

Philippians 1 • God is working on me

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 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. 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. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

¹² I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it

For Class & Family Discussion:

- ▶ Today's lesson is built around "God is working on me." What does that phrase tell us about God? What does it tell us about ourselves?
- ▶ **Acts 16** tells us about the gospel being carried to Philippi. How did they come to be "saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi"?
- ▶ Remembering where Paul is as he writes this letter (**1:13**), how do you think he could write with such confidence—"I am sure of this"—in **1:6**?
- ▶ Paul describes the saints in Philippi in a few powerful ways. What did he mean when he described them as:
 - Partners in the gospel (**1:5**)?
 - Partakers with me of grace (**1:7**)?

out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

For Class & Family Discussion:

- ▶ “God is working on me.” Let’s think through the “good work” Paul was describing in the lives of these people in Philippi. What did it mean for them (and what will it mean for us) for God to be working so that...
 - Your love abounds more and more? (1:9)
 - Your knowledge and all discernment abound? (1:9)
 - You approve what is excellent? (1:10)
 - You are pure and blameless? (1:10)
 - You are filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God? (1:11)
 - Your manner of life is worthy of the gospel of Christ? (1:27)
 - You are standing firm with other saints in one spirit, striving side by side? (1:27)
 - You are not frightened by your opponents? (1:28)