

Paul's letter to the Philippians

Paul's letter to the Philippians was written while he was a prisoner awaiting sentence. He was writing to a group of Christian supporters in Philippi who had a special place in his heart. Despite being 'in chains', the keynote of his letter is joy. It is in four chapters:

Chapter 1:

Paul sends greetings, prayer and personal news to all his supporters, who are God's people. His message is inclusive, mentioning men and women, church leaders and all helpers (deacons). This can relate to us all even today.

Chapter 2

Paul writes about Jesus' model of humility and writes lyrically about Jesus as the Son of God, who humbled Himself as a servant, being 'obedient unto death'. Paul warns his supporters against 'grumbling or arguing'. What a powerful message for us to take heed of, so we can also 'shine like stars in the sky.'

Chapter 3

This chapter is a warning and example and Paul writes about what can be gained through Jesus Christ, but also what can be lost by not having true faith. Like modern Olympians, Paul urges his friends to set their eyes on the prize.

'I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. ' (verse 14)

Chapter 4

Despite Paul's imprisonment, he is overflowing with joy in the love he knows he has through Jesus Christ. He sends loving messages of reassurance and advice to his supporters both generally and specifically by name. This chapter includes one of the most uplifting and comforting passages in the Bible; it is one that we can hold in our hearts as we go through challenging times.

