



To the Philippians ΠΡΟΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΗΣΙΟΥΣ

The Epistle of Friendship



**Don't
mess with
Roman**



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The Epistle of Friendship





ME

ITALY

MACEDONIA

Philippi

Thessalonica

(GREECE)

ACHAIA

ASIA MINOR

GALATIA

ASIA

Corinth

Ephesus

Colossae

CILICIA

Tarsus

Syrian Antioch

SYRIA

ta/Malta

ADRIA

SEA

CRETE

CYPRUS

MEDITERRANEAN

SEA



Thessalonica

Philippi

GREECE

Athens

Pella

Amphipolis

Philippi

Neapolis

Apollonia

Berea

Thessalonica

Mount Olympus





Philippi
was a Roman
colony.

It could not be
more Roman if it
existed on
Italian soil.





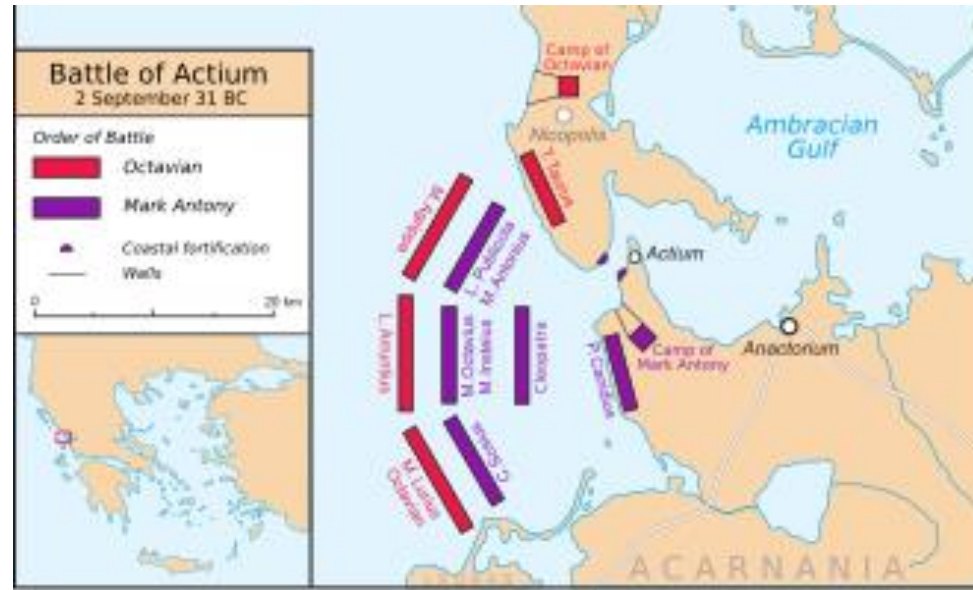
Octavian
And
Marc Antony

VS

42 B.C.

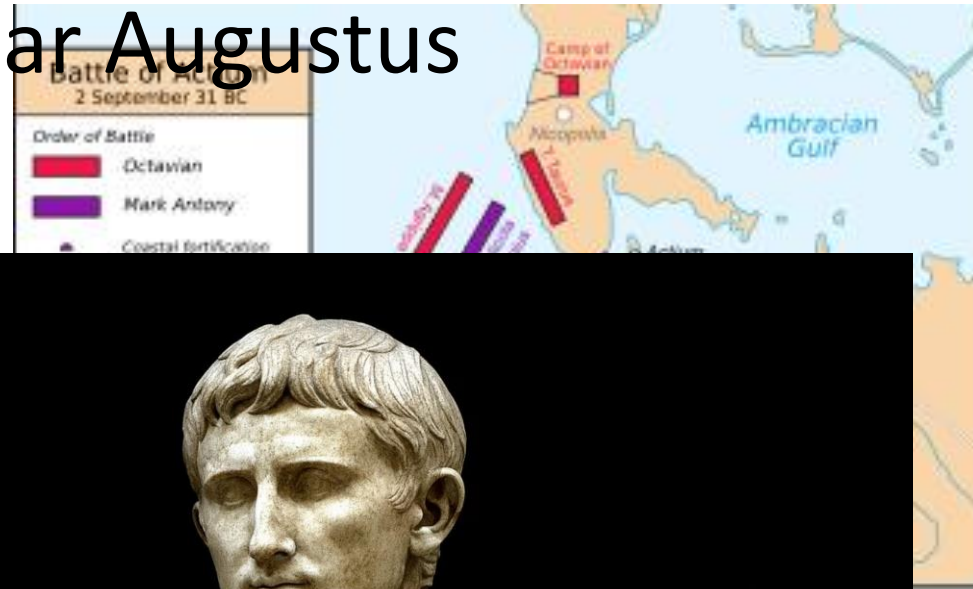
Brutus
And
Cassius





31 B.C. The Battle of Actium

Caesar Augustus



The Philippian Church likely had 50-80 members.

Most were craftsmen, shopkeepers, and slaves



So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. ¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

Who is
“we”?

--Acts 16:11-13

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

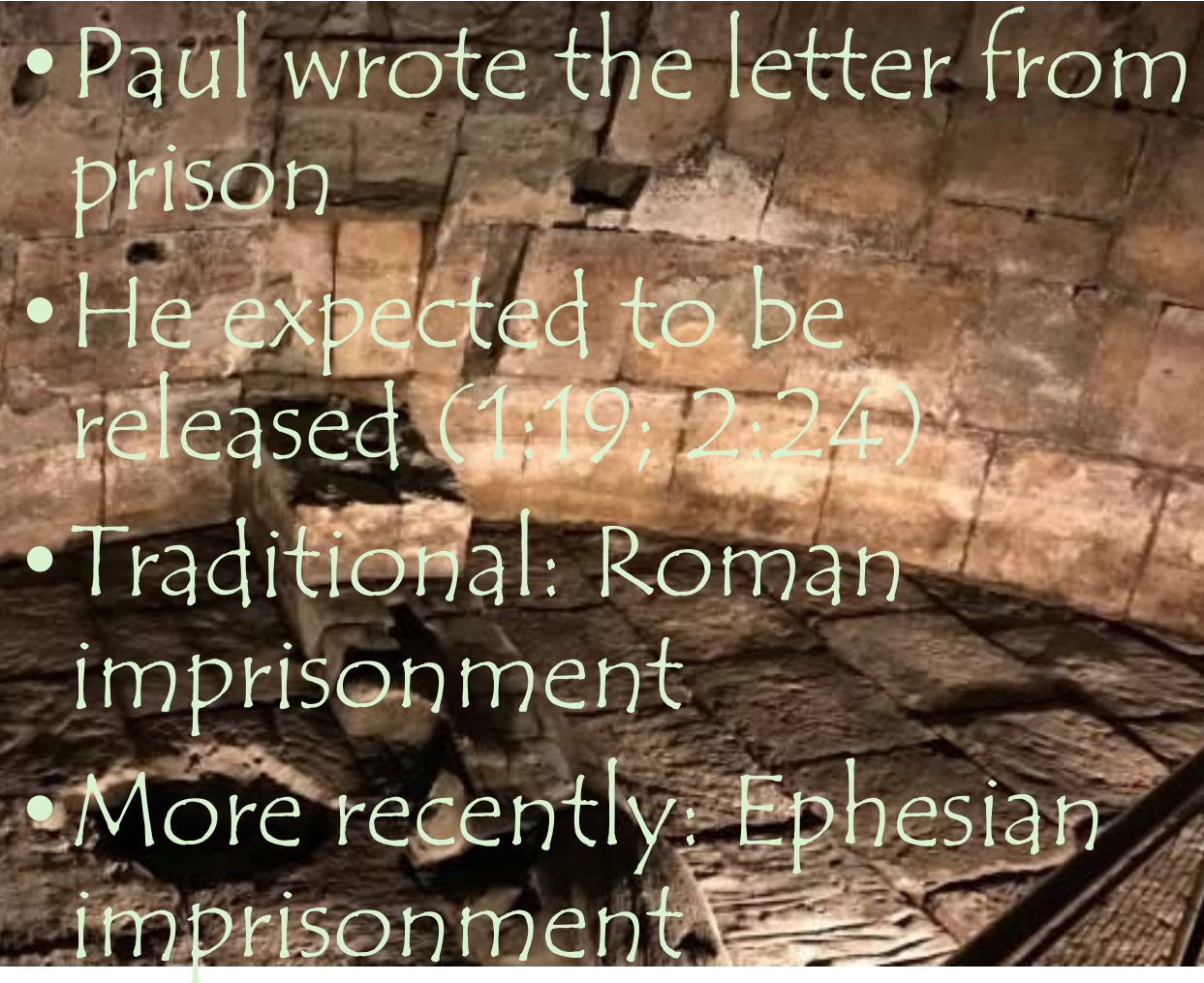
--Acts 16:14-15

Paul's Relationship with the Church

- Paul founded church on his second missionary journey; first church in Europe
- Philippian church had supported Paul's mission
- Friendly tone of the letter indicates that Paul had a special relationship with Philippi.



Prison Letter

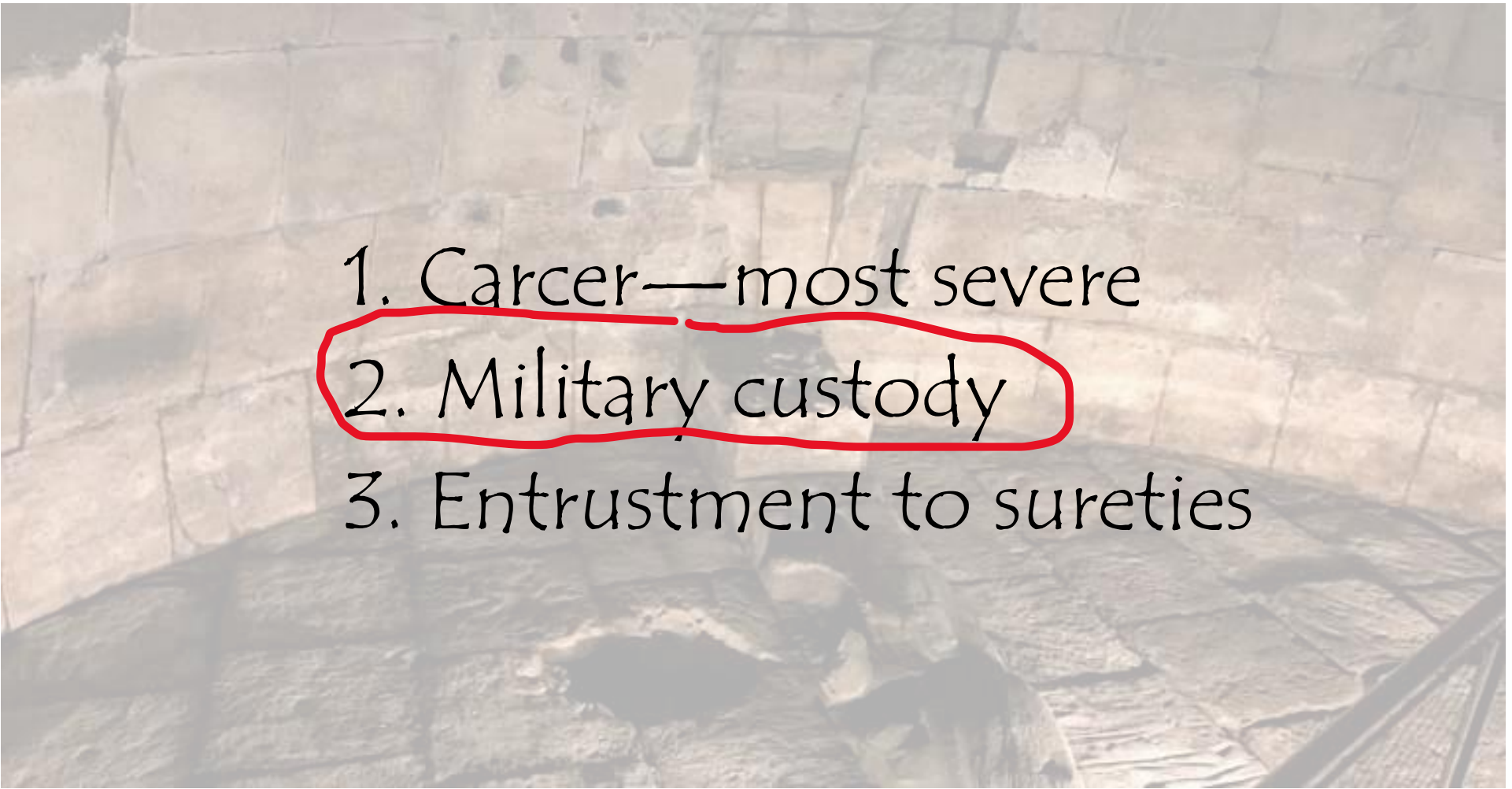
- 
- A photograph of a stone wall and floor, likely representing a prison cell. The wall is made of large, rough-hewn stone blocks, and the floor is made of smaller, darker stones. The lighting is dim, creating a somber and confined atmosphere.
- Paul wrote the letter from prison
 - He expected to be released (1:19; 2:24)
 - Traditional: Roman imprisonment
 - More recently: Ephesian imprisonment

Travel distance from Ephesus to Philippi was 435-500 miles/ 35 days



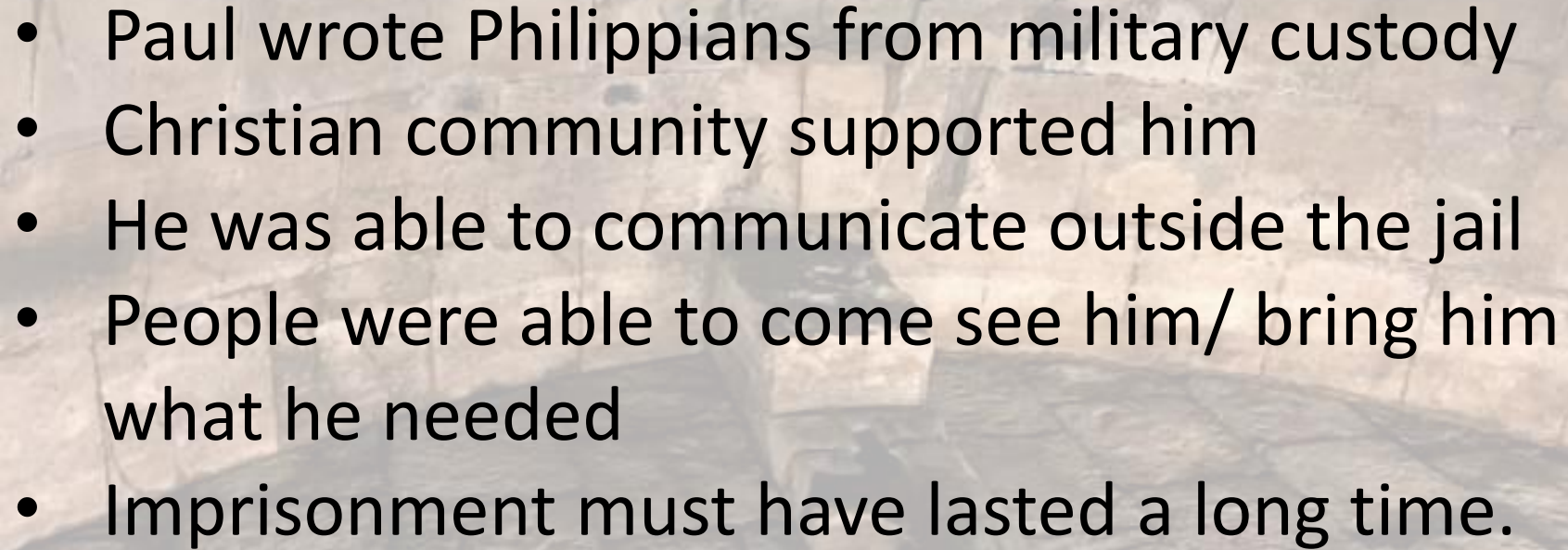
Travel distance from Rome to Philippi was 800-1300 miles (combo of land and sea)/ 52 days

Prison Letter

- 
1. Carcer—most severe
 2. Military custody
 3. Entrustment to sureties

Three Levels of Roman Imprisonment

Prison Letter

- 
- Paul wrote Philippians from military custody
 - Christian community supported him
 - He was able to communicate outside the jail
 - People were able to come see him/ bring him what he needed
 - Imprisonment must have lasted a long time.

Military custody

Paul wrote a number of his letters from Prison

- Philippians
- Colossians
- Ephesians
- Philemon
- 2 Timothy



Friendship Letter

Rhetorical analysis indicates that Philippians belongs to a genre of letters from the ancient world called "friendship letters."

Friendship

Friendship was an important topic for philosophers and moralists.



Friendship involved . . .

1. Fellowship

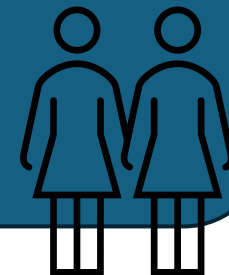
2. Equality

3. Friends hold all things in common

4. Friends have the same mind



We see these topics throughout Philippians.



Friendship Language: "partnership"

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your **partnership** in the gospel from the first day until now.

--Phil 1:3-5

(see also 2:1; 3:10; 4:15)



ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

Friendship Language: "one soul"

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with **one mind** striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

--Phil 1:27



μιά ψυχῇ

Friendship Language: "thinking the same thing"

complete my joy by
being of the same mind,
having the same love,
being in full accord and
of one mind.

,

--Phil 2:2

τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε,

τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες

Friendship Language: "sharing in my
trouble"

Yet it was kind of you to
share my trouble.

--Phil 4:14

συγκοινωνήσαντέ
ς

Friendship Language: "sharing the same
form as"

that I may know him and
the power of his
resurrection, and may
share his sufferings,
becoming like him in his
death, ¹¹ that by any
means possible I may
attain the resurrection
from the dead.

συμμορφιζόμενος

--Phil 3:10

Friendship Language: "rejoice
together"

Even if I am to be
poured out as a drink
offering upon the
sacrificial offering of
your faith, I am glad and
rejoice with you all.

συγχαίρω

--Phil 2:17

Friendship Language: "fellow workers"

Yes, I ask you also, true companion,² help these women, who have labored³ side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

--Phil 4:3

συνεργῶν

See also
"fellow soldier" (2:25);
"fellow imitator" (3:17)

Rhetorical function

Language not only
“means” stuff;
it “does” stuff.



The friendship language
counters any insiders or
outsiders given to self-
promotion, envy, rivalry.

(the opposite of friendship)

It focuses their attention on the
equality and unity that should
characterize them.

The Senders of the Letter

*Paul and Timothy, servants [slaves]
of Christ [king/Messiah] Jesus,*

The Recipients of the Letter

*To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi,
with the overseers and deacons:*

At about this time (AD 56-62) some offices
are beginning to emerge.

The Greeting

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Thanksgiving/prayer-wish

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
always in every prayer of mine for you all
making my prayer with joy,
because of your partnership in the gospel
from the first day until now.*

*There is good reason to translate this:

*“I thank my God because of your every remembrance [of me]”
or “I thank my God every time you remember [me]”*

Recognition of the Gift

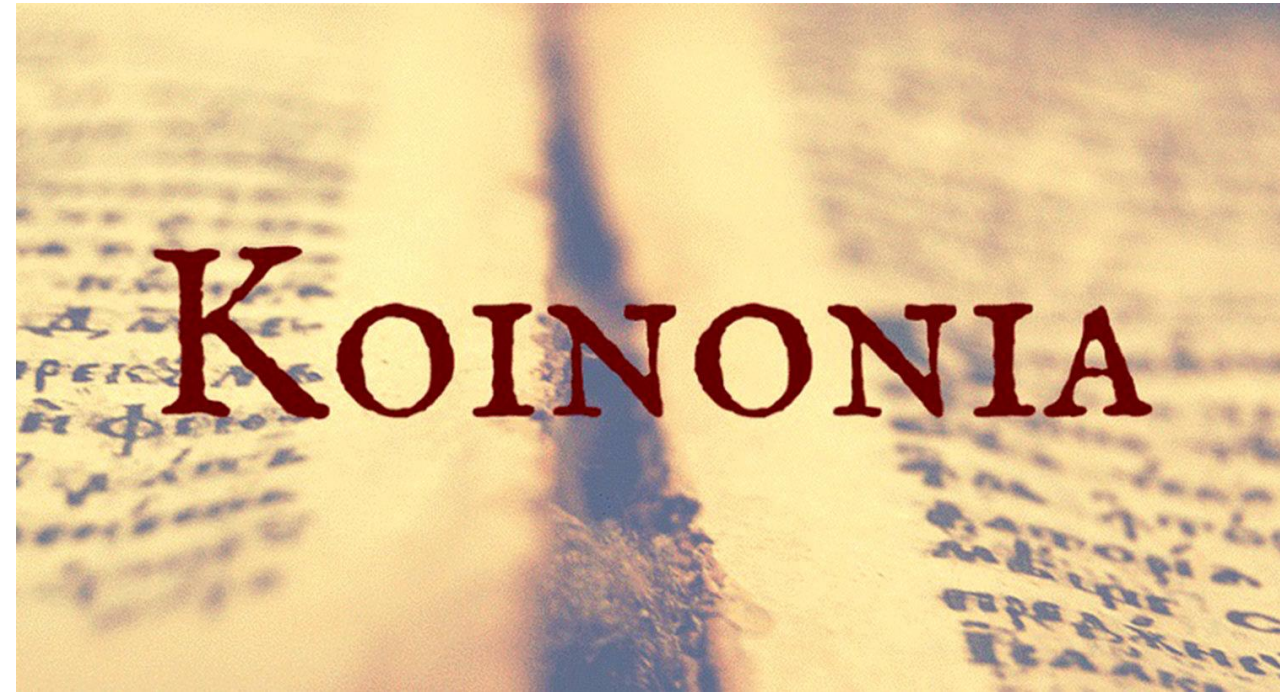
*Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.
And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning
of the gospel, when I left Macedonia,
no church entered into partnership (ἔκοινώνησεν)
with me in giving and receiving (δόσεως καὶ λήψεως),
except you only.*

Even in Thessalonica you sent me help
for my needs once and again.

--Philippians 4:14-16

I thank my God ...

Because of the many times you
have remembered me

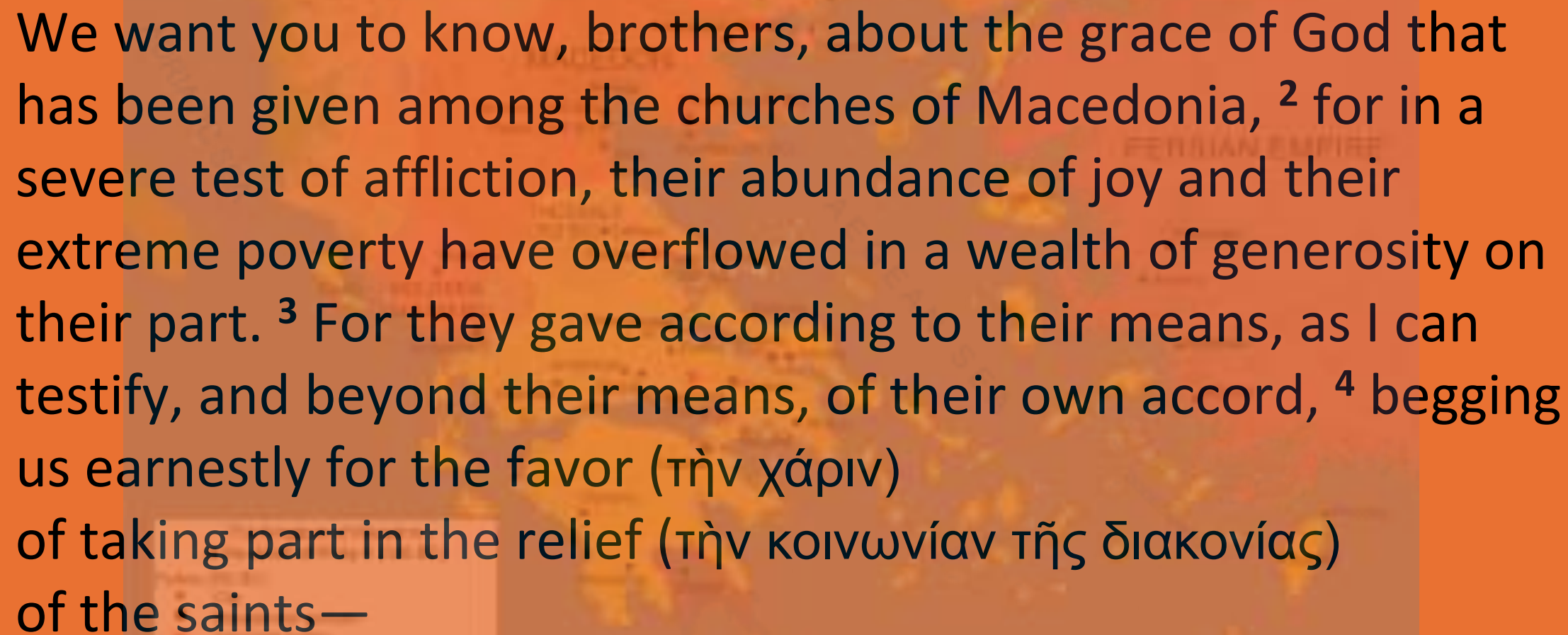


Because of your partnership in the
gospel from the first day until
now.

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor (τὴν χάριν) of taking part in the relief (τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας) of the

--2 Cor 8:1-4



The background of the slide features a map of the Roman Empire, showing its vast extent across Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. A legend is visible on the left side of the map, listing various regions and their corresponding colors. The text is overlaid on the map, with the main paragraph in black and the Greek phrases in a lighter, semi-transparent font.

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor (τὴν χάριν)
of taking part in the relief (τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας)
of the saints—

--2 Cor 8:1-4

Thanksgiving/prayer-wish

What does Paul mean by "good work"?

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you [ἐν ὑμῖν/ among you] will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

What does
Paul mean by
"good work"?

It's unlikely he refers to just some
random "good work"

Consider the context

The most likely referent is their
"participation in the gospel"

I am confident of this, that God, the one who began this good work
among you, a work that allows you to participate in the gospel, will
complete it at the day of Messiah Jesus.

Thanksgiving/prayer-wish

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
always in every prayer of mine for you all
making my prayer with joy,
because of your partnership in the gospel
from the first day until now.*

*There is good reason to translate this:

*“I thank my God because of your every remembrance [of me]”
or “I thank my God every time you remember [me]”*

Thanksgiving/prayer-wish

*For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all
with the affection of Christ Jesus.*

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more,
with knowledge and all discernment,
so that you may approve what is excellent,
and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,
filled with the fruit of righteousness
that comes through Jesus Christ,
to the glory and praise of God.*



Points for Home

Friendship is central to the gospel.

Friendship today is rare and hard to come by.

It consists of sharing life together/
having things in common/
treating others as equals

If we had friends, we would not need therapists.





Points for Home

God will complete
what he started.

Saints do persevere.
God is faithful.



Points for Home

Paul can teach us
to pray.

Thanksgiving/prayer-wish Benediction

*May your love for God and one another and your enemies
grow and abound more and more,*

*May your knowledge increase and may you discern between right and
wrong, what is good, better and best,
what is God's will in every situation.*

*May you be found pure and blameless on the day
when Christ returns,*

*May you be filled with the fruit of righteousness
that comes through Jesus our Messiah King,
to the glory and praise of God.*