

Philippians

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Introduction



Philippi was founded by Philip II in 356 B.C. and located in Macedonia about 10 miles inland from the Aegean Sea. There was a major highway running alongside the forum of the city and the river Angitis was near the city. One purpose of establishing the city was to guard the nearby gold mines. The city received major status in 27 B.C. when it was named a leading city in Macedonia. This status gave the inhabitants advantages of an autonomous government and being declared citizens of Italy although located in Greece. Paul founded the church in A.D. 50 during his second missionary journey (Acts 16). Fellow missionaries with him at the time were Silas, Timothy, and Luke. The city had no synagogue but there were some “God-fearers” there such as Lydia who became the first convert to Christianity. The combination of “God-fearers” and Gentiles made for a strange group for the first church but God’s grace formed the glue for the church. There is speculation that Luke was originally from Philippi and it seems that he was left there to guide the church when the others left. Paul returned to the church on his third missionary journey in A.D. 55-56 (Acts 20:1-6).

There are three possibilities considered for the place where Paul wrote this letter: Caesarea, Rome, or Ephesus. Most scholars consider that he wrote the letter from prison in Rome during his first imprisonment during A.D. 59-61 (Acts 28:30). It seems that his trial was being conducted during the writing. This letter is a very personal letter and contains no harsh rebukes of the congregation that we see in the letters to the church at Corinth. The letter has been accepted into the canon by many early Christian leaders such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria from the late second and early third centuries. Mention of its content was given by Clement of Rome in the first century, Polycarp and Ignatius in the early second century. The Moratorian fragment found in c. A.D. 170 includes it among the list of Paul’s Epistles. Thus there is no controversy regarding its inclusion in the canon.

The book gives us excellent insights into the mind of Christ and few portions of the Bible give us this marvelous insight. The Gospels give us information about what Jesus said and did but seldom do they give us insights into His thoughts. The mind of the believer and the mind of Christ should be the same and studying this book will help us to have His perspective of the world. So prepare to be greatly blessed as we spend time studying this great book of the Bible.

Chapter 1

Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

Phil 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The book begins appropriately with the names of the people writing to the church at Philippi. The first sentence says that Paul and Timothy are bond-servants of Christ Jesus. We know that a bond-servant is a person who was a servant to someone but has been released from that servitude and now willingly submits to being a servant to someone else. Of course each of us was a servant of Satan:

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

Eph 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Being a slave to Christ Jesus is very different than other servitudes except for the total allegiance we have to Him. We have a bondage of love and gratitude that leaves us free to serve, give, and love Him totally. This serving of Christ Jesus is the path of joy and peace and perfect spiritual satisfaction. The book is not written to everyone in Philippi or even to every member of the church at Philippi but it is written to the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi. These people are saints not based upon their external behavior but based upon the grace that they received from God to be born again and made spiritually holy before Him. Before the presence of God we have no sins because they were put on Jesus for Him to receive the wrath of God on our sins. Also before the presence of God we have the righteousness of Jesus in our account so that spiritually we are sinless and totally righteous. This is called double imputation as reported by Paul:

2Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Note that this book is written to all the saints there including the church officers who worked with all the other saints to edify and sanctify the congregation of believers. The second sentence gives a common greeting in Paul's time. Grace and peace had a meaning to mankind that was different from their meaning to the Christian. Grace is God's unmerited favor toward His chosen people. Here are a few verses concerning this wonderful grace:

John 1:16 For of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

Rom 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,

Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Peace is also a very different concept for Christians than for non-Christians. The greeting among Jewish people was often “Shalom” and this means peace but not in some loose fashion as we might say “hey”. This peace to a Christian is peace with God that comes about because of the grace of God. Notice the difference Jesus stated about the word:

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

Notice also the first words Jesus spoke after His resurrection to the disciples in the upper room:

John 20:19 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

This peace with God then leads us to have the peace of God in our life on earth. As we learn more about the sovereignty of God we will experience more of this peace and realize that we never have any reason to be anxious about anything. Our heart should never be troubled or fearful in any situation. Also note that Paul uses excellent theology in placing grace before peace since we cannot have this peace without first receiving God’s grace. Paul also states that this grace and peace have their origins in God the Father and God the Son. The Father and the Son are in agreement about the offering of grace and peace to the chosen Family of God.

Phil 1:3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,

Phil 1:4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,

Phil 1:5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

Paul’s emphasis in prayer is always first for spiritual needs for others and for himself. The spiritual needs always trump the physical needs. Since spiritual aspects of Christians have their origins in God, we should always thank God for those. Carol and I have been praying for the salvation of our grandsons for a long time and we always thank God for their salvation that can only come from His initiative. Here Paul is thanking God for the salvation of these fellow Christians at Philippi. He has great joy in his heart knowing that God has led them to their participation in the gospel and that He is continuing His work in their life. An important Greek word for prayer is “eucharisteo” and it means to give thanks. A Latin word for prayer is “gratia” and it originally had two meanings. One of the meanings was grace, in the sense of God’s unmerited favor and the other meaning is thanksgiving. We are using these meanings when we say that we will say grace before a meal in which we are giving thanks for God’s grace in giving us the food. All of our prayers should then be filled with thanksgiving. All of these people had one important thing in common and that was the gospel of Jesus Christ and it was for this that Paul is thanking God. We Christians today share this same common element and we should always thank God for that element within each of us that causes us each to have great joy in being one in that fellowship.

Phil 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

This is an often quoted verse and one that has been memorized by many Christians over the ages since it was written. It is the great promise of perseverance. I am reminded of:

Heb 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus is the author of our faith and He is the one who will perfect it. Since our faith is not generated by ourselves, it is not something that we can ever dismiss.

Rom 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

God has allotted to each of His children an appropriate measure of faith that will be perfected by Jesus Christ. There should never cross our minds that we might not persevere in that faith. It is because of these facts regarding our faith that we can quote the verse:

*Rom 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,
Rom 8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Our salvation is not of ourselves and our perseverance also does not depend upon our willpower. Praise the Lord and give Him great thanks for this wonderful fact. The good work that He began in us will be perfected until the last day at the second advent of Jesus Christ. The good work is the making of us in the image of Jesus:

*Rom 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;
Rom 8:30 and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Note in Rom 8:29 that we are predestined to become conformed to the image of Jesus. It is that process that we call sanctification. As we are being sanctified we will become more and more aware of our sinful nature and the sins that we have committed and the more we know how sinful we really are the more thankful we become for the grace of God. Paul knows all of that and so he can ensure these people of their future also.

Phil 1:7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

Phil 1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Paul can have the aforementioned knowledge about them because they are in his heart. Remember he is probably in prison in Rome awaiting his trial and so he is thinking about how he will defend the gospel message. Since they are all partakers of God's grace then they are all praying for him that he might give a defense that brings glory to God. Any result of his trial will also affect them and so he is thinking of them also. Verse 8 should be how we all feel about being apart from fellow Christians and especially with those with whom we have fellowshiped considerably. Each of us longs to one day be with Jesus but in the meantime the best we can do is to be with fellow Christians for each of us are in Christ.

Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

Phil 1:10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

Phil 1:11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Here in these three verses is the path of sanctification. The love of which Paul speaks is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22) and is necessary for the performance of all other spiritual virtues (1 Cor 13:1-3). This love also perfects the unity between Christians:

Col 3:14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

This love is not just some emotion but it is an element of our being that must be nurtured by our obtaining real knowledge of Jesus and the gospel. It also must be utilized in our discernment of all and of everyone we contact. As we obtain more knowledge of the truth and as our discernment is further developed we will only approve the things that are excellent before God. His plan is for us to be sincere in our love for Jesus and other Christians and that we will be blameless as we walk in the world. The purpose of our salvation is not just to free us from the wrath of God and to gain admission into heaven with Him forever. The plan is for us to learn more each day about how to walk righteously before Him in that plan:

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We are preparing ourselves for that day when we will give an account before God:

2Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

This thought should be a great encouragement for us as we walk in this world.

1John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Verse 11 tells us how we will achieve these goals of the Father. We are not depending upon ourselves to achieve the impossible. God has already filled us with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ. This fruit is not the internal fruits but the fruit that is expressed externally through our works. This fruit will be produced in the life of God's children as long as we remain close to the vine.

John 15:1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

John 15:4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

All of these works by God's children in the world are not for the glory of any of us but for the glory of God.

Eph 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Eph 1:12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Eph 1:14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

Phil 1:12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel,

Phil 1:13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,

Phil 1:14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

God is sovereign, even in the imprisonment of His most erstwhile messengers. God causes all things to work out for the progress of His gospel. There are no circumstances regarding the proclamation of His Word that are not without His guidance. To some, it might appear a terrible event that Paul is in a Roman prison. But Paul knows that God is working out a greater plan than any that might appear to us. The Christian walk is one of attempting to attain the perspective of God on that walk. That the Romans had imprisoned the famous Paul would have been great news to the entire world and especially to those guards who had been seeking him. The praetorian guards were those who guarded the Emperor. Paul had been chained to one of them since his imprisonment in Jerusalem except for the time on a ship. Thus there had been guards hearing and watching Paul for some time and I can only imagine what a great impact he had upon them all both by his reaction to his sufferings and for his talking about the gospel. Paul's suffering was neither corrective nor instructive but for the spreading of the gospel message to others and for others to gain confidence in the reaction of Paul to that suffering. Many people had experienced a rebirth because of his imprisonment and they have been encouraged to speak the word of God without fear. They would have seen the experience by Paul in reacting to the command of Jesus:

Matt 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Phil 1:15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will;

Phil 1:16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel;

Phil 1:17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.

Phil 1:18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.

There were then and are today people preaching Christ from two different motives. Some preach out of selfish ambition and some preach motivated by love for God and His people. The early church was as imperfect as it is today. We can learn how to recognize current problems in the church by studying the problems in the early church. The true teachers were preaching Christ and praising Paul for his defense of the gospel. The false teachers were preaching Christ hoping to cause Paul even more distress in his imprisonment. The false teachers were probably saying some things like Job's "friends" told him regarding his actions bringing on his sufferings. In the case of these particular preachers, it is unlikely that they were preaching a false gospel and thus not Christians. It is unlikely that Paul would have included his statement in verse 18 if these people were preaching a false gospel for Paul condemned such:

Gal 1:9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

In Galatians we also read what are often called the three sins of a Christian:

Gal 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Gal 5:26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

When Christians do not walk in the Spirit they can be led back into the life of yielding to the sins of the flesh and then become boastful, challenging and envying. These are horrible sins but no Christian is immune from them. If these people were true Christians caught up in these sins then God would have disciplined them and then they would have repented. But at this point in time Paul is even rejoicing that these people are lifting up the name of Christ even if they are doing it with the wrong personal motives. It does bother me that Paul says that they may be doing it in pretense for that implies to me that the preachers did not really believe the message. But even if they were not true believers and were attacking Paul, the message of the truth of Christ must have been present for him to rejoice. Could any of us rejoice when someone was being excessively critical of us in their preaching of Christ? I am not sure that I could do that. Paul had a tremendous trust in God that few have had since his time. I long for more people with such true convictions to become more obvious to us in this world now. As we progress in our study of this marvelous book we will see further how to deal with such situations.

Phil 1:19 For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Phil 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Some have said that Paul thought that he was going to be released from prison and that is what he meant by his deliverance. However considering the total context and especially the next few verses it is likely that he is talking about his continual deliverance from a life of sin. Living in a prison and being chained to a Roman soldier was not a pleasant experience and he required the continual discernment he discussed earlier. Thus he needed the provision of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ and he probably viewed that help as being increased in the form of the answered prayers of the Philippians. Verse 20 amplifies this interpretation as he told of what he needed to better glorify Christ. Whether he were to remain in prison or if he were to be put to death his prayer was that Christ would be exalted in him. We know that God lives in our body:

1Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

Since our body is a temple for God we must make sure that He is exalted in our bodies. That means that we must be careful what we do with our bodies. Our eyes are a window to the world and much of the world is not fit for the eyes of God. The advertising we see on TV and the printed media are appealing to the non-Christian elements of humans and we must be careful what we see. America is preoccupied with sex and it can be argued that our media is promoting voyeurism so again we need to be careful at what we look. Our tongue can be a terrible problem for us and James devotes an entire chapter to that possibility. Our mind is the repository for concepts that shape our reactions in the world so we need to think about what is wholesome. We must surrender our entire body and mind to the service of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and that requires the leading of the Holy Spirit as we will see later.

Phil 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Phil 1:22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose.

Phil 1:23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;

Phil 1:24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

Phil 1:25 And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith,

Phil 1:26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

I have quoted these verses a lot over the years. As I have said MANY times, Christianity is not a religion but it is a person: Jesus Christ. Some people think that Christianity is the visible church or the ceremonies of the church or the creeds. But Christianity cannot be learned. It requires that the person is born again into the family of God and that all the person does is then about Christ. The living that we do as Christians is reflected in another passage written by Paul:

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Phil 1:21 and Gal 2:20 make up the definition of Christianity for everyone who is really a Christian. We must live daily to die to self and to live for Christ. We still have the sin nature within that is at war with the Christ nature and we must recognize the war and actively participate in becoming victorious for Christ within ourselves. Only through death to our sin nature will we find victory with Christ. So as the second part of Phil 1:21 says, the death of our sin nature leads to the most important gain we can make in this world. Of course our final physical death will lead to the ultimate gain for the Christian since we will then be with Him forever. For the unbeliever physical death results in eternal suffering under the wrath of God. The Christian then has no fear of physical death:

Heb 2:14 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Heb 2:15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

This is not to say that the Christian has a death wish for our goal is to live life here for glory for Christ. It is important for us to meditate on all six of the above verses. There are two great benefits in death for the Christian. The first benefit is freedom from evil. The second benefit is that we will be like Jesus in our righteousness, love and knowledge:

1John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

Contemplating the above it may be tempting to want to die and be with Jesus. But to live here is to participate in fruitful labor for Him and, although we do not work for rewards, we will have more rewards in heaven and thus a more glorious experience there. But working for Christ here brings glory to Christ in the people with whom we work here. Therefore it is much more favorable to stay here for the benefit of the people with whom God has planned for us to disciple. How can we carry out the great commission if we are dead?

Matt 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

Matt 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. "

So just as Paul concluded, we choose to stay here and continue staying with fellow Christians and those whom God will bring into His family. There is much work to be done for Christ here and we praise the Lord that He has chosen us to stay here and work for the Kingdom of Heaven. He was looking forward to his return to them to continue helping them in their sanctification.

Phil 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Phil 1:28 in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

As Christians we then have obligations here. The phrase “conduct yourselves in a manner worthy” is a translation of a single Greek word: “politeuo”. This word is based on a noun, “polis” that means city and refers to the citizenship people had in a country. The verb means “to conduct oneself worthily as a citizen of the city-state” in the Greek society. To the Greek his “polis” was an integral part of his identity. The laws and customs of the city-state were ingrained in his conscience and living according to its principles was his goal and the best way to live. When Paul tells the people to live “polis” he was telling them to live as though the Kingdom of Heaven was here now in its total expression. We are to live as members of the body of Christ and to love fellow Christians as we love Him. We are citizens of heaven now and Paul is telling them to live accordingly.

Paul did not know if he would get to see them again or not but he wanted to at least be able to hear about their behavior so that he would be proud of them. We citizens of heaven should all stand firmly in one spirit and with one mind striving together for the advancement of the gospel. He had a similar message to the Ephesians:

Eph 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

Eph 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,

Eph 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Of course the unity must be of the Spirit so that the purity of the Gospel is preserved in our unity and we do not compromise its truth to have unity. We must also carry the purity of the Gospel in every area of life in the arena in which we have been placed. The world needs the Christian message in all of the areas of the city-state.

There has always been opposition to God’s Word and it began in the Garden of Eden and continues today. If we do not face opposition in the world then we are probably not being true to the Word. The opposition is not to be feared but rather it is to be faced with resolute determination to continue in living for Christ. That the world is against us in our determination to remain true to Him is actually condemnation for them and such should bring fear into their hearts. But their hearts are hard and they cannot even see that our perseverance in the faith given us is indeed condemnation for them. Seeing this opposition should be encouraging to us that we are indeed freed from the wrath of God and secure in our salvation. As Paul concludes these two verses, both their condemnation and our salvation are from Him.

Phil 1:29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

Phil 1:30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

This chapter ends with our promise of suffering for the sake of Christ. Suffering for Him is a way that God achieves His purposes in His son and in all believers. We read here regarding His son:

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

We read in the following regarding all believers:

James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:4 And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

1Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

1Peter 1:7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

The Christians at Philippi were experiencing the same sort of suffering that they had seen him suffer and they had also heard of his sufferings at the hands of the Romans. The book of Acts records some of the suffering that the Christians at Philippi had seen:

Acts 16:19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities,

Acts 16:20 and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews,

Acts 16:21 and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans. "

Acts 16:22 And the crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them, and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.

Acts 16:23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;

Acts 16:24 and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks.

We are all called to a life of suffering when we strive to conduct ourselves worthy of imitating the life of Christ as seen in the following:

2Tim 2:3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

1Peter 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

1Peter 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

1Peter 4:12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

1Peter 4:13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.

1Peter 4:14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

1Peter 4:15 By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler;

1Peter 4:16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God.

Of course if we suffer because of the consequences of our sin then there is no blessing in that suffering. In all of our suffering as Christians we should praise the Lord and even be joyful!

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,