

Philippians

The Exaltation of Christ [1:18b-26]

- **In Life or in Death [1:18b-24]**

- Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,
Ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι,
 - The word “Yes” is the conjunction ἄλλα (alla) which is normally contrastive meaning “but”.
 - Because this next section continues the thought of rejoicing, this word is being used emphatically here and is best translated “yes”.
 - The phrase “I will rejoice” is a future indicative of χαίρω (chairō) which does mean “I will rejoice”.
 - However, this word is used in the sense of “I will continue to rejoice” here.
- because I know for sure that this will lead to my deliverance
οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν
 - The word “for” is γὰρ (gar) which means “for” or “because”.
 - This word is used in the causative sense here and would be better translated “because”.
 - The phrase “I know” is οἶδα (oida) which means “know” or “know about”.
 - Here this word is used of knowledge that leads to certainty about something.
 - The word “this” is τοῦτό (touto) which is a singular, neuter pronoun.
 - This word is used here as in Eph 2:8 where it refers to a verb action or clause, not a single word.
 - In this verse τοῦτό (touto) refers to the entire previous section [vv. 12-18a].
 - This includes Paul’s imprisonment, its impact on the proclamation of the gospel, etc.
 - The phrase “turn out” is from ἀποβαίνω (apobainō) which means “result in”, “turn out” or “lead to”.
 - Since this verb is followed by εἰς (eis = to) it would be better to translate this “lead to”.
 - The word “deliverance” is from σωτηρία (sōtēria) which means “deliverance” or “salvation”.
 - Eternal salvation is not in view, so “deliverance” is a good translation.
 - But what is Paul going to be delivered from?
 - Some say his imprisonment, but if you follow Paul’s train of thought the answer is found in verse 20 – he would not be put to shame in anything.
- by means of your entreaties and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
 - The word “through” is διὰ (dia) which means “via” or “through”.
 - Here this is a marker of instrumentality meaning “by” or “by means of” [Acts 11:28; 15:7].
 - The word “prayers” is from δέησις (deēsis) which means “prayer”, “supplication” or “entreaty”.
 - This describes an urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God.
 - This instance is a singular noun, but refers to the prayers of the Philippians as a whole.
 - Given the context, the translation “entreaties” best captures the meaning.
 - The word “provision” is from ἐπιχορηγία (epichorēgia) which means “assistance” or “support”.

- We saw a cognate of this word in 2 Pet 1:5.
- In that study we observed that our English words “chorus” and “choreography” come from the χορηγ (chorēg) family of Greek words.
- In ancient Greece the state established the chorus, but it was the director (the χορηγος - chorēgus) who paid for the training of the chorus and, thus, was the “provider”.
- The phrase “the Spirit of Jesus Christ” is found only here, but as with the phrase “the Spirit of Jesus” found in Acts 16:7, this is clearly a reference to God the Holy Spirit.
- in accordance with my eager anticipation and confident expectation,
κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαραδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου,
 - The phrase “according to” is κατὰ (kata) which means “according to” or “in accordance with”.
 - Given that Paul’s expectation and hope are in view, “in accordance with” makes more sense.
 - The phrase “earnest expectation” is from ἀποκαραδοκία (apokaradokia) which means “eager anticipation” [Rom 8:19].
 - The word “hope” is from ἐλπίς (elpis) which means “confident expectation”.
- that I will not be put to shame in anything,
ὅτι ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι
 - The word “that” is ὅτι (hoti) which means “that” and can be a marker of narrative or an explanatory clause.
 - In this verse ὅτι (hoti) explains exactly what Paul’s deliverance [v. 19] would be.
 - The phrase “I will not be put to shame in anything” is actually “in nothing will I be disgraced”.
 - The reading here in the NASB is easier and it still conveys the meaning of the Greek.
- but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body,
ἀλλ’ ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματί μου,
 - The word “boldness” is from παρρησία (parrēsia) which means “outspokenness” or “frankness”.
 - This word can also describe confidence or boldness [2 Cor 7:4; Eph 6:19].
 - This is a reference to Paul’s boldness in being outspoken about Christ.
 - The phrase “will...be exalted” is from μεγαλύνω (megalunō) which means “glorify” or “exalt”.
 - This word is used here to describe Christ being magnified [Acts 19:17].
 - The phrase “in my body” emphasizes Paul’s fallen body as the place where Christ was to be exalted.
 - Charles Ellicott restated this as “My body will be the theatre in which Christ’s glory is displayed”.
- whether by life or by death.
εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου.
 - The phrases “by life” and “by death” use διὰ (dia) in the same way we saw it used in verse 19.
 - The word “life” is from ζωή (zōē) which is most often used of spiritual (eternal) life, but here it is used of temporal life [1 Cor 15:19].

- Principles of Philippians 1:18b-20
 - We have already seen that Paul rejoiced knowing that Christ was being proclaimed.
 - Paul knew he would continue to rejoice because everything that was happening to him was going to work out for his deliverance [Gen 50:20].
 - By deliverance, Paul meant that he knew he would not be put to shame [Isa 50:7; 1 Pet 4:16].
 - Paul's eager anticipation regarding this outcome was based on his understanding that the prayers of the Philippians would be effective [Jas 5:16b].
 - Paul's confidence came from his knowledge that the Holy Spirit would provide for him in any and every circumstance [Rom 5:3-5; 15:13-16].
 - No matter what Paul might be facing in his life, his utmost desire was to continue to be boldly outspoken about Christ his Savior [Eph 6:19-20].
 - Paul knew that he might die while in prison, but he was going to glorify Christ in his body whether he lived or died [Rom 12:1-2; 14:7-8; 1 Cor 6:20].
- For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος.
 - As we saw in verse 20, living and dying here is talking about physical life or death.
 - The word "gain" is κέρδος (kerdos) which means "gain" or "profit" [Phil 3:7].
- But if *I am* to live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me;
εἰ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκί, τοῦτό μοι καρπὸς ἔργου,
 - This verse does not use a normal construction for one of the Greek conditionals.
 - Here we have εἰ (ei) plus the infinitive "to live".
 - However, the context indicates that it is 3rd class.
 - The phrase "to live on in the flesh" confirms for us that Paul is using ζωή (zōē) [ζάω (zaō)] for physical life in this passage.
 - These words are typically used of spiritual life.
 - The phrase "fruitful labor" indicates that there are labors in life which do not bear fruit [John 15:4-5; Col 1:9-10; 2 Pet 1:5-8].
- and it is not obvious to me which I prefer.
καὶ τί αἰρήσομαι οὐ γνωρίζω.
 - The word "know" is γνωρίζω (gnōrizō) which means "make known" or "reveal".
 - This is an awkward usage here, but seems to indicate that this matter has not become clear (made known) in Paul's thinking.
 - The word "choose" is αἰρέω (haireō) which means "choose".
 - This is another awkward usage here, but this word is used of Paul's preference, not that he would choose to die (as in suicide).
- But I am hard-pressed from both sides,
συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο,
 - The phrase "hard-pressed" is from συνέχω (sunechō) which means "press in" or "hem" [Luke 8:45; 19:43].
 - The idea here is that both living and dying have merits in Paul's thinking and he is torn.
 - The phrase "from both *directions*" is literally "from the two".
 - The NASB translators added "directions" to make this clearer, but "sides" works as well.

- having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is much more advantageous; τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, πολλῶ [γὰρ] μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον·
 - The word “desire” is from ἐπιθυμία (epithumia) which means “desire”, “longing” or “craving”.
 - This word is most often used of sinful desires, but sometimes in a positive sense [Luke 22:15].
 - The word “depart” is from ἀναλύω (analuō) which means “depart” or “return”.
 - This word is from λύω (luō) which means “untie” or “set free”.
 - The word “for” is γὰρ (gar), but not all of the Greek manuscripts include this word.
 - However, even without γὰρ (gar) this clause clearly explains Paul’s desire to be with Christ.
 - The word “that” is not in the Greek, but it is implied that “very much better” refers to being with Christ.
 - The phrase “very much better” is actually “much more advantageous”.
- yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. τὸ δὲ ἐπιμένειν [ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ἀναγκαιότερον δι’ ὑμᾶς.
 - The phrase “remain on” is from ἐπιμένω (epimenō) which means “remain”, “stay” or “continue”.
 - This word is an intensified form of μένω (menō) which means “stay” or “remain”.
 - The phrase “in the flesh” is [ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ([ἐν] tē sarki) which connects to verses 20 and 22.
 - The word ἐν (en) is not in all Greek manuscripts, but τῇ σαρκὶ (tē sarki) means “in the flesh”.
 - The phrase “more necessary” is from ἀναγκαῖος (anankaios) which means “necessary”.
 - The word “more” makes sense here given the contrasting sides of the struggle Paul was facing.
 - The phrase “for your sake” is δι’ ὑμᾶς (di’ humas) which means “for you”.
 - This often means “for your sake[s]” [Rom 11:28; 1 Co 4:6; 2 Co 2:10; 4:15; 8:9; 1 Th 1:5; 1 Pet 1:20].
- Principles of Philippians 1:21-24
 - We have seen that whether he lived or died, Paul would glorify Christ in his body.
 - In Paul’s thinking, to live *is* Christ.
 - In other words, Paul sees his temporal life as a means by which Christ can be manifest to the world through him [2 Cor 4:7-10; Gal 2:20].
 - Paul knew that when he died, he would be face-to-face with Christ [2 Cor 5:6-8].
 - Being in heaven with Christ would be better for Paul than staying here on earth.
 - However, if he lived on in this world he would have more opportunities to bear fruit for Christ.
 - Paul’s ministries were benefitting the believers he served, so for their sakes it was better if the Lord gave him more time on this earth.
 - The two options each had merits and Paul struggled to decide which one he liked better.
 - As Paul assessed God’s plan for his life, he came to the conclusion that it was more necessary for him to remain on in the flesh.
 - Paul did not get to choose whether he would live or die, but as much as he loved Jesus and desired to be with Him, he knew his work was not yet complete [2 Tim 4:6-8].

- **In Remaining On [1:25-26]**

- Having been convinced of this, I know *for sure* that I will remain and continue with you all

καὶ τοῦτο πεποιθὼς οἶδα ὅτι μενῶ καὶ παραμενῶ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν

- The Greek word καὶ (kai) is used as a connective conjunction here that is not translated.
 - This is a continuation of a run-on sentence and the NASB translators decided to start a new sentence.
 - The word “Convinced” is from πείθω (peithō) which means “persuade” or “convince” [Ro 8:38; 14:14].
 - This is a perfect active indicative meaning a past completed action with present ongoing results.
 - The phrase “of this” is τοῦτο (touto) which we have seen can refer to a verb action or clause.
 - Here it refers back to “to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake”.
 - The phrase “I know” is οἶδα (oida) which means “know” or “know about”.
 - Here, as in v. 19, this word is used of knowledge that leads to certainty about something.
 - The words “remain” and “continue” are μενῶ (menō) and παραμενῶ (paramenō).
 - These words echo the meaning of the word ἐπιμένω (epimenō = “remain on”) in v. 24.
 - The phrase “with you all” is πᾶσιν ὑμῖν (pasin humin).
 - This means that Paul had become convinced that he would be released from prison.
- for your advancement and joy in the faith,

εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως,

- The word “progress” is from προκοπή (prokopē) which means “progress” or “advancement”.
- As in v.12 the idea of “advancement” better fits the context here.
- The phrase “in the faith” is τῆς πίστεως (tēs pisteōs) which is literally “of the faith”.
- Most modern translations use “in the faith” here because it better expresses the meaning of the Greek phrase.

- so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus

ἵνα τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν περισσεύῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ

- The phrase “so that” is ἵνα (hina) which is used to introduce a purpose clause.
- This explains God’s purpose in preserving Paul’s life and allowing him to leave prison.
- The phrase “proud confidence” is καύχημα (kauchēma) which means source of pride.
- This word highlights the *reason* for pride or boasting [2 Cor 1:14; Gal 6:4].
- The phrase “may abound” is from περισσεύω (perisseuō) which means “be in abundance”.
- As we saw in v. 9, this word conveys the idea of an overflowing abundance [2 Cor 9:12; Col 2:7].
- The phrase “in Christ Jesus” makes it clear that Paul wanted the Philippians’ confidence in him to be completely based upon their confidence in Jesus Christ.

- through my coming to you again.

διὰ τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

- If the phrase “with you all” in v. 25 left any doubt, this phrase makes it crystal clear that Paul expected to be with the Philippians once again.
- Paul’s ability to visit the Philippians again should inspire their abundant confidence in Christ who would bring about his preservation and release.

- Principles of Philippians 1:25-26
 - Paul had given so much consideration to God's will for his life that he had become convinced that it was more necessary for him to live on for the sake of the believers he was serving with his life.
 - This led him to be sure in his knowledge that he would be released from prison one day so that he could visit the Philippians once again [Phil 2:24].
 - By the Lord allowing him to live on and continue his ministries, the Philippians (and all of us) would benefit by advancing in their spiritual growth and in the joy that comes about as a result.
 - We will encounter circumstances in this life that do not inspire rejoicing, but if our focus is on Christ we will be able to rejoice in Him [Phil 2:1; 1 Pet 4:13].
 - This type of rejoicing (joy) is unique to the Christian faith and is something we have the capacity to do continually [Phil 4:4; 1 Thess 5:16].
 - Paul wanted to make sure Jesus Christ got the credit for preserving his life and allowing him to be released from prison and that the Philippians' confidence in him was rooted in Christ Himself.
 - In fact, he wanted their confidence in Christ to increase to the point of overflowing through the Lord allowing him to visit them once again.
 - The grace of God would be on full display by His allowing the one who taught them about Christ to come see them again and help them to grow in their faith [2 Pet 3:18].