



PHILIPPIANS

(For access to all available commentaries and written sermons of Charlie's click [HERE](#))

...being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:11

The context needs to be given in order to follow what Paul now says –

“...that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

He asks us to “be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.” He then explains that thought. The words translated here as “being filled” are better translated as “having been filled.” It is a participle in the perfect tense. In other words, it is done; we have been filled. And the filling was with “the fruits of righteousness.” Again, there is disagreement as to whether the word should be “fruit” or “fruits.” The Old Testament speaks of the fruit in the singular in verses such as this one from Proverbs –

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who wins souls is wise.” Proverbs 11:30

It is also singular in Amos 6:12. In the New Testament, the “fruit of righteousness” is mentioned in James 3:18 and in this verse from Hebrews 12 –

“Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Hebrews 12:11

Thus, it is more than probable that the correct rendering of this verse is also singular. Regardless of this, the filling with the fruit of righteousness is not ongoing until the day of Christ. Instead, we have been filled with the fruit of righteousness (meaning it was imputed to us upon belief in Christ), and that will sustain us until the day of Christ. It is already available to us and it is up to us to tap that source and act upon it.

And this filling with the fruit of righteousness is “to the praise of God.” He so filled us with the righteousness of Christ so that He might be glorified in us and through us. In the Bible, fruit is the outcome of something. Christ’s work confirmed His righteousness and thus it is symbolized by fruit – the end result of what He accomplished. In our receiving Him, we are granted that outcome as if we had ourselves accomplished it. This is what is called “imputation.” God imputed Christ’s righteousness to us, having filled us with this fruit. Now we are asked to demonstrate that by being “sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.”

Life application: Proper theology comes at a cost of time and effort. We don’t just get it by an external infusion of the Holy Spirit. That is a cheap and easy way of looking at doctrine, but it is wrong. It says, “I will rely on the Holy Spirit to form me while I do all the other things in life that I want to do.” Sorry... it just doesn’t work that way. The Bible tells us to study to show ourselves approved. Get to work.

But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, Philippians 1:12

A conjunction is introduced here which can be translated as “but,” “and,” “now,” or even “moreover.” Paul is tying this verse in with what he said in verse 7. There he noted his chains and also his “defense and confirmation of the gospel.” It was a note that he was bound and imprisoned because of his proclamation. It would seem that this would hinder his efforts. However, the exact opposite was true.

He says, “But I want you to know, brethren...” He will impart news to them which will bolster their own faith and show that the divine hand of God is with them in their efforts. The word, “brethren” is given to show that they are one united force. Regardless of their circumstances, their efforts were directed towards the same good end. From this note of unity, he then tells them “that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel.”

As noted, his bonds have brought about exactly the outcome that one would expect. Instead of the transmission of the gospel being hampered, it was being furthered. This is seen in Paul’s selection of terminology. The word translated as “furtherance” here is *prokopé*. It is an unusual word which is used only by Paul. He uses it here, again in verse 1:25, and then in 1

Timothy 4:15. It comes from two words – pró, meaning “in front of,” and kóptō, which indicates “cut” or “chop down.” The sense is one of people who are designated to go before an army, cutting down trees in order to continue their march unabated. It can also pertain to pioneers who clear away trees as they move forward in order to settle the land.

Paul’s chains had actually gone forth in this manner, chopping down any resistance to the gospel. What this shows is that those who saw him and heard his words were convinced that the chains were on a man who was otherwise freer than those who had no chains. His physical person may have been bound, but there was a freedom in him that all around him desired to possess. This is the same type of thought that was expressed by Paul when he stood before King Agrippa in Acts 26 –

Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!”

25 But he said, “I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. 26 For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”

29 And Paul said, “I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.”

30 When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; 31 and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, “This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains.”

32 Then Agrippa said to Festus, “This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.” Acts 26:24-32

Life application: If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. No earthly bonds can hinder the spirit of a person who has been freed by Christ Jesus. The chains a believer may bear on his physical body can be used to present a freedom that no one around him could actually imagine.

...so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; Philippians 1:13

The reading of this verse is disputed, but the overall sense is still available. Several translations will help us to see this –

As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. NIV

For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. NLT

So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; KJV

so that my bonds have become manifest in Christ in the whole praetorium, and to the other places -- all, YLT

As you can see, the KJV says “bonds in Christ.” The YLT says “bonds have become manifest in Christ.” The latter is correct. The spacing in the Greek is too far apart to tie “bonds” in with “Christ.” It undermines the intent of what Paul is saying. The NIV takes those same words and paraphrases them for the sake of clarity. As far as “the whole palace guard,” the words are translated by the KJV as “palace” and “praetorium” by the YLT. “Palace” is not correct. “Praetorium” is a literal rendering of the Greek, but it doesn’t explain what is the case for us to understand. The term “palace guard” does.

Vincent’s Word Studies gives a long and detailed explanation of the meaning, but for brevity’s sake, the Pulpit Commentary gives a shorter, but less detailed explanation –

“...literally, in the whole praetorium, The word elsewhere means a governor's house: Pilate's house in the Gospels, Herod's palace in Acts 23:35. But at Rome the name so used would give unnecessary offense, and there is no proof that it was ever used for the palatium there. St. Paul must have heard it constantly as the name of the Praetorian regiment; he was kept chained to a soldier of that corps (Acts 28:16); and as his guard was continually relieved, his name and sufferings for Christ would become gradually known throughout the force.”

The substance of this verse can be summed up with the thought that Paul was handed over to the palace guard along with many other prisoners, as was (and still is today) a common thing. When he arrived, he was just another offender along with all the others. But afterwards, the palace guard began to realize that he was different, and his imprisonment was not for an offense against Rome, but it was because of His witness for Christ. Eventually, as the guards rotated their assigned duties of taking charge of Paul, they all came to know and understand his position.

From there, the word had spread “to all the rest.” The talk of this particular prisoner went beyond the guards, and the gospel message spread because of Paul’s imprisonment. His chains had thus “been made manifest” in Christ, or as the NKJV reads, the fact “has become evident.” Good news had spread from dire circumstances.

Life application: Reading a single version of the Bible is fine, but to understand what is actually the true rendering of any given passage takes hard work, studying Hebrew and Greek scholar's writings, and knowing the Bible more than just superficially. The more one reads, the more various accounts will tie together to form a picture of what is being transmitted in any given passage.

...and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Philippians 1:14

The words of this verse (which follow after the KJV) are incorrectly translated. It would be a redundancy to say "brethren in the Lord." If one is a brother, he is in the Lord. The words "brethren" and "in the Lord" are never connected in the Bible in this way. Instead, the words "in the Lord" should be connected to the word "confident." This follows along with the same connection as is found in Galatians 5:10, 2 Philippians 2:24, and 2 Thessalonians 3:4. Therefore, this verse should be translated as is found in the Berean Study Bible –

"And most of the brothers, confident in the Lord by my chains, now dare more greatly to speak the word without fear."

As you can see, the translation makes sense, and it avoids what would otherwise be a theological error. Further, the words "in the Lord" are in the emphatic position in the Greek. Therefore, the idea is that "most of the brethren" have a renewed confidence IN THE LORD because of Paul's chains. From this confidence, they are now "more bold to speak the word without fear."

This is a normal attitude which is often seen among people. If there is a call to arms in a nation, people may be reticent to get up and respond. But if Renny Ready-to-Go jumps to his feet and says, "I stand with freedom!" then suddenly others will be emboldened to rise and join the call as well. Likewise, if there is a need to accomplish a special task in the bad side of town, the church may make the call for volunteers. But until Phil Faithful stands up and says, "I'll go down there! The Lord will prevail!" the people may be timid and reticent to respond. However, in his bold stand, others will quickly join in to help.

This is what is being described by Paul here. The Lord used his chains to spur on the brothers. They were emboldened in Him through the use of Paul's circumstances and his faithful proclamation despite them.

Life application: When a call is made for something to be accomplished, don't be afraid to be the first to stand and accept the challenge. Your willingness to rise to the challenge may be just what is needed to spur others on to meeting the need.