

Philippians 2

Light

Chapter I Review:

- Paul writing to his friends at Church he planted in Greek city of Philippi
- Every time I think about you I thank God

You are doing well

- I am confident God will finish the good work he started in you
- Even though we are over 4000 miles away
 1. We are one in Grace
 2. We are one in Mission

I long to see you

- I encourage you to **abound more and more** in sincere love
 1. Approving what is good
 2. Abhorring what is evil
 3. Be real with one another [without wax]
- Don't worry about my chains/possible execution...
 1. I'm still preaching the Gospel
 2. Whether I live or die I will magnify Jesus
 3. I believe I will be with you soon
- Instructions till I see you:
 1. Conduct yourself like men/woman of God bearing good fruit
 2. But don't fear/be surprised by persecution...it will happen

Philippians 1:29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the **same conflict** which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

1. Do I die and be with Jesus forever? Easy
2. Do I live in both suffering/victory to exemplify God's grace to others? **A. 2**

Living for Christ is not for the faint-hearted. What did we sign up for?

- **Chapter 1:** Dealing with trouble from outside the church
- **Chapter 2:** Dealing with potential trouble from within the church [Pride]

2 Corinthians 12:20 [Paul feared going to Church in Corinth] For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be **contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbiting's, whisperings, conceits, tumults...**

- Paul warned Church in Galatia not to abuse their freedom...

Galatians 5:13 ...you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in

one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 **But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!**

Paul encourages Philipians to cultivate unity through humility before it's too late..

I. Unity through Humility

1 Therefore...

Since you accepted the challenge to live for Christ...Here are your instructions for victory

1b... if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy

Suffering is part of the Christian Experience but...

- **Benefits of being born-again are awesome/tremendous:**

1. Consolation: gr. p̄ā-r̄ā'-klā-sēs lit. God drawing near to us when we need Him
2. Comfort: 2 Cor. 1:3 God of all comfort when we hurt
3. Fellowship: gr. koinōnia Communion with Jesus
4. Affection: Fervent love of God to His children
5. Mercy: Compassion of God. Forgiveness casting sin from East to West

If [lit. because] you are experiencing these benefits of being born-again...

2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

- **Make my joy complete: Same thing in four different ways...**

1. Have the same mind
2. Have the same love
3. Be of on accord
4. Be of one mind

**If you have received all these benefits from God...
Get along with one another! How?**

- **Sin nature:**

1. 1st word...**no!**
2. 2nd word...**mine!**

**How is this supposed to happen, Paul?
How do we just get along? Can't we all just get along?**

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit...

Let nothing you do be done for your own self interest

- **Wrong motives:**

1. **Selfish ambition:** Lit. Strife; i.e. Desire to put one's self forward

Men do not quarrel when their ambitions have come to an end." [Spurgeon]

2. **Conceit:** Lit. Vainglory; i.e. eager glory without reason

Let nothing you do be done for your own self interest

...but in **lowliness** of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Not selfish ambition or conceit but instead...

- **Lowliness of mind:** Lit. Humility
- **Esteeming others better than ourselves**

In humility counting/thinking of others higher, better, more excellent than ourself

- **Christian Life/Maturity/Victory is ALL about what motivates us**
 1. **Walk in Pride:** Putting other down to build ourselves up
 2. **Walk in Humility:** Lifting/Building others up as we fade away

If I consider you above me and you consider me above you, then a marvelous thing happens: we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on. [Guzic]

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- **Looking to our own interests is natural**
- **Looking to other interests is *supernatural***

Being genuinely interested in the interests of others is a "God thing"

1. What are your interests; hopes and dreams in the Lord?
2. What can I do to help you get there?
3. How can I facilitate your victory, promotion, growth, restoration, healing?

SUMMARY: Unity Through Humility. Let nothing you do be done for your own self-interest but to build others up.

I've never seen anyone do every single thing for others and not themselves

II. Humbled and Exalted Christ: Our Example

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...

Have the mind of Christ? **gr. *phroneō*** Lit. **"Think like Jesus" How?**

- **Looking to other interests is supernatural**

1. Our minds cannot be rehabilitated/fixed from pride/selfishness
2. Our minds must be transformed/renewed by Jesus

Romans 12:1 [Read] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- Don't be **conformed**: Poured into the mold of the world
- Be **transformed**: gr. *metamorphoō*. Lit. To change into another form

**Don't allow the world to shape you
Let Jesus change you**

- How do allow Jesus transform me? By renewing my mind!
 1. Not based on feeling
 2. Not based on doing
 3. Transformation comes from a life based on God's Word. Period

God is never against feeling and doing. He is a God of powerful and passionate feeling, and He commands us to be doers. Yet feelings and doing are completely insufficient foundations for the Christian life. The first questions cannot be "How do I feel?" or "What do I do?" Rather, it must be "What is true here? What does God's Word say?" [Guzic]

- Holy Spirit will bring to mind the Words you read when you need them

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...

6 [Jesus], being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God...

- **When Jesus said " I and My Father are one"**
 1. *He was not* stealing the Father's glory
 2. *He was speaking the Truth...He is equal to the God Father*

Instead of holding on to His glorious position with the Father which was His absolute right...

7 ...but [Jesus] made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

- **He Made Himself:** Jesus made the Choice
 1. Be of no reputation: Lit. to make void, make of not effect. Empty or lay aside
 2. Humbling Himself in *form of God* to adding *form of a "bondservant"* [Cf. v1]
 3. Coming to earth/time in the "likeness of men"
 4. Jesus did not cling to the privileges of deity...[not deity itself] [Guzic]

Make no mistake.

The One who spoke the universes into existence *chose* to empty Himself and become a man

- **Context:** Jesus example of Humility

8 And being found in appearance as a man, [Jesus] humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

- **Jesus the man:**
 1. Humbled Himself: Found in appearance a man
 2. Humbled Himself: Became obedient to the Father
 3. Humbled Himself: Obedient to death on Cross

Isaiah 50:5 The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. 6 I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; **I did not hide My face from shame** and spitting. 7 "For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Not My will but Your will be done. Decision made in eternity passed...

Hebrews 10:5 ... when He [Jesus] came into the world, He said [to the Father]: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.'" [Cf. psalm 40:6-8]

One key to Jesus' obedience on earth was the endurance of suffering. This again was something He could only *learn by experience* after the incarnation. As it is written: though He was a Son, yet [Jesus] learned obedience by the things which He suffered. [Hebrews 5:8] [Guzic]

The Eternal Son of God emptied Himself and was obedient to God the Father...

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name

- **Therefore:** Because of Jesus humbling himself exemplified by obedience...

God highly exalted Him Gave Him "the Name above every Name"

- **Father reinstates Jesus Original Glory:** Jesus same yesterday, today and forever

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

- Father gives Jesus the **Name above every Name...**

There is no name that is not under submission to His Name. The Name of Jesus

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth

- ALL those in heaven, earth, under the earth will bow
- Willingly or unwillingly they will bow

His Name is Salvation

Acts 4:12 ... there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we **must be saved.**"

11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Romans 10:9 ... if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved.**

- Every tongue will confess what Jesus has already made clear...

John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. 7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

- God will exalt the humble and put down the proud
- We are to humble ourselves before one another

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

- **Reward for humility?** Exaltation as in Jesus example...

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, **all of you be submissive to one another**, and be **clothed with humility**, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, **that He may exalt you in due time...**

SUMMARY Humbled and Exalted Christ: Jesus our example. Have the mind of Christ

III. Light Bearers: Practical Application of Love

12 Therefore...

- **Since:** Philippians 2:8-11
 1. Jesus walked in our shoes before us
 2. Jesus therefore understands our suffering
 3. Jesus is presently and forever exalted to His former glory
 4. Every human *will confess* Jesus as Lord to glory of God...

Since even the Son of God obeyed His Father during His stay on earth...

12b...my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...**

- Keep doing what you are doing but even more...
- Obey God in fear and trembling...

"Work out your own Salvation"?

Work out your own Salvation not work for your own Salvation v13

- **Work out:** Be obedient [v12] to the Holy Spirit immediately when He speaks

Co-operating with God. He says we do.

- **Your own Salvation:** Your personal walk with Christ. Differs with every believer.

John 21:21 "But Lord, what about [John]?" 22 Jesus said to [Peter], "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."

- **Fear and Trembling:** We don't play w/ God. God is Holy.
 1. **Fear of God beginning of wisdom:** If we don't fear God we are not wise
 2. **Disobedience/lack of fear** may be sign false-conversion? If you love Me...

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling?

...God has pre-planned good works for His children to work-out

Ephesians 2:8 [Read] ...by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For **we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**

- **Believers:** Every person, situation, circumstance is not a coincidence
- Only question is **will we take advantage** of opportunities God has put in front of us

Psalm 85:13b... [God] shall make His footsteps our pathway.

- Following in Jesus footsteps is literal

Work out your own Salvation not work for your own Salvation

13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

- **We work out what God works in**

1. God gives us the **will to do**
2. God gives us the **ability to do**
3. But God gets the Glory for what is done. "Apart from Me you can do nothing"

It is God who will "finish the good work He started" in us! [1:6]

Grace all-sufficient dwells in you, believer. There is a living well within you springing up; use the bucket, then; keep on drawing; you will never exhaust it; there is a living source within." [Spurgeon]

- God puts desire and ability in our hearts to do what pleases Him

What things does God ask of us? What is important in God's economy?
...what brings God good pleasure?

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life

1. *Do we want* to be **found blameless**?
2. *Do we want* to **walk in innocence**?
3. *Do we want* to **shine like stars** in this dark and dying world?
4. *Do we want* to be **taken seriously** when we share the Gospel...**Word of Life**?

Stop Complaining.

- **Complaining:** Lit. Murmuring or grudgingly. Secret displeasure
- **Disputing:** Questioning motives of others, cynical and suspicious

Isaiah: 59:11 [Nation needing repentance] We all growl like bears ...moan sadly like doves

- Complaining among people of God is unacceptable...

Those complain first in our churches who have least to do. The gift of grumbling is largely dispensed among those who have no other talents...There are some who do little else but complain. They complain of the times, of the weather, of the government, of their families, of their trade; **if for once**, they would complain of themselves, they might have a more deserving subject for fault-finding. [Spurgeon]

- Complaining among people of God is unacceptable...
- **Paul to Philippians:** I want you to shine...don't complain, don't argue...Shine

...so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

"I want to celebrate when Jesus returns because through you many were saved. You spent your time building up others not tearing down, in thanksgiving and praise, not murmuring"

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

- Poured out as a Drink Offering: Paul thought he might would be martyred
- If I am going to die for Christ be glad. One way or another we will see each other

Paul would later be martyred in Rome
Not before being set free and seeing the friends he loves one more time

IV. Timothy: Bridging the Gap

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be **encouraged** when I know your state.

- **Sending Timothy:** Lit. to bridge the gap between us

- Faithful Messenger

Proverbs 13:17 ... a faithful ambassador brings health [healing/wholeness].

Proverbs 25:13 Like the cold of snow in time of harvest Is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he *refreshes the soul of his masters*.

- Paul and Philippians would be refreshed: Bridge the gap
- I trust the Lord to send Timothy...

20 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. **21** For all **seek their own**, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

- **Like-minded:** Cares for you like I care for you
- All seek their own will in contrast to seeking the Lord's will

Not Your will be done but mine be done?

- **Things which are of Christ Jesus:** Sincerely care for Philippians. Love one another
 - Looking to our own interests is natural
 - Looking to other interests is *supernatural*

I have **no one** I can trust to represent my feelings toward you ...except Timothy

22 But you know [Timothy's] proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.

- **Proven Character:** Leaders must be vetted
 1. Humility
 2. Integrity
 3. Doctrine
- **Paul took note of Timothy;** i.e. as a son working w/ father. Guys got something
 1. Listening
 2. Obeying
 3. Respecting
 4. Observing
 5. Imitating Paul...

1 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Corinthians 11:1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

Hebrews 6:12 do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

3 John 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.

- Timothy would be a

23 Therefore I hope to send [Timothy] at once, as soon as I see how it goes

with me.

- **Therefore:** Since Timothy represents my feelings toward you...

I will send him as soon as possible...and see how it goes with me

24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

- **Paul's hope is in the Lord:** I'll see you soon

SUMMARY Timothy: Bridging the Gap

V. Epaphroditus: Giving All

25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need...

- **Epaphroditus:** *Belonging to Aphrodite*
- First sent by Philippians to Paul with gift
- Paul had deep respect:

1. **Brother:** Same Father
2. **Worker:** Same objective
3. **Soldier:** Same enemy
4. **Messenger** From Philippians
5. **Minister** Attending to Paul

- **I needed to send him back?**

26 ...since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him

- **Epaphroditus**

1. **Longing for you:** Missed being with you
2. **"Heart was heavy"** because he heard you worried about him

You had good reason to worry; he was dying when he got here
...**God had mercy him...**

27b...and not only [mercy] on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

- **Sorrow upon sorrow:** If he died I would have missed him greatly
- Waves of sorrow when we suffer loss of loved on

28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.

- **Less sorrowful:** Still sad to see him go

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; 30 because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

- **Welcome him:** With cheering
- **Honor him:** Don't take him or others like him for granted
 1. Men who work themselves to death for Christ
 2. Men who do regard others' lives more than their own

SUMMARY Epaphroditus: Giving All

Timothy and Epaphroditus: Faithful Selfless Messengers

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.