

## Philippians Chapter Four

A Series of Exhortations (vv. 1-9)

The Primary Exhortation (v. 1)

**VERSE 1 Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown,**

**in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved** (“Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοὶ καὶ ἐπιπόθητοι, χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός μου, οὕτως στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ, ἀγαπητοί [*conj hoste therefore + noun voc.m.p. adelphos brethren + pro.gen.s. ego “my” + adj.voc.m.p. agapetos beloved + conj kai + adj.voc.m.p. epepothetos longed for; “whom I long to see” + noun voc.f.s. chara joy + conj kai + noun voc.m.s. stephanos wreath; “crown” + pro.gen.m.s. ego “my” + adv houto accordingly; “in this way” + pres.act.imper.2p. steko stand firm + prep en in + noun loc.m.s. kurios Lord + adj.voc.m.p. agapetos beloved*]).

### ANALYSIS: VERSE 1

1. Following the wonderful assurance of a coming deliverer that will deliver body, soul and spirit from this present evil world and bring the royal family to the place where their eternal citizenship resides, Paul in this verse engages in a series of exhortations for the Philippian saints.
2. The first in the series enjoins these believers to “stand firm in the Lord” in order to maximize their Ph 3 status as citizens of Christ’s kingdom.
3. They are to “stand firm” (pres.imperative *steko*) in the One who will return and deliver them from all that is arrayed against them in the angelic conflict.
4. Standing firm in the Lord is the equivalent to holding fast to the head of the church or keeping the faith in the face of the hostility that is the cosmos (cf. 1 Cor. 15:2; 1 Thess. 3:6; Heb. 3:6; 3:14; 10:23; Col. 2:18)
5. For this particular verb (*steko*) see Rom. 14:4; 1 Cor. 16:13; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 3:8; 2 Thess. 2:15).
6. The call to perseverance noted in 1:27-30 is repeated here as the most basic and essential exhortation concerning the CWL.
7. This call is couched in terms of warm affection.
8. Five designations are used here and they are: “my brothers, beloved, longed-for, my joy, my crown.”
9. Paul expresses his love for his children in the faith with five terms of endearment before he utters the command.

10. Paul repeats the 2<sup>nd</sup> designation (“my beloved”) after the command to “stand firm.”
11. For “my beloved brethren” note also 1 Cor. 15:58 (cf. James at 1:16, 19 & 2:5).
12. Here “beloved” expresses Paul’s *agape* love for the believers in the church at Philippi.
13. A bond is established between the pastor-teacher and right-congregation.
14. The Greek word order has: “my brethren, beloved.”
15. We are a family and a family bond is based on common norms and standards.
16. Love for one another is the bond within the family.
17. The designation “whom I long *to see*” is an adjective (vocative-voice of address) that only occurs here and should be rendered “longed-for ones.”
18. It is connected to “beloved” with the connective conjunction *kai*-and.
19. If you love someone you desire to be in their company.
20. This is a very strong term (*epiphetos*) only found here in the NT and not attested in secular literature pre-dating Paul.
21. Paul has already expressed his desire to visit the church (1:8).
22. “My joy” used by Paul in reference to believers who are under his spiritual care also occurs in 2 Cor. 2:3 in a context that is emotionally charged.
23. This is also used in connection with BD within (Jn. 15:11; 17:13).
24. Paul has already admonished these believers to “make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (2:2).
25. Paul shared his joy with them, the joy (+H) he had even under the threat of death (2:17).
26. Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
27. Actually here “joy” and “crown” are joined together based on the fact that the pronoun “my” comes after the term for “crown.”
28. “My joy and my crown” is to be connected with the Bema Seat where the hoped-for results finds Paul and the Philippians celebrating the premiere designation of citizenship—the wreath/crown/prize.
29. This interpretation is supported by 1 Thess. 2:19 “For who is our hope or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?”
30. The noun usually translated “crown” (*stephanos*) but is actually the Greek noun for a victor’s wreath is used in the NT for: the crown of thorns (Matt. 27:29//Mk. 15:17//Jn. 19:2, 5); the deacon Stephen who was the first CA martyr (Acts 6:5, 8, 9; 7:59; 11:19; 22:20); the top category of SG3 (1 Cor. 9:26; Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jam. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10); rider on the white horse (Rev. 6:2); adorning the heads of the demonic “locust” invasion (Rev. 9:7); the crown of twelve stars in the astrological vision of the woman (Rev. 12:1); and regarding Christ in connection with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent (Rev. 14:14).
31. The exhortation to “stand firm” comes against a background of defection on the part of “the many” (Phil. 3:18-19).
32. V. 1 also serves as to demonstrate Paul’s feelings for these believers and his motives for the touchy subject that follows.

## The Euodia-Syntyche Feud (v. 2-3)

**VERSE 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord** (Εὐδοΐαν

παρακαλῶ καὶ Συντύχην παρακαλῶ τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ [*noun acc.f.s. Euodia + pres.act.ind.1s. parakaleo urge, exhort + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. Syntyche + pres.act.ind.1s. parakaleo urge + d.a.acc.nt.s. w/pro.acc.nts. autos same + pres.act.infin. phoneo think; entire expression means 'to live in harmony of mind' + prep en + noun loc.m.s. kurios*]).

**VERSE 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have**

**shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel** (καὶ ἔρωτῶ καὶ σέ, γνήσιε σύζυγε, συλλαμβάνου αὐταῖς, αἵτινες ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι [*part nai yes, indeed + pres.act.ind.1s. erotao ask, request + conj kai also + pro.acc.s. su you + adj.voc.m.s. hnesios genuine, true, loyal + adj.voc.m.s. ouzugos partner; only here + pres.mid.imper. sullambano in the middle voice; to assist + pro.ddat.f.p. aute "these women" + pro.nom.f.p. hostis who + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.nt.s. euagnelion gospel + aor.act.ind.3p. sunathleo work/struggle together with; cf. 1:27 + pro.instr.s. ego "me"*]), **together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life** (μετὰ καὶ Κλήμεντος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συνεργῶν μου, ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἐν βίβλῳ ζωῆς [*prep meta + conj kai also + noun gen.m.s. Clement + conj kai and + d.a.w/adj.gen.m.p. loipos rest + adj.gen.m.p. suergos fellow-worker + pro.gen.m.s. ego "my" + pro.gen.m.p. hos "whose" + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.p. onoma name + prep en + noun loc.f.s. biblos book + noun gen.f.s. zoe live*]).

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 2-3**

1. Paul's repeated appeals for unity/unanimity among the Philippians in this letter takes on an unexpected turn with his singling out two prominent women in the assembly who were at odds with one another.
2. The only parallel to this outside the pastoral letters and Philemon is Col. 4:17, where Archippus is exhorted to fulfill his ministry (implication being that he was falling short in that regard; the verb *blepo* that introduces the exhortation suggests indirect criticism).
3. Here we have a direct criticism in the form of a measured rebuke.

4. For Paul the problem was not trivial as it constituted a rift in this model church that needed his direct intervention.
5. Paul' directness demonstrates how close he felt for these believers.
6. Paul considered these two women mature enough to withstand this kind of exposure.
7. Apparently it was no secret that there was a rift in fellowship between these two women.
8. We can also surmise the these two women held some prominence in the church based on their applications over the years.
9. Their contribution in the history of this church is highlighted in v. 3 in the phrases "who have shared in my struggle" and designated as "fellow-workers."
10. Euodia and Syntyche were not troublemakers as some assume.
11. Their names only appear here in the NT.
12. It is not of any importance to know the nature of their break in fellowship.
13. We can assume that they were once quite close, but something transpired that ended that closeness and this was something that did not go unnoticed by others.
14. Each of these two ladies receive a personal exhortation since the verb "urge/implore" (*parakaleo* call alongside) occurs twice in the sentence—once in regard to each woman.
15. The words "to live in harmony" is literally "to be of the same mind" (articular infinitive *phoneo*-to think; cf. 1:7; 2:2, 5;d 3:15, 10; 4:10).
16. In v. 3 Paul makes an appeal to an unspecified individual to aid in the reconciliation process.
17. He refers to this believer as "true companion" (*gnesie sunzuge*).
18. The adjective translated "true" means "loyal/genuine" (at 2 Cor. 8:8; 1 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).
19. The adjective "companion" only occurs here.
20. It has been postulated that Paul is here referring to Epaphroditus the bearer of this letter to act as a peacemaker.
21. Paul appeals to this individual "to help/assist" (pres.mid.imper. *sullambano* Euodia and Syntyche to overcome their differences so they can "live in harmony in the Lord."
22. These two ladies made noteworthy contributions to Paul's ministry referred to in general terms in the phrase "who labored with me in the gospel" (aor.act.ind.3p. *sunathleo* fight together with/labor together with; also at 1:27).
23. In that regard Paul specifies by name one "Clement" who along with Euodia and Syntyche "and the rest of my fellow workers" were intimately involved in the establishment of the Philippian church.
24. We are left wondering why Clement is singled out, but the recipients of this letter knew the applications made by these believers.
25. These courageous individuals who no doubt risked much for the well being of this church cannot let this on-going rift affect the present and future.
26. The emphasis on corporate solidarity and responsibility to live in harmony reaches a dramatic high point with Paul's mention of their names being written in the Book of Life.
27. This register contains the names of all who make up the redeemed (cf. Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27).
28. Outside the book of Revelation this is the only mention of this book in the NT.
29. Apparently names are blotted out of this book when an unbeliever dies (Ps. 69:28; Ex. 32:12; Ps. 56:8; 139:16).
30. The point is that this awareness should help us to resolve differences that do not involve doctrinal integrity.