

Study 1

THANKFUL PRAYER



Background

Paul's relationship with the Philippians was preceded by the Lord giving him a vision of a Macedonian man pleading with him to come over to them (Acts 16:9). At that time Paul and his companions were in Mysia (Acts 16:8). Almost immediately, the Lord began to work miraculously in the hearts of people (Acts 16:14-15) and then in demonstrations of His power with signs and wonders (Acts 16:18). Paul and Silas were arrested by Philippian authorities soon after arriving, but even that setback was used by the Lord to bring people to Christ (Acts 16:30-34). The result was that a church was planted consisting of thoroughly converted people who had great affection for the Apostle Paul. Even after Paul left Philippi to go south to Athens and then Corinth, it was the Philippian believers who continued to financially support him.

This epistle is unique among Paul's canonical (Biblical) epistles because it does not address a heresy or a problem. Written from his Roman imprisonment around about AD 61, this is an extremely warm letter from the aged apostle to a church of believers he had great affection for.

1. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:01:26 pm
1Cor. 1:1 Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

2. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:01:42 pm
2Cor. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ¶ To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:

3. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:07:24 pm
Gal. 1:1 Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—

4. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:08:42 pm
Eph. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, ¶ To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

5. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:09:03 pm
Col. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

6. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:09:27 pm
1Tim. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

7. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:22:34 pm
Paul designates himself as “a servant” to the Philippians. His relationship with the Philippians was one of deep affection and love - not as apostle to bring doctrinal correction or to rebuke them for a misconduct.

8. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:36:45 pm
Col. 1:13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

9. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 12:39:06 pm
Rom. 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”
Rom. 8:23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
Rom. 9:4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the

The Greeting

1. In the opening verse of Paul’s epistle to the Philippians he identifies himself quite differently than he does to the Corinthians (1Cor. 1:1; 2Cor. 1:1), the Galatians (Gal. 1:1), the Ephesians (Eph. 1:1), the Colossians (Col. 1:1), and even to his companion Timothy (1Tim. 1:1). How does he designate himself and why do you think he did this?

1 2
3 - 5
6

7

To be a follower of Christ involves being spiritually transformed which Christ described as being *born again* (John 3:3). Once a person is transformed by the Holy Spirit, they are translated out of the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of God’s light (Col. 1:13). They are adopted by God and become a son or daughter of the Lord (Rom. 8:15). The redeemed child of God becomes a citizen of Heaven (Phil. 3:20).

8
9
10

2. How does Paul identify the Philippian believers in the opening verse?

11
12

13 Paul also greets the o_____s - the Greek word for this English word is *episkopoi* which also the meaning of a *guardian*.

3. Paul greets one more group in the Philippian church. Select which group he also greets:

- (a) decorators - who played an important role in setting up the Sunday floral-art
- (b) decoders - language specialists who can decode hidden messages in Hebrew
- (c) demeanors - those who had the give of insulting to help the proud to become humble.
- (d) deacons - which means *servant* who willingly gave of their time and efforts to practically help the church minister to people.

promises.

Gal. 4:5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Eph. 1:5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

10. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 1:14:52 pm

Phil. 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

11. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 1:17:25 pm

Phil. 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, ¶ To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

12. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 1:17:33 pm

“saints”

That is, you don't have to be 'canonised' by the Roman or Orthodox Churches to be considered a 'saint'.

13. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 1:42:37 pm

overseers

14. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:14:16 pm
Phil. 1:3 ¶ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
15. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:26:03 pm
Phil. 1:4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy,
16. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:26:21 pm
Phil. 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now
17. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:26:28 pm
Through their financial 'missions' partnership with Paul.
18. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:49:36 pm
2Cor. 8:1 ¶ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,
19. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:53:10 pm
Phil. 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.
20. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 2:57:49 pm
represented
21. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 3:00:06 pm
Phil. 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
22. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 3:06:09 pm
Phil. 1:9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,
23. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
2 March 2022 at 3:06:22 pm
1. That their love may continue to abound.
2. That they will be filled with knowledge and discernment.

Reasons for Thanks

14 Paul's great affection for the Philippians is summed up in **Philippians 1:3**. What a
15 delightful thing when a pastor truly **loves** the people that God has put under their care!

4. Not only was Paul thankful for the Philippians' love but he was particularly
16 thankful that they demonstrated their love for him. Based on **Philippians 1:5**, how did they *demonstrate* their love for Paul?

17 _____

The Philippians (also referred to as *the Macedonians*) were not a wealthy people. Paul alludes to this in his epistles to the Corinthians (who were wealthy) in

18 **Second Corinthians 8:1**.

5. After the Philippians had committed to financially support Paul despite their poverty, what does it seem that Paul was confident that God would do for them based on **Philippians 1:6**?

19 _____

Even though Paul was imprisoned in Rome, the Philippians continued to financially support Paul. Paul's affection for them was merely because of the value
20 of the money they had sent him, it was what the money **r_____d**.

21 Perhaps based on **Philippians 1:7**, Paul felt that the financial support of the Philippians entitled them to take some credit for those whom Paul had been able to lead to Christ even while he was in prison. This is a wonderful encouragement for believers and churches today to view their missions giving of those church-planting missionaries as their *partners* in the gospel as well.

6. While Paul was thanking God for these believers, what concerns does he express for them in **Philippians 1:9**?

22 _____
23 _____

24. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 3:08:31 pm

Note - 2Cor. 8:2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.

25. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 3:11:28 pm

Phil. 1:10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, Phil. 1:11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

26. Dr. Andrew Corbett

2 March 2022 at 3:11:37 pm

1. To only approve that which was "excellent" so that they would be "pure" and "blameless".
2. That their lives would reflect "the fruit of righteousness" that comes through Christ.

24 Paul was a beneficiary of the Macedonians' generosity despite their "extreme poverty" (2Cor. 8:2). But it seems that he was concerned that they might be taken advantage of financially.

25 7. Therefore what did he want for them, and how did he want them to conduct themselves based on Philippians 1:10-11?

26 _____

As Paul dictated this letter from his imprisonment, he seems to have had a growing sense that the Lord was about to do something dramatic. In two places in this opening paragraph he has referred to *the day of Jesus Christ*. It is supposed by many biblical scholars that this refers to the *second coming of Christ* also referred to by scholars as *the return of Christ*. This gave Paul's concern for the Philippians a sense of urgency. And history tells us that this concern was warranted as the Neronic¹ persecution broke out within a few years of this epistle being sent.

Application Discussion

- What should we be more thankful for in our praying?
- How do we determine who or what we should be 'partnering' with?
- When was the last time you wrote a "thank you" note/card/letter to someone you are thankful for?

¹ Neronic means by *Caesar Nero*.