

Paul's Prayer of Gratitude

(Phil.1:3-8) Prayer of Gratitude – (Phil.1:9-11) Prayer for Growth

Prayer of Gratitude – Vs 3-8

Vs 3-5 Fellowship in the Gospel
Vs 6 Faithfulness of God
Vs 7-8 Fellowship in Grace

Vs 3-5 - Grateful because of their Fellowship in the Gospel

Vs 3 – **I thank** – **eucharisteo** PAI – the main verb in vs. 3-8 indicating the main thought of this section of the letter – Paul's gratitude and Paul's prayer

Vs 3 – **my God** – the direction of Paul's gratitude – to God – My God indicates his personal relationship with his God – He is grateful to his God

Vs 3 – **in all my remembrance** – **epi** – based on; because of all my remembrance – all – not indicating a specific incident but Paul's total experience with the Philippian church

- Remembers: the vision Act 16:9; Lydia's conversion 16:14-15; demon possessed girl 16:16-24; midnight prayer meeting in jail 16:25; earthquake 16:26; jailer's conversion 16:27-34; generosity Phil 4:10-18.

Vs 4 – **always in my prayers for all of you** – making my prayer with joy

- When Paul thinks of them, he prays for them, joy comes into his soul
- He is grateful and joyful because of the spiritual life and mission they share
- Who makes you grateful and joyful and why? Spiritual connection?

Vs 5 – **because of your fellowship** – **koinonia** – sharing; participation; partnership

Vs 5 – **in the gospel** – **euaggelion** – good news; death, burial, resurrection

Vs 5 – 1st day – (Acts 16) **until now** – the date of writing (10 yrs later)

- Paul uses koinonia 3 times in Phil: 1:5 – f/gospel; 2:1 – f/GHS; 3:10 – f/suffer Jesus
- Their fellowship includes 2 ideas: (1) Sharing in salvation by believing the gospel (1st day) (2) supporting the gospel ministry – financial support Phil 4:16.
- The gospel is the good news about Christ – D,B,R – 1Cor 15:3-4; Rom 1:16

Summary of the Passage

1. The main idea of Vs 3-8 is Paul's gratitude for the Philippian Bel's.
2. Their faith and service motivated him to thank God for them and pray for them.
3. Paul continued to remember all they had shared and had in common.
4. Vs 4 is best understood as a parenthesis – details of Paul's prayer
5. The Philippian bel's were also a source of joy for Paul as he prayed
6. He was specifically grateful for the spiritual life they shared together
7. He was specifically grateful for their financial support of his ministry

Gratitude

1. Greek: eucharisteo – eu – good; charis – grace; good grace, grace is good

- Gratitude for the believer is a response to God's grace; Grace à response
- The Eucharist is a ceremony of thanks to Jesus for His Person and work.
- Acceptance of God's plan and agreement that all He allows is right & good

2. Gratitude is the only reasonable response to knowing God

- 1Chr 16:34 – God's grace and mercy
- Rev 11:17 – God's sovereignty – He is in control
- Ps 30:4 – God's holiness
- 1Chr 29:11-13 – God's greatness, power, glory, majesty, sovereignty, power

3. Gratitude is the appropriate response for the helpless and undeserving having been given so much.

- Eph 2:1-9 - God gives love, mercy and grace to the helpless and undeserving
- Rom 5:10 - Jesus dies for His enemies, reconciling them to Himself –
- Col 1:9-13; Col 3:1-4 Position in Christ – our salvation and security in Christ -
- Col 3:5-9 - Power over the flesh – freedom from sin and the old man belief system

4. Gratitude increases as the believer grows in grace and knowledge.

Col 2:7 rooted & built up in Him, strengthened in faith, overflowing with gratitude

Col 3:12-17 – 4 imperatives & 8 participles related to spiritual growth; Vs 15-17 keep becoming thankful; singing with gratitude; in all things giving thanks

Eph 5:20; 1Thes 5:18 – grateful for all things – consistent spiritual perspective

- Gratitude related to capacity – ability to appreciate what God has done for us.
- Capacity is the ability to see clearly what God has given us cp to what we deserve
- Gratitude cannot be commanded, but is a choice based on our focus of thought.
- Gratitude must be genuine to have value in the sight of God.

5. Gratitude is a test of our faith and focus on spiritual priorities and realities

- 2Thes 1:3; 2:13 – obligated to give thanks – **opheilo** – indebted; to owe
- Eph 5:20; Col 3:17; 1Th 5:18 – give thanks for all things
- Gratitude is the natural response of the soul focused on spiritual reality
- Saved not lost; forgiven not condemned; embraced never forsaken; permanent provision; empowered; enlightened; protected; etc.
- Ingratitude indicates a focus on your own frustrated agenda – not God's
- Ingratitude indicates a failure of faith – Rom 8:28 – All things made into good
- Ingratitude indicates walking in the flesh – focused on the flesh
- Rom 1:21 – those who reject God/plan are not grateful

6. Gratitude is an important aspect of prayer

1Cor 1:4; 1Thes 2:13; 2Thes 1:3; 1Tim 1:12; 2Tim 1:3 – I thank God

Phil 4:6; Col 4:2 – prayer with thanksgiving.

- As we orient to God's plan we realize & believe that all He does is out of love
- If everything God allows is for good (Rom 8:28) we can be grateful for it
- God wants us to recognize His care for us and thank Him for His grace