

## He Who Began a Good Work in You: Philippians 1:1-11 Explained

### Scriptures for Today

#### ""Philippians 1:1-11

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; 6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: 7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; 10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; 11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.""

### Intro: A Church Born in Difficulty & Remembered With Joy

To understand Philippians, we must understand where we are in the Bible. Scripture records exactly how this church began — not in comfort, not in ease, but in **Acts 16**, through spiritual warfare, persecution, and miraculous deliverance.

Paul first came to Philippi because the Holy Ghost **forbade** him to preach in Asia and redirected him supernaturally (Acts 16:6–10). Many people wonder why. The answer is in this book. When Paul arrived in Philippi:

- A businesswoman named **Lydia** was saved (Acts 16:14–15).
- A demon-possessed girl was delivered (Acts 16:16–18).
- Paul and Silas were beaten, imprisoned, & thrown into the inner prison (Acts 16:22–24).
- An earthquake opened the doors, leading to the salvation of the **Philippian jailer and his household** (Acts 16:25–34).

All of that is a pretty good reason why Paul was directed to not go to Asia. People are still getting saved from the Scriptures of Paul's story in Acts 16. "What **MUST** I do to be saved?"

This was the church's beginning: **converted families, spiritual battles, suffering, joy, and the power of God breaking chains**. Years later, Paul writes to them again — but this time **from prison** (Philippians 1:7, 13).

Yet this letter is not filled with sorrow. It is filled with **joy, gratitude, confidence, and affection**.

Philippians is the warmest letter Paul ever wrote. If Galatians is a rebuke and Romans is a doctrine book, Philippians is a **love letter to a faithful church**. Look, that's what we want to be. No matter what, we need to be a FAITHFUL CHURCH that is faithful to work and continue in God.

And look, God's story of this church is being written. What is God saying about True Words Baptist Church and what will God say about this church when we arrive in heaven one day?

In the first eleven verses of Philippians, Paul shows us:

- what a healthy church looks like
- how God continues the work He begins
- how love grows
- how believers mature
- how Jesus receives all glory

This is a passage filled with encouragement for every believer.

## **Verse 1 — Servants Writing to Saints**

### **""Philippians 1:1**

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:""

Paul does not begin this letter by asserting authority. He begins by **lowering himself**:  
"servants of Jesus Christ." He writes to:

- "all the saints" — every believer in Christ is a saint
- "with the bishops and deacons" — showing that Philippi already had established leadership

This church had grown and matured since Acts 16. Notice that this one church has bishops and deacons or multiple pastors and multiple deacons.

## **Verse 2 — Grace Before Peace, Again**

### **""Philippians 1:2**

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.""

Just like Galatians, Paul puts **grace before peace** because:

Grace is the root. Peace is the fruit. There is no true peace where grace has not yet worked.

Philippians 1:2 teaches that grace and peace come from the Father and the Son together, proving Christ's deity, grounding the believer's daily walk, and introducing the very themes the entire book will unfold.

Philippians 1:2 proves the deity of Christ because Paul places Jesus beside the Father as the equal source of grace and peace—something only God can give. You cannot give what you do not possess, and Jesus gives what only God has. That makes Him God.

## **Verse 3–5 — An Apostle's Joy in a Faithful Church**

### **""Philippians 1:3–5**

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;""

Paul remembers them with joy — not pain, not frustration. Why? Because they had **fellowship in the gospel**.

This means:

- they supported Paul
- they stood with Paul
- they kept the gospel central
- they did not drift into works, legalism, or false doctrine

They were gospel partners. From day one — Lydia, the jailer, the church — they were faithful partners with Paul.

## **Verse 6 — God Finishes What God Starts**

### **""Philippians 1:6**

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:""

This is one of the greatest promises in the entire Bible. It teaches:

1. **Salvation begins with God.** ("He... began a good work in you.")
2. **Sanctification continues by God.** ("He... will perform it.")
3. **Glorification is guaranteed by God.** ("Until the day of Jesus Christ.")

This is why salvation cannot be lost. If God started the work, **God will finish the work**.

The Christian life is not you holding onto God; it is God holding onto you. God remains loyal to His people even when His people fail. And we fail at times. We see loyalty everywhere within this great book of the Bible.

## Verse 7 — Shared Suffering, Shared Grace

### ""Philippians 1:7

Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.""

They stood with Paul:

- in his bonds
- in his defense of the gospel
- in his confirmation of the truth

They were not ashamed of him in prison. They did not distance themselves. They shared in the grace of suffering and ministry.

They stayed loyal to a man who was staying loyal to God. The Philippians show great loyalty to Paul. They did not abandon him when he was imprisoned. They did not distance themselves because he was controversial. They did not shrink back because supporting Paul was costly. This makes Philippi the most loyal church Paul founded.

Corinth questioned Paul. Galatia deserted Paul. Ephesus faced wolves. Philippi stayed faithful.

## Verse 8 — A Pastor's Deep Affection

### ""Philippians 1:8

For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.""

Paul uses the strongest language for affection in the New Testament. He loves them with Christ's own love. Look closely. This is not human fondness — this is **Christ's heart poured into Paul** for His people.

That is the same love God calls us to have for one another. As Paul told Philippi, I tell you that today. You are in my heart. I pray for you. I carry your burdens. After church last Sunday, when I got home that night, I cried for some of you. I know Pam has cried for some of you. We ask God to help you. Please Lord, help! I know the things you all have been through and that brings tears.

We weep together with you. We rejoice together with you. The love we have for you is not human affection alone — it is Christ producing His own compassion in us for His people. A church should love: deeply, sacrificially, faithfully, sincerely, and consistently.

Not surface level love. Not Sunday morning love. But Christ filled love that aches for one another, prays for one another, and walks with one another. Paul longed for the Philippians with the love of Jesus. And that's the love I want us to all grow in — a love that comes from Christ, flows through us, and binds us together as one body.

## Verses 9–10 — Paul's Prayer for Their Growth

### ""Philippians 1:9–10

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;""

Paul prays for:

- growing love
- discerning love
- sincere hearts
- holy living
- spiritual maturity

Love without knowledge becomes foolishness. Knowledge without love becomes harshness. Paul wants them to have **both**. Love and knowledge. You need to know the Bible. You need to know the things of God. This is how love increases. If you won't read your Bible, you won't love me. If I won't read my Bible, I won't love you. We must stay in the word of God!

## Verse 11 — The Fruit of Righteousness Comes Through Christ

### ""Philippians 1:11

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.""

All true righteousness:

- comes through Christ
- grows in Christ
- results in the glory of Christ

The gospel changes us so that God alone receives praise. We all need to be filled with the fruits of righteousness. Our outward actions and attitudes should be naturally growing and getting better based on a life touched by Christ.

Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Good works don't save, but works should be flowing from being saved. Serving others, giving, encouraging, helping the weak, and obeying Scripture. These are fruits but not roots. Works don't save. Fruit doesn't save.

Look, we need to turn from sin, pursue purity, guard our hearts and minds, and walk in the Spirit. Worship God. Be thankful to God. Lead others to Jesus Christ.

## **Application — Encouragement for Every Believer**

1. **God finishes what He starts.** Your failures cannot stop His faithfulness.
2. **A healthy church partners in the gospel.** Not in personalities, programs, or preferences. Soul winning is the main program here. Visiting people is the main program here. Reaching people with the Gospel out there and in here is the main focus here.
3. **Love must grow in wisdom.** Not emotional love, but discerning love. Love is not just a feeling, emotion, warmth, or affection. It is wise. True love knows when to say yes and when to say no. True love knows what helps a person and what hurts a person.
4. **Christian maturity leads to sincerity.** A clean heart, an honest walk, and a life that approves what is excellent. We must do better each day. Improve a little at a time.
5. **Everything begins and ends with Christ.** Salvation, sanctification, and the fruit of righteousness.

## **Closing — The God Who Completes His Work**

Philippians opens not with rebuke but with gratitude. Not with fear but with confidence. Not with warning but with joy. Paul reminds us that the Christian life is not our work for God — it is **God's work in us.**

We have to see the work of God that we do in a different way. God is working in us as we work for Him.

He began it. He sustains it. He perfects it. And He will finish it in the day of Jesus Christ.

Whatever God starts, God completes. Whatever God plants, God grows. Whatever God promises, God performs.

This is our hope, our confidence, and our rest. God will perform the work He said He will do. Now, let's be more and more like Him by doing the good works we need to be doing. And He will give you blessings and gifts such as wisdom and knowledge.

And let's do all of this together as a church. Let's stay loyal to God and to each other. Let's show each other the absolute ending and amazing love of God.

Let's pray.