

1/31/99

Philippians 2:1-16

Paul has given to the Philippians many facts and certainties in chapter one revealing that Christ was his life and should also be that of the Philippians.

But now in Chapter two he is going to deal with the mind of Christ, not a mere mind filled with Biblical knowledge but one that has a Christ like attitude.

As we have said before, there was no problem with doctrine, but it does appear that there was a problem locally with unity, due to the lack of humility, especially with two individuals in the church and certainly with the church at large. Phil. 1:15-16, 27; 2:3; 4:2

Disunity always comes from a lack of humility and a presence of pride, it is the first sin that God hates in a list of sins in Proverbs, the epitome of sinful flesh.

2:1-4 Paul pleads for unity through humility in Christ.

2:1 The source of unity.

- 1) The exhortation is in conclusion of the preceding section dealing with their sufferings. Phil. 1:27
- 2) The supreme example of sufferings is Christ and his faithful sufficiency towards us to strengthen one another.
 - * The word since does not indicate any doubt but in the Greek affirms the reality of what is being mentioned!
 - a) Since, or as sure as there is consolation “paraklesis” in Christ, referring to encouragement or ground of appeal, support by Christ.
 - b) Since there is comfort “paramuthion” refers to a stimulating force of love “agape” by Christ for His own.
 - * God of all comfort. 2Cor. 1:3
 - c) Since there is fellowship “koinonia” of the Spirit in joint participation due to the fact that He dwells in the believer. Phil. 1:19; 2Cor. 13:14
 - d) Since there is affection “splagchna” of mercy meaning a heart of compassion, referring to the lungs and heart. Phil. 1:8; Col. 3:12

2:2 In view of the resources available to the believer, Paul makes the request of the Philippians.

- 1) They were to fulfill his joy by being like-minded in thinking on their benefits

experienced by Christ and their potential to do likewise to each other in three ways. Phil. 1:3, 4; 4:10

a) Having the same “agape” love. Rom. 5:5, Gal. 5:22

b) Being of one accord, oneness of soul.

c) Being of one mind, thinking the one thing, others interests.

* The focus being on the thinking and thought process, that brings about unity and oneness, cultivating their Christ attitude! Phil. 4:8

2) This is sufficient to bring about unity, for the believer can yield to the enabling of Christ through the Holy Spirit! Eph. 4:1-3

2:3-4 Paul’s council

1) Self is not to be the focus of life. vs. 3a

a) The negative prohibition of selfish ambition or conceit focuses on the sinful desires of the flesh!

b) Selfish ambition “eritheia” means electioneering or intriguing for office and in the New Testament a courting distinction, factions, a desire to put one's self forward, a rivalry and factious spirit which does not disdain low arts. Phil. 1:17

* Aristotle used the word to denotes a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means.

c) The word conceit “kenodoxia” means groundless self-esteem and empty pride, made up of two words, hollow and opinion, appearing in this form only this one time in the New Testament.

* A servant of the Lord must not strive or quarrel... 2Tim. 2:24

1) Like those in chapter one in faction spirit, having an over-estimation of their self worth.. Phil. 1:16

* Rom. 12:3; 1Cor. 8:1

2) What do you have, that you have not received? 1Cor. 3:7

3) The wars in our members. Ja. 4:1

2) Others are to be the focus of life. vs. 3b

a) The positive command, focusing on Christ’s ability and ennoblement of the believer, in lowliness of mind each is to esteem others better than himself!

* Abraham gave Lot the first choice of the land!

b) Lowliness of mind” tapeinophrosune” means having a proper estimation of oneself and smallness.

* Paul used it to identify his own service to the Lord at Ephesus. Acts 20:19

c) Esteeming others better than self.

* This is a key verse of chapter two and I believe for the entire letter of joy, for that is the only way of being joyous.

2:4 The clarification of the ministry to others.

1) Each person is not to look out for his own interest only, at the exclusion of all others. vs. 4a

a) This is again the negative on the sinful bent of man.

b) The word look “skopeo” means to fix the attention upon, contemplate on one’s own benefit as a primary practice all the time, one’s aim or goal.

* Self-centeredness is of the fallen nature and was the sin of Lucifer. Is. 14:12-19; Ezk. 28:15, 17

2) But rather also for the interests of others. vs. 4b

a) Others are to be included on a regular basis to impart benefits.

b) The New Testament is filled with commands for one another.

1)) We are to love one another. 1Pet. 1:22

2)) We are to forgive one another. Eph. 4:2

3)) We are to serve one another. Gal. 5:13

4)) We are to pray, exhort, have compassion, bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2; Col. 3:13

5)) We are to serve, comfort and hurt for one another.. Rom. 15:1-3, 1Cor. 6:7

2:5 The exhortation is after the example of Christ’s humility.

1) The command is based on the privilege and potential in Christ. Phil. 2:1-4

2) Attitude is the focus at this point which manifests the right actions out of a right motive as Christ did on earth.

3) The potential is due to being “in Christ”.

2:6 The greatness of Christ’s humility.

1) Christ was God incarnate.

a) The word “being” is a antecedent condition carried to the present.

1) He was God before the incarnation, during the incarnation and after His death due to the incarnation.

2) He could only be what He always had been God, even when He

became man at a specific point in man's history.

b) He was in the “form” of God, the outward expression of His attributes of His true inner nature and being, vailing His glory with a human body.

* There is no article in the Greek, referring to the divine essence. Jn. 1:1,14; Is. 64:1; Heb. 1:1-3; Col. 1:15; Gal. 4:4

2) Christ being God did not seek to hold on to or assert an equal with God to demand His rights or privileges but rather dismissed them for the sake of others.

* What a contrast to Adam who was made in the image of God exercised his own right of choice for himself and bringing sin upon the human race!

a) This is what is meant by “consider” it not robbery to be equal with God”.

* Consider means, judgment based on facts and He didn't think it a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards.

b) The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and give His life a ransom for many! Mk. 10:45

c) He became poor , so that through his poverty we might become rich. 2Cor. 8:9

2:7 The extent of Christ's humility in the incarnation.

1) He made himself of no reputation.

a) He emptied himself, known as the “kenosis”, but though the text is usually describes as emptying, it really does not say that as much as that He divested Himself of something, namely His glory, not deity, by taking on the form of a servant.

b) He limited Himself for a time, in submission to the Father for the interest of mankind. 1Cor. 11:3

* Oh Father, glorify Me... Jn. 17:5

2) He took on the form of a bondservant.

a) He took on the outward expression of a bondservant “doulos”, by His own choice, which person would deny the right to his own person and life, being God.

1)) The Lord has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. Is. 50:5

2)) He knowing the Father had put all things under power washed the feet of the disciples. Jn. 13:1-17

b) He came in the likeness of a man, He was in every way as any other man.

* The idea of likeness “homoiomati” stresses similarity while leaving

room for difference, just like all men yet without sin nature.

- 1)) A body You have prepared... Heb. 10:5
- 2)) He thirsted, hungered, tired, bled, hurt, etc.
- 3)) He was tempted in all points as we are without sin. Heb. 4:15
- 3)) He was born of the seed of David, of a woman and he had a body of flesh like all other men, not a phantom. Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4; 1Jn. 4:2-3; 2Jn. 7

2:8 The depth of Christ's humility.

- 1) He was found in appearance of a man, meaning no different.
 - a) Appearance means an outward expression that doesn't come from within.
 - b) In other words He clothed Himself with a human body to veil His person of God. Jn. 1:1, 14
 - c) On the transfiguration He displayed what He had concealed, as Peter, James and John saw Him in His glorified body. Matt. 17
- 2) He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death on the cross.

- a) His commitment was at the end as it had been at the beginning, "Not My will but Your be done". Lk. 22:42
 - b) His confidence as to Who He was and what He was to accomplish was based on His own person as the Lamb of God. Jn. 1:29
 - * No man takes my life, I lay it down...Jn. 10:18
 - c) His humiliation reached it's height by the extent of His submission, tasting death for every man by the shameful death on a cross, despising the shame and endured it for the joy of man's redemption. Heb. 2:9, 12:2
 - * He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities. Is. 53:11
- 1)) It was the most vile and shameful way of dying, a curse in the Law. Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13
 - * No Roman citizen would ever be crucified!
 - 2)) That is why Paul boasted in nothing but the cross of Christ. Gal. 6:14

2:9-11 The result of Christ's humiliation was exaltation.

2:9 God the Father exalted Christ His Son.

- 1) He was highly exaltation.
 - * Super exalted!
 - a) He took with Him to heaven the fact that He is a man, making intercession for the believer. 1Tim. 2:5
 - b) No one is higher or above Him. Is. 52:13; Dan. 7:13-14
 - c) He is at the right hand of God. Acts 2:33; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3
 - c) Jesus Himself prophesied it to the Pharisee at His trial. Mk. 14:62
- 2) He was given a name above every name.
 - a) Christ, is His title, the anointed of God, the Messiah to come.
 - b) Lord is His title of respect and position of Master.
 - c) Jesus, is His name which means “Jehovah is salvation”, the Greek translation of the Hebrew name “Joshua”, which itself is a contraction of “Jehovah-shua”, Jehovah is salvation.
 - d) This stood agaisnt the Eaesar cult in Rome.

2:10-11 The purpose is declared by the Father.

- 1) That every person acknowledge the exaltation of His name above all others. vs. 10

- a) That every knee should bow, implying a time of free-will through the age of Grace in contrast to the Kingdom age when all will bow without choice.
- b) The extent is those in heaven, in earth and under the earth, nothing exempt, all that is in existence is to bow to Him, nothing is excluded or the exception, for He is higher than the heavens. Heb. 7:26; 1Pet. 3:22
* Universal worship!. “Is. 45:23”
 - 1)) The Father has make Jesus the judge of every man. Jn. 5:22
 - 2)) There is no other name given under heaven or earth whereby men **must** be saved. Acts 4:12
- 2) That every person declare the position of his supreme Lordship. vs. 11
 - a) Every tongue confess “exomologeo”, acknowledge and profess openly, that Jesus Christ is Lord or Master, to say the same thing about Jesus that the Father has revealed and declared through Scripture by their free-will. Rom. 10:9
* Caesar worship was commanded by burning a pinch of incense and declaring that “Caesar was Lord”.
 - b) To the glory of God the Father means in a sincere and genuine attitude, with

all the respect, honor, majesty and love the Father has given Him.

- 1)) The Father declared, "Sit at My right hand while I make ." Ps. 110
- 2)) We do not see everything yet but it will in the Kingdom. 1Cor. 15:26-28; Heb. 2:8
- 3)) Whosoever exalts himself shall be abased... Lk. 14:11
- 4)) Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 1Pet. 5:6
- 5)) All authority is given to Me in heaven and earth. Matt. 28:18
- 6)) Angels and authorities are all subject to Him. 1Pet. 3:22

2:12-16 The practical exhortations.

2:12-13 The conclusion based on Christ's example of humble obedience regarding salvation and their ability in Christ for salvation is commanded.

2:12 Human responsibility is addressed.

- 1) In view of their past reputation in his presence much more now in his absence they were to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. vs. 12

* He returns to the original exhortation. 1:27-30

- 2) Paul is not teaching that the Philippians were saving themselves by what they did.
- 3) Paul was exhorting them regarding their human participation and responsibility to carry out to the goal or completion by their yielding to the Spirit of Christ who enables them through sanctification. Phil. 1:27; 2:1-4; 3:12-14

* The word "work" was used for a student to carry out a problem in arithmetic to the end!

- a) The manner is with "fear" the attitude of reverence and self-distrust. 1Cor. 10:13
- b) The perspective is with "trembling", knowing God knows, sees not only all things but the motive of the heart.
- c) The practicality of both knowing that I am unable to cope with the world, my flesh and Satan in and of myself and will only grieve God.

2:13 Divine enablement is assured.

- 1) In view of God working on behalf of man's salvation, remember it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. vs. 13
- 2) This is the other half of the equation, divine enablement.

- a) God works “energeo” referring to “energy”, in us both to will and do of His good pleasure.
- b) God through His Holy Spirit brings about the desire and power to carry it out.
- c) We are His workmanship in Christ Jesus for good works. Eph. 2:10
- d) And with Him we can do anything He call us to do. Phil. 4:13
- e) Roberetson the Greek Scholar puts it this way, “ Paul exhorts as if he were an Arminian but he prwys as if he were a Calvinist”.
- f) The believer is to be a “Calminian”, it is Scriptural, otherwise you end up in error!

2:14 The manner that all humble service should be done in partnership with God.

- 1) All things are to be done without complaining “gongusmon” means grumbling or murmuring.
 - a) Such words are called onomatopoeic because the sound of the word sounds like the word!
 - b) The word refers to an undertone, like the murmuring of Israel in the wilderness, dissatisfied. Ex. 10:7; Num. 11:1-6; 1Cor. 10:10

- 2) To do all things without disputing, “dialogismos” referring to arguing, we get our word dialogue from it, be it with yourself or others, in this context with ill-nature. Rom. 14:1; 1Tim. 2:8
* Be it in public or private to bring suspicions, uprising or divisions.

2:15 The purpose of the exhortation.

- 1) That they be blameless and harmless.
 - a) Blameless “amempto” deserving no censure, free from defect.
* Used of wine watered down in Paul’s day.
 - b) Harmless “akeraios” means unmixed, unadulterated as wine or metals.
- 2) Children of God without fault “amometos” without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.
* Used of spotless for animal sacrifice in the LXX.?
- 3) Whom you shine as lights in the world.
 - a) Lights “phosteres” luminaries, light bearers.
 - b) The word is used in the LXX for the sun, moon and stars in Genesis.
 - c) They shine not for themselves but for the dark world around them, so the believer. Matt. 5:14; Jn. 8:12; Phil. 1:27; 1Thess. 5:5

* He is quoting the wilderness experience and their failure, no longer being children of God as lights. Deut. 32: 5

2:16 The consistency of the practice.

- 1) They were to be holding fast the word of life.
 - a) The word holding “apeko” is used of offering wine to a guest.
 - b) The word of life, the gospel lived out by faith so as to be a clear presentation to the lost and dark world. Rom. 1:16-17; Hab. 2:4
- 2) The outcome being that Paul might rejoice in the day of Christ, that he had not run in vain or labored in vain.
 - a) The day of Christ is the Bema-Seat, 1Cor. 3:13-15; 4:5
 - b) The word labor means to the point of exhaustion, rejoicing over their growth and maturity. 1Thess. 2:19
 - c) The term is used in the training of an athlete, he did not want his running to be in vain. 1Cor. 9:24-27; Gal. 2:2; 4:11