

## **The Christian and the Gospel: Philippians 1**

Developed by Bob Young

Paul begins the letter to the church at Philippi by reminding them of the importance of the gospel. This focus may be due to the fact that the Philippian church helped Paul in his “gospel work.”

### **Participants in the gospel, 1:5**

The phrase is “communion” or “fellowship” [koinonia] for [eis] the gospel. The meaning is “because of or based on your contribution” as in 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13; Acts 2:42. The fellowship or “partnership” was the contribution made by the Philippians for the spread of the gospel (Phil 4:14).

### **The confirmation and defense of the gospel, 1:7, 16**

Christians can live and speak as a “defense” (apologia, but not parallel to the contemporary concept of apology) for the gospel, as reasoned evidence of the validity of the gospel, as support.

### **The progress (advance) of the gospel, 1:12**

Christians make the progress of the gospel a priority, even above self-advancement  
In this case, adverse circumstances were serving to advance the gospel  
Christians can pray for the advance of the gospel.  
Christians can live so as to help the progress of the gospel.

### **The defense of the gospel, 1:16-17**

The defense of the gospel was Paul’s goal. His defense was in spite of the opposition and encouraged by those who preached Christ out of love.

### **Live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ, 1:27**

For the first time, the reference is to the gospel “of Christ.” Christians live a life worthy of the gospel, consistent with the gospel. Christians live in a way that advances the gospel because the gospel is “of Christ”.

### **Contending in unity for the faith of the gospel, 1:27**

The word contending (“striving together”) reflects an athletic contest, and the work of a team. The faith of the gospel energizes individuals but the work shared provides a synergy that far exceeds the possibilities of individual efforts.