

## Philippians 1:3-11

### Context

1. *What can you learn about the person or situation to which the letter is written?*
  - a. Partners in the gospel from the beginning without pause (5)
  - b. Believers – God began his good work in them (6); partakers of grace (7)
    - i. In author’s imprisonment (7)
    - ii. In author’s defense and confirmation of the gospel (7)
  - c. Not yet complete – love may abound more and more
  
2. *What clues are there about the author and his circumstances?*
  - a. Thankful for the recipients (3ff.)
  - b. Prays for the recipients (4ff.)
  - c. Strong affections for recipients – thank (3), joy (4), feel (7), hold in my heart (7), yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus (8)
  - d. Believer – partaker of grace (7)
  - e. Imprisoned (7)
  - f. Defending/confirming the gospel (7)
  
3. *What was the main point of the passage immediately before this one? Are there logical or thematic connections to the passage you are reading?*
  - a. Greeting
  - b. Grace (2, 7)

### Observations

1. *Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text? Are there key connecting words (for, therefore, but, because) that indicate the logical flow of the passage?*
  - a. Sections
    - i. 3-6 – Assertion of thanksgiving and confidence
    - ii. 7-8 – Further explanation of affection for readers
    - iii. 9-11 – Content of prayer
  - b. Key connecting words
    - i. “because” (5) – reason for thanksgiving
    - ii. “and” (6) – connects what precedes and what follows
    - iii. “because” (7) – reason for rightness of feeling
    - iv. “for” (7) – reason why he holds them in his heart
    - v. “both ... and” (7) – connects two phrases
    - vi. “and” (9)
    - vii. “so that” (10) – result of increased love
    - viii. “and so” (10) – result of approving what is excellent
      1. ESV weak here, see NAS (“in order to”) or KJV (“that”)
    - ix. “and” (10)
    - x. “to” (11) – result of fruit of righteousness

Note 1: Some words function as connectors (conjunctions) sometimes and in other ways at other times (prepositions, etc.)

- “for”
  1. (4) – subject of prayer
  2. (7) – who has feeling

3. (8) – explanation of strength of affection
4. (8) – object of yearning
5. (10) – when (period of duration – “until” as in KJV, NAS, NIV)
- “that”
  1. (6) – content of confidence, what his confidence is
  2. (9) – content of prayer
  3. (11) – explanation/description of fruit of righteousness
- “to”
  1. (6) – part of verb “bring to completion”
    - a. ESV weak here, prefer KJV “will perform” or NAS “will perfect”
  2. (7) – infinitive (“to feel”)

Note 2: Some other words and phrases that *can* function as logical connectors include the following

- or
- thus
- therefore
- but
- rather
- instead
- if ... (then)
- likewise
- in order that
- but now

2. *What is the main point or points? What supporting points does the author make?*

- a. I thank my God (3)
  - i. in all my remembrance of you
  - ii. always in every prayer of mine (4)
    1. For you all
    2. making my prayer with joy
  - iii. because of your partnership (5)
    1. in the gospel
    2. from the first day
    3. until now
- b. And I am sure of this (6)
  - i. that he ... will bring it to completion
    1. [he] Who began a good work in you
    2. at the day of Jesus Christ
- c. It is right (7)
  - i. for me to feel this way
    1. about you all
  - ii. because I hold you
    1. in my heart
    2. for you are all partakers
      - a. with me
      - b. of grace

- c. both in my imprisonment
  - d. and in the defense and confirmation
    - i. of the gospel
  - iii. For God is my witness (8)
    - 1. how I yearn for you all
      - a. with the affection
        - i. of Christ Jesus
  - d. And it is my prayer (9)
    - i. That your love may abound more and more
      - 1. with knowledge and all discernment
      - 2. so that you may approve (10)
        - a. what is excellent
        - b. and so be pure and blameless
          - i. for the day of Christ
        - ii. filled with the fruit of righteousness (11)
          - 1. that comes through Jesus Christ
          - 2. to the glory and praise of God
3. *What surprises are there in the flow of the argument?*
  - a. (none)

## Meaning

1. *How does this text relate to other parts of the book?*
  - a. (typically look back to what has previously been observed)
  - b. Partnership (5) – 4:15
  - c. Gospel (5, 7) – 1:12, 16, 27; 2:22, 4:3, 15
  - d. Imprisonment (7) – 1:12ff.
2. *How does this passage relate to Jesus?*
  - a. Establisher/accomplisher of the gospel mentioned
  - b. Christ's coming and judgment ("day of Jesus Christ" as designating age/period which includes coming and judgment) as a future event and the occasion of our future perfection (6).
  - c. We are to be those who pursue righteousness until the day of Christ (10)
  - d. Righteousness comes through Jesus Christ (11)
3. *What does this teach you about God?*
  - a. God began this good work (6)
  - b. God, who began this good work, will be the one to complete this work at the day of Christ (6)
  - c. God [in his omniscience] is a witness to Paul's affection (8)
  - d. God receives the glory for the coming of righteousness through Jesus Christ (11)
4. *How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?*
  - a. Paul's gratitude for the Philippians overflows into thanksgiving as a result of God's work in their lives (which demonstrates itself in their gospel partnership with him). However, his desire for them is not to remain as they are but to grow in love with discernable results (fruit) in their lives, which is consistent with the work that God is doing now and will perfect at the coming of Christ.

**Application**

1. *How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?*
  - a.
  
2. *Is there some attitude you need to change?*
  - a.
  
3. *How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?*
  - a.