

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philippians

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| Scripture Block: | n/a |
| Theme: | Introductory Material |
| Life verse: | n/a |
| Today's passage: | Various portions of Philippians chapter 1 |

Notes

Comments

We have investigated Paul's first visit to Philippi as recorded in Acts 15-16. This visit, which corresponds to the start of the Church in Philippi, occurred some time just prior to 50 AD. So then, what is the situation now, at the time of Paul's letter to the Philippians?

- The date is now most likely between 60-62 AD. During the intervening years, Paul has kept in touch with the fledgling Church through Timothy, and has returned to the city on at least two other occasions (Ac 20:1-6).
- As is clear from the first chapter of Philippians, Paul is now in prison (Pp 1:7, 13-14, 20-24, 30). His life is most certainly on the line. Although there is some uncertainty with the specific location of his imprisonment, it is most likely Rome, awaiting for Caesar to pass judgment on his case.

We should also consider the purpose for which the book of Philippians was written.

- There are of course Paul's purposes in writing: a thank-you for financial support, a health-update on Epaphroditus, etc. I would call these “surface purposes.”
- There are also God's purposes in preserving this letter as part of His Word. I would like to suggest three purposes that are interwoven throughout the book:
 - 1) to display the life of a servant;
 - 2) to reveal the thinking (heart) of a servant; and
 - 3) to emphasize the great care needed to guard one's servant heart!

I will do my best to develop each of these during the course of our study.

Application

Paul is in prison, on a trumped up charge—waiting to be freed or executed at the hand of a capricious emperor. Yet his heart turns to ministry and the service of others. Are we ready to do the same in the midst of whatever challenges God brings our way? Even now I hope that Paul's servant heart will convict our hearts to follow his example, while at the same time remembering that such service can only be done in the strength the Lord provides.