

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 110 – Philippians 3:17-4:23

Day 546: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Verse 17

Συμμιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας καθὼς ἔχετε τύπον ἡμᾶς.

συμμιμητης, ου m one who joins in following the example of another

Cf. 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7,9. This compound verb appears here only in the NT and has not been found in other Greek literature. The meaning would seem to be, 'join together in imitating me.' The emphasis is again on unity.

σκοπεω pay attention to, watch out (for)

The force here is 'mark and follow'

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way
περιπατεω walk, live
τυπος, ου m pattern, example

E.g. Eraphroditus. "Since Philippi was a small city on the main highway East and West, a full day's walk from Neapolis on the coast, the Christian community in Philippi was undoubtedly frequented by all sorts of itinerants, who would be given the normal Christian hospitality... Fully aware that not all who would come through were of the same mind as Paul regarding walking in the ways of Christ, he has frequently warned them of such itinerants (as vv. 1 and 18 indicate). This imperative therefore, besides specifying the reason for vv. 4-14, moves toward warning, that when others come among them, they mark well those who 'walk' in the way of the cross and who are living in eager anticipation of the future." Fee

Verse 18

πολλοὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦσιν οὓς πολλάκις ἔλεγον ὑμῖν, νῦν δὲ καὶ κλαίων λέγω, τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many

The grammar is a little awkward. Eadie says "The verb περιπατοῦσιν stands emphatically, and without any added characteristic... The apostle, in the previous verse, had referred to his own life and to those who walked like himself ... and now he speaks of others who do not so walk. But he does not formally express the difference by an adverb – he does it more effectively by an entire clause."

Fee thinks πολλοὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦσιν "suggests people associated with the Christian community but outside Philippi."

πολλάκις often, repeatedly, frequently
κλαιω weep, cry; trans weep for

"He grieved that the gospel should, through them, be exposed to misrepresentation, that the world should see it associated with an unchanged and licentious life" Eadie

ἐχθρος, α, ου enemy, one hated
σταυρος, ου m cross

They are people who make a profession of being Christians but who refuse to live a life patterned by the cross.

Verse 19

ὣν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια, ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν, οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες.

τελος, ους n end, conclusion

Perhaps a play on on this term – now by way of contrast with vv. 12,15.

ἀπώλεια, ας f destruction, utter ruin

Cf. Rom 6:21

κοιλια, ας f stomach

"'Stomach' may be a metonymy for the craving after sumptuous fare, or perhaps for surfeiting. One cannot be sure. Perhaps it is intended to be more representative – of those who are so given over to present bodily desires of all kinds, represented by the 'appetites,' that such has become a 'god' to them." Fee

δοξα, ης f glory

αἰσχυνη, ης f shame, disgrace

"That is, they find their glory in what is really their shame." Eadie

ἐπιγεις, ου earthly, of the earth
φρονωω think, have in mind

Cf. Col 3:2. Again, the focus is on 'mindset.'

"These people over whom Paul weeps are first of all 'enemies of the cross'; they are now characterised as those who have abandoned the pursuit of the heavenly prize, in favour of what belongs *only* to the present scheme of things. Their focus is altogether earthward... He is probably describing some itinerants, whose view of the faith is such that it allows them a great deal of undisciplined self-indulgence." Fee

Verses 20-21

"Here is a classic expression of the eschatological framework of Pauline theology, that present life is 'already/not yet,' predicated on Christ and his coming(s). Although the passage begins with the 'already,' the accent falls on the 'not yet,' thus giving perspective to the Philippians' present situation – and to much else in this letter. Christ has gained his present glory through humiliation (2:7-11); he is now 'in heaven' where we 'eagerly await' his coming as 'Saviour'; when he comes he will 'transform' us into his 'likeness,' so that our present bodies that know weakness and 'humiliation' are conformed into the likeness of his present 'glory'; and he will accomplish that in keeping with the same divine 'energy' (cf. 2:13) whereby he will also subject 'all things' to himself (= 'every knee shall bow')." Fee

Verse 20

ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει, ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτήρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,

πολίτευμα, τος n place of citizenship

Paul is making a play on their Roman citizenship, cf. 1:27. Moffatt translates "we are a colony of heaven" and Fee adds, "Just as Philippi was a colony of Rome, whose citizens thereby exemplified the life of Rome in the province of Macedonia, so the citizens of the 'heavenly commonwealth' were to function as a colony of heaven in that outpost of Rome."

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἶμι)

Cf. Col 3:3. "He who has his home in the future will be only a pilgrim for the present." Eadie

οὗ adv where

σωτηρ, ηρος m saviour

"Only once heretofore (Eph 5:23) [Fee thinks Ephesians predates Philippians] has he used this title ['Saviour'] to describe Christ. That he does so here is almost certainly for the Philippians' sakes, since this is a common title for Caesar. That he does so at all is especially significant christologically, since the title occurs frequently in the OT to refer to God as our (my) Saviour. As with the title 'Lord,' therefore (cf. 2:9-10), Paul has co-opted yet another OT term for God and unflinchingly attributed it to Christ. None of this would be missed by the Philippians, who know the term well in both of its contexts." Fee

ἀπεκδεχομαι look for, wait for

Carries the sense of eagerness or longing.

Verse 21

ὃς μετασχηματίζει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τῷ σωματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.

μετασχηματιζω change, transform

This and σύμμορφον pick up the language of 2:6-8.

σωμα, τος n body

ταπεινώσις, εως f humble state, humiliation

Our present body, subject to all the weakness and frailty consequent upon the fall. The AV's translation 'vile' is unfortunate. Again, there are echoes of the 'humiliation' of Christ in 2:8. The contrast is with those whose shameful glory is in present excess, v.19.

σύμμορφος, ον having the same form, sharing likeness

Of this glory that belongs to Christ's risen and ascended body, Eadie remarks, "When he appeared at the arrest of Saul in the neighbourhood of Damascus, His glory dimmed the mid-day sun, and before the symbolical apparition at Patmos, the disciple who had lain in his bosom was so overpowered that he 'fell at his feet as dead.'"

ἐνέργεια, ας f (supernatural) working, power

ὑποτάξαι Verb, aor act infin ὑποτασσω subordinate, put in subjection

Cf. 1 Cor 15:36-50. "In some ways this is the most remarkable 'transformation' of all, in that Paul here uses language about Christ that he elsewhere uses only of God the Father... The phrase 'able to subject all things to himself' is Paul's eschatological interpretation of Ps 8:7, where God will 'subject all things' to his Messiah, who in turn, according to 1 Cor 15:28, will turn over all things to God the Father so that 'God might be all in all.' Remarkably, in the present passage the 'subjecting' of all things to himself is said to be by Christ's own power." Fee

"With Paul we would do well not merely to 'await' the end, but eagerly to press on toward the goal, since the final prize is but the consummation of what God has already accomplished through the death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord." Fee

Verse 1

Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοὶ καὶ ἐπιπόθητοι, χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός μου, οὕτως στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ, ἀγαπητοί.

Echoes the exhortation of 1:27

ὥστε so that, with the result that

"Paul uses this conjunction specifically to apply the preceding 'argument' to the local situation." Fee. Cf. 2:12.

ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved
ἐπιποθητος, ον longed for

This adjective occurs here alone in the NT.

στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown, prize

Cf. 1 Thess 2:19. "The apostle refers ... to the Lord's coming. His converts will then be his wreath of victory, for it will appear that he οὐκ εἰς κενον ἐδραμεν (2:16), and he will receive the successful athlete's reward; comp 1 Cor 9:25)" Lightfoot

Eadie suggests it also has a present reference: "as he had been so instrumental in their conversion, they were to him even now a wreath of honour."

οὕτως and οὕτω see 3:17

The reference may be back to verse 17.

στήκετε Verb, perf act indic & imperat, 2 pl
ἵστημι stand, stand firm, hold ground.

"During their present distress they are to 'stand fast in the Lord,' firmly planted in relationship with the same Lord whose coming they eagerly await and who will then subject all things to himself (3:20-21). And they are to 'thus stand firm' (NIV, 'that is how'), referring probably to the whole of 3:1-21, but especially to their 'imitation' of Paul by their upright 'walk' even as they bend every effort to attain the eschatological prize." Fee. It is not just an exhortation to the individual, Paul is here addressing the church.

ἀγαπητοι "The Apostle's love finds expression in the accumulation and repetition of words. In the final ἀγαπητοι he seems to linger over this theme, as if unable to break away from it." Lightfoot.

Day 547: Philippians 4:2-5**Verse 2**

Εὐδοίαν παρακαλῶ καὶ Συντύχην παρακαλῶ τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
φρονεω think, have in mind

Echoes the language of 2:2

It is theoretically possible for the names to be those of men, but the αὐταις of the following verse removes any ambiguity: these two are women. We know nothing of who these women were or what was the nature of their disagreement. Many suppose they were 'deaconesses'. Fee considers that this appeal "is where most of the letter has been heading all along."

Verse 3

καὶ ἐρωτῶ καὶ σέ, γνήσιε σύζυγε, συλλαμβάνου αὐταῖς, αἴτινες ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι μετὰ καὶ Κλήμεντος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συνεργῶν μου, ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἐν βίβλῳ ζωῆς.

ναι yes, yes indeed, certainly
ἐρωταω ask, request, beg, urge
γνησιος, α, ον genuine, true, loyal
συζυγος, ου m fellow-worker, partner or perhaps a proper name

Lightfoot thinks it probable that Epaphroditus, the bearer of this letter, is intended here. Some suggest that it is a reference to the individual who would receive this letter on behalf of the church – its first reader. Some suggest the reference is to the whole church but Fee thinks this most unlikely. He thinks it probably refers to one of Paul's itinerant co-workers who was currently in Philippi – perhaps Luke.

συλλαμβανω sieze; midd help, assist
ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅ τι who, which
εὐαγγελιον, ου n good news, gospel
συναθλεω fight together with, strive together with, work together with

Cf. Acts 16:13. They may have been among the women who first responded to the gospel at Philippi. Fee comments, "Here is one of those pieces of 'mute' evidence for women in leadership in the NT, significant in this case for its off-handed, presuppositional way of speaking about them. To deny their role in the church in Philippi is to fly full in the face of the text. Here is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is 'gender-blind,' that he gifts as he wills; our task is to recognise his gifting and to 'assist' all such people, male and female, to 'have the same mindset in the Lord,' so that together they will be effective in doing the gospel."

Κλημης, εντος m Clement

Probably belongs with συλλαμβανου αὐταις

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other
συνεργος, ου m fellow-worker

"The clause probably functions as a gentle reminder to all who lead the believing community in Philippi to 'have the same mindset as the Lord,' even though that is not specifically said of or to them." Fee

ὄνομα, τος n name
βιβλος, ου f book, record
ζωη, ης f life

The register of the Covenant people.

Verse 4

Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε· πάλιν ἐρῶ, χαίρετε.

Paul regularly begins the concluding part of his letters with "staccato imperatives." Fee

χαίρω rejoice, be glad
πάντοτε always
πάλιν again, once more
ἐρῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s λεγω

Cf. 3:1. 'Joy' is a repeated theme in this letter – this word and its cognates appearing 16 times in all. "As they traced all blessing to Christ and to union with Him, they would rejoice in the Lord; not in themselves as recipients but in Him as Source, not only in the gifts conferred but in Him especially as the gracious benefactor." Eadie. "'Joy,' unmitigated, untrammelled joy, is – or at least ought to be – the distinctive mark of the believer in Jesus Christ." Fee

Verse 5

τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς.

ἐπιεικης, ες gentle, forbearing, considerate; τὸ ἐπιεικὲς = ἡ ἐπιεικεια kindness, forbearance, gentleness

Cf. Psalm 86:5 where this quality is attributed to God. Eadie points out that it is "that grace which was defective in one or another, or both of the women, who are charged by the apostle to be of one mind in the Lord. For, slow to take offence, it is swift to forgive it." Having cited 1 Peter 2:23, Fee says, "It is this 'gentle forbearance' and 'meekness' of Christ, to which Paul appealed in 2 Cor 10:1, which he here calls the believers to exhibit in Philippi."

γνωσθήτω Verb, aor pass imperat, 3 s
γινωσκω
ἐγγύς adv near

Cf. James 5:8 There is some debate as to whether 'the Lord is near' belongs with what precedes or what follows. Eadie suggests that it may be a link phrase, relevant to both. Fee also thinks it may be a 'bit of both,' "perhaps something as close to intentional double entendre as one finds in the apostle? On the one hand, this looks very much like another instance of intertextuality, purposely echoing Ps 145:18, 'the Lord is near all who call upon him.' In which case it introduces vv 6-7 as an expression of 'realised' eschatology: 'Because the Lord is ever present, do not be anxious but pray.' On the other hand (or perhaps at the same time), it also echoes the apocalyptic language of Zeph 1:7 and 14 ('the Day of the Lord is near'), picked up by Paul in Rom 13:12, and found in Jas 5:8 regarding the coming of the Lord.

"On the whole it seems likely that this is primarily intended as the last in the series of eschatological words to this suffering congregation, again reminding them of their sure future, despite present difficulties. Thus it is a word of encouragement and affirmation."

Day 548: Philippians 4:6-9

Verse 6

μηδὲν μεριμνᾶτε, ἀλλ' ἐν παντί τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ δεήσει μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν γνωρίζεσθω πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
μεριμναω be anxious, worry

On the antithesis between worry and prayer, cf. Matt 6:25; 1 Peter 5:7.

The παντι may refer to 'every circumstance' (se Fee) or 'at any time'. Maybe it embraces both.

δεησις, εως f prayer, plea

"While προσευχη is the general offering up of the wishes and desires to God, δεησις implies special petition for the supply of wants." Lightfoot. For the use of the two terms together cf. Eph 6:18; 1 Tim 2:1; 5:5.

εὐχαριστια, ας f thanksgiving

"... Since thankfulness for past blessings is a necessary condition of acceptance in preferring new petitions. Great stress is laid on the duty of εὐχαριστία by St Paul; e.g. Rom 1:21; 14:6; 2 Cor 1:11; 4:15; 9:12; Ephes 5:20; Col 2:7; 3:17; 1 Thess 5:18; 1 Tim 2:1. All his own letters addressed to churches, with the sole exception of the Epistle to the Galatians, commence with an emphatic thanksgiving." Lightfoot.

αἰτημα, τος n request, demand
γνωριζω make known, disclose, know

Verse 7

καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ ἣ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν καὶ τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

The και is "that of result, and might be paraphrased 'and then,' or 'and so.'" Eadie. Fee says that "to pray in trusting submission and thanksgiving" is "God's alternative to anxiety."

εἰρηνη, ης f peace

Cf. Col 3:15. Eadie says that this is not simply the objective peace with God consequent upon reconciliation with him – since they possessed that always. "What the apostle refers to is a state of mind which has that reconciliation for its basis. The former peace has a special relation to God, the controversy between Him and the soul being terminated – the latter is more personal and absolute. This peace is but another name for happiness, for it is beyond the reach of disturbance ... To know that it is well with me now, and that it shall be so for ever – to feel that God is my guide and protector, while His Son pleads for me and His Spirit dwells within me as His shrine – to feel that I am moving along a path divinely prescribed and guarded, to join the eternal banquet in the company of all I love and all I live for – the emotion produced by such strong conviction is peace, ay, the 'peace of God.'" It is *shalom*. It is not simply individual, it is also social, cf. Eph 4:3.

ὑπερεχω be of more value than, surpass
νους, νοος, νοι, νουν m mind, thought,
understanding

Lightfoot thinks this phrase means 'better than every human device or counsel', and that Paul is saying that it is better to live together peaceably before God than to argue with each other and seek to get the best of each other. Eadie has a rather different conception of this peace (see above), and says, "The mind cannot rightly estimate this peace, or rise to an adequate comprehension of it." Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9.

Fee says, "his peace totally transcends our merely human way of perceiving the world."

φρουρεω guard, hold prisoner
νοημα, τος n mind, thought

The mind is guarded from disquieting thoughts and the heart from upsetting emotions. The location of such protection is 'in Christ Jesus.'

Postscript to Verses 4-7

Fee writes, "Joy, prayer, thanksgiving, peace – these identify Pauline spirituality. Such lives are further marked by gentle forbearance and no anxiety. The key lies with the indicative, 'the Lord is near' – now and to come. The Lord is now present by his Spirit, who prompts prayer and thanksgiving, among whose 'fruit' in the life of the believer and the believing community are joy and peace. Here is God's ultimate gift to those who trust in Christ, *shalom* and joy.

"In a post-Christian, post-modern world, which has generally lost its bearings because it has generally abandoned its God, such spirituality is very often the key to effective evangelism."

Verse 8

Τὸ λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, ὅσα ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ, ὅσα σεμνά, ὅσα δίκαια, ὅσα ἀγνά, ὅσα προσφιλή, ὅσα εὐφημα, εἴ τις ἀρετὴ καὶ εἴ τις ἔπαινος, ταῦτα λογίζεσθε·

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining: (το)
λοιπον adv. finally, from now on

Cf. 3:1

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as; pl. as many as; ὅσα whatever things

ἀληθης, ες true, honest, genuine

Truth "both in reference to God and men"
Eadie

σεμνος, η, ον of good character,
honourable, respectable

"It is opposed to what is mean, frivolous, indecorous and unworthy." Eadie

δικαιος, α, ον righteous, just
ἀγνος, η, ον pure, holy

Cf. Prov 15:26.

προσφιλης, ες pleasing, lovely

Another word that occurs here only in the NT. "In common parlance, this word could refer to a Beethoven symphony, as well as to the work of Mother Teresa among the poor of Calcutta; the former is lovely and enjoyable, the latter is admirable as well as moral." Fee

εὐφημος, ον worthy of praise
ἀρετη, ης f moral excellence, goodness

ἔπαινος, ου m praise, commendation; a praiseworthy thing

λογίζομαι reckon, consider, think

Paul uses the language of Stoicism (though there are parallels with Jewish wisdom, cf. Jas 3:13-18), but his ethical instruction remains Christocentric. Fee writes of Paul, "using language the Philippians would have known from their youth, he singles out values held in common with the best of Hellenism. But as v.9 implies, these must now be understood in the light of the cruciform existence that Paul has urged throughout the letter." Fee comments on Paul's use of the verb λογίζομαι here rather than φρονεω. The Philippians are to *reckon* as worthy of embrace (rather than set their minds on) those things in the world which possess these characteristics. His concern is that, "even though they are presently 'citizens of heaven,' living out the life of the future as they await its consummation, they do not altogether abandon the world in which they used to, and still do, live. As believers in Christ they will embrace the best of that world as well, as long as it is understood in the light of the cross."

Verse 9

ἃ καὶ ἐμάθετε καὶ παρελάβετε καὶ ἠκούσατε καὶ εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοί, ταῦτα πράσσετε· καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν.

ἐμάθετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl μανθανω learn, find out

The language of discipleship.

παραλάβετε Verb, aor act ind, 2pl παραλαμβάνω receive, accept
εἶδετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl ὄραω trans see, observe
πρασσω practice, do

The Gospel is to be lived.

εἰρήνη, ης f peace
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

"The phrase *God of peace* is parallel to the preceding one – peace of God. In the former case the peace is described in its connection with God, and now God is pointed out as the inworker of that peace." Eadie

Day 549: Philippians 4:10-14

Verse 10

Ἐχάρην δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μεγάλως ὅτι ἤδη ποτὲ ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε ἠκαιρεῖσθε δέ.

ἐχάρην Verb, 2nd aor pass dep indic, 1 s χαιρω rejoice, be glad
μεγάλως greatly
ἤδη adv now, already; ἤδη ποτε now at last

"Paul's own qualifier that follows makes it clear that even though not intending these words pejoratively, he recognised that they could be taken so." Fee

ἀνεθάλετε Verb, 2nd aor act indic, 2 pl ἀναθαλλω revive

The verb is a botanical metaphor meaning literally 'to blossom again.'

φρονεω think, have in mind

"Their care for him had been for a time like sap and life in the veins of a tree, but an inclement season had prevented it from forming foliage and blossom." Eadie

ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε 'in reference to which you were indeed continually concerned.' Fee argues that καὶ here bears an intensive force 'indeed' rather than simply 'also.'

ἀκαιροεομαι be without opportunity

Another word that occurs here only in the NT.

Verse 11

οὐχ ὅτι καθ' ὑστέρησιν λέγω, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἶμι αὐτάρκης εἶναι.

οὐχ ὅτι is intended to guard against wrong inferences being drawn from what he has just said.

ὑστερησις, εως f need, want; καθ' ὑ. because of need

Paul does not deny his need, but his thankfulness is more than a response to want relieved – just as his joy is not dependent upon material circumstances.

ἔμαθον Verb, 2nd aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl μανθανω v.9

ἐν οἷς εἶμι Eadie says is not 'in whatever state I may be' but the particular 'in the condition I am in.' Nevertheless he adds, "His mind calmly bowed to the will of God in every condition in which he was placed."

αὐτάρκης, ες self-sufficient; satisfied

"The idea of αὐτάρκεια is 'independence of external circumstances.' Compare 2 Cor 9:8; 1 Tim 6:6." Lightfoot

Fee comments that, "On the surface, his explanation looks like a meteor fallen from the Stoic sky into his epistle." But Fee points out that Paul's sufficiency, unlike that of the Stoics, is not self-sufficiency but a sufficiency found in Christ, cf. v.13.

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

Verse 12

οἶδα καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι, οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν· ἐν παντὶ καὶ ἐν πάσιν μεμύημαι καὶ χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πεινᾶν, καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι.

οἶδα know, understand
ταπεινω humble; midd live in humble circumstances

Refers here to physical conditions rather than mental state.

περισσευω abound, excel, have plenty

ἐν παντι και ἐν πασιν "A general expression, corresponding to the English 'all and every'." Lightfoot

μεμύημαι Verb, perf pass dep indic, 1 s

μυεομαι learn the secret of

χορταζω feed, satisfy

πειναω be hungry

ὑστερω lack; pass be lacking; midd be in want

He had learned to accept from God every situation and circumstance.

Verse 13

πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με.

ἰσχω be strong, be able, be sufficient

ἐνδυναμοω strengthen, make strong

"It is ... to be borne in mind that this ability came not from his commission as an apostle, but from his faith as a saint. The endowment was not of miracle but of grace." Eadie
He knows the continual provision of Christ's power through the Spirit, enabling him to face each situation with contentment and joy and to continue undaunted in the work of the gospel.

Verse 14

πλὴν καλῶς ἐποιήσατε συγκοινωνήσαντές μου τῇ θλίψει.

πλην nevertheless, however

συγκοινωνήσαντές Verb, aor act ptc, m

nom pl συγκοινωνεω take part in; help

Implies fellow-feeling or sympathy. "This returns to the language of 1:7, where Paul gives reason for his thanksgiving in terms of their being 'partners/participants' together with him in his chains and in the defence of the gospel." Fee

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

"It was not the actual pecuniary relief so much as the sympathy and companionship in his sorrow that the apostle valued." Lightfoot

Day 550: Philippians 4:15-23

Verse 15

Οἴδατε δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς, Φιλιππηῖοι, ὅτι ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὅτε ἐξῆλθον ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας, οὐδεμία μοι ἐκκλησία ἐκοινωνησεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήμψεως εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι·

οἶδα know, understand

οἴδατε και ὑμεῖς "You know as well as I"

ἀρχη, ης f beginning

ἐν ἀρχη του εὐαγγελιου 'in the earliest days of the Gospel'

ὅτε conj when, at which time

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

ἐκκλησια, ας f congregation, church

κοινωνεω share, take part, contribute

δοσις, εως f giving; gift

εἰς λογου δοσεως 'in the matter of giving'

λημψις, εως f receiving

μονος, η, ον only, alone

Cf 2 Cor 11:8,9

Verse 16

ὅτι καὶ ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη καὶ ἅπαξ καὶ δις εἰς τὴν χρεῖαν μοι ἐπέμψατε.

και ἐν Θεσσαλονικη – i.e. "and indeed, even before I left Macedonia, while I was in Thessalonica ..." Cf. 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8,9. "The sums sent from Philippi did not fully supply the need of the apostle, for he was still obliged to work; but it argued goodwill on the part of the Philippian church, and the apostle refers with gratitude to their liberality." Eadie

ἅπαξ once, one time

δις twice

χρεια, ας f need, want

εἰς τὴν χρεῖαν μοι some MSS read μου rather than μοι, others omit εἰς. Some have both variants.

πεμπω send

Verse 17

οὐχ ὅτι ἐπιζητῶ τὸ δόμα, ἀλλὰ ἐπιζητῶ τὸν καρπὸν τὸν πλεονάζοντα εἰς λόγον ὑμῶν.

ἐπιζητεῶ seek, desire, search for

δόμα, τοσ n gift

καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest, outcome

πλεοναζω increase, grow

λογον here means 'account.'

"It is not the gift he covets, but the rich spiritual blessing which the gift secures to its donor." Eadie. Their gifts are evidence of their continuing faithfulness and fruitfulness (cf. 1:11), "which will find its full expression at the coming of Christ. They themselves will be Paul's eschatological 'reward' (2:16; 4:1); their gift to him has the effect of accumulating 'interest' toward *their* eschatological 'reward.'

Verse 18

ἀπέχω δὲ πάντα καὶ περισσεύω·
πεπλήρωμαι δεξάμενος παρὰ
Ἐπαφροδίτου τὰ παρ' ὑμῶν, ὄσμην
εὐωδίας, θυσίαν δεκτὴν, εὐάρεστον τῷ
θεῷ.

ἀπεχω receive in full, have enough

περισευω abound, excel, have plenty

Cf. vv.11-13.

πεπλήρωμαι Verb, perf pass indic, 1 s

πληρωω fill, make full

δεξάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s

δεχομαι receive

ὄσμη, ης f fragrance

εὐωδια, ας f sweet smell, fragrant aroma

ὄσμην εὐωδίας is a phrase used frequently in the LXX for the smell of sacrifices and offerings (Gen 8:21; Ex 29:18 etc.). Paul uses it in Eph 5:2, cf. 2 Cor 2:15,16.

θυσια, ας f sacrifice, victim

δεκτος, η, ον acceptable, favourable

Cf Rom 12:1

εὐάρεστος, ον acceptable, pleasing

The gift is a source of delight to God himself.

Verse 19

ὁ δὲ θεός μου πληρωσει πᾶσαν χρείαν ὑμῶν κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος αὐτοῦ ἐν δόξῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Paul cannot reciprocate by sending any gift to them but he reminds them that in giving to Paul they have given to God (note 'my God') and that God is no one's debtor.

πληρωω v.18

χρεια, ας f v.16

πλουτος, ου m & n riches, wealth

δοξα, ης f glory

Eadie interprets ἐν δόξῃ as "in a glorious way".

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ "designates the sphere of God's action. In Christ Jesus he will supply their wants, or from the fulness in Him, His merit and mediation being the ground of it."

Eadie.

"The Philippians' generosity toward Paul, expressed lavishly at the beginning of v.18, is exceeded beyond all imagination by the lavish 'wealth' of the eternal God, who dwells 'in glory' full of 'riches' made available to his own 'in Christ Jesus.' ... It is 'in keeping with' all of this – not 'out of' his riches, but in accordance with this norm, the infinite 'riches' of grace that belong to God's own glory – that God's full supply will come their way to meet their every need." Fee

Verse 20

τῷ δὲ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων· ἀμήν.

πατηρ, πατρος m father

"God is glorified in the aspect or character of Father, and "our Father," implying that those whose wants are supplied by Him are His children." Eadie

αἰῶνας Noun, acc pl αἰων, αἰωνος m
age, eternity

Verse 21

Ἀσπάσασθε πάντα ἅγιον ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἀδελφοί.

ἀσπαζομαι greet

ἅγιος, α, ον holy, set apart to/by God; οἱ

ἅγιοι God's people

Lightfoot Eadie and Fee think that ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ is to be taken with ἀσπασασθε, cf. Rom 16:22; 1 Cor 16:19.

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγω

Verse 22

ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι, μάλιστα δὲ οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

μαλιστα especially

οικια, ας f house, household

It is uncertain who are being spoken of here. Some think that it was members of Caesar's own family, but it is more probable that it was servants who were part of Caesar's household. In any event it is testimony to the effect of Paul's character, conduct and words while in prison that it had such an effect on those aligned with his captors.

"They have brothers and sisters in Caesar's own household, who are on their side and now send them greetings; and therefore the Saviour whom they await (3:20) in the midst of their present struggle will gather some of Caesar's household as well as from Caesar's Philippi when he comes." Fee

Verse 23

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν.

χαρις, ιος f grace, unmerited favour

"The unauthorised postscript is variously read, both in the MSS., Versions and Fathers; the Received Text being – τοις Φιλιππησιους ἐγγραφη ἀπο Ῥωμης δι Ἐπαφροδιτου." Eadie