

# Paul's Ministry Partners Enjoyed Many Blessings



**Paul and the Philippians Cooperate to Advance the Gospel**

From *The Amplified Bible*  
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**The Apostle Paul Was In A Unique Partnership Relationship With The Philippians.**

The word partnership appears only three times in the entire Amplified Bible, and in every case that word appears in the writings of Paul. Only in the Book of Philippians is that word used in the context of cooperation for the purpose of spreading the Gospel. Thus, only in the Book of Philippians is this powerful **partnership principle** revealed, and we will need to carefully study Paul's letter to the Philippians, to discover the impact that this principle made in the lives of the believers in Philippi. In Phil 1:5, 7-8, and 4:15, Paul tells them, "[I thank my God] for your fellowship (your sympathetic cooperation and contributions and **partnership**) in advancing the good news (the Gospel) from the first day [you heard it] until now. You are all partakers and sharers with me of grace. For God is my witness how I long for and pursue you all with love, in the tender mercy of Christ Jesus [Himself]! And you Philippians yourselves well know that in the early days of the Gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, no church (assembly) entered into **partnership** with me and opened up [a debit and credit] account in giving and receiving except you only." Note that the Philippian account was both receiving and giving, thus apparently the Philippians kept an account going and received regular offerings to support the ministry of Paul. This regular giving enabled their ministries as Paul and his associates traveled to other countries.

**Call to action -- support the spreading of the Gospel:** I want to ask a critical question, as we consider this partnership of Paul and the Philippians. Are you now involved with a church or ministry that has as its purpose to advance the cause of Christ and the spreading of the good news of the Gospel? If so, do you cooperate and contribute regularly? If you attend a church or support a ministry that promotes the cause of Christ and spreads the Gospel locally and abroad, then I urge you to be diligent and regular in your cooperation and giving. A good ministry like Paul's can enrich your life greatly, so Paul gave the Philippians an opportunity to participate and reap the blessings. If you do not have a church or ministry to support presently, then may I suggest that you partner with our ministry? Get in on God's abundant blessings now!

**Paul Prayed Regularly For His Ministry Partners.**

In Phil 1:2-4, 9-10 Paul prayed for the Philippian believers, "2 Grace (favor and blessing) to you and [heart] peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah). 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you. 4 In every

prayer of mine I always make my entreaty and petition for you all with joy (delight). 9 And this I pray: that your love may abound yet more and more and extend to its fullest development in knowledge and all keen insight [that your love may display itself in greater depth of acquaintance and more comprehensive discernment], 10 So that you may surely learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value [recognizing the highest and the best, and distinguishing the moral differences], and that you may be untainted and pure and unerring and blameless [so that with hearts sincere and certain and unsullied, you may approach] the day of Christ [not stumbling nor causing others to stumble]." In James 5:16b we also learn that, "The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working]." So Paul's heartfelt and continuing prayers and dynamic teaching improved life dramatically in Philippi.

**Practice this powerful prayer principle regularly:** If you are a pastor, evangelist, teacher, or Christian leader -- do you spend time regularly praying for those in your care? For example, Paul prayed for the Philippians that they would have favor and experience God's blessings, and that their love would abound and display itself more. He prayed to elevate their discernment, so they would focus on the best things in life or things that are excellent or of real value. In other words, Paul prayed earnestly and regularly for the Philippians that God would Change Their Destiny and improve their lives dramatically. Paul's prayers made tremendous power available. Yours will too, as you follow Christ and spread the Good News (the Gospel). Be encouraged that your impact is supernatural, as you are faithful to Christ.

**Paul's Role Model Was Infectious. He Inspired Confidence, Boldness And Freedom In Many Others.**

Paul's circumstances would have made most people depressed and ineffective, however, his effectiveness in spreading the gospel actually increased, in spite of his afflictions. His joyous demeanor and ability to rise above the circumstances was a powerful witness to all of the imperial guard and to all others who surrounded him. Paul's life in Christ was a powerful testimony. In Phil 1:12-14 we read, "12 Now I want you to know and continue to rest assured, brethren, that what [has happened] to me [this imprisonment] has actually only served to advance and give a renewed impetus to the [spreading of the] good news (the Gospel). 13 So much is this a fact that throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest [here] my imprisonment has become generally known to be in Christ [that I am a prisoner in His service and for Him]. 14 And [also] most of the brethren have derived fresh confidence in the Lord because of my chains and are much more bold to speak and publish fearlessly the Word of God [acting with more freedom and indifference

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to the consequences].” While Paul was confined in prison, his consistent faithfulness to Christ and his adherence to the fruit of the Spirit made a powerful witness -- that inspired multiplication inside and outside prison walls.

**Question:** Do you rise above your circumstances, through Christ, as Paul did; and inspire fresh confidence, more boldness, and more freedom in others? Paul and his ministry team members provided great role models and they all encouraged the Philippians to follow their example.

### **Paul Discerned The Reality Of Existing Conditions In Philippi And Prescribed Effective Remedies.**

Some of the brethren were at odds in Philippi. That was hindering ministry effectiveness, souring personal relationships, and diminishing the well being and potential of the Philippians. Paul therefore provides instructions in Christian unity in his Epistle to the Philippians and his theme is that **only in Christ are real unity and joy possible**. Paul founded the church at Philippi and visited the church again on his second missionary journey. He also received reports from time to time, for more than a decade, as his ministry associates visited Philippi repeatedly. Paul loved the Philippians greatly, genuinely cared for them, and expressed his profound appreciation for their regular support. Paul exhorts the church at Philippi to grow and abound in the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy and peace). From James 3:16 we understand that, *“For wherever there is jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry and selfish ambition), there will also be confusion (unrest, disharmony, rebellion) and all sorts of evil and vile practices.”* Decline sets in whenever there is envy and strife in a ministry, business, home, or personal relationships.

**Call to action:** Paul had great discernment and was a problem solver and unifier. He helped to increase the effectiveness of ministries like that of the Philippian Church. He followed up what he started to see that they were coming along well. Paul knew fundamental principles in Scripture, like the value of unity. He rooted out disabling strife with his effective teaching and the fruit of the Spirit. For all of us who are engaged in Christian leadership, that should be our approach in ministry as well. Inspire humility and unity in Christ.

### **Paul Worked Diligently To Bring The Philippians Along To Full Maturity In Christ.**

Paul encouraged them to progress in their development. He set the right example personally by striving to continue his own further development in Christ. In Phil 1:6 Paul wrote, *“And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.”* Paul said, in 1:21a, *“For me to live is Christ”* and in 1:25 *“I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith.”* Paul is dedicated to remaining in his ministry role to the Philippians. His life is needful for them and he is genuinely concerned for their welfare. He wants to see them continue to make progress in building their faith. Paul appeals to the Philippians to: Have the Mind and Humility of Christ, to grow in their knowledge of Christ, and

to make peace with God and have the peace of Christ. Paul testifies that Christ is the sole source of his sufficiency and overcoming strength, in 4:13 he says, *“I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency].”*

**Question:** Have you learned to **set a good example** and **be an overcomer** in Christ’s strength? Work on the development of your own faith and help to develop and complete the faith of others. Be an encourager!

### **The Philippians Experienced God’s Supernatural Supply As They Supported Paul’s Ministry.**

In Phil 4:17-19 Paul tells the believers, *“17 Not that I seek or am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek and am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account]. 18 But I have [your full payment] and more; I have everything I need and am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent me. [They are the] fragrant odor of an offering and sacrifice which God welcomes and in which He delights. 19 And my God will liberally supply (fill to the full) your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”* The Philippians helped to meet Paul’s every need, and Paul told them God would meet their every need, as they reaped what they sowed. In Mark 10:29-30 Jesus said, *“29 Truly I tell you, there is no one who has given up and left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for My sake and for the Gospel 30 Who will not receive a hundred times as much now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life.”* Jesus articulated this powerful and productive investment principle Himself, and I believe this statement by Jesus speaks for itself. No further explanation is needed.

*“I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency].”*

**Action – Become a partner in ministry:** Give for the sake of Christ and the advancement of the gospel, and your resources will multiply, and not diminish! Above all, bring all your tithes and offerings into God’s storehouse – and He will open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing for you, and rebuke the devourer for your sake, and all nations shall call you happy and blessed and you shall be a land of delight (As shown in Malachi 3:10-12).

If you want to study the Word of God for yourself and discover and participate in these abundant blessings, then I encourage you to become involved in the ministry that is discussed in pages 26 and 27 of this Guide issue. With God’s help you can **Change Your Destiny** and impact the destiny of many others as well, as Paul did. Start a home or business prayer group and follow along with this study program. Become a multiplier and channel of His blessings.

The author of this article has been involved in computer-based Bible research for over thirty years. The special study described in the next two pages resulted from an extensive and fresh computer research project, which was inspired by principles found in the Prayer of Jabez. You will be excited as God, through His Word, brings blessings, enlargement, and divine protection -- to you, your family, and your church or business. **Are you ready to Change Your Destiny?**