

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Paul told the Philippians, “My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19). I praise you today as the God who supplies my every need. You know my situation and the difficulties I face, and you are more than able to give me the victory through Jesus Christ! I can rejoice in all things, for I know that you will bring to completion the good work you began in me (Phil 1:6). Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me Paul’s letter to the church in Philippi. This letter is the first of what are known as the “Prison Epistles” (Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon), so named because they were written during Paul’s imprisonment in Rome. Paul’s letter to the Philippians was written to thank them for their gift which was delivered by Epaphroditus and to let them know about his current situation. He also wrote to address some issues, for Epaphroditus had given Paul an update on the church, and Paul’s comments indicate that divisions and conflicts had arisen between various members (cf. Phil 4:2). Not only that, but false teachers from the Jews were doing their best to infiltrate the church and convince the Gentiles that they must be circumcised (cf. Phil 3:2–3). As I read the letter, I tried to think of it as written personally to me, and I was encouraged by the many insights Paul shared on how to be a disciple of Jesus. First, Paul emphasized the need to rejoice. He rejoiced that Christ was being proclaimed, he rejoiced with the church, and he said over and over, “Rejoice in the Lord!” (Phil 3:1; 4:4). This teaches me that joy is both a decision and an emotion. As I focus my mind on what you are doing in people’s lives and choose to praise you in every situation, the Spirit produces within me a feeling of joy. This feeling is something I’m called to nurture and develop by choosing each day to set my mind on what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent and worthy of praise (Phil 4:8). Second, Paul highlighted the fact that his imprisonment had served to advance the gospel. This teaches me to examine my own circumstances and rejoice in how you are using them to spread the good news and make me more like Jesus. In this way I can turn what may be a source of discouragement into a source of expectation and hope. Third, Paul encouraged the church to let their conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil 1:27). They were to stand firm in one spirit and strive together in one mind for the faith of the gospel. Rather than acting from selfish ambition and conceit, they were to humble themselves, considering others as more important. This teaches me to imitate the mindset and attitude of Jesus. Although he was greater than all, he took a servant’s place and humbled himself to do your will, even to the point of death on a cross. I must humble myself as he did and be willing to submit to others in a spirit of unity and love. Fourth, Paul warned against false teachers. The Jews who demanded circumcision and works of the law were quick to tout their fleshly credentials. Paul dismissed such claims and reminded the Philippians that he could boast of the same things, yet he counted them as rubbish “in order that I may know Christ” (Phil 3:8). This teaches me that the righteousness which really matters is the righteousness that depends on faith, for the ultimate credential is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. Finally, Paul admonished the Philippians to be content in every situation. He revealed that the secret to obeying this command is found in the glorious truth: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13). This teaches me to regard what you have given me to be enough and rest in the knowledge that you will supply my needs as you see fit.

Reflection

Paul said, “Do all things without grumbling or disputing” (Phil 2:14). Do I complain when I don’t get my own way or whine about the difficulties in my life? When I do, I’m questioning your goodness and doubting your Word!

Request

Father, make my love abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that I may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Phil 1:9–11).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for all that you have done for me in Jesus. Truly, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Glory to God!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[May the Mind of Christ, My Savior](#)” – Kate B. Wilkinson.

Meditation Verse: Philippians 2:5–8.