

**Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church**  
**Bible Sharing Program 2020-21**  
**Session #3: Overview of Philippians, Living is Christ, Dying**  
**Is Gain.**

*CSB – Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*  
*CCSS – Cath Commentary on Sacred Scriptures*  
*SN = Special Notes*  
*NAB = New American Bible*  
*SK = Chinese Bible*  
*CCC = Catholic Catechism*

<p><b>A</b></p>	<p><b><u>Overview of Philippians</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSP has already studied 10/14 of Paul’s letters; this is his 11<sup>th</sup>. After studying Colossians, we will move on to the last two, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.</li> <li>This text has been rightly described as the master story of Paul’s conviction about Christ, as written, “Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain”; therefore, he must press on “because Christ Jesus has made me his own”, and share his spirit of rejoicing “in the Lord always”. The focus of Paul’s letter concerns the spiritual growth of the Philippians; to encourage the Church of Philippi to persevere in imitating Christ, who “humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death”, as well as his own steadfast faith in Christ even during his imprisonment, his joy under oppression, life or death belongs to Christ.</li> <li>Structure of Philippians</li> <li>Location of Philippi, its society and Church.</li> <li>Was it written in Ephesus or Rome? Date?</li> </ul>	<p>CCSS, CSB</p> <p>1:20-21</p> <p>3:12</p> <p>4:4</p> <p>CSB, 2:6-11</p> <p>SN1</p> <p>CCSS 62-65</p> <p>CCSS 62, CSB 355</p>
<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b><u>Greeting, Thanksgiving and Intercession</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Greeting, Paul and Timothy called themselves “servants of Christ Jesus”, and acknowledged that Christ is the “Lord”. Believers are addressed as “saints in Christ”, also “bishops” and “deacons”.</li> <li>The “Greeting” reflects that both the Christian community and individuals continue to do good work until “the day of Jesus Christ”. The believers in Philippi were generous in their donations; they are Paul’s exemplary partners, “shar[ing] in God’s grace”; Paul vowing his love for them. Paul’s oath does not go against Christ’s teachings.</li> <li>Paul’s prayer begins with thanksgiving, leading to the focus of God; this shows that God is the source of all prayers. Beginning with God, then offer our petitions. This is an exemplary formula for prayers.</li> </ul>	<p>1:1-11</p> <p>1:1</p> <p>2019-20 BSP#9 B1</p> <p>2020-21 BSP #1 C5</p> <p>2020-21 BSP #1 D2,</p> <p>CCSS</p> <p>1:3-8, CCSS</p> <p>Mt 5:34-37</p> <p>CCC 2154 (SN2)</p> <p>1:9-11, CCSS</p>

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C	<p><b><u>God Can Write Straight With Crooked Lines</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul is convinced that through Christ, “in all these things we are more than conquerors”. His imprisonment is for Christ; while others may proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry or out of selfish ambition; however, “What difference does it make, as long as in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed?”</li> </ul>	<p>1:12-18</p> <p>Rm 8:37, Jn 16:33          CCSS 82-84</p>
D	<p><b><u>Christ be Exalted, Whether by Life or by Death</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“... this will turn out for my deliverance” – Paul’s situation is similar to Job’s. Like Job, Paul is convinced that he will be “delivered” (“deliverance” in OT implies reckoning and protection in the contemporary world; in NT it implies eternal life in God), through Christ he “will not be put to shame ... but that by my speaking with boldness, Christ will be exalted whether by life or by death”.</li> <li>“For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain” – championing the sentiments in the previous verses, Paul has left an indelible teaching; a teaching that will be treasured by all Christians. For him, living means being in relationship with the risen Lord, a relationship that death does not terminate but only changes.</li> <li>“... but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you” – Christians should strive for such attitude, we are for Christ whether by life or by death; both are filled with joy and peace. Therefore, Paul doesn’t worry about life or death. If God wills him to remain, that is for others – believers in Philippi.</li> </ul>	<p>1:18-26</p> <p>1:19-20 CCSS          Job 13:16</p> <p>1:21, CCSS 86</p> <p>1:24, CCSS</p>

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

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1. Chiastic Structure of Philippians:
  - A – Grace from the Lord Jesus Christ to the holy ones (1:1-2)
  - B – My prayer that you abound and be filled to glory and praise of God (1:1-11)
  - C – I rejoice and I will be joyful (1:12-18)
  - D – Death in my body is gain but remaining is for your faith (1:19-30)
  - E – Joy in humility for the day of Christ who humbled himself to death (2:1-16)
  - E' – Rejoice with those who neared death for the work of Christ (2:17-30)
  - D' – Gain in faith in the death of Christ and the body of his glory (3:1-21)
  - C' – Rejoice in the Lord, rejoice (4:1-5)
  - B' – Glory to God who will fulfill you as I am filled and abound (4:5-20)
  - A' – Greeting from holy ones and grace from the Lord Jesus Christ (4:21-23)
  
2. CCC 2154. Following St. Paul, the tradition of the Church has understood Jesus' words as not excluding oaths made for grave and right reasons (for example, in court). "An oath, that is the invocation of the divine name as a witness to truth, cannot be taken unless in truth, in judgment, and in justice."