark contrast in the lifestyle and the final destiny between the believers and non-believers.

This picture is completed by the understanding that we have Christ at the center of our life, He being the sphere and goal of our life. This will enable us to stand firm against the world without being intimidated, and to carry out the life that is worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul again presents his own experience both as an example and evidence.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) The life worthy of the gospel means a conflict with the world (27a, 28b-30)
   a. The command to live worthy of the gospel
   b. the inescapable nature of the conflict:
      i) Because the world is against God
      ii) The suffering is given as a part of grace
      iii) Paul’s experience testifies to it
2) The life worthy of the gospel requires three biblical perspectives (27b-28a)
   a. Our perspective toward Christ: regardless of the circumstances
   b. Our perspective toward other saints: in one spirit with one mind
   c. Our perspective toward the world: standing firm without fear

7. THE JOY THAT SEEKING OTHERS’ INTERESTS BRINGS
   (2:1-4)

PURPOSE:

The Philippian church has many positive aspects to be commended. But one of the known problems for them is lack of unity. But this problem should not be exaggerated beyond what the test indicates. The problem revealed in 4:1-3 is between the two individuals. This passage focuses on the benefits of maintaining the unity with positive exhortations rather than negative ones.
MAIN MESSAGE:

Since being in Christ, all the believers are put in the fellowship of the Spirit. And as a result, we are already one in that fellowship. And that fellowship is decorated with positive elements such as encouragement, consolation of love, affection and compassion. These are the elements that keep the fellowship together and in harmony.

To maintain the unity the Spirit created among the believers is to keep God's command and at the same time to imitate the mind of Christ. This is possible only through having the mind of Christ, as will be demonstrated in the following passage.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Let us feel the fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2:1);

Make the most of the elements that decorate the spiritual atmosphere (2:2, 4b)

2) Let us read God's heart: the command to maintain unity in the church (2:2, 4b)

   a. God wants the church to maintain her unity

\(^7\) Conjunction "if (Εἰ)" of 2:1 is better translated as "since," indicating the present reality of the statement that follows. Cf. \textit{BAGD}, p. 219, I.1.a.
b. God is pleased when the church remains one

3) Let us learn Christ’s mind (3-4a, 5-11)

a. Christ’s mind is to look out for others’ interests. (3-4a)

b. Christ’s mind is described in detail (5-11).

8. THE JOY THAT THE MIND OF CHRIST BRINGS (2:5-11)

PURPOSE:

This passage is believed by many to have been a hymn of a very early origin that had been sung among the believers of the early church. This hymn reflects the highest Christology found in the New Testament, in conjunction with Christ’s indescribable humility in sharp contrast. It is theologically a fully charged paragraph, but its practical implication is also amazingly profound. True joy is, in a sense, not something we grab in our hands, but the very process of imitating Christ Himself.

---

MAIN MESSAGE:

First of all, it should be emphasized that it is a real honor and special privilege that we Christians are called to have the mind of Christ Himself. It is nothing but the highest calling that we will ever get. We sinners are called to become just like Christ the Creator and the Holy One Himself!

Before we try to follow the footsteps of Christ, it is very crucial that we understand and believe in the deity of Christ that is pronounced in unequivocal terms in 2:6. Then the meaning and significance of His incarnation begin to have some impact on our minds and hearts. Incarnation itself is an unfathomable event to human understanding: Creator becoming like a creature!

Incarnation, however, was just a beginning. He humbled Himself even to the point of death on a cross. This was all because of His love for us. And this should be the motivation for us to follow His footsteps.

His humiliation has been rewarded and His work has been vindicated through exaltation. On a practical level, this cycle sets a pattern for the believers to pursue: humiliation before exaltation. Promised is His Second
Coming, when every knee should bow at the name of Jesus and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The eschatological promise, the ultimate victory of our Lord, again functions as a motivating factor and provides the meaning and reason for the obedient living.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) A command to have the mind of Christ (2:5)
2) Christ before incarnation (2:6)
3) Christ who was incarnated and humbled Himself (2:7-8)
4) Christ who has been exalted (2:9-11)


PURPOSE:

One of the grandest commands from the Lord for the believers is that they shine through the darkness of the world as lights. In order to accomplish this honorable task, believers are to understand the enemy, the spiritual nature of the world. This passage will get them ready for the task, by providing the understanding of God who is
working in them and of the strategic method of attaining joy through sacrifice.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Here are posted three paradoxical or contrasting ideas. First, the God who saved us still works in us that we can bring out the power within us in such a way that we can shine as lights in this spiritually dark world. God’s sovereign calling and saving grace and power are still there. But at the same time we are called to work out (not for) our salvation, so that the sovereign working of God within us can be manifested in and through our own lives.

Second, working out our salvation involves the character issue (blameless, innocent, above reproach, without grumbling and disputing) and setting the example against the spiritually ignorant and ungodly generation. The contrast is inevitable and so vast.

Again, the day of Christ functions as the motivational factor for their being faithful to the word of God. To be noted is the vivid characterization of the world we all live in. It is not only crooked, but also perverse in a very active sense, with the sense of challenging against
God. Hence the role of believers as lights becomes even more significant.

Third, the real joy of the believers sometimes comes through the suffering and sacrifice for others. This is a paradox that no one belonging to this world can appreciate. The joy that comes through sacrificing oneself for the spiritual benefit of others is a true characteristic of the one who is working out his salvation. Surely that one is following the steps of imitating Christ.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

Three paradoxical concepts:

1) A paradox of our obedience and God’s sovereign work: (2:12-13)
   a. We, who are save, are called to work out our salvation.
   b. God, who saved us, is still working in us that we can work out our salvation.

2) A paradox of darkness of the world and the light of the saints: (2:14-16)
   a. This world is in spiritual darkness.
i) Characterized by grumbling and disputing
ii) Crooked and perverse.

b. We, who are saved from this world, are called to shine in this world of darkness:
   i) Being blameless and innocent
   ii) Children of God above reproach
   iii) Holding fast to the word of God, in anticipation of the day of Christ.

3) A paradox of sacrifice and joy (17-18)
   a. We are to be willing to offer ourselves as a sacrifice for others.
   
   b. We are to know the joy that issues from that kind of sacrificial service.

10. THE JOY OF IMITATING CHRIST (2:19-30)

PURPOSE:

This passage is actually a continuation of the preceding eighteen verses. The idea of imitating Christ continues. Two specific examples of imitating Christ are
depicted in some detail. Very concrete spiritual characteristics presented in this passage are to be understood and imitated in the lives of believers.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus consist of a list of characteristics that imitate those of Christ Himself. Paul, first imitated Christ and then Timothy and Epaphroditus imitated Paul. Now today's believers are called to imitate them and ultimately Christ Himself. Interesting is the contrast between 1:21 and 2:21. In the midst of the crowd that would fall into the category of 2:21, we are in a great need of those who claim 1:21 as their life-verse.

The list of spiritual characteristics is the application of 1:21 in a real life setting. This message makes it clear that it is Christ Himself who is our model and following the examples of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus is nothing but "having the attitude which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5-11). This Christ-likeness is to be found in the circle of ministry and church life.
HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) God's ministry is accomplished by those imitating Christ: Examples of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus who are imitating Christ

2) The report card of those who are imitating Christ
   a. The report card of Timothy
      i) Of kindred spirit
      ii) Seeking the interests of Christ Jesus
      iii) Proven worth
      iv) Like a child serving his father
   b. The report card of Epaphroditus
      i) My brother
      ii) Fellow worker
      iii) Fellow soldier

3) The way to become one of those imitating Christ
   a. We should set the goal of our life straight
   b. We should be willing to pay the price for that goal
11. THE TRUE JOY THAT IS NOT LIKE THE FALSE JOY (3:1-3)

PURPOSE:

What all the believers ought to be warned about is that there is true joy and false joy. To differentiate between the two is very important. For false joy prevents them from enjoying the true joy that can be found only through the right relationship with the Trinity.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The Philippian church was facing real threats from three kinds of false teachings. First, the Judaizers emphasized good works for salvation. The second threat was from those who were very active and enthusiastic but had wrong and impure motives. And the third was from those who focused only on the external and ceremonial aspects of religiosity without “the power of godliness” (2 Timothy 3:5). It is still true in our religious circle.

True service is possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit. True boasting is possible only in and through Jesus Christ. True power comes only by relying on God Himself, not through confidence in himself. What is to be
noted is that all three members of the Trinity are involved in our “rejoicing in the Lord.” Apart from the right relationship with the Trinity, true joy cannot be found.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) We need to be careful about false joy:
   The necessity of the warning (3:1): There is true joy and false joy.

2) We need to guard ourselves from the people who strive for false joy:
   The opponents in the warning (3:2).
   a. We are to be careful about the “Dogs”: the Judaizers.
   b. We are to be careful about the evil workers.
   c. We are to be careful about the false circumcision.

3) We need to find and enjoy true joy:
   The solutions for the warning (3:3).
   a. We are to serve in the Spirit of God.
   b. We are to glory in Christ Jesus.
   c. We are to put no confidence in flesh.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{5}}\text{\lambda\alpha\tau\rho\epsilon\iota\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\tau\epsilon\varsigma} \text{ can mean either “worship” or “serve.” Contextually, however, the latter is to be preferred.}\]
12. THE JOY THAT THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST BRINGS
(3:4-11)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this sermon is to teach the audience the right perspective that the intimate personal relationship with Christ plants in the believer's mind. The right perspective has everything to do with the spiritual maturity that the Apostle demonstrates and with the true joy that the Apostle enjoys so much. Judaizers' philosophy should be rejected.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Paul's Christ-like character is no accident. Here one finds the solemn resolution of Paul, one of the greatest saints in history. Believers are challenged here to give up all the things that they may think of as having some value in comparison to Christ and in terms of their spirituality. Paul's own experience denies most of the attempts to think otherwise. But his attitude was not that of boasting but that of humility in light of the person and work of Christ Himself.
The logic involved here is not that Paul threw away some valuables to trade for Christ. Rather his logic is that to know Christ is much more precious and valuable than all the spiritual inheritance he had received and all of his past achievements he had made which he used to be proud of. So the idea of “giving up” with the connotation that there is some loss involved is not present in Paul’s statement. Paul has simply found out “the things that are really excellent with regard to the Christian living” (1:10), and so without any hesitation he freely lay aside all that is less excellent with regard to his spiritual maturity.

Paul’s exhortation to join him with regard to the outlook on life, the outlook that pursues having Christ at the center of life is a corollary of the belief in Christ and the new perspective based on the intimate fellowship with Him. Here the change in perspectives plays a crucial role for the new kind of life. Also distinctive is the position and value of Christ in the whole matter of Christian living and spiritual maturity.
HOMILETICAL/EXEGETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Paul’s challenge (3:4-6)
   a. Paul’s bold yet humble challenge (4)
   b. Four things Paul inherited (5a)
   c. Three things Paul achieved (6b-6)

2) Paul’s invitation to his new outlook on life (3:7-9)
   a. The cause and content of his new outlook on life (7-8b)
   b. The goal of his new outlook on life (8c-9)

3) Paul’s resolution (3:10-11)
   a. The content of his resolution
   b. The method of his resolution

---

6 The outline for this passage is quite exegetical rather than homiletical. This is because an exegetical outline is deemed to better serve the audience for a correct understanding of this passage. Its homiletical outline could be like the following:

1) Have you received Paul’s bold yet humble challenge?
   a. Our spiritual inheritance does not mean much for our spiritual life
   b. Our achievement does not mean much for our spiritual life.

2) Have you responded to Paul’s invitation to new outlook on life?
   a. The real significance of the work of Christ should be appreciated.
   b. The excellence of the knowledge of Christ should be appreciated.

3) Have you participated in the suffering of Christ and His resurrection power?
   To know Christ means:
   a. To participate in the suffering of Christ.
   b. To participate in the resurrection of power of Christ.
PURPOSE:

There is no perfection or stagnation in the process of spiritual growth. This passage provides a biblical strategy for spiritual growth for the real "perfect" believers. Spiritual growth demands the believers' strong determination to put behind the past and to press toward the mark with humility. But at the same time God's intervention will safeguard this pursuit. So this process is destined to be a success, if believers are to remain "perfect."

MAIN MESSAGE:

The previous passage extends its thoughts into the current passage. Paul's attitude about pursuing spiritual maturity is described in these verses. The perfectionist' philosophy is refuted. Rather Paul delineates the strategy for the real "perfect" ones. In the pursuit of the upward call of God, believers are to put behind all the spiritual successes and even failures. They are to face forward.
There is still the upward call of God that should be their spiritual goal.

This pursuit is made possible and attainable only in and through Christ Jesus. In the process, God still comes along with them that they may continue on the right track. Therefore, this pursuit toward the mark demands a determination on the part of the believers, it is only possible through God’s help and by virtue of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Putting behind all of our past (3:12-13)
   a. Putting behind all of our past achievements
   b. Putting behind all of our past failures

2) Pressing toward the mark (3:14)
   a. Pressing toward the mark for the prize of the upward call of God
   b. Pressing toward the mark in Christ Jesus

3) Maintaining the correct attitude (3:12, 14, 15-16)
   a. The attitude of pursuing the goal (3:12, 14)
   b. The attitude of expecting God’s intervention (3:15-16)
14. THE JOY THAT THE HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP BRINGS (3:17-21)

PURPOSE:

The audience needs to be instructed with the spiritual analysis of the prevalent lifestyle that may appeal to them so attractively. Rather in light of the fact and in expectation of Christ's Second Coming, believers are expected to live as citizens of heaven. They need to be able to see the glory of the Coming King and the glory that they themselves will experience at the time of Christ's coming.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The Judaizers' philosophy is rejected in 3:4-11. Perfectionists' philosophy is refuted in 3:12-16. Now in this passage the antinomians' philosophy is refuted.

Both temporal and spatial eschatological tones are distinctively prevalent in this passage. Believers, whose citizenship is in heaven, should reject the rather prevalent lifestyle of this world that does not become of the believers. For them to reject the prevalent lifestyle, they need to be able to analyze the spiritual aspect of that lifestyle. Going
against the stream of the world demands some heavenly motivation, which is here the second coming of Christ and their heavenly citizenship as well. The sure expectation of Christ’s Second Coming should function as a positive motivation for this call.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Be warned against the enemies of the cross: spiritual analysis of the prevalent lifestyle (3:18-19)
   a. Their glory is shame in reality
   b. Their god is their belly
   c. Their destiny is destruction

2) Be prepared for the coming of Christ (20-21)
   a. Live as the citizens of heaven
   b. Live in expectation of Christ’s second coming

15. THE JOY THAT THE UNITY IN CHRIST BRINGS (4:1-5)

PURPOSE:

One cannot emphasize the importance of harmony within the church too much and too often. It is the indicator of how firm that church is standing in the Lord.
The seriousness of spiritual harmony is very tightly tied with the fact that the Lord is near, both temporally and spatially.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Again, Paul introduces a new, biblical perspective toward one another in the church. In many cases, an awkward relationship with others, even in the church, becomes a joy-killer. Paul reminds them that the believers are brothers and sisters in Christ sharing the same “blood” of none other than that of Christ Himself. This revelation leaves no room for any kind of discord or disharmony in the church. Paul admonishes us to regain the names we lost such as “brothers in the Lord,” “sisters in the Lord,” and “beloved in the Lord.” The phrase “in the Lord” itself determines the atmosphere of the relationship between the believers.

We sometimes find ourselves thinking, talking and acting like “Euodia” and “Syntyche” of the church at Philippi. It is a very natural tendency of all of us born with a sinful and depraved heart. We need to admit this
problem. But we are not alone. We are in Christ. And He is near, actually in us.

Now the concept of tolerance is to be introduced and instructed (of course, not in the sense that today’s liberal media and liberal politicians portray it). Again the phrase “the Lord is near” (ὁ κύριος συνείς) forms the basis of the apostle’s teaching. Christ is sitting at the center of the life of the church and in that sense He is near. Because Christian life is built around Jesus Christ, he is the reason and the center of the harmony and oneness among the believers.

Christ’s Second Coming will give the ultimate meaning to the Christian life here and now. So it also makes the unity among the believer all the more meaningful.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) We need to regain our real spiritual names.

2) We need to find out and remove “Euodia” and “Syntyche” hidden in ourselves.

---

7 The meaning of “near” (συνείς) can be taken either spatially or temporally. But the possibility of dual sense is also there. In one sense, the Lord is among or in the midst of the believers. But at the same time His Second Coming is imminent. Both meanings very well fit in the context.
3) We need to exercise "biblical tolerance" in light of the fact that the Lord is near.

4) We need to stand firm by rejoicing in harmony with brothers and sisters in the Lord.

16. THE JOY THAT PRAYER BRINGS (4:6-7)

PURPOSE:

One of the most essential elements in Christian life is prayer. The importance of prayer is to be reminded through these verses. But a correct understanding of the promise iterated in this famous passage is also to be expounded.

MAIN MESSAGE:

Bible does not condemn that we worry. But it does prohibit us from "keeping on worrying." It is our natural tendency to worry about things that brings us discomfort or threatens the welfare of our being and living. We naturally and instinctively begin to worry. But we should stop worrying. We should not linger in the mood of

---

8 The present aspect of the Greek expression (μεριμνάτε) signifies the idea of stop what is in progress.
worrying. We should turn to the Lord and bring what makes us worry to Him.

When we pray according to the way that is described in 4:6, then God has promised that “the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (4:7). Here is what biblical prayer guarantees. We need to read the bible and its promises accurately and correctly. It is the peace of God that makes the difference in our hearts and minds. The verb “guard” (φρονεῖν) is quite a strong word. Even though the circumstances may not change, prayer still works and we still get the answer from God. Our prayers are always answered, if prayed biblically.

This passage also provides instructions on the rationale, attitude, methods, scope, and promise of prayer.

**HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:**

1) Stop worrying: To worry is to sin not trusting His faithfulness

2) Come to God in prayer with thanksgiving

---

9 *BAGD* gives φρονεῖν of this verse the meaning “guard, protect, keep.” But the literal meaning of this verb has military significance, “put garrisons in the cities.” p. 867.
Understand whom we are praying to
a. Learn what to pray
b. How to pray
   i) With thanksgiving
   ii) In prayer and supplication
3) Experience the promised peace of God
   a. The characteristic of peace of God
   b. The channel of peace of God
   c. The scope of peace of God

17. THE JOY THAT THE GOD OF PEACE BRINGS (4:8-9)

PURPOSE:

In the previous two verses (4:6-7), Paul teaches us about the peace from God, which will be given as a result of a biblical prayer. Now in these two verses (4:8-9), Paul teaches and urges us that we are to demonstrate and make visible that peace from God in the daily living. We are to show our God of peace to the world. While 4:6-7 deals with the vertical relation and individual situation,

---

10 "Finally" (τὸ λογίσθω) at the beginning of 4:8 means more than "and so." As Martin suggests, "it follows then, in this connection" better suits the context. Philippians, p. 171
4:8-9 deals with the horizontal situation with relation to others.

MAIN MESSAGE:
Since we enjoyed the peace from God, now we express that peace in our relationship with others. This world needs spiritual giants who really demonstrate the God who lavishes His peace on those who pray to Him. Paul gives a list of six Christian virtues (though not limited to six).\textsuperscript{11} Spiritual giants will demonstrate these virtues. Again, Paul introduces the idea of "imitating" by presenting his own example.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:
1) Need of spiritual giants who demonstrate the God of peace
2) Need of spiritual operation
3) Need for the cultivation of spiritual giants
   a. true
   b. honorable (godly)

\textsuperscript{11}Verse 8 and 9 "constitute a single sentence in Greek and that is marvelous for its rhetorical expression and for the loftiness of the moral standards it sets forth." Hawthorne, \textit{Philippians}, p. 185.
c. right
d. pure
e. lovely
f. of good repute

18. THE JOY THAT GODLY CONTENTMENT BRINGS (4:10-13)

PURPOSE:

This passage contains one of the most favorite and most quoted verses in the bible: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” The contexts, however, both actual and literary, should be taken into consideration in order to arrive at a correct understanding of that great proclamation.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The bold and powerful proclamation that “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” came out of a context that deals with the relationship between the Apostle Paul, a missionary and the church in Philippi that supported him with prayer and monetary gift. We need to see the right relationship that existed between a
missionary and the church that supported him. The missionary Paul's attitude toward the church was, of course, one full of gratitude. But at the same time Paul had a sense that the Philippian church participates in the grace of God by sending monetary gift to him. Of course we do not see even a hint of arrogance on the part of Paul.

As has been made clear in 1:7, their cooperation in the ministry of the gospel with Paul is a means of participating in the grace of God with Paul. In this passage Paul makes it very clear that he is very much grateful for the gift. But at the same time Paul is grateful that they now have he opportunity of supporting him with finances.

The relationship between a missionary and the church that supports him should not be one of beneficiary and benefactor. Both are beneficiaries and benefactors. Talking about the monetary gifts alone, while the missionary is the beneficiary in the material sense, the church is the beneficiary in the spiritual sense. This is the biblical understanding on the relation between the two. Missionaries should never “beg” the churches for their support. They rather invite the churches to be partakers of
the God's special grace. And the churches should have attitude of a coworker or that of a partnership.

The next lesson from this passage is that there is a clear difference between a spiritual thermometer and a spiritual thermostat. The environment and situation around us are supposed to change without ceasing. They are supposed to fluctuate. But Paul's proclamation in 4:13 is an absolute statement. He can do ALL things regardless of outward circumstances. It is because of Jesus Christ his Lord. He strengthens Paul. He not only knows it but also appropriates that strengthening process on a daily basis. The grace and strength from the Lord is always sufficient. Paul refuses to be a spiritual thermometer. He insists on remaining a spiritual thermostat. Christ’s strengthening is always available, but only to him who remains totally dependent on the Source. So as a corollary comes the proclamation of 4:13.

We need to be reminded that Paul begins this passage by rejoicing "in the Lord." And at the end of this passage Paul's proclamation is focused on Christ who strengthens him. Paul's thinking and living are totally occupied with Jesus Christ his Lord.
HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) A mature fellowship between a missionary and a church (4:10-11a)

2) A godly contentment that is acquired in Christ (4:11b-12)

3) A bold proclamation in and through Christ (4:13)

19. THE JOY THAT THE PRIVILEGE OF GIVING BRINGS (4:14-19)

PURPOSE:

The biblical meaning of giving is very well defined in these verses. Especially in light of the spreading of health-wealth theology these days, a biblical understanding of tithes and offering is crucially important.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The atmosphere of gratitude still continues in this passage. Paul appreciates their giving. And by way of praising their efforts, Paul delineates the real meaning of what they have done through giving to the cause of Jesus
Christ. It is much more than just monetary transaction between a church and a missionary. Giving is a privilege given only to believers, a precious responsibility of believers, a spiritual investment, an act of worship pleasing to God, and a guarantor of God's promise to meet all our needs. And all of these aspects mean that it has all the significance of God's approval.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) A privilege given only to believers (4:14)
2) A precious responsibility of believers (4:15-16)
3) A spiritual investment (4:17)
4) An act of worship pleasing to God (4:18)
5) A guarantor of God's promise to meet all our needs (4:19)

12 There is a very strong leniency toward health-wealth theology among the Korean churches. Reverend Paul Yonggi Cho who is leading a huge mega-church in Seoul, Korea, is the most famous representative of this trend.
20. CONCLUSION: THE JOY OF BIBLICAL LIFESTYLE (4:20-23)

PURPOSE:

This sermon will serve as a conclusion of the whole Epistle.

MAIN MESSAGE:

The Epistle to the Philippians ends in Paul's typical fashion, that is, with doxology, farewell and benediction which are very fitting as a conclusion of the letter that provides the keys to a life filled with true joy in the Lord. Doxology is due God the Father, simply He is the One who planned the Christian life possible for us, without mentioning all the other reasons.

Then, after very ordinary greetings for the brothers around himself, Paul's benediction follows. Again it is the Lord Jesus Christ who grants grace for their spirit.

As a conclusion to the series on the Epistle to the Philippians, (a rather lengthy one, though, following the example of Paul himself as in Philippians 3:1), it would be effective to reiterate and reemphasize the four main ideas discussed in the previous pages. The audience needs to be
reminded in an impressive way that those four lenses are the main keys to a joyful Christian living, along with other principles instructed along the way.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE:

1) Doxology
2) Farewell
3) Benediction
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Actually, Paul’s intercessory prayer in the Epistle to the Philippians is a part of his thanksgiving as was proven contextually and exegetically based on grammatical analysis. The intercessory prayer is built upon the thanksgiving in that the latter provides clues to what occasioned Paul’s intercessory prayer to God for his readers that is, gratitude toward and love for them.

The intercessory prayer consists of two parts. The first part is the object of the intercession that the Philippian believers might be equipped with the spiritual ability to carry out spiritual living, that is, love in true knowledge and insight resulting in spiritual discernment (1:9-10a). The second part is the purpose of the intercession that they might live out spiritual living with the help of Christ in them by being motivated by the eschatological hope to the glory of God (1:10b-11).

The study in this thesis shows that the intercessory prayer is not an independent prayer separated from the body of the Epistle but rather an introductory prayer in that it introduces main concerns and
ideas of the Epistle at its beginning which are developed and expanded further into a practical life setting.

According to the perspective of this study, the Epistle to the Philippians, as is reflected in the intercessory prayer report, is not a dry, abstract theological treatise but rather an outward expression of a pastoral concern and care for a local church and its members. First, one finds Paul, pastor of the church in Philippi, awakening the need of love in knowledge and insight resulting in spiritual discernment.

Second, one finds Paul, pastor of the church in Philippi, encouraging them to put the spiritual faculty into practice in both individual and corporate living situation.

Third, one finds Paul, pastor of the church in Philippi, urging them to keep Christ at the center of each and every aspect of their lives.

And fourth, one finds Paul, pastor of the church in Philippi, motivating them to a righteous living with the glorious eschatological hope in mind.

Similar results like that of this study can be detected from other introductory intercessory prayers of Pauline Epistles, especially from those in the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to the Colossians. And as a corollary of this study, the intercessory prayer's function of
integrating the whole Epistle, through the threads of main ideas, speaks loudly in favor of the unity of the Epistle.

Now moving to the practical and pastoral concern, the contemporary ministers of the gospel should follow the example of the great Apostle Paul, who was a minister of the gospel for his time. Even though the times have changed, the living Word of God still speaks to the community of believers with the same clarity and fervor on how the minister should serve his flock.

This thesis suggests that the contemporary ministers should focus their attention on the same concerns as the Apostle Paul did. The key word in the relationship among the believers in the church is love. Ministers of the gospel need to emphasize the importance of love. But the love that one finds in the word of God is to be guided by the true knowledge and result in spiritual discernment. The same lesson is also found in 2 and 3 John.

The contemporary minister of the gospel should equip his flock with biblical perspectives on the issues of life so that they may be able to live a life that reflects the characteristics of Jesus Christ Himself. The Epistle of James and practical sections in some of Pauline epistles put emphasis on the idea of bearing fruit.
In the contemporary ministerial setting, Christ should be still at the center of every aspect of Christian living, both individual and corporate. In teaching ministry, the crucial importance of the personal relationship with Christ should be emphasized over the outward performance-oriented ministry. Paul’s focus on this issue is well expressed in Colossians 1:28: “And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

Though the importance of the minister’s leadership being acknowledged, even that leadership should be submitted to that of Christ. The phrase “in Christ” is such a popular concept in Pauline theology and in the Gospel of John as well, where the idea of “abiding in Christ” is prevalent.

The eschatological motivation for Christian living should be duly emphasized for the believers’ life within and without the church. The promise of Christ’s return enables the believers to live beyond the limitations of this earth and at the same time it provides the meaning of life on this earth. The realistic urgency of His coming should be taught along with the emphasis on the responsible lifestyle in light of His return. The apostle Paul provides more detailed and specific instructions in the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians.
This thesis suggests the contemporary ministry be built on and around the four main biblical concepts as shown in the intercessory prayer of Philippians 1:9-11.

The apostle Paul, the great model pastor, pours out his heart for the believers of Philippi, with genuine love and concern, through his intercessory prayer found in Philippians 1:9-11. This intercession is also inspired by the Holy Spirit and should be not only a model prayer for contemporary ministers, but also should constitute the principles for ministerial strategies for the churches today. With the vast number of seminars on church growth and various programs available for the churches today, the contemporary minister of the gospel needs to go back to the biblical principles on pastoral ministry. And one of the most strategically clear texts on this matter is found in Paul's intercessory prayer recorded in the Epistle to the Philippians in 1:9-11.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Unpublished Materials
