

The letter Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi

This page tells a bit more about Paul's letter to the Christians at Philipp

God sent Paul to many countries and to a lot of towns to tell people about Jesus. One of those towns was called Philippi (see Acts 16:11-40.) It was in the country they used to call Macedonia.

At that time the Roman people were the bosses of many countries. They didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in jail in the big city called Rome, and he sent it to the Christians at Philippi.

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven. Timothy helped him write it.

This letter has very important messages for Christians, to help us get really close to God. So we have to take notice of what Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi.

¹ I am Paul, and this letter is from me and Timothy. He is helping me write this letter. We work all the time for Jesus Christ. We are sending this letter to all God's special people at Philippi, you people that belong to Jesus Christ. We are writing to you Christian leaders, and to you church helpers, and to all you Christians.

² We are asking God our Father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

The Christians at Philippi helped Paul tell people about Jesus

³⁻⁵ I'm really happy every time I think about you mob and I pray for you. Right from the first day that you heard the message about Jesus you believed it, and you helped me tell it to other people. In that way you helped me with my work. And you are still doing it. ⁶ I know that God started to do something good inside you, and he will keep on doing it until he has finished it properly. That will be when Jesus Christ comes back again. I'm really sure that God will do this good thing inside you. ⁷ You see, I love you mob very much, so it is alright for me to think about you in this way. You are my friends and God is good to you, as well as me. So you are helping me every time God lets me tell people the good news about Jesus. Sometimes I'm tied up in jail, and sometimes they take me to court, and I tell them the message about Jesus, and show them that it is true. ⁸ Yes, I love you, just like Jesus Christ loves you, and I want to be with you again. God himself knows this is true.

Paul asked God to help the Christians at Philippi

⁹ So I pray like this for you. I ask God to help you to love each other more and more, and to know God better. I ask God to help you to understand spiritual things better. ¹⁰⁻¹¹ Then you will decide the right way about everything, and you will do a lot of good things. And I ask Jesus Christ to help you so that you will always do good things. Then nobody will blame you for anything and you will show everyone that God is good, and they will say that he is really great. I want you to live this way till Jesus comes back again.

Paul was in jail, but he told more people about Jesus

¹² As for me, friends, you know that bad things happened to me, and now I'm in jail. But don't worry, it is better for me now. I can tell more people about Jesus.

¹³ So now everybody here knows why I'm in jail. All the guards, and soldiers, and everyone else that works in the big boss's house, they all know that I belong to Jesus Christ, and that is why I'm in jail. ¹⁴ And when the Christians here think about me in jail, most of them get brave, and they are not afraid to tell other people God's message.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ You know, there are some Christians that are a bit jealous of me. They want the others to think that they are more important than me. So they tell people about Jesus Christ, and they hope they will get a lot of people to say they are great. They are thinking the wrong way. They only think about themselves, and they try to get people to think they are important. That is why they tell people about Jesus Christ.

But there are other Christians here that think in a good way and they want to help me, so they tell people about Jesus. They love me, and they know that God let people put me in jail so that I can tell the message about Jesus to a lot more people, and show them that this message is true.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ But it doesn't matter. Both mobs are telling people about Jesus Christ. That is the most important thing. Maybe some are thinking the wrong way, and they think they can give me trouble while I'm in jail. But the others are thinking the right way. And all of them are telling people about Jesus Christ, so I'm very happy about it.

Which is better, to be with Jesus or to stay alive in this world?

Yes, and I will stay very happy. ¹⁹ You mob are praying for me and the spirit of Jesus Christ is helping me, so I'm

sure that God will get me out of this jail. ²⁰ I want to be brave and I don't want to do anything to shame myself, so I reckon that I will stay strong for Jesus Christ this time, just like I always was before. Maybe they will kill me, or maybe they will let me stay alive. It doesn't matter. I want to show everyone how great Jesus Christ is, no matter what.

²¹ You see, while I'm alive I want to let people know that Jesus Christ is really great. That is what I live for. But if they kill me, that is even better for me. ²² Maybe they will let me keep on living in this body, and then I will keep on working for Jesus and more people will believe in him. ²³ I don't really know which will be best, to live or to die. I want to do both. ²⁴ I want to leave this body and go to be with Jesus Christ. That will be a lot better for me. But at the same time, you mob need me, so I want to keep on living in this body so I can help you. ²⁵ When I think about it, I'm sure that I will stay alive here and keep on helping all of you, so that you will trust God more, and you will be more happy. ²⁶ Yes, I reckon I will come and visit you again and you will be happy to see me. You will tell everyone, "This is awesome. Jesus Christ is really good and really powerful. He got Paul out of jail." You will talk like that to everyone.

Stay strong together and don't let the bad people frighten you

²⁷ Listen, you heard the good news about Jesus Christ and you trusted him, so keep on living the way he wants you to live, no matter what happens. Maybe I will come and visit you again, but maybe not. Maybe I will only hear what people tell me about you. Anyway, I want to find out that you are staying strong for Jesus and that God's spirit is joining you all together, so that you all are working

together like one person, and more people are believing the good news about Jesus. ²⁸ I don't want to find out that bad people made you frightened, I mean those people that don't like you living for Jesus. If you stay strong for Jesus you will show those bad people that, in the end, God will finish them. But he will save you. Yes, God is the one that will do it. ²⁹ You see, God lets you believe in Jesus Christ, but not only that, he lets you have pain for him too. ³⁰ Those bad people are making trouble for you, just like they made trouble for me when I was there in your town. And bad people are still making trouble for me.

2

Work together with each other so that you are all like one person

¹ Listen. You know that you belong to Jesus Christ, and he helps you to be strong and brave. You know that he loves you, so you are happy. You know that God's spirit is in you, and you share your lives with him. You know how to be sorry for each other, and how to help each other. You know all this, don't you? ² All right, now make me properly happy. I want you all to love each other properly, and I want you all to agree with each other and think the same way about what is right. I want you to be like you are all joined together, like you are one person. ³⁻⁴ Each of you has to think about what is good for the others. Don't only think about what is good for yourself. Don't think that you are better than other people, but think that they are better than you. And don't do things only to get people to say you are good. Don't try to be a boss over other people, but let others be boss over you.

Be like Jesus and think like he did

⁵ You have to think like this, the same way that Jesus Christ thought.

⁶ He was the same kind of person as God.

He was just as important as God.

But he didn't reckon that he had to keep on being important like God.

⁷ Instead, he left all that, and he made himself like a nobody.

He was born into this world like a human, and he was happy to be a really poor man.

He was a man living here, and then

⁸ he was happy to become even less important.

He did everything that God wanted him to do, he was even happy to die.

He let people nail him to a cross and kill him.

⁹ So then God made him alive again and lifted him up to the most important place in heaven.

And God gave him power, and a name that is greater than every other name.

¹⁰ The time will come when everyone will hear the name of Jesus, and they will bend down and show him respect.

They will all do that, everything in heaven, and everything on the earth, and everything under the earth, they will all show respect to Jesus.

¹¹ And everything that has a tongue will say aloud, "Jesus Christ is our boss."

This will happen to show that God our Father is very great and good.

God gives you the power to do good things

¹² So, my good friends, you always have to do what God wants. I know you did this when I was with you, and I reckon you still do it now that I'm not with you any more.

So, in the same way, you have to keep trying to live the right way. You see, God saved you, and you are in his family now, so give him proper respect and try to live his way. You have to be afraid to do any bad thing that will make him angry. ¹³ God is the one that is working inside you. He helps you think the right way, so that you want to do the good things that make him happy, and he gives you the power to do those good things.

¹⁴ And while you do these things, don't get angry or argue about them. ¹⁵ Then you will be properly good, so that nobody can blame you for anything. You are God's kids living among really bad people that always go wrong. So you have to live in a way that is properly good. Then everyone will see that you are properly good. You will be like bright stars in a dark sky. ¹⁶ And you have to keep on believing the message about Jesus that gives us life. If you live like that I will be very happy with you. And when Jesus Christ comes back I will tell everyone about you. I will tell them that I didn't waste my time when I worked among you.

¹⁷ Yes, I'm happy about you. And even if they kill me I will still be happy. I know you believe in Jesus and you work for him, and in that way you are giving your bodies to God. And if they kill me, I will be giving my body to God too, along with you. So we can all be happy about it together. ¹⁸ Yes, you can be happy too, even if they kill me. You can be happy with me.

Paul wanted Timothy to find out about the Philippi mob

¹⁹ Now I will tell you what I want to do. Timothy is here with me and I want to send him to you soon. After that he will come back and tell me all about you, and that will make me happy. ²⁰ Timothy is different from the other

people here. He really cares about you, and he always wants to know how you are going. ²¹ The others think more about their own things, not the things that Jesus Christ wants. ²² But you know Timothy. He shows us all that he is a good man. He works with me just like a son works with his father. Together we tell people the good news about Jesus. ²³ So I will send him to you. But first I will wait and see what they are going to do to me, then I will send him to you, ²⁴ even though I'm sure that God will soon let me come to visit you too.

Epaphroditus wanted to go back to Philippi

²⁵ Right now I'm sending Epaphroditus back to you. You sent him to me a while ago when I needed help. He came here and looked after me. He has been a good Christian friend to me here. We work together. We are both like soldiers fighting for God. But now I reckon I have to send him back to you. ²⁶ You know, after he came here he got sick, and then somebody told you about it, and now it worries him. He doesn't want you to be sad and sorry for him. So he really wants to go back and see you all again. ²⁷ Yes, he was very sick a while ago, and he nearly died. But God was good to him and made him better. And God was good to me too. He didn't let me have another thing to make me sad. ²⁸ So now I really want to send him to you, and when you see him again you will be happy, and I will not worry about him any more. ²⁹⁻³⁰ He belongs to our leader, Jesus, just like you do. You couldn't come and help me at that time, so he came instead of you. And then he nearly died. But he didn't worry. He knew he was working for Jesus Christ while he was helping me, and he was ready to die for Jesus. You have to really respect people like Epaphroditus. So when he comes back to you,

be happy and say, “Good to see you again. You are our good Christian friend.”

3

Some people teach things that are not true

¹ The next thing I want to tell you, friends, is this. You belong to our leader, Jesus, so keep thinking about him and be happy all the time. Yes, I told you all these things before, and I am telling you again. I don’t get tired of telling you, and this message will stop you going the wrong way.

²⁻³ Look out. There are some men that want to teach you the wrong things and get you to go the wrong way. They are like dogs. They go wrong. They only want to cut men’s bodies. They say that you don’t belong to God unless you do what the Jewish law says and have a young man’s operation. They are wrong. We have God’s spirit in us and he leads us the right way. We know what Jesus Christ did for us, and we trust him. We don’t trust people, or anything that people want to do. So really, we are the ones that belong to God. Those that only follow that Jewish law don’t belong to him.

Know Jesus properly, this is most important

⁴⁻⁵ Look at me. I’m more Jewish than they are. I was born into the Israel nation, and I belong to the Benjamin tribe. They did that young man’s operation on me when I was 8 days old, just like the Jewish law says. When I grew up, I joined the Pharisee mob that are really strong for the Jewish law. I’m properly Jewish. ⁶ I really wanted to make God happy, but I followed the Jewish way, and I made a lot of trouble for Christians. And I was strong for the Jewish laws. Nobody could say that I broke any of them.

⁷ I used to think that if I lived that way God will like me. But then I found out the true message about Jesus, and I knew that I was wrong. Those things didn't help at all. Now that I know Jesus Christ properly I reckon all those things are useless. ⁸ Yes, everything else is useless. The only important one is Jesus Christ. I know him, and he is my leader. He is really dear to me now. I have left every other way and I follow him. I reckon all those other things are rubbish and I have chucked them away, so that I can join up with Jesus Christ, ⁹ and belong to him properly. I have stopped trying to follow that Jewish law to get God to say that I'm all right. Instead of that I trust in Jesus Christ, and that is why God will say that I'm all right. ¹⁰ And I really want to know Jesus Christ properly. I want to have the same power that God used to make him alive again. And I want to share my life with him, even though this will give me a lot of pain, just like he got a lot of pain. That's all right. I will even let his enemies kill me, like they killed him, ¹¹ so that later, in the same way, God will make me alive again.

Try hard to be like Jesus

¹² I'm not saying that I have already done all this. I'm not saying that I'm properly good now. But, you see, Jesus Christ picked me to be one of his people, so I'm trying hard to be the sort of person that he wants me to be. ¹³ You see, friends, I don't reckon I'm all that good yet, but I keep looking ahead. I'm like a man running in a race. I forget what I did in the past and I think about what God wants me to do later. ¹⁴ I keep trying to be like Jesus, so that God will take me up into heaven to properly join up with him. This will be my prize.

¹⁵ And all of us have to think like this if we are spiritually strong now and live properly for Jesus. But if you think differently about anything, God will help you and show you which way is right. ¹⁶ This is the main thing for all of us. We started to learn about the way God wants us to live, so we have to keep on living his way and keep doing the things he has taught us to do. Don't go back.

Paul showed us the right way to live

¹⁷ My friends, you know how I live, so you all have to try to live the same way. And look around at each other, and see the way you all live. Notice those people that live the same way as I live, and you do the same. ¹⁸ You see, there are a lot of people that don't live the right way. I have often told you this before, and now I'm telling you the same thing again. When I think about it, I get so sad that I cry. There are people that reckon they are Christians, but they are really enemies of Jesus Christ. They live in a way that shows they are against the good things that Jesus died for on the cross. ¹⁹ They don't listen to God but they listen to their own bodies, and do bad things so that their bodies feel good. They do those bad things but they aren't ashamed. Instead, they think they are smart. They only think about the things that belong to this world. And in the end God will kill them in hell.

²⁰ But we belong to heaven. That is our real home. We are waiting for our leader, Jesus Christ, to come back from heaven. He is the one that saves us, and we really want him to come back. ²¹ He will change these weak bodies that we have now, and make them into new bodies. They will be like the wonderful body that he has now. Jesus can do this because he is really powerful. He is so powerful that he can be the boss over everything.

4

¹ So think about all this, my dear friends, and keep on following our leader, Jesus, and keep on trusting him properly. I love you very much and I really want to see you again. You make me very happy, and it is like you are the prize I get for winning a race.

Don't argue with each other

² Now I just want to talk to Euodia and Syntyche. I ask you 2 ladies very strongly to stop arguing with each other, and to try to think the same way as each other. Remember, you both belong to our leader, Jesus. ³ And now I'm talking to my other good friend there. Listen, my friend, you worked hard with me, and you were always true to Jesus. Now I want you to help those 2 women to be friends with each other. They both worked hard to tell people the good news about Jesus. They worked with me and Clement and some other Christians. God wrote all of their names in his special book called the Book of Life, where he writes the name of every person that will live for ever.

Jesus can make you calm and settled, to think properly

⁴ Now I'm talking to all of you Christians. You belong to our leader, Jesus, so always be happy. This is important, so I'm saying it again, "Be happy." ⁵ Always be easy with people and nice to them so that everyone will all see how good you are. Remember that our leader, Jesus, will come back soon. ⁶ Don't worry about anything, but pray to God and ask him for everything you need. And always thank God for what he has already done. ⁷ Then God will get you to feel calm and settled. You belong to Jesus Christ, and he will do this to look after your minds, so that you will

think properly. Nobody knows how God does this, but he can do it.

Think about good things

⁸ And one more thing, my friends. Keep thinking about the things that are true and honest. Keep thinking about the things that are right and good and lovely. Think about things that everyone reckons are really good. Think about the things that we can thank God for. ⁹ And keep doing the things that I taught you and that you agreed with. Remember the things that I said and the things that I did when I was with you and you do those things too. Then God will be with you and he will get you to feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

The Philippian Christians wanted to help Paul and this made him happy

¹⁰ Now I will tell you how things are going with me here. I'm really happy, thanks to our leader, Jesus. I know you were worried about me here in jail and you wanted to send something to help me, but at first you couldn't do it. Then you got a chance to send me some things, and this has made me happy. It shows that you are still thinking about me.

¹¹ I'm not saying this because I need anything. I have learned to be happy, no matter what happens to me. ¹² I know what it is like to need things and I know what it is like to have a lot of things. I have learned this secret, to be happy all the time no matter what happens. Sometimes I can eat plenty of food, and sometimes I go hungry. But it doesn't matter, I can be happy anyway. Sometimes I have everything I need, and sometimes I have nothing. But it doesn't matter, I can be happy anyway. ¹³ You see, Jesus Christ makes me strong, so I can do all these things.

¹⁴ And you have been very good to me. I have been getting trouble, but you remembered me and you helped me a lot.

They do good things, so God is happy with them

¹⁵ Do you remember the time when I first came to tell you the good news about Jesus? Then I left your country, called Macedonia, and I went to other people and tell them this story. You know, you were the only Christian church that gave me anything to help me do that. ¹⁶ And when I was in the town called Thessalonica, you mob kept on sending me money to help me.

¹⁷ I'm not telling you this to get you to keep on sending me things. But I want you to keep doing good things like that, so that God will be happy about you. He will add those good things to the list of all the good things you have done, and one day he will pay you for it all.

Give to God, and he will give you everything you need

¹⁸ But right now I have everything I need, and even more than I need. You gave all these things to Epaphroditus to bring to me, and I'm happy to get them. But you didn't only give them to me. You gave them to God. You gave him the right sort of present, a really nice one, and it has made him very happy. ¹⁹ You know, God looks after me, and he will look after you too. You belong to Jesus Christ, and God will give you everything you need. He is really rich. He has lots of things, so he can give you anything you need.

²⁰ Everyone always has to say that our God is very great. And he is our Father. They have to keep on saying that he is great for ever. This is very true.

The end of Paul's letter

²¹ Say hello to all God's people there that belong to Jesus Christ. The Christians who are with me here say hello to you. ²² All of God's people say hello to you. There are some Christians here that live in the house that belongs to the really big government boss, and they say a special hello to you.

²³ I pray that our leader, Jesus Christ, will keep on being really good to all of you.

From Paul

Plain English Version
Portions of the Holy Bible in the Plain English Version translation
for Australian Aboriginal people who speak English as a second
language

Copyright © 2019 The Plain English Project

Language: Aboriginal English (English)

Dialect: Australian Aboriginal

This translation is made available to you under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivatives license 4.0.

You may share and redistribute this Bible translation or extracts from it in any format, provided that:

You include the above copyright and source information.

You do not sell this work for a profit.

You do not change any of the words or punctuation of the Scriptures.

Pictures included with Scriptures and other documents on this site are licensed just for use with those Scriptures and documents. For other uses, please contact the respective copyright owners.

2019-08-07

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 27 Sep 2019 from source files dated 8 Aug 2019

838c6f50-4b58-56fb-846b-7becf8890f94