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TERMINOLOGY IN PHILIPPIANS DIRECTED TO,
AND INFLUENCED BY, LOCAL CONDITIONS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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June 1958

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The reader of the New Testament is ever aware that the Book he is reading has been written under the inspiration of God. He is opening his mind and heart to receive the results of man's

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The New Testament is God's Word and written by men "moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21), yet the writers wrote in accordance with their own style and in language which their hearers knew and understood.

This thesis, then, will not be concerned with the doctrine of inspiration as such. It will rather discuss the terminology which exhibits the involvement under

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The reader of the New Testament is ever aware that the Book he is reading has been written under the inspiration of God. He is not merely reading the results of man's wisdom, but he is opening his mind and heart to receive God's revelation of judgment and mercy presented in written words through the agents whom He Himself appointed. This often results in misunderstanding regarding the Biblical view of inspiration. Questions such as these often arise: "If this is God's Word, what part does the human author play?" "Is this inspiration a mechanical rendering whereby the author loses all personal identity?" "Does the author have any freedom in the formulation of his writings?" It is to these questions that this thesis is directed, and it will be shown that the "human element" is not forced into the background in the writings of the New Testament. While the New Testament is God's Word and written by men "moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21), yet the writers wrote in accordance with their own style and in language which their hearers knew and understood.

This thesis, then, will not be concerned with the doctrine of inspiration as such. It will rather discuss the terminology which exhibits the involvement under

inspiration of the "human hand" in its formulation and the influence of local conditions in determining this terminology.

In this research paper the investigation will be restricted to Paul's letter to the Philippians. Even within this restriction completeness cannot be attained because of scanty information available on the local conditions as they existed in Philippi at the time of St. Paul. Occasionally evidence will be cited as it pertains to Rome and not specifically to Philippi. This may be justified, however, in the light of the fact that Philippi had Rome as its *πολίτευμα* and was, therefore, a "little Rome," a Roman colony patterned after its Mother.

The method used in arriving at conclusions in this thesis is the following: Material on the city of Philippi was gathered. The text of Philippians was then studied and words or phrases selected which showed a connection with the economic, social, religious, or political life of Philippi on the basis of known conditions within the city. To acquaint the reader with this investigation more adequately, background material regarding the city of Philippi and St. Paul's association with the Philippians first will be given briefly. The writer is hopeful that the reader will find through this study evidences of God's wisdom in using a human author, in an historical situation, to write to a Christian congregation in meaningful language with which it would be familiar.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF PHILIPPI

Philippi is a city in Macedonia. It was originally called Krenides, "Little Fountains," from the numerous wells or fountains which existed in the area.¹ Philip of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great, named the city after himself after conquering it and building a fortress on the site. Philippi, because of its location and wealth, became one of the foremost cities in Macedonia.

The Romans became masters of this region in 42 B. C. upon the defeat of the Republican forces under Brutus and Cassius by Octavian and Antony.² Two battles were fought on the site. With the final battle the Oligarchy fell before the rising of the great Roman Empire.

Standing on the great road which the Romans built from the Hellespont to Dyrrachium on the Adriatic Sea, Philippi assumed the role of one of the most important cities of the Empire. Strategically located, it served as a city of defense for the entire area.

Philippi became more important in 31 B. C. after

¹J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 47.

²Martin R. Vincent, The Epistle to the Philippians and to Philemon, in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1897), p. xvi.

Octavian had defeated Antony at Actium, and Augustus settled the city with Roman soldiers. Philippi became a Roman colony called "Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis." It became a miniature likeness of the city of Rome, and a Roman atmosphere permeated the city. Augustus settled battle veterans in the city and designated that those whom he assigned to Philippi were to regard this assignment as a reward for their faithfulness and service to the Emperor and the Roman Empire.

Many of the settlers, then, were Roman soldiers. Though Jews dwelt in the city, they were few and despised. Their place of worship was merely a προσευχή, a "prayer house," and not a full synagogue, outside the walls of the city, on the river's bank.³ Lightfoot⁴ and Morton⁵ agree with this theory and mention that it gives support to the conviction that the military town of Philippi did not attract many Jews. Arndt and Gingrich state that προσευχή

is nearly always equivalent to συναγωγή
But many consider that the πρ. in Ac 16:13,16 was not a regular synagogue because it was attended only by women (v. 13), and because the word σὺν is freq.

³H. C. G. Moule, Philippian Studies (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), p. 13.

⁴Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 52.

⁵H. V. Morton, In the Steps of St. Paul (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1944), p. 272.

used elsew. in Ac (e.g. 17:1,10,17). . . .⁶

Philippi was a rich and prosperous city. The original interest in the city stemmed from the rich gold mines in the area. Gold mining was the principal industry of the region for many years. During the time of Philip, for instance, gold mining yielded him an annual revenue of

a thousand talents,--a treasure which furnished him with the means of establishing and maintaining a navy, and which was quite as potent as his army in securing the future triumph of Macedonia.⁷

Deissmann points out, however, that by the time of Paul these mines had become depleted, and poverty was the normal situation in all of the Macedonian churches.⁸

While this in no way gives the reader a complete understanding of the history and situation of Philippi, it may suffice for now. The major references to the city will be reserved for Chapter IV, in which the relationship between the city of Philippi and the Christians of Philippi will be presented.

⁶William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 720.

⁷Vincent, op. cit., p. xv.

⁸Adolph Deissmann, St. Paul, A Study in Social and Religious History, translated from the German by Lionel R. M. Strachan (London: Hodder and Stoughton, c.1912), p. 215.

CHAPTER III

PAUL'S CONTACT WITH THE PHILIPPIANS

His Visit to the City

Acts gives the account of Paul's first visit to the city of Philippi (16:9-40). Paul founded the Church at Philippi on his second missionary journey. While at Troas he received in a vision the command to go over to Europe and to make his way to the city of Philippi. Arriving at the city with Luke, Silas, and Timothy, Paul journeyed to the riverside to meet first with the Jewish inhabitants of the city. As was pointed out above, the Jews apparently had no synagogue of their own in the city.¹ Whether one may call Paul's work in the city successful is, perhaps, a matter of debate, but it is interesting to note the converts who are mentioned.

Among the converts to Christianity was a woman by the name of Lydia, a seller of purple, from the city of Thyatira. She and her whole household were converted and baptized by St. Paul during his stay in their midst. A business woman of first rank, no doubt, whose business may suggest the existence of wealth within the city, she accepted Christ as her Savior. Paul's next probable convert had an altogether

¹Suora, p. 4.

different background. She was a fortune-teller and slave girl out of whom he had cast a spirit of divination. The performance of this miracle, however, had serious results. Paul and Silas were dragged into the market-place and charged with being Jews who were spreading unlawful doctrines among the Romans. They were accused of preaching treasonable heresy that would endanger the customs enjoined upon the Roman inhabitants.

After being beaten, Paul and Silas were cast into prison. God miraculously delivered them that night, however, and used them for the conversion of the third individual recorded, the jailer and his house. Upon their release the next morning Paul and Silas once again visited Lydia and the brethren. They then left the city. The twentieth chapter of Acts tells of Paul's return to the city on his third missionary journey.

The Letter to the Philippians

The genuineness of the Epistle to the Philippians is today generally recognized. The external evidence for it is strong. The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians admonishes the Philippians to make use of and to study carefully the epistles which Paul had written to them.² The

²Polycarp, The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians, 3:2, translated from the Greek by Edgar J. Goodspeed, in The Apostolic Fathers (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1950), p. 240.

Muratorian Canon places it among the letters of Paul. It is included in the Syrian and Old Latin versions. At the close of the second century it was in use by church fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. For further reference to such external evidence the reader is referred to Vincent³ and to Thiessen.⁴

The internal evidence is also most convincing. The author of the Epistle calls himself Paul (1:1). "The historical details, the language and style, and the tone of the letter, all point to Paul as the author."⁵ Kennedy says: "Perhaps no Pauline epistle bears more conclusively the stamp of authenticity."⁶

One difficulty some scholars have found with the Epistle concerns the unity of the letter. It has been suggested that it consists of two letters rather than one: one (1:1-3:1; 4:21-23) being addressed to the Church in general; the other (3:2-4:20) to certain prominent individuals

³Martin R. Vincent, The Epistle to the Philippians and to Philemon, in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1897), pp. xxv-xxvi.

⁴Henry C. Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1952), pp. 247-248.

⁵Ibid., p. 248.

⁶H. A. A. Kennedy, The Epistle to the Philippians, in The Expositor's Greek New Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.), III, 407.

within it.⁷ The main argument for such a division revolves around the abrupt and sharp contrast between 3:1 and 3:2. The solving of this problem is beyond the scope of this paper. The reader is referred to Michael for a further discussion of this question.⁸ For our concern it is satisfactory to note that the unity, not the authorship, is in question.

Various viewpoints have been expressed as to the place from which Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians. Scholars have suggested its writing as taking place in either Ephesus, Caesarea, or Rome.⁹

This writer has been unable to find any author who goes further than merely to present the arguments in favor of Caesarea as being the place of writing. The main evidences which Mueller presents as being used to support this theory are the following: (a) The imprisonment mentioned in Phil. 1:13 is better understood in the light of Paul's circumstances in Caesarea under military custody than of

⁷Thiessen, op. cit., p. 248.

⁸J. Hugh Michael, The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, in The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, edited by James Moffatt (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), pp. xi-xii.

⁹For a thorough discussion of these three views the reader is referred to Mueller's treatment which offers a comprehensive summary of the subject. Jac. J. Mueller, The Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon, in The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955), pp. 21-28.

those in Rome where he was fairly free to move about and to preach; (b) The Praetorium (Phil. 1:13) must be identified with the Palace of Herod at Caesarea, of which Acts 23:35 makes mention.¹⁰

Against this theory Mueller states that: (a) As the trial of Paul drew near at the end of his two-year imprisonment, he would have been subjected to stricter custody; (b) Paul states that his bonds were manifest "throughout the whole Praetorium and to all the rest." The phrase "to all the rest" could only refer to Caesar's guard of nine thousand men in Rome.¹¹ Franzmann adds, in summarizing the unlikelihood of Caesarea as being the place of writing:

(a) Paul at that time had no thought of revisiting Macedonia or Asia Minor; (b) In Caesarea there never was a prospect of an early release; (c) It is unlikely that Philemon, a runaway slave, would take refuge in a town like Caesarea, where he could hardly hope to escape detection.¹² Thiessen comments that if Caesarea had been the place of writing, reference would no doubt have been made in the Epistle to Philip the Evangelist, who lived in the city (Acts 21:8).¹³

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 22-23.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Martin H. Franzmann, "New Testament Introduction," unpublished lecture notes (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Print Shop, n.d.), p. 82.

¹³Thiessen, op. cit., p. 228.

Duncan is the most noteworthy supporter of Ephesus as the place of authorship. He holds that there are a number of passages on which such a hypothesis could be based. In Second Corinthians (11:23) Paul claims that he had been "in prison far more frequently." In First Corinthians (15:30-32) he refers to fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus and his life being in danger continually. Although he proceeds with caution in using Second Corinthians 1:8-10 as evidence, Duncan does suggest that Paul's reference to "the distress which befell me in Asia" could also be referred to an Ephesian imprisonment. Besides these references Duncan calls upon extra-canonical evidence to support an Ephesian ministry, most of which is indirect. The one specific reference he quotes comes from the Acts of Paul in which there is the story of Paul's encounter with a lion at Ephesus. For a complete study of Duncan's theory the reader is referred to his St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry.¹⁴

Dodd objectively takes up Duncan's theory in his New Testament Studies.¹⁵ After a careful analysis he concludes:

The net result so far is that the Ephesian hypothesis has some advantage, . . . provided that we are at liberty to assume that Paul was imprisoned at Ephesus. But so far we have only been convinced that such an imprisonment is possible. Unless it can be shown to

¹⁴George S. Duncan, St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930), pp. 59-87.

¹⁵C. H. Dodd, New Testament Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), pp. 85-99.

be probable, then the advantage after all would lie with the Roman hypothesis, since we know that Paul was imprisoned at Rome.¹⁶

Franzmann states: "The direct evidence for an imprisonment at Ephesus is admittedly not very strong; the hypothesis is based largely on indirect, internal evidence."¹⁷ Thiessen argues that it is unlikely that the Philippians would have sent Paul a gift at Ephesus, where he had so many friends.¹⁸

Modern scholarship is almost universal in accepting Rome as the place of authorship. This accounts best for Paul's mention of Caesar's household (4:22) and the Praetorium (1:13), for the story about Onesimus, for the gift from Philippi, and for his silence about Philip the Evangelist.

If Rome is accepted as being the place of writing, the date of writing will most logically fall between 59 and 61 A. D., the years of Paul's Roman imprisonment. Considerable difference has arisen, however, as to whether Philippians was the first or the last of the four captivity letters: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians. Investigation by this writer has shown Lightfoot to stand almost alone in the theory of an early dating around 59 A. D., but

¹⁶Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁷Franzmann, op. cit., p. 83.

¹⁸Thiessen, op. cit., p. 228.

his vehemence and determination demand the expression of his views. Those in favor of dating the letter about 61 A. D. contend that 1:12ff. show that Paul had already experienced a long period of imprisonment. Statements such as the bonds of the Apostle becoming known not only in the "Praetorium" but also "to all the rest" and his reference to Christ being preached "in every way" could not be true if Paul had just arrived in the city. Against this view Lightfoot states that the Church was already organized, and, hence, soldiers could be expected to have been among the believers. He also contends that the statement of his bonds being known "to all the rest" cannot be pressed. He feels, also, that such activity would have been more natural immediately after his arrival, while it would have died down in the course of a two-year imprisonment.¹⁹

Those favoring a late date maintain that 2:20 intimates that Paul's companions, Aristarchus and Luke, who had accompanied him on the voyage to Rome (Acts 27:2), were no longer with him. Nor are their names mentioned in the salutation of the Epistle as is the case in the Colossian and Philemon letters (Col. 4:10,14; Phlmn. 24). The conclusion is given that by the time of the writing of the Epistle these men had left the city of Rome. Lightfoot states, however, that

¹⁹J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 32.

to argue from silence is questionable. Aristarchus and Luke are not mentioned in the Ephesian letter, either. Further, the salutation of the Philippian letter extends greetings from "the brethren with me" (4:21).²⁰

To the argument that a late date is necessary because of four journeys which took place between Rome and Philippi between the time of Paul's imprisonment and the writing of the Epistle,²¹ Lightfoot replies by working out an ingenious method to show that only two journeys were actually necessary between the time of Paul's actual imprisonment and the writing of the Epistle.²² The reader is referred to Lightfoot for details. He also maintained that even if there had been four journeys, they could have taken place within four months with no difficulty. Finally, Paul's expectation of an early release (2:23) is used as evidence of a late dating. Lightfoot replies by saying that Paul probably felt that way many times.²³

To this writer the later dating seems more acceptable

²⁰Ibid., p. 34.

²¹The four journeys referred to are the following: (1) The news of Paul's arrival had to be conveyed to the Philippians; (2) Epaphroditus had to make the trip from Philippi to Rome; (3) The news of his illness at Rome had to be sent to Philippi; (4) The news of the concern of the Philippian congregation had to be sent to Rome.

²²Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 36.

²³Ibid., p. 40.

in view of the likelihood of a lengthy imprisonment, the length of time needed to allow comfortably for the four journeys, the general salutation of the Epistle, and Paul's expectation of an early release. Should the reader like to pursue these views further, he is referred to Lightfoot,²⁴ who favors, as has been stated, the theory of an early dating; and to the following who favor a late dating: Kennedy,²⁵ Thiessen,²⁶ and Mueller.²⁷ Vincent presents both sides of the question and leaves it an open issue.²⁸

Paul wrote the Epistle to express his gratitude for the gift which the Philippians had sent him and to admonish them to unity and joyfulness. As Herklots points out, the letter to the Philippians is a genuine letter. It is not simply a "book of the Bible," as such, in the sense that it was written for that purpose.²⁹ The entire letter is pervaded by Paul's strong personal attachment to the Church. There is no rigid, formal air. Paul is greeting friends, people to whom he is closely attached.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 30-46.

²⁵Kennedy, op. cit., pp. 405-407.

²⁶Thiessen, op. cit., pp. 250-251.

²⁷Mueller, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

²⁸Vincent, op. cit., pp. xxii-xxv.

²⁹H. G. G. Herklots, The Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians (London: Lutterworth Press, 1946), p. 12.

The letter is almost altogether commendatory. One cannot read it without picturing a confident Paul who is certain of the continued faithfulness and allegiance of his readers to that Gospel which he preached to them. Paul does not dwell on any specific doctrine, nor on any specific error within the Church as he does in his letters to the Corinthians, for example. Rather, he dwells on the very heart of the Gospel, and he appeals for the adherence to all that is pure, lovely, and of good report, and to the knowledge of those truths which they knew so well. The Epistle concerns itself more with the ethical than with the doctrinal. At the same time, however, it cannot be overlooked that the genuine Gospel is at the basis of Paul's letter. "The personal Christ is at its every heart."³⁰

In the opening eleven verses of the book Paul declares his thankfulness to God for their fellowship with the Apostle and for the fruits of their faith.

From verses 12 to 26 Paul describes his own condition as a prisoner and his readiness to glorify Christ either in death or life.

The remainder of chapter one and the entire second chapter dwell on the concept of unity and of humility, with Christ being the example of the Christians in Philippi.

Chapter three opens with an exhortation to joy, a tone

³⁰Vincent, op. cit., p. xxxv.

which rings so clear in the Epistle that it has been called "The Epistle of Joy." Suddenly, in the second verse, the tone changes. Paul warns his readers to beware of false teachers and the Judaizers who were attempting to misdirect the zeal of the Philippian Christians. He contrasts the Christian's true attitude with that of those who placed an emphasis on ritual and earthly appearances.

Chapter four deals with general exhortations. Paul encourages his readers to steadfastness and then proceeds to encourage two women to settle their differences with the help of one of Paul's former fellow-laborers. Then follow exhortations to joyfulness, moderation, prayer, steadfastness, giving of thanks, and an imitation of Paul's own example.

With 4:10 begins Paul's thanksgiving for the gift supplied to him by his Philippian readers and his expression of trust in whatever situation he finds himself.

The Epistle closes with a general salutation. No one is mentioned by name. His letter is addressed to "every saint in Christ Jesus" (4:21).

CHAPTER IV

TERMINOLOGY WHICH REFLECTS LOCAL CONDITIONS IN PHILIPPI

The Economic Situation

As has been pointed out,¹ Philippi had been a city rich in wealth because of its valuable gold mines. It is supposed, however, that by the time of Paul these mines had been depleted and Philippi was a poor city. Though the writer has been unable to find any evidence either to support or to deny this hypothesis, it yet appears, because of Paul's terminology, that Philippi was a commercial center and familiar with technical commercial vocabulary. That Philippi was not a poor city seems to be supported also from the appearance of Lydia in the Acts account. Only in a wealthy city could a "seller of purple" find customers for his goods.² Further, it is unlikely that the city of Rome would allow this colony to suffer deprivation. Considering its strategic position, it is most likely to assume that business flourished in the city, although much of it may have been in the area of agriculture.

¹Supra, p. 5.

²W. M. Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1896), p. 214.

The Christians of Philippi, no doubt, were involved in business even as were the other citizens of the city. Paul's reference in Second Corinthians to the deep poverty of the Macedonian churches, however, suggests that the Christians of Philippi did not enjoy the same wealth as the Roman citizens enjoyed: "How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their down-to-the-bottom poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (8:2). Strachan points out that the Roman government took the profits from the various business enterprises, and that the persecution and social ostracism of the Christians in Philippi added to their poverty.³ Paul's comment, "ye lacked opportunity" (Phil. 4:10), would then refer to a situation of poverty as being the cause of the Philippian Christians failing to transmit contributions to him sooner.

Terminology employed by Paul appears, however, to bear out the fact that many of the Philippian Christians were involved in business and economics. In 4:15 Paul uses the expression: *δόσεως καὶ λήψεως*. This is a technical expression which means "credit and debt." *δοῖς* occurs in the New Testament only here and in James 1:17. Here it refers to pecuniary transactions. When Paul writes, therefore, "no church communicated with me as concerning

³R. H. Strachan, The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, in The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, edited by James Moffatt (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), pp. 131-133.

δοσεως και λημψεως but ye only," he is using this familiar expression to show that the giving by the Philippians and the receiving by Paul form two sides of the account.

In 4:17 Paul uses two other words with monetary associations which would have had special meaning to readers acquainted with commerce: "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire τὸν καρπὸν that may abound to your λόγον." Moule points out that the word καρπός refers to principal and interest.⁴ καρπός is the recompense which the gift will bring to the givers.⁵ In commenting on λόγον, Herklots refers it to "account" in the financial sense.⁶ Paul saw in the enthusiasm of the Philippians, therefore, the unity of Christ's Church, the members having mutual interest, so that if one suffers, all suffer. The Philippians claimed a right to share in the Apostle's wants and needs and to communicate in his affliction. This, as a fruit of Christ's work and of the presence of His Spirit, refreshed the Apostle. It was the giving of themselves as

⁴H. C. G. Moule, Philippian Studies (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), p. 249, f.n. 1.

⁵Martin R. Vincent, The Epistle to the Philippians and to Philemon, in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1897), p. 149.

⁶H. G. G. Herklots, The Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians (London: Lutterworth Press, 1946), p. 127.

total persons for the sake of Christ that abounded to their account.

The opening words of 4:18, also, suggest technical language: ἀπέχω δὲ πάντα. "I have 'received the full sum' and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things from you." By using ἀπέχω, Paul is telling his readers that their account was closed. Herklots comments that this was as much as to say that Paul was giving them a receipt in full for the money they had sent him.⁷

Paul's technical commercial and economic vocabulary suggests new shades of meaning and gives new insights into the message which he wrote to the Philippians. It is very apparent that his vocabulary was influenced by local conditions, and that he selected his words with a view to those conditions.

The Social Situation

Athletic interests and the racial situation in Philippi also caused St. Paul to select certain definite, concrete terminology in his Epistle to the Philippians.

He uses athletic terminology in 1:27 and 1:30.

"στῆκετε in one spirit," Paul exhorts his hearers in verse 27, "having the same ἀγῶνα which ye saw in me, and now hear in me" (v. 30). These words were both used in

⁷Ibid.

connection with contests in the arena and athletic contests in general. Lightfoot comments that *στηκετε* was used as a command given to criminals who were placed in the Roman amphitheater to die.⁸ They were thrown into the arena and commanded to fight one another to death, or, "to fight for their lives." They were to "stand firm" lest they be killed. The Philippians were to cling to that Gospel which they had received as if their very lives were at stake. Even as condemned criminals in the theater were alert and looked about them continually lest they be struck unawares from the rear, so the Philippians were to be sober and alert, ever mindful that sin and worldliness surrounded them and were seeking to kill their spiritual lives and the life which the Gospel had arisen within them.

ἀγών carries this thought a bit farther. This "conflict" was still on! The game was far from over! The Philippians were in a contest and were being used by God as a part of His demonstration to the world of the victory won by Christ.⁹ It is possible, also, that Paul in this verse was reminding the Philippians of his persecution in Philippi as a symbol of that which they, too, must undergo. *ἀγών* is used both of inward and outward conflict. Even as the

⁸J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 106.

⁹Herklots, op. cit., p. 59.

athlete undergoes internal and external strugglings in his quest for victory, so also must the Philippians realize that theirs, too, will be a life of internal and external combat, of spiritual as well as physical sufferings for the sake of Christ.

Whether Philippi itself had such an arena as Rome had has not been determined. The writer was unable to find any reference to such an arena existing in Philippi. Inasmuch as Philippi and the Philippians were so closely associated with the city of Rome, however, these words may properly be said to have been influenced by local conditions. Surely the Philippians would have understood this terminology with all of its implications better than many other people to whom Paul may have written.

The presence of many Gentiles within the Philippian congregation also influenced Paul's terminology. In 2:8, speaking of Christ's death, Paul writes: "And being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient *μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.*" While this and similar statements of Christ's death on the cross are mentioned throughout the New Testament, Paul's placement of it here, in an emphatic position as sort of an afterthought adds much to the ignominy of His death, especially in the minds of his Gentile readers. No death was so humiliating in the eyes of a Roman citizen as death by crucifixion. This was one type of dying which the Roman citizen needed never fear.

For the Jew death on the cross was a symbol of the curse of God upon a victim. For the Gentile, Moule states, it was the horror of degradation which should be far not only from the bodies but also from the imagination of the citizens of Rome.¹⁰ Not only does the word *μέχρι* add to the impact, but the little particle *δέ*, also, introduces another and more striking detail of the humiliation and leads to the climax. Paul is a master of words in this phrase, and the modern reader, no doubt, could not even begin to realize the impact which the phrase would have had upon the Gentiles, as well as upon the Jews, who made up a large part of the congregation in Philippi.

That Gentiles did make up the great part of the congregation can be seen from Acts 16, the account of Paul's first visit to Philippi. Verse 13 states that on the sabbath day Paul went to the side of the river, where *ἐνομιζόμεν προσευχήν εἶναι*. *προσευχή* is used in this context as a "place of prayer."¹¹ The absence of a synagogue gives probability to the suggestion that the military city of Philippi did not attract Jews. Morton comments that there were fewer Jews in Philippi than in any other town except Lystra, also a Roman colony.¹²

¹⁰Moule, op. cit., p. 95.

¹¹Supra, p. 4.

¹²H. V. Morton, In the Steps of St. Paul (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1944), p. 272.

Paul, then, chooses his terminology with discretion. Before giving the account of the highest exaltation of Christ, he closes the description of His humiliation by leaving his readers at the very lowest point of humiliation which they could imagine.

In 2:17 Paul's use of the word *θυσία* is influenced by local conditions. Lightfoot suggests that this is a reference to heathen sacrifices rather than to Jewish drink-offerings.¹³ "And if I be offered upon τῆ θυσίᾳ and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."

According to Paul's metaphor, therefore, the Philippians as priests offer their faith to God in the midst of an ungodly generation who had already shed Paul's blood at Philippi, had imprisoned him at Rome, and would probably put him to death. If they should do this, Paul's blood would be the libation which would be added to the Philippian's offering.¹⁴

Herklots agrees with this view and states that this reference is to the sacrificial system of paganism with which many of Paul's Philippian converts would be familiar.¹⁵

The Religious Situation

The terminology within the Epistle strongly reflects the religious situation among the Christians at Philippi. Although there is no external evidence, of course, the

¹³Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 119.

¹⁴Vincent, op. cit., p. 71.

¹⁵Herklots, op. cit., p. 75.

entire Epistle suggests, through Paul's selection of vocabulary, the atmosphere which existed within the Philippian congregation. The general tone of the Epistle leaves no doubt that Paul was completely satisfied with their loyalty. He does not reproach them because of disorderly living. Warnings against grosser sins are not present. The Epistle is a pledge of confidence from beginning to end.

Yet, there was one drawback as evidenced by Paul's letter. A spirit of strife had sprung up within the Church. Perhaps this strife had not yet taken the form of open feuds, but that there were disputes and rivalries is very clear. The strife seems to have been more of a social nature than of a doctrinal nature. Lightfoot concludes that within the congregation various groups were claiming the Apostle's sympathy for themselves.¹⁶ Inasmuch as the Christians of Philippi were of varied backgrounds and experiences, one need not have too much imagination to visualize the temptations which could have instigated quarrels. The Epistle gives no hint that these were dangerous tendencies, but merely that either Jews antagonistic to Christianity or Judaizers with their formalism and anti-nomian license were present.

¹⁶Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

Everything points to their being Jews. But were they Jews unaffected by the Christian faith, void of all sympathy with it, and intolerant in their attitude to those who professed it? Or were they Judaizers, that is, Jews who had adopted the new faith but were seeking to impose upon all converts, Gentiles as well as Jewish, the burden of Jewish ritual, teaching that apart from circumcision there could be no access to God? The context permits us to hold either of these views. . . . It may be that the Christians to whom Paul is writing were suffering at the hands of persecuting Jews and sorely tempted to slide back into Judaism. The fact that the Apostle in his list of outward privileges in which he could outmatch his antagonists includes his quondam persecution of the Church (ver. 6) lends some countenance to this view. The great majority of commentators, however, assume with little or no discussion of the question, that the persons against whom the warning is uttered are Judaizers. . . . The machination of the Judaizers, who so persistently harassed Paul and his converts, constituted the chief peril to which the earliest Christians were exposed.¹⁷

That Judaizing Christians were responsible for this controversy is intimated in 3:2. "Look out for dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of τὴν κατατροπήν." "Dog" was a term of contempt with both Jew and Gentile. It was an unclean animal according to Jewish law. The Jews called the Gentiles "dogs" (Matt. 15:27). Reference is most assuredly made, then, to individuals who were acting in an impure manner, the profane character of false teachers whose moral quality was to be questioned. The point of their heresy was τὴν κατατροπήν.¹ This word appears nowhere

¹⁷J. Hugh Michael, The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, in The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, edited by James Moffatt (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), pp. 133-134.

else in the Bible. Translated "the concision," the word "directs attention to the fact that these persons had no right to claim circumcision in the true sense."¹⁸

The reference here is to Judaizing Christians. In view of their habit of keeping an eye on the Pauline churches and of introducing their emissaries into them, it is not likely that they had overlooked Philippi; and it is quite probable that Paul had previously found it necessary to warn the church against their designs. Some fresh intelligence of their operations may have prompted him to repeat those cautions.¹⁹

Rainy makes the very pointed observation:

They [the Judaizers] classed the Gentiles (even the uncircumcised Christians) as dogs, impure beings who devoured all kinds of meat and were open to all kinds of uncleanness. But themselves, the Apostle intimates, were the truly impure, shutting themselves out from the true purity, the heart's purity, and (as Dr. Lightfoot expresses it) "devouring the garbage of carnal ordinances." They were also evil workers . . . busy to undo rather than to build up what is good. . . . And they were the concision; not the circumcision according to the true intent of that ordinance, but the concision, the mutilation or gashing. Circumcision was a word which carried in its heart a high meaning of separation from evil and of consecration to the Lord. . . . For the Judaizing zealots could be claimed only a circumcision which had lost its sense, and which no more deserved its name,--a senseless gashing of the flesh, a concision. . . .²⁰

Paul learned of this divided spirit, possibly, from Epaphroditus, who crossed the mountains and sea to carry the

¹⁸Vincent, op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 92-93.

²⁰Robert Rainy, The Epistle to the Philippians, in The Expositor's Bible (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903), pp. 175-176.

generous gift of money to Paul in Rome. And Paul, then, in writing his Epistle, attempted to solve this difficulty by using specific, pointed expressions, but yet without intimating that the problem was beyond correction.

The call to unity, the stress on "all," appears throughout the Epistle. Paul exhorts his readers to be of "one mind" (3:16) and to be "followers together of me" (3:18). He calls for unity of love, unity of spirit, and loving agreement (2:2). The very first verse of the Epistle already indicates that Paul intends to make it clear that he had no favorites within the congregation. He addresses his letter to "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." By contrast, Paul addresses "the Church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1); "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2); "the saints which are at Ephesus" (Eph. 1:1); "the saints and faithful brethren which are at Colossae" (Col. 1:2).

The second chapter contains several references to the fear which plagued Paul regarding divisions at Philippi. In 2:3-4, Herklots points out, Paul's use of the plural form *ἑκαστοί* indicates his desire to say "each party."²¹ Kennedy also states that this usage was very common in

²¹Herklots, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

classical Greek.²² Paul's desire is that each party may grasp the other's viewpoint. The verses read:

Let nothing be done through a party spirit (*ἐπιθειά*) and vainglory (*κενοδοξία*); but in lowliness of mind each [party] (*ἑκαστοί*) thinking the other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Before pursuing the further significance of these verses, however, consideration must be given to the textual problem of reading *ἑκαστοί* (with BAGPC) or *ἑκαστος* (with p⁴⁶X C² D pl). Manuscript evidence is evenly balanced. On the basis of the variety of witnesses and the aptness in the context, however, this writer favors, with Kennedy²³ and Lightfoot,²⁴ the reading of the plural *ἑκαστοί*. Lightfoot adds that if the clauses of verse four are to be correlative, both forms must be alike. The second *ἑκαστοί* very clearly is the correct reading.²⁵ It is also noted that *ἑκαστοί* agrees with the preceding *τὰ ἑαυτῶν*.

"Let nothing be done through *ἐπιθειά*." This word also refers to a party spirit, the exaltation of one's self

²²H. A. A. Kennedy, The Epistle to the Philippians, in The Expositor's Greek New Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.), III, 434.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 109.

²⁵Ibid.

or of one's party.²⁶ Vincent points out that the word was applied to those who served in official positions for their own selfish purposes, and, to that end, prompted party-spirit or factions.²⁷

"Vainglory" (κενοδοξία) has similar connections with the dispute at Philippi. The word connotes a vain conceit of possessing a rightful claim to honor. Its goal is something externally beautiful and glittering, but it is just that. It is vain and fleshly. It is to this, perhaps, that Paul also refers in 3:2-3, where he describes the true circumcision, the worshipping of God in the spirit and rejoicing in Christ, having "no confidence in the flesh." Such κενοδοξία no doubt had arisen in the thinking of the Jewish Christians of Philippi, as also happened in the Galatian Church, and they demanded that the Gentile Christians submit themselves completely to Jewish law.²⁸

Dangerous tendencies had arisen within the congregation, therefore, and Paul chose his words so as to unite the congregation once again. This is true not only in the opening verse but also in 1:27: "that ye stand fast $\bar{\epsilon}\nu$ $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\iota$ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ, συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου." Paul calls for the unity of the

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Vincent, op. cit., p. 21.

²⁸Herklots, op. cit., p. 88.

Church, unity in the highest and deepest realms of human experience, a unity possible only through the Spirit. Vincent agrees with the interpretation that *πίστις* goes far deeper than a "subjective energy as a rule of life." In the word is embodied the meaning of "the new regimen of those that are Christ's; the objectively new, obligatory way of life."²⁹ The new way of life goes beyond personal, subjective judgment. That which is to bind the Christians of Philippi together is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ is their unity. He characterizes their "rule of life."

Paul's selection of words in 1:3-4 also reveals his concern about uniting the Philippian Christians into one body: "I thank my God upon every mention of you. Always in every prayer of mine *ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑμῶν* making request with joy." The memories of Paul regarding the congregation were not easily obliterated. Once again he talks about "you all." He had in mind, no doubt, not only the Jews whom he had met at the *προσευχή*, but also Lydia, the "psychic girl," and the jailer. They, too, though they were not Jews, were ever in the mind of the Apostle and in his prayers. He regarded them as highly as any of the other members of the Philippian congregation. By the use of the tiny word *πάντων* Paul emphatically calls for unity and reminds his readers of the unity of the Church, a unity which

²⁹Vincent, op. cit., p. 34.

goes beyond racial or physical characteristics.

The same call to unity is expressed in 1:7: *συγκοινωνίους μου τῆς χάριτος πάντας ὑμᾶς ὄντας*. "In my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel, you are all (*πάντας*) partakers of my grace." Even as the entire congregation toiled to alleviate Paul's sufferings in imprisonment and to cooperate with him in defending the Gospel and to suffer for its sake, so Paul here shows that they all were prompted by the same grace. They were one people. They were to dwell together as one body in Christ. It is noted just in passing that strife between two women of the congregation, Euodias and Syntyche, prompted Paul to exhort them by name to unity (4:2).

Paul's mention of Timothy (2:19) may go beyond simply his high regard for this young preacher. "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state." Timothy was the one thoroughly trusted friend within Paul's reach. It was Paul's intention that Timothy should bring to the Philippians news of Paul and to represent him as only a near and confidential friend could. At the same time Timothy was to bring back to Paul an account of things at Philippi. Timothy was indeed fit for the job, and the reader can feel the air of peace and satisfaction as he reads Paul's announcement of his decision to send Timothy as his personal representative into their midst.

Paul's terminology in 2:20 reveals further cause for his rejoicing in sending Timothy to the Philippian congregation. Paul wanted to send Timothy because no man was ἰσόψυχον; no one else would γνησίως care for their situation. ἰσόψυχον occurs only here in the New Testament. Paul and Timothy were of the same mind; they were close. Paul was certain that the quality of Timothy's ministry would be no less than his own. Further, Timothy's concern would come γνησίως, "naturally," "by birth relation," and would therefore be genuine and true. In the same verse Paul continues by commenting that he and Timothy served together "as a son with a father." Timothy would not regard his mission merely as a task to be fulfilled. He was associated with Paul in the founding of the congregation and hence would take a personal interest in the work of ministering to the Christians in Philippi. The problem of disunity, then, heavily contributed to terminology which Paul employed in his Epistle to the Philippians.

Considerable debate has arisen regarding Paul's mention of "bishops and deacons" (ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι) in the first verse of the Epistle as to its bearing on the church polity in Philippi. In this discussion the writer is heavily indebted to Vincent and his thorough excursus on this question.³⁰ Conclusions, however, cannot become

³⁰Ibid., pp. 36-51.

dogmatic owing to the imperfections of the sources available.

What is the relationship between the *ἐπίσκοπος* and the *διάκονος* mentioned in Acts and in the Pastoral Epistles? This has been a subject of controversy for many centuries. The Roman Church, to preserve its teaching that bishops were the only successors of the apostles, issued a dogma to this effect through the Council of Trent. This dogma was rejected by the Reformed and by the Lutherans. As time went on, however, discussion and study on this matter went beyond the doctrinal basis to a more historical basis.

The New Testament exhibits church polity in a fluid state. Terms are often used interchangeably, and the offices themselves have not as yet taken any permanent shape. More often than not it appears as though local conditions to a great extent were the determining factors in the setting up of church polity. In fact, certain terms appear to have been used in sections of the Church but not in others.

An apostle, a bishop, a teacher, a deacon, are alike "servants." An overseer will be likely to be a presbyter, chosen on account of his age and experience. The overseers may be called *προϊστάμενοι*, *ηγούμενοι*, or *κυβερνήσεις*. The assistants of an overseer may be known as *διάκονοι* or *ἀντιλήψεις*.³¹

The terms, then, do not completely explain themselves. Most of them had functional meanings, were marked with

³¹Ibid., pp. 37-38.

vagueness, and indicated particular functions rather than serving as official titles. "ἐπίσκοπος is an overseer; δίακονος is a servant. . . . δίακονοι is applied to religious and churchly ministries of all kinds."³²

The Gentile churches, especially, with no mother-church from which to build, were bound together and united mainly through their relation to St. Paul. His ideal was unity.

The primitive Pauline church consisted of a number of little fraternities, composed largely of the poor and of the lower orders of society, holding their meetings in the private houses of some of their members.³³

These church-communities were self-governing. The members themselves determined who was to minister to them. It was impossible to institute offices formally within the Church-at-large. The only exceptions were the offices of the apostles, prophets, and teachers. Paul declared that God had placed these offices within the Church (1 Cor. 12:28). Their justification was a special divine endowment or χάρισμα. They were not three grades within the Church. Whatever authority they possessed depended upon their divine origin.

It is noted that neither ἐπίσκοποι, πρεσβύτεροι, nor δίακονοι appear in the Corinthian list. Nor do they occur in the list cited in Ephesians 4:11-12.

³²Ibid., p. 38.

³³Ibid., p. 39.

But in the Ignatian epistles (100-118 A. D.) we find a clear recognition of three orders of the ministry,--bishops, presbyters, and deacons,--without which it is asserted that a church is not duly constituted (Trall. 111). This ministry is the center of church order. The bishop is distinguished from the presbyter as representing a higher order. . . . The presbyters are to preside after the likeness of the council of the apostles (Mag. vi). . . . The deacons are to be respected as Jesus Christ (Trall. 111). In short, we have in these epistles the strongly marked beginnings of the monarchical episcopacy.³⁴

Realizing that the Philippian congregation was the oldest Pauline congregation in Europe, it does appear logical that the polity of the Church had become somewhat matured, and that the names *ἐπίσκοπος* and *διάκονος* had received a narrower significance in their midst. While in later Church usage *ἐπίσκοπος* designates an "overseer" of a congregation who was concerned with the spiritual side of congregation life and the *πρεσβύτερος* signified a class or state, church members of good standing who had proved themselves by their good works and pure character, it cannot be assumed that such was the case as far back as 60 A. D. Nor can it be assumed that presbyters played no part in the Philippian congregation because they are not mentioned by name.

The ecclesiastical eldership is . . . not identical with the episcopate, though in the unsettled state of ecclesiastical nomenclature, the names might, on occasion, be interchanged, and though, in the later change of ecclesiastical development, the assumption of the teaching function by both classes, though the gradual

³⁴Ibid., p. 40.

subsidence of charismatic endowments, tends to confuse them. The presbyterate denotes an honorable and influential estate in the church on the ground of age, duration of church membership, and approved character. Only bishops are "appointed." There is no appointment to the presbyterate.³⁵

The special office of *διάκονος* occurs in the Pastorals and nowhere else in Paul's writings. Generally, it is a common expression of service, either to Christ or to others. Exactly what were the responsibilities of the office of the *διάκονος* within the Philippian congregation we cannot tell, but from the qualifications of the office which Paul mentions in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 it is clear that among their duties was the administration of charitable funds of the Church.³⁶ They are probably singled out in the greeting, therefore, because they had been especially active in gathering and sending the gift given to Paul. Carpenter interprets the First Timothy passage, also, to mean that the *διάκονος* was subordinate to the *ἐπίσκοπος*.³⁷ Further than this we cannot go because of a lack of evidence.

The Political Situation

St. Paul's terminology in his Epistle to the Philippians reveals much about the political situation in the city and

³⁵Ibid., p. 49.

³⁶H. J. Carpenter, "Minister," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The MacMillan Co., c.1950), p. 150.

³⁷Ibid.

in several cases was directed to its local conditions. This is especially true regarding his use of the words *Πολίτευμα* (3:20), *Πολίτευθε* (1:27), and the references to Christ as *Κύριος* and *σωτήρ* in contrast to the practice of Emperor worship which prevailed within the Roman Empire.

The verb *πολιτεύομαι* and its kindred noun *πολίτευμα* refer to the capital or native city which keeps citizens on its register³⁸ and to the conduct of those who are on that register. The Philippians, then, regarded Rome as their *πολίτευμα*. They regarded their own city as a miniature copy of their *πολίτευμα*, or "home base," Rome. Though they lived in the Roman colony of Philippi, they yet belonged to Rome, and they were to put the Roman stamp upon the city. Though local conditions at times necessitated that certain customs differed from those in Rome, yet the Roman standard hung high and proudly over the city. In conduct, also, the principles of the Roman Empire permeated the city and the life of its inhabitants, so that visitors and travelers could see the majesty of the Roman Empire in their midst. The Philippians were only, as it were, sojourners in the town, defending and promulgating the principles of the Roman Empire in that geographical location.

³⁸Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology, translated from the German by John Marsh (New York: The MacMillan Co., c.1955), p. 296, f.n. 518.

The Philippian citizens were Romans! Their colony was a "little Rome." They were Romans away from Rome but ever mindful that they were pledging allegiance to Rome, their *πολίτευμα*.

Philippi was made such a colony by Augustus. It was a self-governing colony of the Mother City, but yet attached and associated with Rome much as a "Crown Colony" is related to London and the British Empire.³⁹ Philippi was looked after by the Roman Emperor through his appointed governors. The Roman Senate, especially in times of peace, was given authority over the city, appointed a proconsul, and, as much as possible, founded the city on the example of Rome. The limits of the city were clearly marked out by the plough. Its citizens were enrolled in one of the Roman tribes, thereby making the citizens of the city cives, that is, genuine Roman citizens, and not merely peregrini, or strangers. Usually the designation of an individual as a civis was restricted to those citizens living in Italy, but, because Philippi had Rome as its *πολίτευμα*, its citizens were fully accepted as cives and Roman citizens.⁴⁰ The colonists, then, went out with all the pride of Roman

³⁹W. H. Boulton, The Apostle Paul; His Life, Labours, and Letters (Bristol: The Maran-Atha Press, n.d.), p. 66.

⁴⁰W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, The Life and Epistles of St. Paul (Hartford: S. S. Scranton and Co., 1900), p. 253.

citizens to represent and to reproduce the city of Rome in the midst of an alien population.

Evidence shows that Philippi was the fourth of such miniature semblances of Rome. Antioch in Pisidia, Alexandria, and Troas previously had been elevated by the Emperor to this position. These cities were not merely mercantile centers, nor were they groups merely thrown together, but they were intended primarily for military safeguard.⁴¹

These colonies were convenient possessions, therefore, for rewarding veterans who had served in wars and for establishing freedmen and other Italians whom it was desirable to move to a distance from Rome.⁴² The majority of residents of Philippi, then, were former inhabitants of Italy, citizens who still pledged allegiance to the Roman Emperor and to the Roman Empire.

As one might readily assume, these soldiers were the ruling caste in the colonies. Further, they were entirely freed from the jurisdiction of the provincial governor. They elected their own magistrates,⁴³ and they were trained

⁴¹Ibid., p. 252.

⁴²Thomas Morrison, The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul (3rd edition; Edinburgh: Olephant, Anderson and Ferrier, n.d.), p. 71, f.n.†.

⁴³C. T. Wood, The Life, Letters and Religion of St. Paul (2nd edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1932), p. 53.

in the stern, strong disciplines of the Roman legions.⁴⁴

A colony was a miniature Rome. The colonists proceeded to their destination under their standards, and marked out with the plough the limits of the new city. The land was divided into sections of two hundred acres, which were subdivided into lots (*sortes*), and in military colonies these were apportioned according to rank. Even in the form and appearance of the city the mother-city was imitated. The coinage bore Roman inscriptions. The colonies were free from any intrusion by the governors of the province.⁴⁵

The colony was a transplanted community. The community, rather than individuals, was given extraordinary privileges, and these privileges were made according to Roman civil status.⁴⁶

To citizens having Rome as their *πολίτευμα* Paul writes that their *πολίτευμα* is in heaven. In view of the political structure just described, Paul's purpose in reminding his readers that their *πολίτευμα* is in heaven becomes very apparent. "Our domicile is in heaven."⁴⁷ Philippi was to be an outpost for these Christians and must receive the heavenly stamp of approval. Though they dwelt within a city of Greeks, barbarians, and Romans, and though they followed the customs and forms of Philippian and Roman life, yet they were only sojourners there and must ever give

⁴⁴F. W. Farrar, The Life and Work of St. Paul (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1889), p. 277.

⁴⁵Vincent, op. cit., p. xvii.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Herklots, op. cit., p. 108.

evidence, by their conduct and manner of life, that they were living the life of citizens of heaven. Even as the corporate, closely-knit life of the Philippian cives made a deep impression upon outsiders, so also the Christians in Philippi, by their corporate, unified life in Jesus Christ were to make a deep impression upon outsiders and to serve as a major factor in winning converts for the Gospel.

One cannot but think here of the old cliché: The Christian must be in the world, but not of the world. Worldliness is one of the worst enemies of the Church. Paul was reminding his readers that the Church had a message to the nation which surrounded it. The corporate life of the Christian society must be worthy of the Gospel. It must be different. The banner of the Cross of Christ must wave proudly and confidently at all times, so that the outsider can not but see that eternal goal to which the Christian has pledged himself.

That the *πολίτευμα* of the Christian is in heaven also testifies to the fact that eternity had now broken through into time and that the long prophesied age of the Spirit had begun.⁴⁸ Believers were inhabitants of a new world of joy and freedom. Their lives were to be lived in service to

⁴⁸James Stewart, A Man in Christ (New York: Harper and Brothers, [1943], p. 272.

the living and true God. A new thrill of hope and expectation was to permeate their lives. Their hearts and lives were to be filled with the certainty that nothing could defeat Jesus or bring His cause to confusion.⁴⁹

The city of which the Christian is a citizen is in heaven. By making this testimony, Paul was also bearing witness to the fact that the Philippian Christians had a right to this heavenly city. The cives of Philippi became such not by their own desire. The Emperor himself, through his representatives, to be sure, decreed upon whom this title should be bestowed. So, also, God elected His people to the heavenly *πολίτευμα* because of His Son's work of redemption. He placed their names on the register of the *πολίτευμα* and gave them this citizenship for a purpose. Their "appointment" to serve their King in His *πολίτευμα* was not the result of a haphazard selection or choosing, nor was it a matter of "luck." God called them by name and placed their names on the "heavenly charter." Hence, Paul was encouraging his readers to behave themselves as such, with certainty and enthusiasm, as His appointed representatives upon earth.

πολίτευμα does not refer only to the state to which citizens belong, however. The word also suggests the functions which the citizens were to perform. *πολίτευμα* refers

⁴⁹Ibid.

to that which one does.⁵⁰ A duty is involved when one belongs to a *πολίτευμα*. For the Roman citizen in Philippi it meant the unwavering allegiance to the principles of the Roman Empire, to the life of the Roman Empire, to the defense of the Roman Empire, to obedience to that for which the Roman Empire stood. The Philippian readers were to understand this aspect of the *πολίτευμα* also. The duty involved for them was to walk as citizens of the saints and kingdom of God with the knowledge that "here we have no abiding city."⁵¹

Since they were a minority group in Philippi, the temptation was no doubt ever present to conform to the standards and mores of the surrounding populace. The idea of conforming to the pattern of Roman life must have often seemed very appealing to the Christians as an escape from direct or indirect persecution. As members and citizens of the heavenly *πολίτευμα*, however, the Philippian Christians were reminded of the responsibilities which that citizenship also entailed. Even as the Roman inhabitants were to remain free from barbarian and foreign ways of life lest the "Roman atmosphere" of the city be corrupted, so also the

⁵⁰Martin H. Scharlemann, "Sermon Study on Philippians 3:17-21," The Concordia Pulpit for 1955 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), XXVI, 471.

⁵¹Henry Airay, Lectures upon the Whole Epistle of Paul to the Philippians (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1864), p. 306.

Christians were not to walk after the flesh or become entangled with the affairs of this life. Their minds were to be set on the heavenly Jerusalem after which their life was to be patterned. They were to keep the principles and foundations of their *πολίτευμα* unblemished and pure, easily distinguishable, though outside forces might do their best to pollute them. They were not their own! The purpose for their being where they were was to reveal the glorious and majestic message of their *πολίτευμα*, the coming of the transcendent God into time through His Son, Jesus Christ, that the peregrini, or strangers, about them might also desire, through faith, citizenship in the *πολίτευμα* of the Christian.

By the use of the word *πολίτευμα* the duty was also enjoined upon the Philippians to stand fast against all assaults. One of the reasons for the existence of such colonies as Philippi was the matter of defense. The soldiers assigned to the city were not merely to defend the cause of the Roman Empire by their conduct, but also, when necessary, by taking up arms and by standing firm even unto death. So also the Christians. They, too, would find themselves ever in danger of oppression. The assaults of the devil would come in on every hand in an attempt to break down and destroy in the hearts and minds of men the glorious character of the heavenly *πολίτευμα*. When these trials would come, the Philippian Christians were to wrestle against them; they

were to stand fast, actively fighting for the preservation of the declaration of the message of the heavenly *Πολίτευμα* to aliens and foreigners. Never should any situation arise which could raise questions as to the true power, majesty, and glory of the *Πολίτευμα* to which the Christians declared their allegiance.

Another obligation of the cives in a *Πολίτευμα* was obedience. Though freedom did exist in some external matters, yet they were governed by the laws of the city and were required to submit themselves to these laws. The same was to be true of the Christian congregation in Philippi. It must ever be aware of, and submit itself to, the commands which its King declared. It dared never confuse its liberty under the Gospel with license. Its freedom was a freedom to serve its Lord and Master in humble obedience, looking to Him alone for all guidance and direction, seeing in Him the pattern for their lives. Even as the cives in Philippi often found two sets of laws, one issued by Rome and the other by local ordinance, foisted upon them, but never acknowledged any law which could supersede those which came from the Mother City, so, too, the Christians should realize and submit themselves first to the higher laws from their Mother City, and then, when there was no conflict, to perform their duties of civil life within the city of Philippi. The Philippian Christians were citizens of a city which was above; they were to carry themselves as

"citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem" as it became the Gospel of Christ.⁵²

The Christian's *πολίτευμα* is in heaven. The Apostle Paul refers to the status of his readers. They were "obliged by their nobility" to live, however far from home, as though they belonged to it. They were to be representatives of their home at all times and in all circumstances.⁵³ Their life was to be regulated and directed by the truths and principles ordained in the Mother City, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Scharlemann points out that Christians are not marked from the rest of mankind by where they live, nor by their speech or customs. They can dwell in Greek or barbarian cities; they can follow the customs of clothing and food which are common to the local manner of life. Yet, they simultaneously manifest a wonderful and paradoxical character of their own unseen state. They pass their time on earth, but hold their citizenship in heaven. There always exists a tension within the Christian life between present existence and the life of the world to come.⁵⁴

St. Paul's reference to the Christian's heavenly *πολίτευμα* is one of several references, also, to another local situation within Philippi and the Roman Empire as a

⁵²Ibid., p. 88.

⁵³Moule, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

⁵⁴Scharlemann, op. cit., p. 478.

whole. Evidence reveals that Emperor worship was common, if not already legally commanded, by the year 60 A. D. within the Roman Empire.⁵⁵ By the time Paul wrote his Epistle to the Philippians, therefore, the Christians within the Roman colony were confronted by the claims of two religions: the religion of the Emperor, and the religion of the Savior, Jesus Christ.⁵⁶

The worship of the Emperor and the Imperial House played a very important part in the establishment of the Roman Empire. The very name Augustus, for instance, denotes divinity. He was a god who was present; he possessed a heavenly heart.⁵⁷

Emperor worship goes back to Alexander and originated in the East. The king had absolute power, and he was regarded as the ideal representative of his people in every secular and religious office. Already at the time of the Persians a rather highly developed form of ruler worship is evident. The king was regarded as spiritually present at all banquets, even though he was physically absent. For this reason food was set at his place at every meal. In

⁵⁵Adolph Deissmann, New Light on the New Testament, translated from the German by Lionel R. W. Strachan (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1907), p. 81.

⁵⁶Conybeare and Howson, op. cit., p. 797.

⁵⁷Joseph William Hewitt, editor, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association (Middleton: American Philological Association, 1930), LXI, 69.

processions an altar was borne with fire on it as a symbol of the king's power. Further, evidence shows that a cult, or system of worship, was named after Cyrus.⁵⁸ As time went on, poets and priests developed a mass of sacred lore about their gods. Kings were stated to have been sons of these gods. Stories developed of divine births, wonderful youths, and miraculous powers of these many rulers.

When Alexander came to the throne, he was familiar with all of this lore that had developed. He was acquainted with the homage which the Greek cities offered to their supposed founders and kings. He visited shrines and viewed relics. He was well aware of the fact that his father Philip had had his house and his own person glorified, as well as having statues of himself brought into the theater.

During this time, however, there was no sharp distinction between hero-worship and god-worship. Rather, a hero could pass into the realm of the gods.⁵⁹ The general belief prevailed that each man had a divine guardian. This seems to have prepared the way for the worship of the daimon (the guiding spirit within man) as a god, with the later development that the ruler himself was worshipped as a god, a praesens deus.

⁵⁸Lily Ross Taylor, The Divinity of the Roman Emperor (Middleton: American Philological Association, 1931), p. 1.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 7.

In the year 332 B. C., when Alexander came to Egypt as conqueror, the people of that country revered him. It is interesting to note, however, that this honor had little effect upon the thinking of the Greek world. The Egyptians had stories of his birth as being supernatural and claimed that he had been born of a serpent father. Eventually, the Erythrean Sibyl confirmed that Zeus was the father of Alexander. He received potential divinity although he was not given a cult, priesthood, or sacrifices, which were signs of divinity. Even upon the building of the city of Alexandria, when tradition gave a cult, this special system of worship, to the city's founder, the cult of the city was directed to the daimon, or guardian spirit, of Alexander rather than to him as an individual.

After the institution of more and more rites to Alexander, formal decrees concerning his deity were passed by individual municipalities, and, finally, he was acknowledged as a revealed god on earth, a praesens deus. The successors of Alexander attempted to establish their power on the basis of Alexander's divinity, and both the Ptolemys and the Seleucids were deified either while still living or after their death.⁶⁰

When Rome extended its power to the East, divine honors paid to rulers were also carried over to the Roman rulers.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 30-32.

With the permission of the State not only emperors, but also generals and governors received such homage at the first. Others, such as Cicero, refused such honors. Special coins bore inscriptions which accorded to the rulers prerogatives which they previously had not enjoyed.

One of the primary reasons, no doubt, for the increased worship of the Roman leaders was a very practical one. Inasmuch as the peoples in the East were accustomed to worshipping their kings as gods, the Roman emperors, lest they be regarded as inferior to those leaders whom they had conquered, by claiming divinity showed themselves not only to be equal to, but also superior to, the deposed rulers. In this way they were able to maintain their authority and the respect of the people.

For the average Roman citizen, however, a hero was not yet the same as a god. It was not until the citizens of Rome longed for peace and desired a savior to secure their fortunes that the individual, especially the victorious general, began to receive more and more homage and power.⁶¹

Julius Caesar, living in a world that thought of an absolute monarch as god, sought his own divinity after his victory at Pharsalus. In the year 63 B. C. he seized the office of pontifex maximus, the chief priesthood of Rome.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 57.

This gave him a lifelong tenure of sacred power.⁶² He declared that he was of Trojan ancestry; he dedicated a temple to Venus, the mother of the Julian House; and he placed his own statue in the Roman Forum. Being a shrewd politician, Caesar dedicated this statue on a traditional day of celebration in Rome, in order that the citizens might begin to associate him with festivities and celebrations. Hence, that day became a permanent festival in honor of Julius, and he was well on his way to receiving deification.

The Senate accorded Caesar yet more honors, but honors with which he was dissatisfied because of their limitations. They made him a demi-god and placed his chariot in front of a cult statue of Jupiter in the Capitolium. Caesar became so disgusted that he refused the honor and had the chariot, the symbol of this honor, removed.

It was not until the year 45 B. C. that Caesar made more notable progress. After his victory at Munda he had a statue of himself erected in the temple of Quirinus entitled "to the unconquered god."⁶³ Next, a house was built, at State expense, to the honor of Caesar and was patterned after the houses of the gods. The following year found the Senate giving Caesar the title of parens patriae, and they

⁶²Ibid., p. 59.

⁶³Ibid., p. 66.

authorized him to stamp this title on Roman coins. His birthday was made a festival, animal sacrifices were made to him, games were celebrated in his honor, and his statue was erected in all temples. The gold chair of Caesar was carried into the theater just as those of the gods were brought in, and the name of the month Quinctilis was changed to Julius.

With the development of these signs of divinity, the Senate decreed him to be a god, erected a temple to him, acknowledged his priesthood, and thus formally provided for his enshrinement in the State cult.⁶⁴ He was given the name divus, or deus, though the title may not have been widely used until after his death. Taylor comments that many of the Roman citizens were not convinced of his divinity until after his death by assassination as a "martyr."⁶⁵ After his death, however, when the Senate, though it wanted Caesar to be regarded as a tyrant, was unable to do so because of public opinion and fear for its own position, the people became enthusiastic and were ready to make something of his deification.

Octavian, the great nephew of Caesar, took over the throne. Mainly as a political maneuver, no doubt, he had a star attached to every statue of Caesar as a symbol of

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 68.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 77-78.

Caesar's godhead, as well as publicly asserting that he was out to avenge Caesar's death. The successor to a god would be well on his way to his own deification. The first Triumvirate of Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus as one of its first acts deified Julius Caesar on January 1, 42 B. C.

Octavian, who had contended with Antony for supremacy and honors during this entire period, signed a document in which he was declared to be divi filius. He claimed Apollo as his special patron, and, in Italy, where he was the sole master, gradually became known as the son of Apollo.

Antony, on the other hand, played the role of the incarnate Dionysus especially in the New Rome, Alexandria.

As the next step in this bitter conflict Octavian dropped his title as triumvir and replaced it with the title Imperator Caesar divi filius. Symbols of his victories, honors, and protecting gods became the sole adornment in Rome.⁶⁶ By killing Antony and Cleopatra, queen of Egypt by Caesar's decree, Octavian found himself the undisputed possessor of Caesar's entire inheritance and the kingdom of Egypt. He became the divine king of the Roman Empire. Cities began to be called Caesarea, and Octavian was given the place of the second founder in the various cults. To guarantee himself an association with the gods, he accepted such honors only if he could share them with the

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 131.

personification of the power of Rome, the goddess Roma.⁶⁷ Octavian regarded himself as, and became known as, the second founder of Rome.

Still not satisfied, Octavian's next step was to receive the title Augustus. Not only was this a title of power but also one of divinity. It was equal to both sanctus and divinus.⁶⁸ Upon reception of this title the Roman citizens declared Octavian to have potential divinity, to be a Mercury on earth; but he was not as yet given any formal festivals or cults. At the same time, however, offerings were made to him rather than to the gods. In the East he received more divine honor. Temples were built, priests were assigned to his cults, and festivals and games were held in his honor.

The way was prepared for a State Cult dedicated to Augustus. Up to this time the only regular cultic act in his honor was the pouring out of libations to his Genius at private and public banquets. With the death of the pontifex maximus, Lepidus, in 13 B. C., however, Augustus became the pontifex maximus and speedily was made a god on earth and the object of a State Cult. Worship was still made to the Genius of the Emperor, but this was only a veiled form of worship to the Emperor himself.⁶⁹ Victims were offered to

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 146.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 160.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 193.

his Genius on his birthday, official oaths were taken by his Genius, and a month was named after him.

A Forum was built and dedicated, though not yet completed, on August 1, 2 B. C. This was to be the center of all Roman activity. Its purpose was to combine the worship of the ancestors of Augustus with the worship of his Genius. Mars, Venus, and the deified Julius were enshrined as well as the cults assigned to the Genius of Augustus. The thin veil which separated Augustus from the full title of god on earth was the absence of a temple; and a temple was never secured.

The establishment of the State Cult in Rome had its effect upon the provinces and municipalities of the Empire, also. In the East the worship of the Emperor was universal in cities and leagues. Allegiance was sworn to the Emperor, not to Rome. In Rome, even though the citizens may in theory have worshipped the Genius of the Emperor, yet the living Emperor was the true object of worship. Literary sources reveal that in Africa Augustus was called deus. A temple was erected at Neapolis. At Pompeii a priest of Augustus was appointed shortly after 2 B. C.⁷⁰ As men began to realize the peace which he brought, they responded to the idea of their times and instituted for all citizens a worship which would give expression to the deep feeling of

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 205-215.

appreciation for the blessings brought by the rule of Augustus.

Augustus died in August, 14 A. D. One of the public orators at his funeral is claimed to have said:

It is fitting that we should not mourn for him but that while we now at last give his body back to nature, we should glorify his spirit like that of god forever.⁷¹

Though he named no successor to his throne, Augustus' designation of Tiberius, an adopted son, was very apparent. Tiberius decreed that a temple be built to Augustus; he further declared that a priest be named for his foster father. The Senate instituted a sacred college of the noblest senators who were to devote themselves to his worship. Poets, such as Ovid, began to liken Augustus to Jupiter. They found parallels in the lives of Augustus and Jupiter and in the battles they fought, and they ascribed to both an overseeing eye as they sat upon the royal seat in heaven.⁷²

Tiberius was interested in following the general principles of Augustus. When he died, however, he was not deified because Caligula, the next Emperor, failed to press the question of deification.

Caligula regarded himself as Jupiter incarnate and demanded extravagant worship. Because of his tyrannical rule

⁷¹Ibid., p. 229.

⁷²Hewitt, op. cit., p. 55.

Rome breathed a sigh of relief upon his murder in 41 A. D. and did not accord to him divinity. The successor of Caligula, Claudius, returned to the precedent of Augustus, and was enshrined as another divus. From Claudius to Diocletian, in which period of history the Epistle to the Philippians was written, those emperors were enshrined as gods of the State upon death whose rule had rendered them worthy of deification. They were given the title divus, which came to equal "man made into god."⁷³

By the time of Paul, therefore, the national religions held the cherished belief that the gods worked in and through their emperors. The emperor was the representative of the gods by divine descent or was divinely chosen and endowed for the exercise of sovereignty. The concern of the gods centered mainly in the political welfare of the nation.⁷⁴ Since there was no one national faith, the citizens of the Empire sought common expression of their faith in the worship of the emperor.

Because of this situation such "tenets" of faith as salvation, deliverance from evil, peace, a savior, and a "golden age" were not new with Christianity, but they found expression, in a different form, to be sure, among all

⁷³Taylor, op. cit., p. 241.

⁷⁴Shirley Jackson Case, The Evolution of Early Christianity (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1914), p. 195.

citizens of the Roman Empire, and, hence, among the inhabitants of Philippi also.

The temptation would be great at times, one can well imagine, for Christians in such an environment to sacrifice some of the exclusiveness which the Cross of Christ demanded for a more "real" worship which, in many ways, offered a similar hope and message. There was always the danger that the essential difference between the Emperor Cult and Christianity might escape the attention of the follower of Christ, namely, that while the Emperor Cult offered a full present and a meager future, Christianity offered a possibly meager present but a full future.⁷⁵

Realizing this danger, St. Paul includes several exhortations and reminders to the Philippian Christians that their God is Jesus Christ. He is the Lord. He is their Savior to whom they must pledge themselves in their entirety. There is only one *Κύριος*, a title which was ascribed also to the Roman emperors from the time of Nero,⁷⁶ the Emperor at the time of the writing of the Epistle to the Philippians. There was only one *σωτήρ*, another title which came to be used, as inscriptional evidence points out, of the Emperor.⁷⁷

Paul reminds his readers, for instance, "that every

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 238.

⁷⁶Deisemann, op. cit., p. 81.

⁷⁷Scharlemann, op. cit., p. 472.

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is *Κύριος*, to the glory of the Father" (2:11). This was a time of conflict for Christians, a conflict of the claims for man's loyalty. Many said that they had no *Κύριος* but Caesar. For the Christian, however, there was only one *Κύριος*, Jesus Christ. There could be no "fence walking," there could be no divided devotion. Complete submission and dedication to the *Κύριος* preached to them by Paul was necessary for those Christians who lived in the midst of a people offering honor and reverence to the Emperor; worship was due to the Christian God alone.

The other striking verse in the Epistle is 3:20: "Our native city is in heaven; whence (that is, from our native city) we look for the *σωτήρα*, the *Κύριον*, Jesus Christ." In this verse not only does the mention of the dedication of the Christian to the heavenly *πολίτευμα* clearly state that the Christian is to have no *Κύριον* but Him Who came from God, but also the mention of *σωτήρ*. Arndt and Gingrich comment on the usage of the word *σωτήρ* :

At an early date *σωτήρ* was used as a title of honor for deserving men . . . and in inscr. and pap. we find it predicated of high-ranking officials and of persons in private life. . . . Of much greater import is the designation of the (deified) ruler as *σ.* (Ptolemy I Soter . . . and oft. in later times, of the Roman emperors as well . . .).⁷⁸

⁷⁸William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 808.

Moulton and Milligan give the additional information that an inscription has been uncovered in Ephesus from 48 A. D. in which the Town Council of Ephesus and other cities already acclaimed Julius Caesar as *θεὸν ἐπιφανῆ καὶ καινὸν τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου σωτήρα*. They also state that an Egyptian inscription refers to Nero as *τῶι σωτήρι καὶ εὐεργέτηι τῆς οἰκουμένης*.⁷⁹ As the citizens of the Roman Empire, then, looked for privileges and protection from the Emperor, so Christians should look above, to heaven, to their Mother City, for the coming of their *σωτήρ*, their source of deliverance.⁸⁰ Even as *κύριος* answers the idea of *πολίτευμα*, so does *σωτήρ* answer the idea of the necessity for complete dedication.

It is in the capacity of Saviour that they await him--the same capacity in which they have already received and known him. They look for him to complete their salvation, and therewith to deliver them from the sufferings which they have shared with him, and from the infirmities and limitations of the flesh.⁸¹

How aptly does the Apostle Paul use this word to sharpen the contrast between their earthly and heavenly citizenship!

Once again it is evident that Paul did not select his

⁷⁹James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949), p. 621.

⁸⁰Scharlemann, op. cit., p. 472.

⁸¹Vincent, op. cit., p. 119.

terminology at random. It was most certainly influenced by, and directed to, the political situation in which the Christians of Philippi found themselves. As they read the letter from the Apostle, they could not but think of the political environment about them and accordingly make application to the Gospel message given them by the Apostle Paul.

First, Philippi, by no means a poor city, was a commercial center and very familiar with the terminology of business and finance. Paul was able to make meaningful use of technical commercial and economic vocabulary, therefore, in writing to the Philippian Christians. By using such technical terminology, he gave local color to his expressions of gratitude for the monetary gift which the Philippians had sent him. He was also able to present in a most picturesque way the mutual interest and sharing which existed between himself and the congregation, even amid trial and affliction.

Second, the interest which Roman citizens had in athletics enabled Paul to picture vividly the fight in which Christians must engage for the preservation of their spiritual life.

Third, internal evidence reveals Paul's concern for the unity of the Church because of divisions which had arisen through a Judaizing element within Philippi.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study has yielded certain information about first-century life in the city of Philippi and has indicated Paul's purpose in selecting certain words and phrases in writing to the Philippians.

First, Philippi, by no means a poor city, was a commercial center and very familiar with the terminology of business and finance. Paul was able to make meaningful use of technical commercial and economic vocabulary, therefore, in writing to the Philippian Christians. By using such technical terminology, he gave local color to his expression of gratitude for the monetary gift which the Philippians had sent him. He was also able to present in a most picturesque way the mutual interest and sharing which existed between himself and the congregation, even amid trial and affliction.

Second, the interest which Roman citizens had in athletics enabled Paul to picture vividly the fight in which Christians must engage for the preservation of their spiritual life.

Third, internal evidence reveals Paul's concern for the unity of the Church because of dissensions which had arisen through a Judaizing element within Philippi.

Fourth, the great number of Gentiles in the congregation offered Paul an excellent opportunity to present merely by the use of small particles the shameful and humiliating ignominy of Christ's crucifixion.

Fifth, Philippi, a colony of Rome, had Rome as its *Πολίτευμα*. By referring to heaven as the *Πολίτευμα* of his readers, Paul was able to summarize for them the nature and character of their ethics, conduct, and exclusiveness; the necessity for faithfulness to the Gospel of Christ within their environment; and the certainty of their heavenly citizenship by God's own decree.

Sixth, the development of Emperor worship in the Roman Empire enabled St. Paul to remind his readers in meaningful language of the loyalty due to the truly divine and gracious *Κύριος* and *σωτήρ* Whom he presented to them in contrast with the homage and worship which Roman citizens paid their political ruler, their *Κύριος* and *σωτήρ*, the Roman Emperor.

In conclusion, then, the Epistle to the Philippians reveals that Paul did not write in abstract forms or generalizations, but rather, that he made use of many concrete local situations in which his readers found themselves. At the same time it is understood that when one undertakes a research of this kind he is not only dealing in the area of the historical, but also in the area of faith, or verbal inspiration. It is only right and proper, therefore, that

Paul is not made the object of glorification, but rather:

Soli Deo Gloria!!

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