

A LOOK AT THE BOOK PHILIPPIANS

Ralph Porter
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AUTHOR AND DATE

External and internal testimony combine to give strong evidence for Pauline authorship.

The letter was written during Paul's Roman imprisonment in about A.D. 60.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The church at Philippi was founded by Paul on his second missionary journey.

It was the first church founded in Macedonia following Paul's vision to go there and help them.

From the beginning, the churches in that region suffered persecution on account of their faith.

The church appears to be doctrinally sound since no corrections are included.

They were a generous church, noted for their support of Paul and other brethren in need.

Paul has much praise for their positive characteristics.

Nevertheless, **two problems** are revealed in the letter:

First, they are **discouraged**.

Times are hard.

They are suffering.

Their leader is in jail.

Their messenger to Paul is sick.

Everything seems to be going wrong.

The second problem revealed is **division**.

There is a personal conflict between two women in the church.

The larger problem of Judaistic divisions, between Judaizers and Gentiles, are evident here as in other areas where Paul has ministered.

PURPOSE AND THEME

The two problems indicate the **two major purposes** of the letter:

1. Due to their discouragement, Paul wants **to encourage them** in the midst of their affliction.
Therefore he writes concerning **joy**.
2. Due to their division, Paul wants **to resolve the conflicts** between the brethren.
Therefore he emphasizes the theme of **unity**.

What are the lessons this letter teaches us about living in the midst of difficult circumstances today?

How should we deal with discouragement? See any solutions?

PHILIPPIANS

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS!

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