

## Chapter Two

Stephen Langton, a professor at the University of Paris and later Archbishop of Canterbury, is widely credited with **devising the chapter system in the early 1200s**. Robert Estienne (also known as Stephanus), a French printer and scholar, is credited with **dividing the New Testament into verses**. In his 1551 edition of the Greek New Testament, **The first Bible to feature both chapter and verse divisions as we know them today was the Geneva Bible, published in 1560**. (Dr. Patrick Oben, *The Bible's Fascinating Journey: Why Chapters and Verses?*)

Hence, the Bible did not come with chapters and verses. They were just like any letter we would write today. There was no precise way to break the NT into chapters and verses. Many times, the thoughts cover a large section of Scripture and to make the chapters manageable, they sometimes had to make a break in the midst of a thought. Since chapter breaks are a human invention, a simple expedient to help us find passages quickly, it is important to remember that they are not inspired and should always be carefully scrutinized. In this case, the “*therefore*” in the second chapter ties directly back to the final section of the previous chapter.

*Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 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. 2:1 If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, Phil 1:27-30; 2:1*

### 1. If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ,

The Holy Spirit through Paul has come to the end of one topic and wants to move to the next, but the thoughts in the first verse became the conclusion of the previous section and the introduction to the new thoughts in the second chapter. The term “*therefore*” is a conjunction often placed between two thoughts to make it clear that the one follows from the other. It is often translated “*then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so.*”

*oun*; conj. **Accordingly, thereupon, then, now, certainly.** Put after one or more words in a clause, and expressing either the merely external connection of two sentences, that the one follows upon the other, or also the internal relation of cause and effect, that the one follows from the other.... (I) **As marking mere external connection and thus denoting transition or continuation from what precedes to what follows with the meaning of thereupon, now then....** (II) As expressing the internal connection of two sentences that the one follows from the other as effect or consequence, i.e., therefore, then, consequently, with the meaning for this cause, for this reason, from these premises.... (D) In **interrogative sentences referring back to a previous assertion, supposition or circumstance** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3767)

“*oun*... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; ... Hence it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...*” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

There are at least four points are brought to completion in this “*therefore.*”

#### **They will be helpful motivations to:**

1. let your **conduct be worthy** of the gospel of Christ.
2. **Stand fast in one spirit**, with **one mind striving together** for the faith of the gospel.
3. **Not in any way terrified** by your adversaries... a proof... to you of salvation, and that from God.
4. **Granted on behalf of Christ**, not only **to believe in Him**, but **also to suffer for His sake**.

(1) Because the conduct of every Christian must always be worthy of the gospel, there will be times when one or more of these motivations will be needed to get over some of the difficulties.

*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 spiritual service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, Rom 12:1-2*

*"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. Mt. 18:8*

(2) The ability to have one spirit and one mind while living the gospel often presents powerful tests. There must be great sacrifices and toleration as each Christian chooses expediences that are abhorrent to others in the church. (Rom. 14 and 1Cor. 8-10)

*10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ... 19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. 20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. ... 21 good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. 1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the weaknesses of those without strength and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. Rom. 14:10-21; 15:1-3*

There are also great hurdles to cross when those in the church describe the difficulties that are encountered in the body of Christ because of the differences in ability and function. (1Cor. 12-14). Some will envy what others can do while others will feel low and useless. It is the duty of all in the church to be aware of these weaknesses and have the same care.

*those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; ... the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 1Cor. 12:22-26*

(3-4) These are two sides of the same coin. There are terrible consequences to severe persecution that can come without warning and completely destroy one's life. It is a clear and evident proof (token) of salvation, but needs careful thought to navigate.

*"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Mt. 5:11*

*Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets. Lk. 6:22-23*

When such times come these four motivations will be necessary and very important.

### If there is

Each of the four statements in verse one begin with "if any." This is an often used combination when speaking of a reality that the writer is forcing the reader to consider. There is no doubt about these things, just an emphasis. Search your heart and see if there are any within.

ei tis; **conditional expression from ei (1487), if, and tis (5100), any.** If any, if someone, used with the sort of emphasis for hōstis (3748), **whosoever, whatsoever, everyone who.** With the indic. pres. (Mark 9:35; Luke 14:26; 1 Cor 3:12; 8:2,3; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 1:9; 1 Tim 5:8; 6:3); with indic. fut. (1 Cor 3:14,15; Rev 13:10); with indic. perf. (2 Cor 7:14; 10:7); with indic. aor. (Rev 20:15). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1536)

By putting it in this way, he forces each reader to consider if there is any. Is there any consolation in Christ, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit or any affection and mercy within my heart? If there is, then how is it helping me in my walk as a Christian? These are the questions each disciple must ask.

### any consolation (exhortation - ASV) (encouragement - NAS) in Christ,

The term translated "consolation, exhortation or encouragement" is used many times in the NT. AS a verb it is used 109 times and as a noun 44 times. Based on its root meaning of "calling beside," it always has a strong sense of care and concern on the part of the one who is speaking. In the gospels it was commonly used by those who approached Jesus with a need as the pleaded and beseeched Him to heal or help in some way or another. In the letters, it was used for exhorting, admonishing, encouraging or comforting others.

*paraklesis* means "a calling to one's side" (*para*, "beside," *kaleo*, "to call"); hence, either "an exhortation, or consolation, comfort," (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3874)

*paraklésis*, fem. noun from *parakalēō* (3870), to beseech. **The act of exhortation, encouragement, comfort. All of Scripture is actually a paraklésis, an exhortation, admonition or encouragement for the purpose of strengthening and establishing the believer in the faith** (see Rom 15:4; Phil 2:1; Heb 12:5; 13:22). Paul

speaks of his preaching of the gospel as *paraklésis* in 1 Thess 2:3 (see Acts 13:15; 2 Cor 8:4,17). The contents of the letter addressed to the church at Antioch from the Apostolic Council are *paraklésis* in Acts 15:31. **Comforting words, consolation** (Acts 9:31; 2 Thess 2:16; Philem 7; Heb 6:18), ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 3874)

*parakaleō* (NT:3870) **request, urge; comfort; paraklésis** (NT:3874) **admonition, encouragement, comfort, request** ... 1. On the basis of statistics alone, *parakaleo* / *paraklésis* are among the most important terms for speaking and influencing in the NT. **The verb (109 occurrences)** is used in the Synoptics 25 times, **predominantly as request in the sense of petition**, in Paul about 44 times, and in the other Epistles about 18 times, **overwhelmingly as request in the sense of a summoning address and as exhort and comfort**. It is lacking in John, 1-3 John, Revelation, James, 2 Peter, and Galatians (!). The noun (29 occurrences) ... (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3870)

It always carries the word picture of the speaker calling his hearers right up to his side, putting his arm around them and then speaking the words they needed to hear. It softened a rebuke, strengthened a request, and added to the encouragement and comfort being given.

In this case, it is all the comfort and security of being in Christ. Being in Christ is both God and Jesus putting their arms around us to comfort, console, encourage and exhort. The love, mercy, compassion, and longsuffering that is packaged in Christ is beyond our ability to fully grasp. It grows year by year as we add knowledge and wisdom to our faith.

God has sought to reveal to us just how involved Jesus was in this creation, not just redemption, but even creation and sustaining.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Col. 1:15-20*

The phrase “*in Christ*” sums up everything. It is the basis of our salvation and the foundation of every blessing. It was God decision and decree that everything would be summed up “*in Christ*.”

*He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. Eph. 1:9-10*

He also placed every spiritual blessing “*in Christ*.”

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, Eph. 1:3*

The phrase “*in Christ*,” sums up everything we learn in the gospel. God’s love and mercy, Jesus sacrifice and intercession, the Holy Spirit’s revelation, our redemption and salvation. Everything is “*in Christ*.” What He introduced here, the Spirit will elaborate on

*though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, Phil. 2:6-10*

The stimulation, exhortation, consolation and comfort we gain from this knowledge is limitless. It transcends knowledge. Our future is stable and bright. The afflictions, unworthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed.

**if any consolation of love,**

The crown jewel of the gospel is Jesus death on the cross. It is this act that forever enshrined love as among the most amazing qualities of God’s character. We can’t even grasp just how full this love is.

*that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Eph 3:17-19*

"Teacher, which is the **great commandment in the law?**" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matt 22:36-40

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 **He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.** 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that **He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 1Jn. 4:7-11

As we grow to understand this love and practice it ourselves, we learn of its fullness and depth. God's love brought Jesus into the world.

But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Rom. 5:8-10

What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** 32 He who **did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** Rom. 8:31-33

This love brings great and majestic "consolation." This is a synonym of the previous word. Side by side we have *para-klesis* (call near beside) and *para-muthos* (speak near beside). There is more tenderness in the consolation and comfort of the term used here than that used above.

*paramúthion*; neuter noun from *paramuthéomai* (3888), to comfort verbally. **Consolation, comfort** (Phil 2:1). This neut. noun has nearly the same meaning as the fem. *paramuthía* (3889). They differ in that **the neuter noun indicates the instrument used by the one who is comforting, and the feminine noun stresses the process or progress of the act...** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3890)

*paramuthion, paramutheomai* is made up of the adverb *para* in the sense "towards" *mutheomai* ... The basic meaning is thus "to speak to someone," or "to speak to someone, coming close to his side." ... in which **it is almost impossible to separate the elements of petition, admonition and consolation.** ... 2. Derivations from the Basic Meaning "To Admonish." ... a. "To urge," to do or not to do something, ... "friendly admonition," though to free men, not slaves, ... **"to encourage"** at 1 Thess 2:12, **"to strengthen"** at 5:14, **"encouragement"** at 1 Cor 14:3, **"friendly word"** at Phil 2:1. (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:3890).

*paramuthia* ... (NT:3889), primarily **"a speaking closely to anyone" (para, "near," muthos, "speech")**, hence denotes **"consolation, comfort," with a greater degree of tenderness than No. 1, (paraklesis) 1 Cor 14:3.** ... *paramuthion* (NT:3890) has the same meaning as No. 2, the difference being that *paramuthia* stresses the process or progress of the act, *paramuthion* the instrument as used by the agent, Phil 2:1. Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3890)

Whether we are called upon to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ or we must tolerate unruly or selfish brethren, we will be consoled and comforted with *agape-love*. God is only asking us to do for others what He and Jesus have done for us.

Love **suffers long** and is **kind**; love does **not envy**; love does **not parade itself, is not puffed up**; 5 does **not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil**; 6 does **not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth**; 7 **BEARS ALL THINGS, BELIEVES ALL THINGS, HOPES ALL THINGS, ENDURES ALL THINGS.** 8 **Love NEVER FAILS.** ... 13 **And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE.** 1Cor. 13:4-8

### if any fellowship of the Spirit,

The Holy Spirit was sent from heaven to be another (*homo of the same kind*) of comforter. He would guide them into all truth and be with all true disciples. Everything we know and all the growth that we have gained are the direct result of the Holy Spirit. Without Him, we would indeed be orphans.

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 **But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** Jn. 14:25-26

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, **the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth**; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. Jn 16:12-14

And I will pray the Father, and **He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever** — 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for

*He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Jn 14:16-18*

Every step of the way, from our conversion (born of water and the Spirit) to our growth to maturity, the Holy Spirit is our guide, comforter and helper. Full fellowship with Him will bring great blessings and benefits. Fellowship is working together on the same project, each bringing what they have to the effort and working together reaching the goal.

*koinōnia* NT:2842 **community; fellowship; participation** ... *koinoneō* NT:2841 **have a share; give a share; take a share; have fellowship** ... *koinōnos* NT:2844 **companion, partner** ... Adjective use of *koinōnos* can be rendered **common or participating in**; subst. use can be rendered **partner, associate**. ... "**partakers of the divine nature.**" ... Luke 5:10: "who were **partners** with Simon") *koinōneō*, the verb derived from *koinōnos*, means **have/take a share in something** ... Heb 2:14: "as now **the children share flesh and blood**"; ... 2 John 11: "One who greets [a false teacher], *takes part* in his evil works"). It means **give a share, communicate, have fellowship with** someone,... *Koinōnia*, the related abstract form, is translated **fellowship, partnership** and also with **participation, sharing**. ... Acts 2:42: "They continued in the teaching of the apostles and **in fellowship**"; ... 1Jn 1:3: "so that **you have fellowship with us**; but **our fellowship is also with the Father and with his Son, ...**" (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2842)

Christians live in joint participation with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit through the use of God's revealed word leads, guides, and helps every Christian. All children of God are in fellowship with Him. He leads, they must follow. He teaches, they must learn. He reveals truth, they must accept it. He reveals moral standards, they must live them. When a person takes God's word (the sword of the Spirit - Eph 6:17) and fully submits to it, they are in fellowship with the Spirit who gave it for that very purpose. They thus walk hand in hand down the path of life. This association, communion and joint participation with the Holy Spirit should present many incentives and offer great protection to the mind and heart of a Christian.

*But I say, **Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. **But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.** (Gal. 5:16-18).*

The Holy Spirit is the source of all New Testament doctrine. He is the other comforter Jesus spoke of in John 14:26, and the one who would guide them and us into all the truth (John 16:13; Eph. 3:3-4). When we walk as he directs we are in fellowship with him. The fruits of such a walk are wonderful, and right in keeping with the sacrificial attitude necessary to do what Paul is about to request.

***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.** Gal. 2:22-23*

When such wholesome fruit characterizes one's own fellowship with the Spirit, they know first of all that they are upholding their side of the fellowship. The Spirit never lets anyone down, it is always the other way around. When one is manifesting the fruits, they know they are in communion with him. They will have great things to bring to the church, their brethren and their fellow man.

### **if any tender mercies and compassions,**

We can and must also draw from our own natural affection. There will be times when our own sense of sorrow and compassion will also help us through difficult times. These two terms share some common ground, but then differ. As we move back to the true image and likeness of God these emotions should grow and become a natural part of our being. This is something God is intensely interested in because it reveals true growth.

The "*bowels*," like our "*heart*" attributes all emotions to the place in the body where they are felt. While English uses "*heart*," the Greeks used the more anatomically correct "*bowels*." It is used literally one time in the NT when Judas fell, but the rest of the time it refers to the tender emotions and "*inner yearnings of compassion.*" It was the seat of emotions and passions of *inward affection, compassion, pity, love*. In three of Jesus parables, this term becomes the heart of each parable. The Lord of the servant who could not pay was given this mercy. In the prodigal son this was the response of the father when he first saw the return of his son. It was also the reason why the good Samaritan stopped to help.

splánchnon; neut. noun. An **intestine, bowel**. In the NT only pl. tá splágchna, the bowels, viscera. ... Figuratively, **the inward parts indicating the breast or heart as the seat of emotions and passions**. In the NT, of the **gentler emotions as compassion, tender affection indicating the mind, soul, ... Metonymically, inward affection, compassion, pity, love ...**" (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4698)

*splanchnon* plural ... **inner organs; "heart," inner yearning, compassion** ... Only the plural of *splanchnon* occurs in the NT (as almost always in Greek literature as well). It occurs once in Luke (1:78) and in Acts (1:18), 8 times in the Pauline Epistles... **Older Greek literature viewed the *splanchna* particularly as the seat of violent, aggressive feelings**. Only in the Hellenistic period were the *splanchna* considered the place where one **"becomes weak, soft"**... they are also the seat of natural maternal love... **Paul's usage derives from these considerations**. One's **positive inclination toward others, the inner yearning for communion with beloved friends is located in the *splanchna*** 2 Cor 7:15 speaks of Titus's **heartfelt affection** for the Corinthians. In Phil 1:8 Paul speaks of his own **yearning** for the Philippians "with the *splanchna* of Christ Jesus": The meaning **pity, compassion, mercy** occurs in the NT (apart from 1 John 3:17) only in combination with synonyms (attributive or in parataxis). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4698)

*splanchnon splanchnizomai, eusplanchnon* The verb occupies a central place in three parables of Jesus and here it quite definitely denotes a specific attitude on the part of men. In the parable of the wicked servant (Matt 18:23-35) the servant prays *makrothumeson* (v. 26) and in answer we read in v. 27: *splanchnistheis de ho kurios* ... This gives the term *splanchnizomai* a certain precedence over *makrothumeo* ... and *eleeo*, which are also used in this parable (v. 26, 29, 33). ... the second parable, that of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32, cf. v. 20: ... In these parables of Jesus human emotions are described in the strongest of terms in order to bring out the totality of mercy or wrath with which God claims man in His saving acts. In the third passage taken from the oldest stratum of the Synoptic tradition, the illustrative parable of the good Samaritan, *splanchnizomai* is shown to be the basic and decisive attitude in human and hence in Christian acts: (Kittel, TDWNT NT 2155)

When circumstances arise like the fornicator in Corinth, these emotions are critical after repentance. Even during the attempts to seek repentance, these emotions should be present. When approaching any situation that involves an issue with a brother or sister in Christ, these emotions are important to diffuse any issues that might arise.

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:1-3*

Compassion follows the same path. It is pity with compassion. Feelings of sympathy which create sincere tears and lamentation. It "denote sympathy, fellow-feeling with misery (sympathy and empathy), mercy, and compassion." It begins with grief and sorrow over the situation and then quickly moves to sympathy which is ready to help.

*oikteirō* ... *oiktos* (n.f.), **compassion, pity. To pity, have compassion on**; predicated of God (Rom 9:15, quoted from Ex 33:19; ... *oikteirō* is closer to *splanchnizomai*, (4697), to pity, both words being connected with **sympathetic feelings which seek expression in tears and lamentation while *eleēō* (1653) and *éleos* (1656), mercy, involve the intent to help.... A criminal begs *éleos*, mercy, of his judge, whereas hopeless suffering can be the object of *oiktirmós* (3628), a feeling of pity, mercy or compassion. ..."** *oiktirmós*; masc. noun from *oikteirō* (3627), to have compassion on. **Pity, compassion, mercy**, but referring to a feeling that is not as strong as *éleos* (1656), mercy. ***oiktirmós* is the pity or compassion which one shows for the sufferings of others.** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3627 - 3628)

*oiktirmós*; If *eleos* ... denotes the emotion of compassion or sympathy, ***oikos* is in the first instance "grief" or "lamentation," esp. "lamentation" at the misfortune or death of a man. then often "sympathetic lamentation," "sympathy," "pity."** If *oiktos* (like *oiktisma*, *oiktismos*) primarily denotes the expression of emotion, the lament, the rarer *oiktirmos* is used for the emotion of sympathy itself. *oiktirein* thus means **"to be sympathetic" in the sense of grief or sorrow. but also in that of the sympathy which is ready to help. ...** Of the nouns the NT uses only *oiktirmos*, always plural except at Col 3:12. In 2 of the 5 instances God's *oiktirmoi* are meant, ... Thus in Rom 12:1 Paul admonishes the congregation through the mercies of God ... In the introduction to Paul's admonition Phil 2:1: ... *eis tis splanchna kai oiktirmoi* *splanchna* and *oiktirmoi* are obviously a hendiadys: **"heartfelt sympathy."** The reference is to the sympathy of the Philippians, to which Paul appeals in order to give emphasis to his admonition. Mercy as a human attitude is also at issue in Col 3:12: (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:3628)

So much for the use and meaning of the term. More importantly are the lessons they teach. Some circumstances do not need a commandment from God to get us to act. Some things naturally call up from within us all the motivation necessary to help. They move the human heart to feelings of

mercy and compassion. No other motivation is needed. When one sees widows and orphans in deep sorrow and affliction, they do not need a command to help them, they naturally leave their own needs for a later time and seek to help them. The inspired Paul gave these emotions their rightful place seeking for God's children to place them in high esteem. The natural feelings of pity and compassion which one feels toward their fellow man in times of disaster and need are good and wholesome emotions which all ought to act upon. They seldom lead us astray, especially when they are directed by God's word.

## 2. Make full my joy,

Paul seals the critical importance of these applications of being in Christ, manifesting *agape-love*, showing their fellowship with the Holy Spirit and manifesting their own journey toward the image and likeness of God. When they can do these things, they will "*complete in every particular*" Paul's joy as they reach toward true maturity and spirituality. It will fill to the brim and complete Paul's joy.

*"pleroo, ...1. to make full, to fill, to fill up... to fill to the full... to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally...2. to render full, i. e. to complete; a. prop. to fill up to the top...so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim,... b. to perfect, consummate... bb. to make complete in every particular; to render perfect... c. to carry into effect, bring to realization, realize; a. of matters of duty, to perform, execute ... bb of sayings, promises, prophecies, to bring to pass, ratify, accomplish; ... hh universally and absolutely, to fulfill, i.e. to cause God's will (as made known in the law)to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfillment ..."* (Thayer, p. 517-518; 4137).

All need to stop and contemplate the vast importance of these words. When an inspired apostle brings such powerful responses to actions on the part of disciples, it is important. These are inspired words! When a Christian can see and begin the process of being moved in the ways describe as a result of understanding them enough to allow them to alter their responses, and it completes to the full Paul's mission. He was sent to teach them to observe all things that Jesus commanded, and these things reveal that these are the final steps to making that mission is nearly completed.

If they can accomplish this one great thing they will have reached such a level of maturity and perfection that they will leave Paul without any concerns for them. Was this a weakness which he saw in them and which he was hopeful to correct in this letter? Was this one of the last rungs in the ladder toward true Christian maturity which Paul would have them climb and which having climbed would make them all that Paul could wish in a local church? It could be either. What a compliment to these brethren! This is the last step, when they complete this one they would completely fill up the joy that Paul feels when he thinks of them (Phil 1:3-7). What a motivation also! To know that this was the final great step needed to reach full maturity.

*fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

### Fulfill my Joy

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Be of the same mind.                        | 6. In lowliness of mind.                     |
| 2. Have the same love.                         | 7. counting others better than himself.      |
| 3. Be of one accord.                           | 8. Not looking each to his own things.       |
| 4. Of one mind.                                | 9. But each also to the things of others.    |
| 5. Doing nothing through faction or vainglory. | 10. This mind in you — also in Christ Jesus. |

This is clearly part of the oneness Jesus prayed for.

*"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. Jn. 17:20-21*

He does not seek a sterile unity based on doctrine alone. He seeks a unity not only of belief, but of purpose and devotion both to the Lord and one another. One of the greatest hindrances to this unity are the personal animosities and minor grudges held by those who refuse to allow the

emotions necessary to remove them. It takes both! Doctrinal unity based on both truth and emotions of unity.

*I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. 4:1-4*

*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. Col. 3:12-15*

by using *hina* – which is a final conjunction ... denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that the Holy Spirit affirms that this journey begins and ends with a full understanding and practicing:

- |                         |                            |                   |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| ❶ consolation in Christ | ❷ fellowship of the Spirit | ❸ comfort of love |
| ❹ affection and mercy   | ❺ Make full my joy         |                   |

With all these things operating fully, the church as the body of Christ, will truly be made up of many members functioning together. Yet it can only happen when every member makes it their personal ambition and goal to master and practice the applications made for them in the next few verses.

**by being like-minded,**

“Like” in “like minded” and “same” in the “same love” are the same word. It is a term that makes something identical. In this case, the mind I have toward you is exactly the same mind as you have toward me.

*autos* ... (occurring with the article): **pertaining to that which is identical to something - ‘same.’** ‘he prayed, saying the same thing’ Mark 14:39; ‘do not even the tax collectors do the same thing?’ Matt 5:46. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:846).

When those exhortations, persuasions and consolations, fellowship, and tender mercies that are in my mind and heart are exactly the same as the things in your mind and heart we have congregational unity. is about to bring out.

*phronéō* ... From *phrēn* (5424), mind. **To think, have a mindset, be minded.** The activity represented by this word involves **the will, affections, and conscience.** .... (I) Generally, to **be of an opinion.** ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5426)

Paul is asking these brethren to begin thinking alike. To have the same facts in their minds and the same opinions about them just as Paul told the Corinthians.

*Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1Cor. 1:10-12*

Just as when one cylinder in an engine is doing something different that the others so also in the church when one member is not in step with the others. When one disciples is serving in humility but the other is taking advantage of it, we will not have what Paul sought here.

**Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another.** Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. **Be not wise in your own conceits** (Rom. 12:15-16).

Yet it doesn’t stop with rejoicing and weeping. It is also true of serving, forgiving and forbearing. Having the same mind set is very important.

*Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ received you, to the glory of God Rom. 15:5-7*

Paul was longing to see a congregation filled with the same mind and heart toward the doctrines of the gospel and toward one another with the same eyes and heart of love. All that he will say in the remainder of this verse will simply strengthen that thought.

## having the same love,

They must also have an identical love. As Jesus made clear when He gave this commandment for the first time.

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Jn. 13:34-35*

These are to hold the same love one to another. It is to be the love which truly cares for the eternal welfare of others. The love which will help others and seek for their best interests. When a congregation is filled with this love it will be a strong force for good in the community, and for those within it. It will take a great deal of such mutual love to fulfill all that Paul brings out in this section.

## being of one accord,

Literally this is "be joined in soul", to be harmonious in soul. The soul is the life force that animates our bodies and keeps us alive. That which we set it upon charts the course of our life. Just as God asks us to love him with all our heart, soul and mind, He here asks each Christian to seek to join their souls one to another.

*sumpsuchos* pertaining to similarity of attitude and spirit - 'harmonious, united in spirit, being one in spirit.' Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:4861)

*sumpsuchos* lit., "fellow-souled or minded" (*sun*, "with," *psuche*, "the soul"), occurs in Phil 2:2, "of one accord." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4861)

*súmpsuchos*, adj. from *sún* (4862), together, and *psuché* (5590), soul. **Joined together in soul or sentiment, unanimous** (Phil 2:2). **It signifies community of life and love...** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4861)

Within each local church this force is to be joined with all the others and offered to God.

## of one mind;

The difference between this clause and the second one in the verse lies in the terms "same" and "one." While same means identical, one means single and only one.

*heis* the **first cardinal numeral**, masculine (feminine and neuter nominative forms are *mia* and *hen*, respectively), is used **to signify (1) (a) "one" in contrast to many**, e. g., Matt 25:15; Rom 5:18, RV, "(through) one (trespass)," i. e., Adam's transgression, in contrast to the "one act of righteousness," i. e., the death of Christ (not as KJV, "the offense of one," and "the righteousness of one"); (b) **metaphorically, "union" and "concord,"** e. g., John 10:30; 11:52; 17:11,21-22; Rom 12:4-5; Phil 1:27; (2) **emphatically, (a) a single ("one"), to the exclusion of others**, (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:1520)

This brings us back to how Paul ended the previous chapter. There two he spoke of single mindedness.

*27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, Phil 1:27*

This is not the only place in the Scriptures that this phrase is used. It is also used for doctrinal purity, unity over expediencies and like here, being united in compassion, love, tenderhearted, and courteous.

*Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. **Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace;** and the God of love and peace will be with you. 2Cor. 13:11*

*We then who are **strong ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak**, and not to please ourselves. **2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.** ...5 Now may the God of patience and comfort **grant you to be like-minded toward one another**, according to Christ Jesus, **6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Rom. 15:1-2, 5-7*

*8 Finally, all of you **be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;** **9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing**, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 1Pet. 3:8-9*

## Phil 2:3-5

*Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Phil 2:1-3*

### **3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition (faction – ASV) or conceit (vainglory – ASV)**

In the midst of all the positive things Paul had revealed and sought, are placed two negative things that must be removed. For Paul's joy to be full, they must seek the unity that comes from those who are truly reflecting the image and likeness of God.

These two things are not from God. They are of the world and only exist in time. To properly prepare to enter eternity, these two things must be removed from them. They must never be allowed to enter into the church. This word is generally reserved (only used 89 times) for a strong warning that not even a smallest portion should be done. This is the word for "not even one." It is used to deny not only the emotion itself, but any thought about it.

*mēdeis, mēdemia, mēdén* **none, not any; no one; in no way** ... This word **appears 89 times in the NT, after a negation**, it means "not ... anything" after a negation, not something or anything,..." (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:3367)

*mēdeis*, **adjective from mēdé (3366), and not, also not, and heís (1520), one. Not even one, no one, i.e., no one whoever** he may be, from the indefinite and hypothetical power of *mē*, differing from *oudeis* (3762), not even one, as *mē* differs from *ou*. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3367)

*me* a particle of negation, which differs from *ou* (which is always an adverb) in that ***ou* denies the thing itself (or to speak technically, denies simply, absolutely, categorically, directly, objectively), but *me* denies the thought of the thing, or the thing according to the judgment, opinion, will, purpose, preference, of someone (hence, as we say technically, indirectly, hypothetically, subjectively).** This distinction holds also of the compounds *oudeis medeis* ..." (Thayer's, NT: 3361)

These two negative qualities often appear when people are gathering together to accomplish something. In the ruling of the nation, the workings of a business, the inner working of a team, the family, and sadly in churches. They are corrosive and destructive and must not be allowed to form. The desire to be helpful and the desire to be appreciated are good emotions that can easily leave the bounds of righteousness and move into the realms of sin and missing the mark.

Ambition is one of the core emotions that God has given to man to better himself. It exists to motivate us to exert energy and make sacrifices and set goals for future progress and success. It was ambition that led the five and ten talent man to trade and make gain, and it was because the one talent man did not possess it that he hid the money. It was the emotion behind the man who sold all that he had to buy that field. It is the foundation of all diligence and zeal. Paul will show it in Chapter Three as he describes the goals and plans he had set for himself.

But ambition can leap over the bounds of love and concern for others and become "selfish ambition." The danger exists whenever a group of people meet together on a continual basis, for faction to creep into the relationship. Since it is the fruit of ambition, it is easy to pass from ambition to selfish-ambition and not even be aware of it. This is such a corrosive and destructive quality that it must not even be a part of the working of the church. Those who are under the grip of this emotion must be made to see it and to repent and remove it. But as James points out, it is crafty and sinister, masking itself as wisdom. But those under its influence are only manifesting a wisdom that did not come from God, but is of the earth among those who live in the flesh and are influenced by the demons. It keeps company with bitter envy, because when someone is seeking to put themselves first, anyone else who moves ahead of them makes them feel very uncomfortable with a sense of both jealousy and envy.

*Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and SELF-SEEKING in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and SELF-SEEKING exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. James 3:13-18*

As we look at the word, how it developed, and what it accomplishes we will be better able to understand it. From the first definition, we see that it is an ambition that keeps company with selfishness and rivalry. It seeks to win followers who will back them when rivalry arises. This is what led to the divisions and factious parties in the church at Corinth.

*erithia* (or —*eia*) ... **denotes "ambition, self-seeking, rivalry," self-will being an underlying idea in the word; hence it denotes "party-making." It is derived, not from *eris*, "strife," but from *erithos*, "a hireling"; hence the meaning of "seeking to win followers," "factions,"** so rendered in the RV of 2 Cor 12:20, KJV, "strifes"; not improbably the meaning here is **rivalries, or base ambitions** (all the other words in the list express abstract ideas rather than factions); Gal 5:20 (ditto); Phil 1:17 (RV; KJV, v. 16, "contention"); 2:3 (KJV, "strife"); James 3:14,16 (ditto); in Rom 2:8 it is translated as an adjective, "factious" (KJV, "contentious"). The order "strife, jealousy, wrath, faction," is the same in 2 Cor 12:20 and Gal 5:20. "Faction" is the fruit of jealousy. Cf. the synonymous adjective *hairetikos*, Titus 3:10, causing division (marg., "factious"), not necessarily "heretical," in the sense of holding false doctrine. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2052)

The second definition brings out the root meaning is working for hire, or a day worker. In and of itself this is not a bad word, but it can lead to those who work to get paid, but have no care or pride in their work because they are only working for a day and for the money of that day. This led to the word taking on the idea of “*self-interest*” or “*mercenary interest*.” Thus it came to mean someone, who working within a group does not have the best interests of the group or a desire to reach the goal, but only to put themselves forward as being the best and thus, all the work they are doing is not being done for the purpose of the group, but only to bring about their own selfish ends.

*eritheia*, fem. noun from *eritheúō* (n.f.), **to work for hire, usually in the mid. voice, used in a bad sense of those who seek only their own. Contention, strife, rivalry. It represents a motive of self-interest, mercenary interest** (Phil 1:16; 2:3). It also meant **canvassing for public office, scheming**. (Rom 2:8; 2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20; James 3:14,16.) (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2052)

This third definition brings out the additional thoughts of those who are striving as the rest, but their striving is not for the good of the whole, but only for the good of themselves. In the civic oath, it is denied: “*I will not ... for personal reasons.*” Never will any action be done, not because it is right, but because it will bring benefits. When the police arrest not because the person is an evil doer, but because it will bring them some gain, they arrest the innocent. Pilate was acting under this emotion when he washed his hands of Jesus even though he knew he was innocent. When our actions seek to influence others, not because it is the truth or because it is right. It might be wrong, but if it results in advantage and it done anyway, that is selfish ambition, self-seeking and faction.

*eritheia* ... 2. The origin of this rare word, which is attested before the NT only in Aristotle Pol. v.3.1302 b.4; 1303 a.14, in the sense of **selfish striving for advantage in a group**, is obscure. ... *eritheia* ... Aristotle ... “**here are those who procure office by illegal manipulation**, and therefore *eritheia* is their attitude, i.e., not so much ambitus as action, but the personal manner connected with it ... The adjective is used in the same sense in the **civic oath of the Itanians...** “**I will not on any pretext bring a charge of failure to keep civic law against any citizen for personal reasons.**” ... **the crucial point of the oath, defines such charges as unobjective and self-seeking.... denotes an attempt to influence others in one’s own interests.** ... He thus demands that **leaders should be non-contentious and without personal ambition.** ... *eritheia* is thus the attitude of self-seekers, harlots etc., i.e., those who, demeaning themselves and their cause, are busy and active in their own interests, seeking their own gain or advantage. (Kittel, TDWNT NT:2754)

Looking at the company it keeps, makes it clear that it is very corrosive and destructive. It works in the midst of, either caused by or creating contention, jealousy, anger, gossip on the one side and hatred, dissensions, and heresies on the other.

*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, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;** 2 Cor 12:20-21*

*19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, **hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, SELFISH AMBITIONS, dissensions, heresies,** 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal 5:19-21*

We see it in its infancy in the apostles on the road to Capernaum. Jesus made it clear there is not place for it in His kingdom.

*Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, “**What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?**” 34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “**If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.**” Mk. 9:33-35*

Within this passage we see the cause and the solution or the diagnosis and the cure. These men were not as interested in the cause of Christ as they were in the positions they could gain by being a part of it. They were already jockeying and posturing to see who would come out on top. When two of them sought to move on their own selfish ambition, the others in the grip of the same emotions became indignant and angry. Not because they knew it was wrong, but because they too wanted that position and were angry that these men had moved first. This is why jealousy, envy, and contentions arise.

*37 They said to Him, “**Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.**” ... 40 to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.” ... 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. Mk. 10:37-41*

Jesus then sat them down and again explained what Paul was speaking about to the Philippian. In earthly kingdoms, exactly what the apostles sought occurred. The strong and powerful take control and expect obedience and respect from those who are weaker. But it can’t be like that in Jesus kingdom because it mirrors heaven and God’s will. Jesus Himself had none of this emotion. He came to serve and to give His life. No self-seeking or selfish ambition. The needs of others were placed above His own.

*But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that **those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.** 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become **great among you shall be your servant.** 44 And whoever of you desires to be **first shall be slave of all.** 45 For even **the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,***

**and to give His life a ransom for many." Mark 10:42-45**

As Jesus contrasted what the Jews had done to the priesthood and the teaching of the law was evil because it was filled with selfish ambition and the desire to be the first, wanting the highest respect and the best of everything. All that they did was done to better themselves.

*But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' Mt. 23:5-12*

There must not be any of this in His kingdom and church. The saving of souls and the service to God must be the highest motives and self-interest must be removed.

*But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Mt. 23:5-11*

The contrast is clear. But because it is only seen in motivation, each must recognize it for themselves. If any of our motives arise from the desire show others our greatness or if anything we do is not for the good of others, but using of others to better ourselves, then we are factious. When everything we in our service to God, easily sacrifices our own needs and desires sacrificed for others then we are sincere and have the mind of Christ.

*I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. 2Cor. 12:14-15*

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 2Cor. 8:9*

**or through conceit (vain glory – ASV)**

What becomes evident from the meaning of this word is that those who are in its grips cannot see it clearly. That is the benefit of carefully considering this term and searching our own heart to be certain it is not lurking there, hiding under misconceptions and folly. While “*vain glory*” is the direct translation, the meaning is a little more complex. Even conceit doesn't completely capture it, leading other translations to add “*vain conceit*,” or “*empty conceit*.” This is the Christian who takes great pride in things that have no basis or justification to be proud of. Those who consider themselves to be superior and look down on those who do not possess what they do.

kenodoxia from *kenos*, “*vain, empty*,” *doxa*, “*glory*,” is used in Phil 2:3. (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2754)

*kenodoxia ... a state of pride which is without basis or justification - 'empty pride, cheap pride, vain pride.'* '(do) nothing from selfish ambition or from empty pride' Phil 2:3. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2754)

*kenodoxia* a. ‘**Delusion**,’ a favourite word of Epicurus, ... b. ‘**Boasting**,’ ‘**vainglory**,’ ... Sense a. is not found in the NT, though it is common in the post-apostolic fathers: ... Sense b. occurs at Phil 2:3: (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:2754)

Vainglory and empty conceit are found in those who take pride and gain self-esteem in the great worldly wisdom of higher education, the abilities of might that lead to greatness in professional sports or the Olympics, or the great wealth that brings a sense of superiority over those who are poor. God warned everyone not to do this, but it is so deceptive that many are still in its grips even in the church.

*Thus saith Jehovah, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he hath understanding, and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah who exerciseth lovingkindness, justice and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah. (Jer. 9:23-24).*

Vainglory is empty pride. It is the feeling of someone who thinks they are very special, or that they are a cut above others when they are not. The truth is deflating and humbling.

*that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. 7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 1Cor. 4:6-7*

If we are mighty or intelligent, it is only because we were born or given the opportunity to gain these abilities. If we have wealth, it is only because “*God gave you the power to get wealth.*” God revealed the progression of how wealth leads to vainglory.

*you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.' 18 "And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, Deut. 8:17-18*

Those who feel superior because of their wealth are filled with vain glory because it was only because God created the heavens and the earth with precious things. Because He made man in His image and likeness, giving him the mind and abilities to make wealth. Those who forget it was God are filled with the vainglory of thinking they did it themselves.

There are many things that bring vainglory into our hearts. Intelligence, beauty, athletic prowess, popularity, fame, and political power are just a few. But no matter what it is that makes us feel or makes us want to be superior over others is just a vain illusion. Using God's gifts to make us feel

important is the height of vainglory. The only thing Christians can take glory in is that we have obeyed the Gospel and God has made us His children.

Every place where groups gather these problems will follow. When we were in school, there were those who thought they were better than others because of vain glory. In the home, workplace, government, clubs, teams, and even churches.

In the context here, anything that would keep a Christian from viewing himself as a servant to others would be empty pride and groundless self-esteem. When one is too good to take the same position Christ had while on the earth has a very distorted view of themselves.

### but in lowliness of mind

“*Lowliness of mind*” is the fruit of true understanding. Once we truly understand that there is nothing in our possession that is not a gift from God and we are only stewards of the gifts we have been given true humility and lowliness of mind will be the natural fruit. This is one of those words that the Holy Spirit took out of the worthless nature that the world thought of it and placed it as one of the great strengths and gems of greatness it actually possessed. The history of this word is full of sorrow and deprivation. Only slaves, low born citizens and the poor and destitute were considered to possess not this virtue, but this curse. If you were lowly you were weak, poor, insignificant and of little worth to your culture and society. Only those born to the right parents had the ability to rise above this curse of lowliness.

*tapeinos, tapeinoo, tapeinosis, tapeinophon, tapeinophrosune ... tapeinos ... a. "Lowly," "mean," "insignificant," "weak," "poor," e.g., of the trivial power or significance of a city or country, state or statesman, ... man, people, or state may be small and insignificant intrinsically, but it may also be made lowly, e.g., by the military force and superior power of others, ....* With respect to the spiritual and moral state of man *tapeinos* means "lowly," "servile," often with other terms which show that *tapeinos* is used disparagingly. **For the aristocratic culture of ancient Greece the worth of a man was determined by his parentage. A noble mind and virtue were inherited and could not be acquired ... tapeinos expresses both the low estate of the man who lives in poor and petty relations, esp. the slave, and also the base disposition resulting therefrom.** The ref. is not to the ethically negative characteristic of craftiness and falsehood nor to subjection to impulses but rather to **the obsequiousness of the servant due to social status.** According to Hom. Od., 17, 322 f. **all-seeing Zeus robs a man of half his worth arete when he brings close to him the day of servitude. This basic thought persists in spite of Sophist-Socratic criticism of aristocratic culture. ... According to Aristotle, tapeinoi... can exercise only menial dominion.** Of the group the adjective *tapeinos* occurs 8 times in the NT, *tapeinoo* 14 times, *tapeinosis* ... 4, *tapeinophrosune* 7 and *tapeinophon* once. ... In Phil 2:3 Paul requires ***tapeinofrosune* from the community. Not "self-seeking" eritheia nor "vainglorious boasting" kenodoxia as self-glory should control their mutual relations but tapeinofrosune.** The opposite gives this the sense of unselfishness. The two sentences which follow show that it is **the resolution to subject oneself to others and to be more concerned about their welfare than one's own, ...** (Kittel, TDWNT, [NT:5012; NT:5013; NT:5014

*tapeinophrosune ...* The work for which Christ's Gospel came into the world was no less than **to put down the mighty from their seat, and to exalt the humble and meek.** It was then only in accordance with this its mission that it should **dethrone the heathen virtue megalopsuchia, and set up the despised Christian grace tapeinophrosune in its room, stripping that of the honour it had unjustly assumed, delivering this from the dishonour which as unjustly had clung to it hitherto;** and in this direction advancing so far that a Christian writer has called this last not merely a grace, but the casket or treasure house in which all other graces are contained... And indeed not the grace only, but **the very word tapeinophrosune is itself a fruit of the Gospel; no Greek writer employed it before the Christian era, nor, apart from the influence of Christian writers, after.** In the Septuagint *tapeinophon* occurs once (Prov 29:23) and *tapeinophronein* as often (Ps 130:2); both words being used in honour. ... the use by heathen writers of *tapeinos, tapeinotes,* and other words of this family, shows plainly how they would have employed *tapeinophrosune,* had they thought good to allow it. The instances are few and exceptional in which *tapeinos* signifies anything for them which is not groveling, slavish, and mean-spirited. .... But it may be objected, how does this account of Christian *tapeinophrosune,* as springing out of and resting on the sense of unworthiness, agree with the fact that the sinless Lord laid claim to this grace, and said, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (*tapeinos* ... Matt 11:29)? The answer is, that **for the sinner tapeinofrosune, involves the confession of sin, inasmuch as it involves the confession of his true condition;** while yet for the unfallen creature the grace itself as truly exists, involving for such the acknowledgment not of sinfulness, which would be untrue, but of creatureliness, of absolute dependence, of having nothing, but receiving all things of God. And thus the grace of humility belongs to the highest angel before the throne, being as he is a creature, yea, even to the Lord of Glory Himself. In his human nature He must be the pattern of all humility, of all creaturely dependence; and it is only as a man that Christ thus claims to be *tapeinos:* his human life was a constant living on the fulness of his Father's love; He evermore, as man, took the place which beseeemed the creature in the presence of its Creator. (Trench's NT Synonyms 5012)

The glory awarded to those in the world for such empty qualities as birth, intelligence, wealth or fame will crumble into dust at the moment of death. They were only an illusion created by this world. True glory, the glory that comes from God requires the very thing the world scorns. Jesus came to reveal it in its glory as will be revealed in the next few verses. Paul's words are very helpful to get our bearings and understand exactly where this humility and lowliness of mind originates.

*For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.... Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: Rom. 12:3-5*

*For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. 1Cor. 7:7*

For **who makes you differ** from another? And **what do you have that you did not receive?** Now **if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?** 1Cor. 4:6-7

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ 1Pet 4:10-11

Since nothing we have is our own, a sober evaluation reveals that God dealt each one the abilities and qualities by which they can measure their faith (faith without words is dead). We can praise God that he has given us such gifts, but to use the gifts God has given to us as a means for pride and a feeling of superiority is not thinking soberly. Each must soberly evaluate the gifts and then use them for the good of all. When we see all our abilities as a special gift from God to be used in His kingdom to bless others we will gain this lowliness of mind.

We see the power and majesty of this lowliness when Jesus did a demeaning task for each of the apostles (because they all thought themselves too good to lower themselves in the presence of the other apostles). Jesus knew He was about to become King of kings and Lord of lords. He knew that all authority would be given to Him. He knew he was the word with God and was God. Yet none of these things stopped Him from doing what needed to be done in order to serve and help His apostles.

Jesus, **knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,** 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, **took a towel and girded Himself.** 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and **began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.** Jn. 13:3-6

He loved the apostles, He had the ability to wash their feet and their feet needed to be washed. He did not allow all the other things to hinder Him from doing what others considered the work of a slave. His own lowliness of mind led Him to do what was needed. After He washed their feet, He directed their minds to the lessons He wanted them (and us) to learn.

So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, **"Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.** Jn. 13:12-17

The Lessons are simple and clear.

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|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Jesus is the Son of God, the teacher and Lord. No one is greater than He.</li><li>2. He did a lowly task to prove that doing lowly things does not lessen the one who does them.</li><li>3. This example proves that we ought to do lowly tasks regardless of how great we think we are.</li><li>4. If we still think such things are beneath us, do we think we are greater than Jesus?</li><li>5. First we learn these things and then: "if we know them, we are only blessed if we do them.</li></ol> |
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No one has gifts and abilities that are so great that they expect others to do the hard things. Instead, in lowliness of mind we learn how to see everyone as "better" than ourselves.

### **each counting other better than himself**

There is a reciprocity to lowliness of mind. Each Christian must think this of all other Christians. What I feel toward you, you feel toward me. Whether the most mature like the apostle Paul or the weakest member in the church, all must cultivate an attitude that sees the one in need as being more important than ourselves.

*allēlōn...* 1. The reciprocal pronoun *allēlōn*... is formed by the doubling of the stem *allo-* (*allos*). It originally means one to the other(s) ... thus it corresponds to Eng. **each other** ... 2. The understanding of *allēlōn*... in the NT is unproblematic; **the translation each other or mutually is sufficient for every instance.** ... is used in connection with groups of persons who are in some way peers and with reference to relationships..." (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:240)

"*allelon...* **one another; reciprocally, mutually...**" (Thayer's, Greek Lexicon, NT: 240)

Each Christian is to count, esteem, consider every other Christian as better. In this case, it is not a conclusion based "on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts." This is not something we simply believe and act upon without due consideration of the fact. It is a fact based on Jesus Himself. There is no opinion allowed or involved.

"*hegeomai...* 2. i.q. **to consider, deem, account, think...**" *hegeomai* and *nomizo* denote a belief resting not on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts; *dokeo* and *oiomai*, on the other hand, describe a subjective judgment growing out of inclination or a view of facts in their relation to us. *hegeomai* denotes a more deliberate and careful judgment than *nomizo*; *oiomai*, a subjective judgment which has feeling rather than thought (*dokeo*) for its ground. (Cf. Schmidt, chapter 17.)..." (Thayer, p. 276; 2233)

*hégēomai*, mid. deponent of *ágō* (71), to lead. To lead or go before, go first, lead the way. ... (I) To be a leader,

chief, ... Spoken generally of those who have influence and authority ... Metaphorically, **to lead out before the mind, i.e., to view, regard, esteem, count, reckon...** of persons, **to hold or esteem an individual in a particular light** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2233)

What they are to mutually and reciprocally consider as a fact is that every other Christian is “*better*.” The other use in this letter makes it clear that he is speaking of respect, honor and value.

*huperechō* a: to **be of surpassing or exceptional value** - 'to be **exceptionally valuable, to surpass in value, to be better**.' ... 'I consider everything to be loss for the sake of that which is of surpassing value, namely, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord' Phil 3:8; ... 'but in humility considering others as better than yourselves' Phil 2:3. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5242)

*huperecho* from Homer down; transitive, 1. **to have or hold over** one 2. intransitive, **to stand out, rise above, overtop** ... metaphorically, a. **to be above, be superior in rank, authority, power.** ... (A. V. as *supreme*), 1 Peter 2:13; ... of magistrates (A. V. *higher powers*), Romans 13:1 substantively, *the prominent men, rulers, ... of kings...* b. **to excel, to be superior.** ... *better than* ... (Thayer, p. ;5242)

This is exactly what Jesus sought to help the apostles see.

*"If anyone **desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.**" Mk. 9:35*

*but **whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.** 44 And whoever of you **desires to be first shall be slave of all.** 45 For even **the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,** Mk. 10:43-45*

*But **he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.** 12 And **whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.** Mt. 23:11-12*

Those who esteem others better than himself see themselves as last of all, servant of all, slave of all, and their servant. When we see the needs of others through the eyes of a slave, we are close to what lowliness of mind will accomplish. Everyone else in the congregation is better and therefore each disciple is a slave to every other disciple. The worth of everyone is not based on abilities or any other consideration. It is based on *agape-love* where the needs of others become as important or even more important than our own. Learning to look at others them as being worth our efforts and sacrifices.

Paul himself manifested this exact attitude everywhere he preached.

*In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive.** Acts 20:35*

## Phil 2:4-8

Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Phil. 2:1-4

### **4. not looking each of you to his own things,**

The extent of this service now moves to our inner considerations and calculations. Paul bids us first consider how we focus and consider our own needs. When it comes to what we need, “looking” is a broad term taking in everything necessary to acquire the information along with the concern that after acquiring it we are concerned enough to do something about it.

*skopeō* and *skopeomai* ... -to look at or after a thing: to behold, contemplate, ... 2. metaph. to look to, consider, examine, ... 3. to look out for, ... considering and being considered, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4648)

*skopeō* c: to exert effort in continually acquiring information regarding some matter, with the implication of concern as to how to respond appropriately - 'to be aware of, to be concerned about, to consider.' ... 'each of you should be continually concerned about not only your own interests, but also the interests of others' Phil 2:4. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:4648)

This is our baseline. We assess how we look out for our own needs. Then, as last of all and servant of all, we begin to look at the needs of others with the intent to give to them exactly what we would want when considering our own needs.

This is exactly what Jesus sought from His disciples. After considering what we want others to do for us, we then do to them.

Therefore, **whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them**, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Mt. 7:12

And **just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise**. Lk. 6:31

Thus the lowly in mind begin broadening out their circle of concern. What began in infancy as a concern only for our own needs soon broadened to our family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. Now, the humble and those seeking greatness in the kingdom seek to broaden that concern to all our brethren and as we have opportunity to everyone else

Therefore, **as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith**. Gal. 6:10

When others have needs, we seek to be as concerned for their needs as we do for our own. Far from looking at our abilities as the means to gain control and power over others to bring them to serve us, we consider our gifts as the means to serve them. Paul said much the same thing to the Romans.

**Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.** Rom. 12:10-19

### **but each of you also to the things of others.**

Using a pronoun that once again speaks of distribution between individual parts that make up a whole, the Spirit continues to demand a mutual fulfillment of this command. As one Christian is looking out for the needs of others so also all other Christians are looking out for his interests. Each and every one separately and individually looking out for every other one separately and individually.

*hekastōs*... **each one of a totality in a distributive sense - 'each.'** (Lou & Nida, NT: 1538)

*hekastōs* each (one) 1. This pronoun appears ca. 80 times in the NT.... 2. *hekastōs* refers to **individual parts of a whole**, as comparison with *pas* shows. ... it **refers to "any and every..."** (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1538)

*hékastos*, from *hékas* (n.f.), separate. Each, every one, of any number separately. (I) Generally, as in Matt 16:27, "to each one separately" ... "each one of them" ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary NT:1538)

The needs of others take the proper position in our minds. It must become a habitual thing for us to be as concerned for how our brethren are doing with the burdens they are struggling with, and how we can help them bear them, as it is for us to bear and carry our own.

**Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.** Gal. 6:3.

The ideals and high standards which Paul has just put forth to the brethren he loves at Philippi are among the greatest and highest which Christianity places upon its members. It is difficult to place oneself in such a position and to demean and lower oneself as it is often necessary to do when one deals with and serves weaker brethren.

We can pick this up in Rom 14 and 1Cor. 8-10

We who are strong have an obligation to **bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.** 2 Let **each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.** Rom 15:1-2

For though I am free from all men, **I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;** 20 and to the Jews **I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews;** to those who are under the law, **as under the law,** that I might win those who are under the law; 21 to those who are without law, **as without law** (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; **22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.** 1Cor. 9:19-23

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, **33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.** 1Cor. 10:31-33

## 5. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Everything that has been commanded above is now summed up and broadened by this new command. First, we must learn the mind of Christ. We must assess this passage and all the other passages and learn as many facts as we can about what was in Christ Jesus' mind. We must learn His underlying dispositions and attitudes so we can think in that same particular manner.

*phronéō* ... From *phrēn* (5424), mind. **To think, have a mindset, be minded.** The activity represented by this word involves **the will, affections, and conscience.** ... (I) Generally, to **be of an opinion.** ... To think, to sense mentally, ... (B) To be mindful of, to be devoted to ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5426)

*phronéō* **think, reflect; set one's mind on** ... occurs 26 times in the NT: Paul uses this word with striking frequency and usually expresses with it **single-minded commitment to something** and the conditions for such commitment. ... **all of a person's thoughts and aspirations.** ... (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5426)

*phroneo* a: (derivative of the base *phron* 'thoughtful planning,' ...) to **employ one's faculty for thoughtful planning, with emphasis upon the underlying disposition or attitude - 'to have an attitude, to think in a particular manner.'** ... 'the attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had' Phil 2:5...." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5426)

The specific thing here is that Jesus had something no one else had that could set Him above all others. Before He came, He existed in the form of God and was equal to God. That dwarfs anything any man might have that makes him feel he is so important, he should not have to put others interests on the same level as his own. It is exactly the same thing that was in Jesus mind before He washed the disciple's feet. He knew who He was, knew of His power and majesty of 0 His abilities and knowledge. Yet in His mind, these things were to bless and benefit others,..

0 not subjugate and use them for His own ends.

Jesus, knowing that **the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,** 4 rose from supper and **laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.** Jn. 13:3-4

We see this mind throughout His life as He always set aside His own needs in order to help and bless others.

Now we have a standard upon which we must be likeminded and of the same mind. All that was said of being likeminded and having one mind is now drawn into the mind of Christ. His attitudes and emotions, His plans and goals, His thoughts and purposes while in heaven contemplating coming to this earth, and all that occurred while He lived and died on the earth are now set forth as the pattern which all children of God should seek to place into their own minds. This is the goal of the gospel. Jesus was the perfect example of God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven. All must seek to imitate him. Though using different words in a slightly different context, Paul told the Ephesians and the Romans the same thing.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, **He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.** Rom. 8:28-29

till we all come to the unity of the faith and **of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;** 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, **may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ —** Eph. 4:13-16

## 6. who, existing

Many of the words in the next few passages must be taken apart, examined and scrutinized closely. Some of the greatest revelations about Jesus are revealed here. Our limitations are simple and clear. We are not in any position to go beyond what is written here. If we go too far or if we do not go far enough, we are no longer in the truth. Paul's words to the Corinthians are our only hope of finding our parameters.

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For **the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.** 11 Now **we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.** 13 **These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.** 1Cor. 2:12-13

how that **by revelation He made known to me the mystery** (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which,

when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), Eph. 3:3-4

From these passages, we learn that the Holy Spirit has revealed the deep things of God with words that they Holy Spirit teaches. When we read, we can have the same understanding as the apostles and prophets who revealed them.

It is the words, chosen by the Holy Spirit, that reveal the deep things of God. In order to understand difficult passages like this one, the student must do two things. Learn as much as possible about the meaning of words the Holy Spirit chose and then consider whether the meaning of those words has been modified by looking at all the other Scriptures that use it.

Battles have been fought over this passage. The words spoken here threatened to destroy the stability of the Roman Empire in the days of Constantine. Controversies over this term have divided churches over the centuries. This controversy led to the Nicene Counsel and the Nicene Creed. It has divided theologians throughout the centuries.

Because of all these things, great caution, careful consideration of definitions and step by step comparisons with other Scriptures will be done to keep us safely within the limitations of the Scriptures.

The term the Holy Spirit chose to describe Christ's existence can mean anything from simple existence as a verb of being, or it can infer Jesus' preexistence and continued existence as God (Divine). It is far more than a verb of being. It is made up of two terms that can mean nothing more than existence or far more than simple existence.

*hyparchō* primarily, "to make a beginning" (*hupo*, "under," *arche*, "a beginning"), denotes "to be, to be in existence," involving an "existence" or condition both previous to the circumstances mentioned and continuing after it. This is important in Phil 2:6, concerning the deity of Christ. The phrase "being (existing) in the form (*morphe*, the essential and specific form and character) of God," carries with it the two facts of the antecedent Godhood of Christ, previous to His incarnation, and the continuance of His Godhood at and after the event of His Birth (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, NT:5225),

"*huparcho* ... to **begin, make a beginning**, ... 2. ... to make a beginning of, ... 3. ... to **begin doing**, ... 4. ... a beginning of it had been made, B. **to begin to be, come into being, arise, spring up**, 2. **to be in existence, to be there, to be ready**, 3. simply **to be**, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon NT 5225).

The Holy Spirit left no doubt that before he became man, He was with God and was God. John the Baptist testified that Jesus was before me. Jesus asked God to restore the glory He possessed with Him before the world was.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. ... 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" Jn. 1:1-15*

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

The strongest proof of Jesus preexistence as the Word was His role in the creation. He laid the foundation of the earth, the heavens are the work of His hands, all things were made through Him and without Him, nothing that was made was made. By Him all things that are in heaven and earth were created. All things were created through Him and for Him. Finally, He is before all things. Thus there can be no doubt that existing in the form of God demanded both a preexistent and in the present state.

*And: "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, Heb. 1:1-12*

*3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ... 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, Jn. 1:3, 10*

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. Col. 1:15-17*

Thus, throughout all eternity Jesus was existing. He has no beginning and no end. He used the same terms for eternity as God did when speaking to Moses at the bush.

*Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Ex. 3:13-15*

*Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." Jn. 8:57-58*

When God used "I AM" He expected us to understand He was speaking of His eternal and unchanging existence and unchangeable nature. No matter what happens God is still the "I AM" Let the world begin and God is I AM, let the world end and God still is I AM, no matter what

happens or does not happens, God is the I AM.

**Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. Ps 90:2**

When Jesus used the same term, we can infer that He meant the same thing. Yet it is more than a simple inference since God tells us exactly what it means. While the heavens and the earth will grow old and perish, Jesus as the Word will remain. Though they will change, Jesus will remain the same.

**8 But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; ...10 And: "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, Heb 1:1-12**

### in the form of God,

Jesus had existed in the form of God throughout all eternity. An existence that began prior to leaving heaven to take the form of a servant. Jesus has always existed in the form of God. What does form add to our understanding of His nature and resemblance to God. There are several words that could be used. This one takes not only His visible appearance, but also the entirety of form and substance. The other two terms that could have been used are the form as it is seen (*idea*), or the outward form alone (*schema*). It is the entirety of the form and the substance.

*morphé* form, **visible appearance** ... 1. *morphé* appears only 3 times in the NT (Mark 16:12; Phil 2:6,7) The NT contains only a small sample of the wide range of meanings ... in classical and Hellenistic Greek ("shape, something known by the senses, esp. physical appearance, form, beauty, loveliness, outward form of appearance,..." Exegetical Dictionary NT:3444)

*mophé* means a. "**form**," "**external appearance**." Of men, ... Of plants or their leaves or buds as distinctive forms, ... Of animals,... But also of things and abstract ideas, ... **figure**," "beauty," "**grace of form**": ... *morphe*, the form proper to a being, is not the same as *eidos*, his total visible appearance. *eidos (idea)* denotes the appearance of the kind, what is common to the individuals, while *mophé* is the individual form of appearance. To *eidos (idea)* clings the idea of what may be perceived and known by others, but *mophé* indicates what is objectively there. *morphé* differs from *schema* inasmuch as it indicates the individual appearance as it is, while *schema* refers to its outward representation. *mophé* is the whole (of the body etc.) in and for itself, while *schema* is what belongs or has ref. to the whole (form, outward characteristics, manner of appearance etc.), ..." (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:3444)

*morphé* [3444], *schéma* [4976], *idea* [2397]. ... These words are none of them of frequent recurrence in the N. T., *morphé* occurring there only twice; (Mark 16:12; Phil 2:6) *schéma* not oftener (1Cor 7:31; Phil 2:8); and *idea* only once (Matt 28:3). ... **morphé** is 'form,' **schéma** is 'fashion,' **idea**, 'appearance,' ... **The first two, which occur not unfrequently together** (Plutarch, Symp. viii. 2. 3), are **objective; for the 'form' and the 'fashion' of a thing would exist, were it alone in the universe, and whether there were any to behold it or no.** ... **idea = *eidos*, John 5:37** is subjective, the appearance of a thing implying some to whom this appearance is made; there must needs be a seer before there can be a seen. ... We may best study the distinction between *morphé* and *schéma*, and at the same time estimate its importance, by aid of that great doctrinal passage (Phil 2:6-8), in which St. Paul speaks of the **Eternal Word before his Incarnation as subsisting "in the form of God" ... as assuming at his Incarnation "the form of a servant" *morphé doulou labōn*), and after his Incarnation and during his walk upon earth as "being found in fashion as a man" (*schéma eureskeis hō anthrōpos*). ... He was by men found in fashion as a man, the *schéma* here signifying his whole outward presentation, ... **In none of these did there appear any difference between Him and the other children of men.** ... The distinction between them comes out very clearly in the compound verbs *metaschématizein* and *metamorphoun*. Thus if I were to change a Dutch garden into an Italian, this would be *metaschématizōs*; but if I were to transform a garden into something wholly different, as into a city, this would be *metamorphōsis* ... How fine and subtle is the variation of words at Rom 12:2; though 'conformed' and 'transformed' in our Translation have failed adequately to represent it. 'Do not fall in,' says the Apostle, 'with the **fleeting fashions of this world, nor be yourselves fashioned to them (*mé suschématizesthe*), but undergo a deep abiding change (*alla metamorphousthe*) by the renewing of your mind, such as the Spirit of God alone can work in you' ... At the resurrection Christ shall transfigure (*metaschmatisei*) the bodies of his saints (Phil 3:21; cf. 1 Cor 15:53); ... The butterfly, prophetic type of man's resurrection, is immeasurably more beautiful than the grub, yet has been duly unfolded from it; but when Proteus transforms himself into a flame, a wild beast, a running stream (Virgil, Georg. iv. 442), each of these disconnected with all that went before, there is here a change not of the *schéma* merely, but of the *morphé* ..." (Trench's Synonyms NT:3444)****

The essential difference can be seen in the term *metamorphosis*. The difference between the caterpillar and the butterfly take in far more than just the outward form. The entire function has also changed. Jesus existing in the form of God is simply another way to say that He is equal to God. Hebrews puts it a little differently.

**who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. 1:3**

**But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; And the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Heb. 1:8-9).**

He has all the attributes of the Godhead. He is all powerful, all knowing, and everywhere present. He is eternal, and is worshiped by men and by angels as God without rebuking them.

**But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."**  
Heb. 1:6

And Thomas answered and said to Him, **"My Lord and my God!"** 29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, **because you have seen Me, you have believed.** Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jn. 20:28-29

### **counted (consider - NKJV, regard - NAS) not the being on an equality with God**

Since the Holy Spirit wants us to have the mind of Christ, He begins to reveal to us what was in His mind, prior to leaving heaven and coming to earth. This is a specific term describing not just feelings and thinking, but the basis and means by which those thoughts were brought into being. This word is used to *"denote a belief resting not on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts."* There is a deliberate and careful assessment made before the conclusion is drawn.

*"hegeomai... 2. i.q. to consider, deem, account, think..." hegeomai and nomizo denote a belief resting not on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts. dokeo and oiomai, on the other hand, describe a subjective judgment growing out of inclination or a view of facts in their relation to us. hegeomai denotes a more deliberate and careful judgment than nomizo; oiomai, a subjective judgment which has feeling rather than thought (dokeo) for its ground..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:2233)*

Throughout all eternity, that the Word was equal to God was evident to all. What the basis of those conclusions rested upon is not revealed, but that this was the only logical conclusion that could be drawn is revealed. How far are we to carry the idea of equality? This is a thorny question that can only be answered with the definition of the word the Holy Spirit chose and the other things He has revealed about it. This equality is of size, number, value force, or characteristics.

*isos, isotés, isotimos ... 1. Quantitative Equality. a. The equality expressed by isos and its derivatives is primarily an equality of size or number, or perhaps of value or force, though not so much in a qualitative sense, for which originally homoios and its cognates are mostly used ... The distinction and relationship of the two words may be seen in Hom. Il., 187: ... "to raise the claim to equality with me, and to regard himself as like in essence," ... isos is accordingly used to denote equal sums of money, or payments, or pieces, or an equal voice, or equal lengths of space or time, or equal shares, or other equal quantities. (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:2470)*

*isos ... pertaining to that which is equal, either in number, size, quality, or characteristics - 'equal, equivalent, same.' 'the length and breadth and height of it are the same' Rev 21:16; ../ 'making himself equal with God' John 5:18. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2470)*

His entire existence in heaven had been one of equality. Jesus held at the same time the outward form and the inward essence of God. This is what He had while he dwelt in eternal existence by the side of the great God and Creator of the universe. All we have to elaborate on this equality are those passages that speak of the creation. God spoke, but the Word took the words that were spoken, knew exactly what God meant by them and then by His own power and wisdom did exactly what God sought. This is an equality of knowledge and power. There is also an equality in eternity for they are both *"I AM."*

This equality however is not unlimited. The Holy Spirit made it clear as Jesus did while on this earth that the will and authority of God are higher than His.

*Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. 1Cor. 15:24-28*

This helps us to understand the distinction that Paul had made earlier in the book of Corinthians.

*For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), 6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. 1Cor. 8:5-6*

This is a difficult distinction to draw, but leads us to understand that we are not to see Jesus as God. We are to see the Father as God and Jesus as Lord and Mediator.

*one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph. 4:5-6*

*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, 1Tim. 2:5-6*

Beyond this, we dare not go. We have no more revelation and to go beyond this is to enter into speculation and human wisdom.

*The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. Deut. 29:29*

## robbery to be equal with God / equality with God a thing to be grasped

being in the form of God, existing in the form of God, (ASV) although He existed in the form of God, though he was in the form of God,	did not consider it counted not did not regard did not count	<b>robbery</b> to be equal with God, (NKJV) being on an equality with God a thing to be <b>grasped</b> , equality with God a thing to be <b>grasped</b> , (NASU) equality with God a thing to be <b>grasped</b> , (ESV)
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The reason for the difference in the translation of the KJV and all the other translations is based entirely the translation of the verb. The verb can mean both “*the act of seizing or grasping*” or “*robbery*.” The sense is similar except in perspective. When still in one’s possession, it is grasped and held, when it is taken away and no longer in possession, it is robbery or theft.

“*harpagmos*,... **the act of seizing, robbery**,...a thing seized or to be seized, booty...to deem anything a prize-- a thing to be seized upon or to be held fast, retained” Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, NT:725)

*harpagmos* ... akin to *harpazo*, “to seize, carry off by force,” is found in Phil 2:6, “(counted it not) a prize.” RV (marg., “a thing to be grasped”), KJV, “(thought it not) robbery”; it may have two meanings, (a) in the active sense, “the act of seizing, robbery,” a meaning in accordance with a rule connected with its formation, (b) in the passive sense, “a thing held as a prize.” Assuming, as we now may, that the equality was something which Christ possessed prior to His Incarnation, and then for a time resigned we have... to choose between two meanings of the word *harpagmos* (1) with the active sense ‘robbery’ or ‘usurpation’ we get the following meaning: ‘Who because He was subsisting in the essential form of God, did not regard it as any usurpation that He was on an equality of glory and majesty with God, but yet emptied Himself of that coequal glory....’ (2) The passive sense gives a different meaning to the passage: “Who though He was subsisting in the essential form of God, yet did not regard His being on an equality of glory and majesty with God as a prize and a treasure to be held fast, but emptied himself thereof.” .... After reviewing the arguments pro and con Gifford takes the latter to be the right meaning, as conveying the purpose of the passage “to set forth Christ as the supreme example of humility and self-renunciation.” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:725)

Since the entire context of this passage is the mind of Christ and specifically the mind of Christ regarding “*counting others better than ourselves*,” The real point is His willingness to give it up or lose it. Jesus had dwelled throughout the long ages of eternity in the form of God. He was God and during this time he had received the honor, dignity and deference which belonged to that position.

In God’s plan, He had to give up the outward form along with all the blessings and glory that came with it. The Holy Spirit is capturing and revealing the emotions and thoughts that went through His mind. He did not think He was being robbed and He did not feel that He needed to grasp, seize or hold fast to it. Both robbery and grasping have the common thought of something precious which someone does not want to lose. Jesus did not count it a robbery of Himself when He willingly gave it up, nor did He consider it something He had to cling or hold it fast.

Instead, Jesus looked at the worth of mankind and the depths of their need, and then at His position of power, dignity and supreme greatness and then made the decision that the needs of mankind were greater and more important to Him than His own position of greatness. He did not therefore cling to this dignity and honor, he did not view himself as being robbed or cheated of it. Instead, he willingly left it all to help and serve us.

### 7. but emptied himself,

Another controversial statement with several different views. Once again we must walk cautiously keeping definitions and other Scriptures foremost in our minds. Among the major errors of Gnosticism was the proclamation that Jesus was not divine. That only a human being died on the cross. Although the definition of the word “*empty*” could be carried that far, it is countered by too many other passages to take it to that extent. He did empty himself of “*of a thing*” but not of everything.

*kenoō* ... -to empty out, drain, opposite to *pleroō* ... c. gen. to empty of a thing:-Pass. to be emptied, made or left empty, ... into the space continually left empty, ... stripped of all things, 2. to make a place empty by leaving it, desert it, ... II. metaph. to make empty, to make of no account or of no effect, N.T.:-Pass. to be or become so ...” (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2758)

*kenoō* 1. to empty, make empty: ... he laid aside equality with or the form of God (said of Christ), Phil 2:7 2. to make void i. e. deprive of force, render vain, useless, of no effect: passive, Rom 4:14; 1 Cor 1:17. 3. to make void i. e. cause a thing to be seen to be empty, hollow, false: 1 Cor 9:15; passive 2 Cor 9:3. ...” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, NT:2758)

The word does not have to be carried so far that everything is emptied and nothing is left. When Paul spoke to the Corinthians about his boasting becoming vain (empty), he spoke only of his boasting about their contribution. Not everything would be lost, only that one thing.

*for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. 3 Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; 4 lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. 2Cor. 9:2-4*

Since the Holy Spirit had spoke only of his equality with God and His form of God, it was only these two things that He emptied himself. Just like Paul’s boasting of the Corinthians would only be emptied regarding the contribution.

Several passages keep us from going any further in our understanding. It is not possible that we understand this emptying to include His Divinity or Deity. The name God gave Him while He sojourned here answers this question beyond doubt.

First, the angel speaking to Joseph revealed to Him the fulness of the prophesy given in Isa 53. He clearly states that when the virgin conceived, the one in the womb, conceived by the Holy Spirit was "God with us." This son will be called "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." When God brought the firstborn into the world, He commanded all the angels to worship Him. Thus, the "word became flesh and dwelt among us."

*But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for **that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.** 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "**Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,**" which is translated, "**God with us.**" Mt. 1:20-23*

*Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.** Isa 7:14*

***For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;** And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called **Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, **Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,** To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isa. 9:6-7*

*But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "**Let all the angels of God worship Him.**" Heb. 1:6*

Among the most powerful of all these passages is this one. Although when the word became flesh He emptied himself, it was only to enter the body God had prepared for Him. The body prepared did not alter the person who entered it.

*when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, **But a body You have prepared for Me.***

The context of Phil. 2:6-7 make it evident that what Jesus emptied himself of when He left heaven and came to earth was the form. He emptied himself of the "form of God" in order to take the "form of a servant".

*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though **he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,** 7 but **emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.** Phil 2:5-8 *ESV**

This is an exceedingly difficult concept for us to grasp. About the closest I think we can come is to consider the following passage:

*14 And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,** and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Jn. 1:14*

All of this is summed up as the great mystery of godliness.

*And without controversy **great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.** 1 Tim 3:16*

The word was God, the word became flesh, and God was manifested in the flesh. There was no loss of essence. He was still God. He still retained his deity. He simply emptied himself of the form of God. The wealth, the honor and the glory of dwelling on the right hand of God was left behind. He made himself poor in order to help us:

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor,** that you **through His poverty might become rich.** 2Cor. 8:9*

### **Phil 2:7-11**

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation (emptied Himself -ASV) taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. Phil. 2:5-8*

#### **taking the form of a servant,**

While the Word who become flesh refused to grasp or seize His equality with God, He did willingly take hold of and receive the form of a servant. Since this is a participle, He was "the taker of the form of a servant." A participle changes an action into a noun such as running to runner, eating to eater, taking to taker. Because it is an active and not a passive, participle this is something He chose to accept and take on. Since this has already been accomplished, it simply sums up that moment of 35 or more years in which He sojourned on this earth. He took on the form of a servant, and remained in that form during His entire stay on earth with the exception of the few moments at the transfiguration.

*lambánō ... To take in whatever manner. ... In the NT, to actively take, and, partially in the pass. sense, to receive, trans. ... (l) To take: (A) Particularly with the hand, followed by the acc. expressed or implied. (1)*

Generally (Matt 14:19; 25:1; 26:26,52; 27:6,30,48; Mark 9:36; Luke 22:17; John 12:3,13; 13:4,12,30; 1 Cor 11:23; Rev 5:8; 22:17) ... **Figuratively** followed by the acc., **to receive honor unto oneself** (Heb 5:4); **power** (Rev 11:17). The participle *labōn* is often used before other verbs by a species of pleonasm, i.e., using two words meaning almost the same thing in order to express the idea more completely and graphically (Matt 13:31,33; Luke 24:43; Acts 16:3; Sept.: Josh 2:4). (2) **Of taking food or drink**, with the acc. (Mark 15:23; John 19:30; Acts 9:19); used in an absolute sense (1 Tim 4:4). (3) With the meaning of to make provision for or take with (Matt 16:5,7; 25:4; John 18:3). **To take a wife** (Mark 12:19-22; Luke 20:28; Sept.: Gen. 16:21; 11:29). (4) Figuratively, **to take upon oneself, to bear, e.g., the cross** (Matt 10:38); **our sicknesses** (Matt 8:17 quoted from Isa 53:4 where ... *phērō* [5342], bring or bear, is used). (5) To take up, gather up (Matt 16:9,10 [cf. Mark 8:19,20]). Figuratively, to take the soul, as opposed to *tithēmi* (5087), to place (John 10:17,18). ... (B) **To take out from a number, to choose, to take a people out of the nations** (Acts 15:14). ... **To take up with a person**, i.e., to receive him as a friend or guest into one's house or society, equivalent to *déchomai* (1209), to accept. (1) Generally (John 6:21, "into the boat" [a.t.]; 19:27, "that disciple took her unto his own home"; 2 John 10, "receive him not into your house"). **Metaphorically of a teacher, to receive, acknowledge, embrace and follow his instructions** (John 1:12; 5:43; 13:20; 14:17); **of doctrine, to embrace, admit, e.g., the word** (Matt 13:20; Mark 4:16); **the witness** (John 3:11,32,33); **the words** (John 12:48; 17:8; 1 John 5:9). ... Figuratively in places where *lambánō* with its acc. is often equivalent to the verb corresponding to the acc. such as *archén* (746), beginning, meaning to begin (Heb 2:3); *aphormén* (874), opportunity, occasion, **to take occasion** (Rom 7:8,11); **to take courage** (Acts 28:15); **to take security** (Acts 17:9); to take *léthén* (3024), forgetfulness, meaning to forget (2 Peter 1:9). **In Phil 2:7, morphén (3444), form, nature, meaning to take the likeness of someone....**" (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2983)

*lambanō* ... **grasp, seize, take hold of, take; attain; take up; receive ... is used 260 times in the NT** ... The verb *lambanō* is attested in Greek literature from the time of Hesiod and Homer, in inscriptions (BAGD), and in papyri. **It signifies the range of meaning, "grasp, take, seize," either peacefully or violently.** ... It is used fig. of mental states and illnesses (e.g., seized by anger, fever: Herodotus, Hippocrates) as well as for mental grasping and conceiving (Pindar, Plato). **In the latter case the semantic idea of "accept, take up, receive, undergo" appears, as it does in both poetry** (Homer) and prose (Xenophon), and is used with reference to both the material realm (possessions) and the human realm (wives). ... 3. a) The active meaning take, grasp is characteristic in the Synoptic Gospels of feeding and meal terminology (Mark 6:41; 8:1)... (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:2983)

## the form of a servant

The Holy Spirit chose the exact same word to describe both states of the Word. While in heaven He was in the "form" of God and while on earth he was in the "form" of a servant. Thus while in heaven, Jesus existed in the form of God with all the glory, majesty and blessings that came from that existence. But at the fulness of time, that changed. One moment He was existing in the form of God as He had through all eternity while living in heaven and the next, moment, He was existing in the form of a servant, emptied in the womb of Mary.

*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Gal. 4:4-5*

It is impossible for us to comprehend how God can dwell in the body of a man. Even with no real information and Deut 29:29 warning us not to do it, controversies that have divided disciples into different factions still have arisen. Even in the days of the apostles, the Gnostics were proclaiming that Jesus had not come in the flesh (because God could not dwell in a human body).

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. 1Jn. 4:1-3*

Thus to believe that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and that the same Word who was in the beginning with God, in the form of God, and equal with God but did not grasp that but instead became a "taker" of the form of a servant is essential to salvation and truth.

Thus we must understand as fully as the Scriptures allow us the exact details of what occurred at the moment Jesus left the form of God and took the form of a servant. There are many passages that speak of this moment, explaining exactly what occurred.

**1. In Jesus' own words, at the moment Jesus was coming into the world** (present active participle - that moment as it unfolded He was leaving heaven (in the form of God) and the coming into this world (to be a taker of the form of a servant)). He is saying (Present Indicative Active - a continuous moment in that present time) these words. Hence the body God prepared for Him was the body He took up residence in and became in this way he took the "form of a servant."

*Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "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.'" ... 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb 10:5-7, 11*

**2. Looking at the moment as the the fulfillment of the promise given long ago, both to Eve, to Abraham and to David.** The Messiah (Christ) would be of the seed Eve, Abraham and David. It would be from David's own body.

And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, **And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.**" Gen 3:14

**In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed**, because you have obeyed My voice." Gen 22:18-19  
12 "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, **I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.** 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 2 Sam 7:12-13

The entire purpose of the genealogies in Matthew and Mark are to prove that Jesus, born of Mary was of the seed of Abraham and David.

concerning His Son **Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.** Rom 1:3-5

**3. Looking at the moment through the eyes of Mary**, an angel came to her while she was still a young woman. He informs her that she will conceive a child. She knew what that meant. She would have a child "after her kind" a man.

26 the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ... 31 And behold, **you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.** 32 He will be great, and **will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.** 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." ... 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.** Lk, 31-33, 35

**4. Looking at the moment through the eyes of Joseph**, the angel revealed that the body God was preparing for the Word to become flesh would come through Mary. It would be through her seed. But she was still a virgin. God supplied what was necessary for this woman to conceive and have a son through the power of the Holy Spirit. Although she would still be a virgin at Jesus birth, Mary made Jesus fully human. God only supplied what was necessary to give Him the genes necessary for the characteristics He would need to fulfill His mission.

18 Now **the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows:** After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, **she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.** ... **that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.** 21 **And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus,** for He will save His people from their sins." Mt. 1:18, 20-21

**5. Looking at the moment through the revelation of Hebrews.** How the divine word could be fully human is a great mystery, but that He was fully human was not a mystery at all. It has been stated and restated in many different passages.

**What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? 5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,** Ps. 8:3-6

**But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.** 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to **make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.** ... 14 **Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.** 17 **Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.** 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. Heb. 2:9-10, 14, 17-18

who, **in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,** 8 though He was a Son, yet **He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.** 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, 10 called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," Heb. 5:7-10

### the form of a servant

The mind that was in Christ Jesus was that His equality in the form of God was not something to be grasped, nor did He consider Himself robbed when He took the form of a servant. He willingly accepted all the sorrow, deprivation, difficulties and even persecutions it would bring. Jesus knew that this would be the case and this is the exact point where the mind of Christ and our own mind should meet and become one.

This is the lowest word for a servant that was available in the Greek language. It was used of a slavery where the slave is under the complete control of a superior. It had an almost exclusively demeaning and scornful significance. Much like the term "slave" carries in our own language today.

**Words with the *doul* - stem appear a total of 182 times in the NT.** Most of these occurrences are of *douleuō*, be a slave, serve (25 occurrences) and *doulos*, slave, servant (124). ... *douloō*, enslave, subjugate, reduce to servitude (8 occurrences); *katadouloō*, reduce to slavery; and *doulagōgeōm*, take into slavery (1 Cor 9:27); and the nouns *sundoulos*, fellow slave (10 occurrences); *douleia*, slavery (5); *doulé*, female slave (3); and *ophthalmoudoulia*, eye service; and the adj. *doulos*, subservient, submissive (2). ... 3. In contrast to the synonyms (e.g., *diakoneō*) **the emphasis of the words with the *doul* - stem lies "on the service being that of a slave,**

i.e. on a repressive or at least dependent form of service under the complete control of a superior" ... In the Greek world and in Hellenism the word group has, because of the high evaluation of personal freedom, almost exclusively a demeaning, scornful significance..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1398)

"*doulos sundoulos, doule douleuo, douleia*. ... All the words in this group serve either to describe the status of a slave or an attitude corresponding to that of a slave. ... The meaning is so unequivocal and self-contained that it is superfluous to give examples of the individual terms or to trace the history of the group. ... Hence we have a service that is not a matter of choice for the one who renders it, which he has to perform whether he likes or not, because he is subject as a slave to an alien will, to the will of his owner..." (Kittel, Vol 2, p. 261-280; NT:1401)

Thus what most Christians in the Greek and Roman world would disdain and refuse to stoop to because in their culture it is repulsive and demeaning, Jesus took upon Himself. From the prophecies in Isaiah, Jesus knew exactly how deep and despicable this slavery would become.

*For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Isa. 53:2-3*

*Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ... 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. Isa. 53:4-5*

*Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:12*

The body prepared for Him was not handsome or muscular. There was nothing about His physical appearance that would give him any honor or appreciation. The work God gave Him to do led to His being despised and rejected, with sorrow and rejection and grief. There was no esteem or respect for His work. He would be thought of as a man who was rejected by God. Even at the very end, God would not help or relieve Him. He would be left to be wounded, bruised, oppressed and afflicted. He would be whipped and receive stripes, and pour out His soul to death.

Even more is written. He would give his back to those who struck him, His cheeks to those who pluck out the beard. He would not hid his face from shame and spitting. Yet through it all He knew that God would help and vindicate Him, so He refused to be ashamed in the face of all this adversity. This is the mind of Christ we must seek to gain.

*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. Isa 50:5-7*

Even more graphic are the words of David. While God had delivered multitudes of His people, He would not deliver Jesus. He would be a reproach and despised by the people.

*But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. 4 Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. 5 They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. 6 But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. 7 All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8 "He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" Ps. 22:3-8*

Along with that are His own personal feelings. Poured out like water, bones out of joint, heart like wax brought to the dust of death. Hands and feet pierced, mocked and scorned.

*I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. 16 For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; 17 I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. 18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. Ps. 22:14-18*

Jesus knew exactly what becoming a servant would bring to Him. Yet He willingly took this upon Himself.

### **being made in the likeness of men;**

The first time we were introduced to this term was at the creation.

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our LIKENESS; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Gen 1:26-28*

Just as God created us in His likeness (the image of God), the Word was made in our likeness (the image of man). An image is something that reflects the likeness. Thus an image on a coin, or an image of men or animals, gives us an idea of their form and characteristics. A likeness does something similar. If we had 100 eggs, they are all in the same image, though each differs in characteristics. All the sheep in a flock bear the same likeness, though the image of each of them may vary.

When Adam begot Seth, both terms were used. He was the image of Adam because they looked like one another, but he was in the likeness because he was a man as Adam was a man. At a distance, one could see the likeness because no one would mistake him for anything other than a man. But as one got close enough, he would see that he shared the facial and form features of Adam to be his image.

*And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. Gen. 5:3-4*

But it is evident that it is not just physical characteristics that are being described in our image and likeness to God. These are the spiritual, moral, emotional, and intellectual, image and likeness. We share in His image and likeness, yet do not have the same portion of His power or knowledge.

*eikōn* [1504], *homoiosis* [3669], *homoiōma* [3667].... There is a **twofold theological interest** attending the distinction between *eikōn* and the two words which are here brought into comparison with it; the **first belonging to the Arian controversy**... , the other is an interest ... whether there be a **distinction, and if so, what it is, between the 'image' (*eikōn*) of God, in which, and the 'likeness' (*homoiosis*) of God, after which, man was created at the beginning** (Gen 1:26). .... *eikōn* (= 'imago' = 'imitago'...) ... **always assumes a prototype, that which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn, ...** Thus, **the monarch's head on the coin is *eikōn*** (Matt 22:20); **the reflection of the sun in the water is *eikōn*** (Plato, Phædo, 99 d); **the statue in stone or other material is *eikōn*** (Rev 13:14); and, coming nearer to the heart of the matter than by any of these illustrations we have done, **the child is *empsychos eikōn* of his parents**. But in the *homoiōma* or *homoiosis*, **while there is resemblance, it by no means follows that it has been acquired in this way**, that it is derived: it may be accidental, as one egg is like another, as there may exist a resemblance between two men in no way akin to one another. ..."

*homoioma* denotes "that which is made like something, a resemblance," (a) in the concrete sense, Rev 9:7, "shapes" (RV, marg., "likenesses"); (b) in the abstract sense, Rom 1:23, RV, "(for) the likeness (of an image)"; the KJV translates it as a verb, "(into an image) made like to"; the association here of the two words *homoioma* and *eikon* (see IMAGE) serves to enhance the contrast between the idol and "the glory of the incorruptible God," and is expressive of contempt; in 5:14, "(the) likeness of Adam's transgression" (KJV, "similitude"); in 6:5, "(the) likeness (of His death); in 8:3, "(the) likeness (of sinful flesh); in Phil 2:7, "the likeness of men." "The expression 'likeness of men' does not of itself imply, still less does it exclude or diminish, the reality of the nature which Christ assumed...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3667)

Hence there were similarities between Jesus in His humanity and that of all other human beings. Yet obviously there were also some differences as the eternal Word was the spirit and soul in this body, while other man had a soul only in the image and likeness of God. Jesus the divine Word was made into a man. He was born as a little baby. He learned to walk, to talk, to run and to jump just like all other children. He learned the Scriptures just like all others learned it. Luke 2:52 summarizes this growth from 12 to adulthood in the following way:

*Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

This too is an exceedingly difficult concept to grasp. How could a divine being with all power and all wisdom and all knowledge be a baby and not know how to talk? How can the Word who was with God, and was God, advance in wisdom? These are great mysteries which the Bible only reveals and does not explain. Jesus was God and man. His humanity was not allowed to diminish his deity and his deity was not allowed to enhance his humanity. He was a man in every sense of the word. He did what all men must do at every step of the way.

## 8. and being found in fashion as a man,

Once *found* (aorist passive participle - sums up His entire sojourn in the fashion of a man) by others to be in the fashion of a man, His humiliation began. It was precisely because Satan and mankind found the Word in the likeness of man was he able to be humiliated. His *fashion* differs slightly from His *form* and His *likeness*. A new term "*schema*" is introduced. No longer in possession of the things that were His while in the form of God. He was now found to be in the fashion as a man. This was external form. No one thought of Him as the Word who was with God and was God because he was no longer fashioned into that likeness.

*schema* ... "a figure, fashion" (akin to echo, "to have"), is translated "fashion" in 1 Cor 7:31, of the world, signifying that which comprises the manner of life, actions, etc. of humanity in general; in Phil 2:8 it is used of the Lord in His being found "in fashion" as a man, and signifies what He was in the eyes of men, "the entire outwardly perceptible mode and shape of His existence, just as the preceding words *morphe*, "form," and *homoioma*, "likeness," describe what He was in Himself as Man" (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:4976)

*idea* [NT:2397], *morphé* [NT:3444], *schéma* [NT:4976] *idea* [NT:2397] denotes merely outward appearance. Both *morphé* [NT:3444] and *schéma* [NT:4976] express something more than that. They too denote outward form, but as including one's habits, activities and modes of action in general. In *morphé* [NT:3444] it is also implied that the outward form expresses the inner essence, an idea which is absent from *schéma* [NT:4976]. *morphé* [NT:3444] expresses the form as that which is intrinsic and essential, *schéma* [NT:4976] signifies the figure, shape, as that which is more outward and accidental. Both *schéma* [NT:4976] and *idea* [NT:2397] therefore deal with externals, *schéma* [NT:4976] being more comprehensive than *idea* [NT:2397], while *morphé* [NT:3444] deals with externals as expressing that which is internal. (Berry's Synonyms NT:4976)

All who saw him saw only a man. They saw someone who shared the same flesh and bones, the same characteristics of being a man, and the same weaknesses.

He could suffer hunger, He could thirst, and get tired, He could be tempted in all points like as we. He could die, suffer persecution, be humiliated. All of this could only occur while he was in the form of a servant, the likeness of men and in the fashion of a man. He could be scorned and mocked, mistreated and treated unjustly.

This was quite a drop in and of itself. For He who was involved in the creation of the entire universe and who upholds all things by the word of his power to become a tiny man on one of the worlds which He himself had made was quite an act of humility. Yet this was not the greatest of all the sacrifices Jesus made. Even after He made this great sacrifice, there were others to be made.

### **he humbled himself,**

Again, leaving the form, likeness and fashion of God to take on the form of a servant and the likeness and fashion of a man was the greatest act of humility and submission ever seen by mortal man, but that was only the beginning. He lowered Himself to this position in order that He might be brought far lower. So low that He would endure a terrible death.

This is the same word the Holy Spirit had commanded that Christians must also gain for themselves as they seek to have the mind of Christ.

*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, **but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.** 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2:3-6*

Selfish ambition and conceit must be removed to gain lowliness of mind. Yet for the worldly minded, this is nearly impossible. Those with gifts see their gifts as making them better than others. Jesus with gifts saw Himself as a servant who will humble Himself for others. He had equality with God and the form of God, yet set it aside. So from the perspective of greatness, no one is greater. From the perspective of lowering, no one has gone so low for others. This puts His words into a clearer perspective.

*and **whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:** even as **the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.** Mt. 20:27-28*

### **becoming obedient even unto death,**

The humility and lowliness of Jesus is most clearly seen in the extent of His obedience. It extended all the way up to His own death. Since there is nothing greater than submitting even to the point of death. That is the greatest extent possible and that was the extent it reached.

*méchri, ... adverb **marking a terminus both of place and time.** ... It differs, therefore, from áchri (891) in that áchri fixes the attention upon the whole duration up to the limit, leaving the further continuance suspect, while **méchri refers solely to the limit implying that the action terminates there.** ... (A) Of place meaning unto, as far as (Rom 15:19). ... (B) Of time meaning until. (1) ... Rom 5:14, "to [until] Moses," meaning that death reigned from Adam until Moses without there being any written law, but not so afterwards ... **Used metaphorically of degree or extent** (Phil 2:8,30; 2 Tim 2:9; Heb 12:4)...." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3360)*

What gives this passage even more power is the type of death Jesus was forced to endure. It was unfair and unjust. They were wicked liars and hypocritical judges. Jesus had done nothing wrong. They delivered Him because of envy. He had to endure their wicked taunts, unrighteous trial, and violent outbursts against Him. The mocking of the Gentiles, the cowardice of Pilate. The fickleness of the people Pilate had hoped to use to deliver Him. The unjust scourging and the shameful yet undeserved death on the cross.

*Therefore doth the Father love me, because I **lay down my life, that I might take it up again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself.** I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from my Father. Jn. 10:17-18*

*who, in the days of His flesh, when He had **offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,** 8 though He was a Son, yet **He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.** Heb. 5:7-9*

For Him to be as great as He was and to be mistreated and serve to the point that He did is above our ability to comprehend, yet the better we comprehend it, the more of it we can take into our own mind to have the mind of Christ.

### **yea, the death of the cross.**

Yet even the death that he was compelled to die was a humiliating one. Under the old law, the Jews would first kill the man and then hang him on a tree as an act of humiliation:

*And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; **for he that is hanged is accursed of God;** that thou defile not thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. (Deut. 21:22-23).*

The Romans took this humiliation one step further by not only hanging them on the tree, but hanging them alive on the tree and letting them die there. This is the death Jesus endured. It is the most "cruel and unusual punishments" ever designed by evil men. The torture and the mental

anguish are unimaginable. Yet Jesus endured it to save wicked and unfaithful mankind from their sins.

*stauros* ... is an upright stake. ... used for fencing, ... Posts serve as foundations, ... The *stauros* is an instrument of torture for serious offences, ... In shape we find three basic forms. The cross was a vertical, pointed stake ... or it consisted of an upright with a cross-beam above it (T, crux commissa), or it consisted of two intersecting beams of equal length ... In the Roman provinces the penalty of crucifixion was one of the strongest means of maintaining order and security. ... Crucifixion took place as follows. The condemned person carried the patibulum (cross-beam) to the place of execution — the stake was already erected. Then on the ground he was bound with outstretched arms to the beam by ropes, or else fixed to it by nails. The beam was then raised with the body and fastened to the upright post. About the middle of the post was a wooden block which supported the suspended body; there was no foot-rest in ancient accounts. ... Crucifixion was regarded as one of the worst forms of execution. Cicero calls it the supreme capital penalty, the most painful, dreadful and ugly. Jos. Bell., 7, 203 agrees. Scourging usually preceded it. The condemned person was exposed to mockery. Sometimes he was stripped and his clothes were divided among the executioners, though this was not the common rule. Crucifixion took place publicly on streets or elevated places. Usually the body was left to rot on the cross. But it could also be handed over for burial. The physical and mental sufferings which this slow death on the cross involved are unimaginable. (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:4716)

This is the mind of Christ and it must become our mind. Just as Jesus willingly took this death upon himself, we are encouraged to have the same mind and to accept whatever trials must come for our faith.

*looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. Heb. 12:2-5*

Jesus took the greatest of anguish and shame upon himself in order to save men and serve God. Isaiah 53 combines these thoughts in a way similar to what Paul is doing here:

*Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:12*

## Phil 2:9-12

### 9. Wherefore also God highly exalted him,

The end result of God's eternal purpose is now revealed. The Word became flesh in order to serve God. He emptied Himself, took for them of a servant in the fashion of a man. He was obedient up to and including the shameful and agonizing death on the cross. He humbled Himself allowing the wicked hypocrites of the Jewish nation to mock, scorn, mistreat Him and He also allowed the Gentiles to ridicule and treat Him shamefully scourged, spat upon, reviled and rejected, He carried the cross and was nailed upon it. All of this to bring complete God's eternal purpose and plan.

The end result is that ultimately the Word lost nothing and gained everything. All the shame and humiliation suffered for a short time on earth led to the highest of exaltation and glory for all eternity.

*"dio, dioper, relatively emphatic markers of result, usually denoting the fact that the inference is self-evident - 'therefore, for this reason, for this very reason, so then.'* (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:1352)

The compound superlative takes the word that means lifting up to the highest level and then adds the preposition to be above all. Hence this is the highest of the high. No one is higher, except God Himself.

*"hupsoo... to lift up on high, to exalt... metaph. to raise to the very summit of opulence and prosperity..."* (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:5312)

*hyperupsoō, from hupér (5228), above, high, and hupsóō (5312), to elevate. An intens. meaning to make high above, raise high aloft, to highly exalt; ... (Phil 2:9); ...* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5251)

After the humiliation and suffering, after the agonized death and the sorrow came the exaltation. Because Jesus was willing to serve and to give his life for man, God gave Him a place of exaltation and honor. The Holy Spirit said much the same thing in Ephesians.

*which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.* Eph. 1:20-23

This is the whole point of this section. It is the proof that the sacrifices we make in serving others, especially those that cost us severely, will one day cause us also to be recompensed with exaltation. God highly exalted him. He is now sitting at the right hand of God.

*"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. 2:6-9*

*"I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.* Dan. 7:13-14

*Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory Rev. 5:11-12*

Not only did Jesus not lose anything by voluntarily taking on a humble position of servant, but He gained some things that could not otherwise have been accomplished. Jesus could have remained in heaven and never lost His dignity and power. He was never compelled to do all that He did. He took it on himself, and could have given it up at any moment. Even in the Garden of Gethsemane He was aware of that:

*Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? Mt. 26:52*

But He never could have gained the things that were accomplished without suffering on behalf of others. He could not now have the name that is above every name. He could not be a saviour, nor could he be the head of all things to the church which is his body (Eph. 1:22-23). None of that was possible unless he willingly took upon himself the form of a servant and humbled himself to the death of the cross. All of it was necessary for him to become a savior.

*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. Heb. 2:9-11*

After he accomplished that which was necessary to be accomplished at great cost to himself, God gave him high exaltation.

**and gave unto him the name which is above every name.**

let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that **by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.** 11 **This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.** 12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for **there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**" Acts 4:10-12

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Mt 28:18

There is simply no one in heaven or on earth with the authority, dignity, and power which Jesus has been given as a result of this great sacrifice of humble service to mankind. This ought to be something each of us seriously reflects upon when we sing praises to him, when we consider him as our mediator during our prayers, and when we are called upon to serve our fellow man in capacities similar to his.

*For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And **His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isa 8:6-7*

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, **Received up in glory.** 1Tim 3:16*

*"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. 13 **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.**" ... 16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. **I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.**" Rev. 22:12-16*

*who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, **Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.** Amen. Rom. 9:4-5*

**10. that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow,** Everything that the word has become is tied to the name Jesus. This name was chosen by God.

*Then **the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.** Lk. 1:29-32*

***an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."** Matt 1:20-21*

*And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, **His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.** Lk. 2:21*

The Name "Jesus" prior to the Word's coming was a simple common name. It simply meant "the Lord is salvation", or "help is Jehovah;". But after the Word became flesh and dwelt among us using that name for Himself it has become the greatest name. A name that will lead to every knee bowing in submission. The bowing of the knee is token of respect, honor, homage. It is a symbol of total submission of one to another. There is a time coming when all in heaven, on earth and under the earth will bow their knees unto him.

**of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth,**

This phrase appears several times in the Scripture to describe everything that exists in heaven and everything that exists in the entire creation.

*And no one **in heaven or on the earth or under the earth** was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. Rev 5:3*

*13 And **every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them,** I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" Rev 5:13*

Things in heaven clearly refers to all beings that exist in the spiritual realm. On the earth refers to all who ever lived on the earth. Under the earth has been subjected to much scrutiny. The clearest and safest answer is that refers to all who are dead. The idea that this term refers to all the wicked who are in torment, or that it refers to the demons and the spiritual hosts of wickedness seems to stretch the credibility. While man equates the grave and Sheol as both being under the earth, Paul placed them in the third heaven.

*I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a one was **caught up to the third heaven.** 3 And I know such a man — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows — 4 how he was **caught up into Paradise** 2Cor. 12:2-4*

Since Jesus identified paradise as the place He and the thief were going after death and yet Peter said His soul was in Hades. The rich man was also in Hades and even though there is a great gulf between paradise and torment, they are both in the third heaven. They will continue to exist and be populated until the last day.

*For **You will not leave my soul in Hades,** Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ... he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of **the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades,** nor did His flesh see*

corruption. Acts 2:27-28

So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, Lk. 16:22-23

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Rev. 20:13-15

It seems best to leave this vague term to refer only to the dead. When God adds an additional fact that every knew will also bow to Him, and it will be done when each gives an account of Himself that this refers to the last day of judgment.

And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me. 22 "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath. Isa 45:21-23

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom. 14:10-12

Thus it is most probable that this refers to the great judgement day. That day when all who are in heaven, all who were living on the earth and all who were dwelling under the earth in tombs will stand before God. On that great day all knees will bow.

### 11. and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

At the same time that the knees are bowed down in humble reverence of Jesus the Son of God, all tongues will also be confessing. The word "confess" contains the idea of speaking the same thing as another and much more. A term used for those who admit guilt, those who agree and consent to something. But it also conveys the idea of the resolve, action, and commitment that it must lead to to become a valid confession. It binds the speaker to His word with a solemn confirmation of His faith and conviction.

*homologeîn* (3670) with the compounds *anthomologeomai* ... and *exomologeō*, (1843)... and the related noun *homologia* is a common term in Gk. and Hellenistic speech, of esp. significance in law and religion ... **homologeîn** means "to say the same thing," "to agree in statement." ... Often passive ... "all men are agreed on the statement." From one side a. "to agree to the statement of another (or others)," "to accept his affirmation," specifically "to admit a charge," "to make a confession of guilt" (from Soph. Phil., 980); b. "to confirm the receipt of money" (often in papyri); c. "to agree to a proposal" (Hdt., Thuc.), even "to submit to it"; d. "to agree to a wish," "to promise" The noun *homologia*, as agreement ... implies consent to some thing felt to be valid, and in such a way that it is followed by definite resolve and action, by ready attachment to a cause. The aim in *homologia* is not a theoretical agreement which does not commit us, but acceptance of a common cause; ... Matt 14:7: ... The compound *excomologeîn* is used in the same way in Luke 22:6: Acts 7:17: ... **A solemn omologeîn of this kind binds the speaker to his word.** On the one side *omologeîn* is admission and solemn confirmation in the Hellenistic sense, on the other (cf. Ac. and Hb.) it is solemn declaration of faith in the Christian sense of proclamation. ... 1 John 1:9: In the first instance this *omologeîn* is the opposite of the contesting of sin in 1:8. We admit that we are sinners and disclose specific sins in confession; ... in the legal sense "to bear witness." The legal sense of *homologeîn* is perhaps the most important in the NT tradition. ... a saying of Jesus which in strictly parallel members sets the disciple's confession or denial under ... promise or ... judgment, Luke 12:8; Matt 10:32. **Jesus demands that the disciple confess Him in the hour of trial (before the judgment, publicly, before men); He rejects denial of discipleship. ... omologeîn = "to make solemn statements of faith," "to confess something in faith."** In Rom 10:9-10 (expounding Deut 30:14) Paul refers to the connection between confession and faith, "If thou confess with thy mouth the lordship of Jesus, if thou believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believes and receives right eousness, with the mouth he confesses to salvation." Faith and confession are similarly related elsewhere in Paul (2 Cor 4:13). **Confession and the word of proclamation grow out of faith....**" (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:1843; 3670)

We can confess now to our salvation or confess when it is too late. Since God has proclaimed Jesus as Lord, everyone else will also publicly acknowledge it, just prior to their eternal separation from Him.

### to the glory of God the Father.

Since this was all God's plan, and multitudes have mocked this plan of a crucified and humble king, God will ultimately receive the glory for the great wisdom and insight He had in doing it this way. By glorifying the Son, we also glorify the Father. and This will in no way remove God from the honor and glory that is due to him. It is his plan. He is the only reason that any of this was ever devised and set in motion. Certainly we will honor and glorify the Son for his acts of humility and service which has brought salvation down to mankind. Yet at the same time all will know that this was through God's plan. Thus God will be glorified for it is his plan that his Son will be glorified.

For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, 23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Jn. 5:21-23

## 12. So then, my beloved,

The Holy Spirit now uses a coordinating conjunction to give the “purpose” and “implication that should be drawn from the previous section.

*hōs; hōste* ... markers of purpose, with the implication that what has preceded serves as a means - 'then, in order to, so that.' ... 'they went into a village of Samaria in order to get things ready for him' Luke 9:52. ... 'he gave them power over unclean spirits in order to cast them out' Matt 10:1. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5620)

*hōste*; conjunction from *hōs* (5613), as, strengthened by the enclitic particle *te* (5037) which serves to connect more closely a following clause with the preceding one. So that, accordingly, thus. ... In the NT generally used as a conjunction meaning so as that, so that, before a clause expressing an event, result, consequence, whether real or supposed; and followed usually by an inf., but also by the indic. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5620)

This conjunction forced them (and us) to take everything that was said beginning in verse 1 and use that as the subjection of the *obedience* and to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” Since there is so much to remember, it is wise to revisit all that has been spoken. All of this must be obeyed as it is the foundation of working out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

<u>Motivations</u>		
consolation in Christ, affection and mercy,	comfort of love fulfill my joy	fellowship of the Spirit

<u>Things that Must be Obeyed</u>	
being like-minded, being of one accord, nothing done through selfish ambition but in lowliness of mind look out not only for his own interests, Let this mind be in you	having the same love, of one mind. nothing done through or conceit, let each esteem others better than himself. but also for the interests of others. which was also in Christ Jesus,

<u>The Mind of Christ</u>	
Existed in the form of God Emptied Himself coming in the likeness of men humbled Himself God also has highly exalted Him At the name of Jesus every knee should bow	Did not consider equality with God to be grasped (robbery), taking the form of a bondservant found in appearance as a man became obedient to the point of the death of the cross Gave Him the name which is above every name  every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

Before Paul gives the command, “work out,” he again affirmed his affection and love for them. This term of affection is built on the root *agape*. In this context, it is the love of Christians to God and to one another. Paul uses it to describe the great desire he has to act in their best interests.

*“agapetos.... beloved, esteemed, dear, favorite... (opposed to ethros, enemy Rom 11:28): is applied to Christians as being reconciled to God and judged by Him to be worthy of eternal life... But Christians bound together by mutual love, are agapetoi to one another... (Philem 16; 1 Tim 6:2); hence, they are dignified with this epithet very often in tender address, both indirect (Rom 16:5,8; Col 4:14; Eph 6:21, etc.) and direct (Rom 12:19; 1 Cor 4:14; (Philem 2, Rec.); Heb 6:9; James 1:16; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 3:1...” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, NT:27)*

*agape* love (noun – NT:26), *agapaō* love (verb – NT:25 *agapetos* (adjective NT:27) beloved, dear ... **The three words in this group occur in nearly all the writings of the NT and a total of 320 times in the NT. Agapao occurs 143 times, ... agape occurs 116 times, ... agapetos a total of 61 times,**

From the very beginning of the book, the close relationship between them has been emphasized. Paul had great love for all the sanctified. He used this term for those he had not yet met in Romans and he used it for the Corinthians who were beset with so many problems. So it may be nothing more than a term of endearment he uses equally to all. Yet it can’t be denied that when using this term toward those with maturity and strength, having little need of rebuke or correction and who could be addressed as equals, it has a different nuance in its meaning. The who book breathes of this fellowship and sense of joy Paul has toward this congregation. If we can’t quite pick that up in this verse, we can certain see it later in the book.

*Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved. Phil. 4:1*

Paul wanted them to know and never to lose sight of the fact as he moves from one set of exhortations and commands to the next that it is his genuine love and concern for them that motivates him.

### **even as ye have always obeyed,**

This is a high compliment. As his mind scans back over all his interactions, and with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to approve, Paul can affirm that they have always obeyed in every area that he has brought to their attention. Hence, just like you have always obeyed in the past, so now continue to do into the future.

*“kathos,...1. according as, just as, even as: in the first member of a comparison:...2. according as i.e. in proportion as, in the degree that...3. since, seeing that, agreeably to the fact that.”* (Thayer, p. 314; 2531).

*“kathōs; adv. from **katá** (2596), according to, and **hōs** (5613), as. According as, equivalent to ...”* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2531)

What a nice thing to hear! Anyone hearing such word from an inspired apostle should feel a sense of joy and peace. Yet just as Paul had not attained and pressed on, so must they.

*hupakoúō ... absolutely. to listen, hearken, give ear... 2 to make answer when called, 3. to listen or hearken to, give ear to, attend to, II. Special senses: 1. of porters, to answer a knock at the door, 2. of a judge, to listen to a complainant, ... 3. of dependents and subjects, to submit to, ... also to yield to, comply with, 4. to answer one's expectations, to succeed...”* (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5219)

*“hupakoe, fem. noun from hupakoúō (5219), to obey, listen to something, hearken. Obedience, compliance ... Generally in the NT it refers to the obedience of a slave to a master (Rom. 6:16). Elsewhere it always refers to the faith which obeys God's will in a special sense, of relationship and subjection to that which, in the sphere of divine power and revelation, is right (Rom 5:19; Heb 5:8). More especially, it refers to subjection to the saving will of God revealed in Christ and referred to as obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:22); ... the unquestioning obedience that is demanded by Christ (2 Cor 10:5). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5218)*

These brethren had always been submissive to the Lord and to his apostles and prophets who bid all disciples to observe His commandments (Mt. 28:18-20). They had always carefully listened and then been obedient to all the commands which came from Christ. Paul is only asking for the continuance of the same attitude they have always manifested. Even the term “always” stresses how much confidence Paul places in them. It is defined.

*pantote ... duration of time, with reference to a series of occasions - ‘always, at all times, on every occasion.’ ...* (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3842)

They have never let him down in the past. The commendation grows even greater when the next phrase is added.

### **not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,**

The entire time Paul was with them, from the day he baptized Lydia, until he left town after being falsely imprisoned, they had always been obedient. After he left, they continued to grow and strengthen themselves. Not only were they the only church who was sending once and again for his needs, but they were growing even faster in his absence than they had while he was present. Much is a term used of multitude or number. In this case, it would be measure and intensity. Added to that is the term more that takes it to a greater degree and a greater quantity.

*“polus,... much used a. Of multitude, number, many numerous, great... abundant, plenteous... b. with nouns denoting an action an emotion, a state, which can be said to have as it were measure, weight, force, intensity, size, continuance, or repetition, much I. q. great, strong, intense, large... c. of time much, long... d. Neut. sing. Polu, much, substantively, I. q. many things... much, adverbially, of the mode and degree of an action...”* (Thayer, p. 529; 4183)

*“mallon... more, to a greater degree; rather; 1. When added to verbs and adjectives it denotes increase, a greater quantity, a larger measure, a higher degree, more, more fully... b. In comparison it often so stands that ‘than before’ must be mentally added, [A.V. the more, so much the more], ... 2. it marks the preference of one thing above another, and is to be rendered rather, sooner...”* (Thayer, p. 387-388; 3123).

If the estimated time Paul coming to Philippi was 51-52 then it had been over ten years since Paul had started the congregation. During that time, their growth was more intense and abundant than it had been when he was in their midst. Paul returned for a time while gathering the money for the needy saints in Jerusalem, but has now been away for at least four years. But the relationship between him and the church in Philippi had continued to develop and he wanted them to know how he saw them. His request is therefore more of a keep doing what you are doing than an exhortation to do more.

### **work out your own salvation**

Sadly, through the centuries this passage has become one of the main passages in the controversy over faith and works. Luther and others took Paul's words about works and interpreted them in such a way that they were forced to either reject or ignore those of James.

The words of Paul:

Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. 28 **We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.** Rom. 3:27-28

**for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, (it is) the gift of God; 9 not of works, that no man should glory.** Eph. 2:8-9

But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, 5 **not by works (done) in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,** Titus 3:4-5

### The words of James

14 What does it profit, my brethren, **if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?** ... 17 Thus also **faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** ... 24 You see then that **a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.** ... 26 **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.** Jas. 2:14-26

So we must harmonize these two thoughts. The truth is simple and it is revealed by Paul here in Philippians. Paul never thought or wrote that anything James said was not true. He taught exactly the same thing. The truth is that without God's grace and the blood of Jesus no works of man can save him. Everyone must be saved apart from the works that he has done in his life. But once grace is accepted by faith, the works that are done are not for salvation, they are for faith! Just as Heb. 11 so clearly taught. It was always by faith ... Abel offered, Enoch walked, Noah built an ark, Abraham left his country and offered His son. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. These were not works that would save them these were works that true faith demanded.

Thus every Christian with true faith, will do what he can do. Christians have to work of they have no faith. They are working because God asked them to work. No one can be saved by faith alone.

Hence each Christian along with the Philippians is to work out their own salvation. This is a term that is used of those who have been given a task and are working to carry it out. They are to do what God has asked them to do with success. Literally, "*the verb signifies working at, and finally accomplishing, a task. It is used in agriculture and in the making of materials.*"

*katergázomai*; from *katá* (2596), an intens., and *ergázomai* (2038), to work. To work out; trans. to bring about, accomplish, to carry out a task until it is finished. ... (l) To work out, to effect, produce, to be the cause or author of (Rom 4:15; 5:3; 7:8,13; 15:18) ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2716)

*katergazomai* ... a: to do something with success and / or thoroughness - 'to accomplish, to perform successfully, to do thoroughly.' ... (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 2716)

"*katergazomai*... found from the time of Soph., means a. "to bear down to the ground," "to overcome," b. "to work at," "make." Refined by constant use, it gradually takes on the sense of the simple, so that **the verb signifies working at, and finally accomplishing, a task. It is used in agriculture and in the making of materials,**..." (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:2716)

The Holy Spirit gave them a task. It is revealed in 2:1-8. They are to take on the mind of Christ. This is a task they are now to work out. So although these brethren had always been obedient, and their sterling character manifested time and again, Paul does not yet give them their crown of victory.

He does not tell them that their salvation is complete. Quite the contrary. The fact that they have always been obedient is here used by Paul to exhort them to even greater efforts. No Christian has the right to become complacent over previous victories. This was the cause of the danger in the book of Hebrews. They had been obedient and righteous, but had grown weary or lax.

**For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those**

As long as we live, salvation can be lost. Paul never wanted these brethren he loved to lose sight of this truth. Constant vigilance and effort is necessary to retain it. Yet Paul's wording is quite clear regarding how Christians are to view their efforts. Each day is to be viewed as another opportunity to put forth efforts to perform, accomplish, and achieve, as a time in which they are to labor and toil in order that their eternal salvation might result.

Salvation is both a present possession resulting from things done in the past, and yet something yet in the future that must be closely watched lest it slip from our grasp. This salvation is already in their possession, and they must work it out in order to keep it.

This presents clearly the attitude which Paul wanted them to have. They were to view themselves as being saved. All their efforts were to be put forth not in order that they might **be** saved, but in order that they might **continue to** be saved.

Each Christian who has repented of any sins of yesterday arises each day in possession of that salvation, yet realize that it is their duty to live that day to keep what they already possess. There are many passages that teach salvation as a possession given at the obedience of the gospel.

He that believes and is baptized **shall be saved**; but he that disbelieves shall be condemned. Mk. 16:16

Which also after a true likeness **does now save you**, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; 1Pet. 3:21

**Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except you believed in vain. 1Cor. 15:1-2**

*For by grace **you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. Eph. 2:8-9*

In the passages above salvation is presented as something that is accomplished at the moment of baptism and is our possession day by day from that day to the present. It is the present possession of all Christians. This salvation from sin is accomplished due to the very nature of baptism itself. It washes away all sin and all corruption from one's soul and then gives them new life (Col. 2:12-13; Rom. 6:3-4). Once all sin cleansed from the soul one must be saved for they have no sin, and there is nothing to bar them from heaven.

Paul's emphasis here as in all places in the Scriptures places this salvation as a conditional possession that can be lost. If a saved and cleansed child of God once again fouls his soul with sin and refuses to wash it clean through repentance and prayer, then he will lose the salvation God gave him.

*For if, **after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.** 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them 2Pet. 2:20-21*

*'The righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; ... 13 When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, **but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die.** ... 18 When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it. Ezek 33:12-20*

There are other passages in the Bible teaching the same truth Paul does here. It is of great importance that the disciple of Christ fix these truths in his mind. There is a need for constant vigilance and growth. This must be done in order to keep what they have been given through the grace of God.

Each Christian must work out his own salvation. He must do something in order for it to be brought about. Faith is a living and growing thing. God desires to see a working faith, appreciative of what it has been given by grace and seeking to grow to a point where less and less grace is needed and more and more obedience and understanding are gained. Never do Christians reach a point where there is nothing left to accomplish. They continue to grow and work until death calls them from this world to the next.

### **with fear and trembling;**

These are two terms that God's grace and mercy do not remove. The first is "fear." Not terror and dread, but reverence and awe. The fear is that we might fall short.

*"phobos first had the meaning of **flight, that which is caused by being scared**; then, that which may **cause flight, (a) fear, dread, terror**, always with the significance in the four Gospels; ... (b) **reverential fear, (l)** of God, as a controlling motive of the life, in matters spiritual and moral, **not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him**, a fear which banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence, Rom. 8:15 and which influences the disposition and attitude of one who circumstances are guided by trust in God..." (Vine NT:5401).*

That is the clear meaning of all these passages. We must not become complacent and care-free. This is no the time.

*Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, **let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.** Heb 4:1-2*

*You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. **Do not be haughty, but fear.** 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. Rom 11:19-23*

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.** 2Cor. 7:1*

The depth of this fear is emphasized by the term "trembling." This is a serious fear that creates trembling and quaking. It does not come from God's side, but ours. We do not want to fall short and our concern should be deep enough to create this trembling. There is so much at stake! So much to win or lose.

*"tromos, .. a **trembling, quaking with fear**...with fear and trembling, used to **describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements, but religiously does his utmost to fulfil his duty**..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT: 5156)*

This is the anxiety of one who has a very important stake in something and as yet is unsure of the outcome. It is of great importance to the child of God reading this epistle to be aware of what this fear and trembling is to take in. This is not to be a universal fear, but a very specific one. One does

not have to fear and tremble when they consider whether God truly wants to save everyone.

*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who **desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.** 1 Tim 2:3-5*

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, **but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.** 2 Peter 3:9*

We never have to fear and tremble over how God feels toward us. He is ever longing for our salvation. No matter what our past might be like, no matter what our weaknesses are, God longs to save us and bring us to heaven with him. None should ever allow themselves to fear and tremble over whether God wants them or not.

Added to this is the promise that nothing outside of ourselves has any influence over how God views us, and whether or not he will give us the salvation we work so hard for. We do not have to fear and tremble over anything outside of ourselves hindering our salvation.

*For when we were still without strength, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly.** 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** Rom. 5:6-9*

*What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** 32 He who **did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? Rom. 8:31-34*

Thus there is no fear regarding God. All our fear comes from within. It is what is within our own heart. It lies in our own will and our own ability to make right decisions and do right things. We need only fear and tremble at our own distrust of ourselves, and then place ourselves totally into the hands of a faithful Creator.

### **13. for it is God who works in you**

With the “for gar- the previous statement is explained.” The Holy Spirit wanted it clearly understood, that this was not something God had left us to do alone. God had done everything possible to help us with it. There is no fear in regard to God’s love and intent for us. We know God loves us. He gave His only begotten son, He sent the gospel out into all the world. There is no doubt God will do everything possible. If we fear that, then we are not yet perfect in love. It is not God’s failure but our own that we fear.

***There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.** 1Jn. 4:18-19*

God wanted us to fully understand that “*working out our own salvation with fear and trembling*” was not something that we must do without help. Our salvation has been on God’s mind since before the creation of the heavens and the earth. (Eph. 1:3-4; 3:10-11). It was part of His eternal purpose and He has exerted His divine power to bring it about. Freely granting us everything necessary to work out our own salvation. In this way God is even now working in each of us!

***Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God** and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as **His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.** 2Pet. 1:2-4*

His divine power begins operating in our souls the very moment we first hear the gospel and make our decision to submit to it.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for **it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.** 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16-18*

*For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, **the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.** 1Th. 2:13-14*

This was part of Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians.

***the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;** that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and **what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,** Eph. 1:18-19*

The truth of this has shifted from side to side with different groups over the years. Some view this working as so powerful that it cannot be resisted. In reaction to this view others have considered this power to be weak and have viewed most of the power as coming from man himself. The truth is that God works with great power to help us. Yet all of this power is tied directly to our own heart. God has given us all things, but it takes faith and trust along with obedience and submission to complete it. There is power beyond comprehension working in us. The power of God’s foreknowledge and ability to bring about His purposes. The power of the word and of prayer. The power of God’s promises and His providence.

*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but **God is faithful, who will not allow you***

**to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1Cor. 10:13**

God is working within each of us through all the means available to Him that does not violate our freewill. Nothing outside of ourselves has the power to overcome God's working. The Greek "energeo" is used to speak of things that are operating, active and producing. God knows how to use His power to help us without overwhelming or compelling us. He will work right up to our own desire and ability to put forth our own efforts.

"*energēō* ... from *energēs* (1756), **in work, operative, active. To be at work, to be effective, operative.** (I) To work, be active, **produce an effect**, spoken of things (Matt 14:2; Mark 6:14, the power of miracles, works, "miracles are wrought by him" [a.t.]; see Eph 1:20; 2:2; Phil 2:13)." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1754)

*energeo* "**to put forth power, be operative, to work**" (its usual meaning), is rendered by the verb "to work effectually," or "to be effectual," in the KJV of 2 Cor 1:6; Gal 2:8 and 1 Thess 2:13;" (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1754)

His power is limitless. We are the only thing that can limit His power. Our faith and our choices will make the difference on the last day and that is why we need fear and trembling.

### **both to will and to work,**

We can count on God to do all of this for us. If we humble ourselves under His mighty hand, He can work and use us as He did Moses or any other faithful servant who will just do exactly what He says to do. This is why Saul failed and David succeeded. David sought to do God's will and God's will alone and the power of God worked mightily in Him. Our will is the most dangerous element in our salvation. The parable of the sower revealed just how much concern we must have with our will. Freedom to choose is one of the most precious things God has given to man. Yet, God knew how easily swayed we can be with temptation, the seductive nature of this world and the power of our adversary the devil to sway us as he did Eve in the beginning. If we truly seek salvation, and we want to do His will, we will submit our will to His. The will is formed through the years through choices and opportunities. Although there are two words for "will," they are so closely aligned that scholars are divided. Both speak of emotion and intellect. Of purpose and deliberation. Yet when all is said and done it is the place where decisions and the course of life are decided upon. Every sin begins with the will and all service to God also begins with the will. This is the term for resolve, intention, determination.

*My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises. Ps. 57:6*

*boulomai* [NT:1014], *thelō* [NT:2309] ... In many cases these two words are used without appreciable distinction, meaning **conscious willing, purpose**. But **frequently it is evident that a difference is intended**, although there is much difference of opinion as to the exact distinction. **Thayer** says that *boulomai* [NT:1014] "**seems to designate the will which follows deliberation**," *thelō* [NT:2309], "**the will which proceeds from inclination**." **Grimm**, on the other hand, says that *thelō* [NT:2309] gives prominence to the emotive element, *boulomai* [NT:1014] to the rational and volitive; *thelō* [NT:2309] signifies the choice, while *boulomai* [NT:1014] marks the choice as deliberate and intelligent. The view of **Cremer** on the whole seems preferable to any other. According to this view, *boulomai* [NT:1014] has the wider range of meaning, but *thelō* [NT:2309] is the **stronger word**, *thelō* [NT:2309] denotes the active resolution, the will urging on to action, see Rom 7:15, while *boulomai* [NT:1014] is rather to have in thought, to intend, to be determined. (Berry's Synonyms NT:1014)

When there is a difficult task, the will is the foundation. If we will, are motivated and convicted, nothing within can stop us. Motivation gives greater determination and purpose to any goal. To desire and want something badly enough that one resolves themselves to pay any price or make any sacrifice to gain it. Yet, as Jesus found in garden of Gethsemane, God's will and our will can come into conflict. The conflict between the influence of the lusts of the flesh and eyes and the pride of life and the influence of God's will must be resolved.

*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:15-17*

*"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Mt. 7:21*

God can help us to will if we will it. God will not force or compel our will. But He will give us information that will fix our will. Moses is a classic example. He refused (his own will) because God had worked on his will with the reward of faithful service. That choice took Moses through his entire life.

*By faith Moses, when he became of age, **REFUSED to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 CHOOSING rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 ESTEEMING the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he LOOKED to the reward. 27 By faith he FORSOOK Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he ENDURED as seeing Him who is invisible. Heb. 11:24-28***

The gospel is full of passages which will motivate any clear thinking person to make all the sacrifices and pay any price to gain their salvation. Paul affirms that it is to God that the credit is

given for our will being given completely to him. He works in us and gives us this motivation. Every time we read his word, or it is preached to us, the precious and exceeding great promises beckon us on to greater heights of service, to more self-denial, to greater sacrifices, and to a greater zeal to crucify the flesh. Truly his word is full of things which constantly have him working in us.

Yet it is not just our will that God works and helps us with, it is our work also. This term work is the same one that Paul used to describe God's working in us. God works for us in order that we might work for Him. This leads to all successfully working out their salvation with fear and trembling. It was defined above as "to be operative, be at work, put forth power." The key lies in our own free will being given completely to him. God wants us to trust him fully and desire to work for him. Without that God can neither work with or help us. He offers the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light. But we must put on the yoke and shoulder the burden ourselves.

**Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. **for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.** (Mt. 11:28-30).

The gospel was given that we might labor and toil for him and inherit eternal life. God promises he will take care of us from our infancy to our maturity. He works in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure. What a wonderful promise!

With the divine power of God granting us all things unto life and godliness, with the precious and exceeding great promises, with the power that effectually worketh in us that believe, with the power of God unto salvation, with the word that does not return to God void working in us, we cannot fail or fall unless we do not avail ourselves of God's power. The power is strictly and totally voluntary and dependent upon our own efforts to access it. This is at the same time Paul's encouragement to them and exhortation. It is yours, it is there, with fear and trembling work it out with full trust that God will never let you down as long as you do your part.

### for his good pleasure.

This final point is a wonderful breath of fresh air. The amazing and wonderful truth that God enjoys helping us! He enjoys working with us, helping us overcome our faults and weaknesses. He wanted to help us in every possible way and He feels delight and satisfaction in watching His people overcome and grow.

"*eudokia*... 1. *Unknown to prof. author.* ... **will, choice**; ... in particular, **good-will, kindly intent, benevolence**; ... 2. **delight, pleasure, satisfaction**; ...3. **desire** (for delight in any absent thing easily begets a longing for it): Rom 10:1..." (Thayer, p. 258; 2107)

*eudokia* ... lit., "**good pleasure**" (*eu*, "**well**," *dokeo*, "**to seem**"), implies a gracious purpose, a **good object being in view, with the idea of a resolve, showing the willingness with which the resolve is made.** It is often translated "**good pleasure**," e. g., Eph 1:5,9; Phil 2:13; in Phil 1:15, "good will"; in Rom 10:1, "**desire**," (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2107)

This is the third time in the NT, it has been revealed that it was not grudgingly or of necessity. God wanted to do it and it gave him pleasure. It stemmed from His good will, kindly intent and benevolence.

<i>according to (kata)</i>	<i>the good pleasure</i>	<i>of</i>	<i>His will,</i>	<i>Eph. 1:5</i>
<i>according to</i>	<i>His good pleasure</i>	<i>which</i>	<i>He purposed in Himself,</i>	<i>Eph. 1:9</i>
<i>for (huper - in behalf of</i>	<i>His good pleasure.</i>	<i>works in you</i>	<i>both to will and to work</i>	<i>Phil 2:13</i>

Since it was by His choice even before our creation, God wanted us to know of His kindly intent and benevolent desire toward us. Everything He is doing is to bring us back to Him. Even when we fall short as David or Saul of Tarsus, He still hopes and waits for our repentance so He can graciously forgive.

Thus, when we look at our salvation from our side, and the truth that we can grow weary or even fall, it should create fear and trembling within. But when we look at it from God's side, we know of His fixed desire to save us and bring us to heaven, then the fear narrows down to that one single point of our own will and work. God works in us here, but he will never interfere in our own desires. We must want to serve him with all our heart, soul, and mind. Here and here alone does the fear and trembling come in. Can we truly affirm that these have been completely removed from ourselves and our own selfish desires and been given into the hands of God.

### 14. Do all things without complaining and disputing,

As all Christians works out our own salvation with fear and trembling, now knowing and understanding that it is God who is working through the gospel to bring us to salvation, there must be a wall of separation from all complaints and disputes. We must keep ourselves far from and completely removed from these two qualities.

*chōris* **separated, far from, apart from, without** ... 1. Only John 20:7 ... uses this word as an adverb. The **handkerchief lay separately.** Otherwise *chōris* is used as an **improper preposition**... 41 NT occurrences, ... With genitive of the person *chōris* means **without, separated from**: "**Without connection to me you can do nothing**" (John 15:5); ... b) With gen. of the thing, that which one does not need or use: **without a foundation** (Luke 6:49); "**not without parables**" = "only with the aid of parables" (Mark 4:34; Matt 13:34)... **without grumbling** (Phil 2:14); without anger (1 Tim 2:8; 5:21); without your consent (Philem 14)... Without the presence of: **Without**

**the Spirit the body is dead, as is faith without works** (James 2:26); ..." (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:5565)

Complaining and murmuring always infer we do not think we are being treated fairly. With all God's grace, mercy and compassion, whatever He has commanded us to be done must be done without and feelings that things are unfair or unreasonable. When we begin to feel frustration and irritation and are tempted to mutter, grumble or speak of our displeasure by complaining, it is a direct affront to God who did so much for us and now asks us only what is reasonable.

*gogguzo* ... **"to mutter, murmur, grumble, say anything in a low tone"** (Eng., "gong"), an onomatopoeic word, representing the significance by the sound of the word, as in the word "murmur" itself, is **used of the laborers in the parable of the householder**, Matt 20:11; **of the scribes and Pharisees, against Christ**, Luke 5:30; of the Jews, John 6:41,43, **of the disciples**, 6:61; **of the people**, 7:32 (of debating secretly); **of the Israelites**, 1 Cor 10:10 (twice), where it is also used in a warning to believers. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT: 1111)

*goggusmos* ... **"a murmuring, muttering"** (akin to A, No. 1), is used in the sense of secret debate among people, John 7:12 (as with the verb in v. 32); (b) **of displeasure or complaining** (more privately than in public), said of Grecian Jewish converts against Hebrews, Acts 6:1; in general admonitions, Phil 2:14; 1 Peter 4:9, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1112)

We can see how God's people can fall into this sin. As Israel was led from Egypt to the promised land, they complained about how God was treating them. They complained about water, quality of water, lack of food, quality of food, and the hardship of having to enter the land of Canaan and fight such powerful enemies.

*for the Lord hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the Lord." Ex. 16:8*

*Now when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; for the Lord heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of the Lord burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp. Num. 11:1-2*

*"How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28 Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29 The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. Num. 14:27-30*

*Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe His word, 25 But complained in their tents, And did not heed the voice of the Lord. 26 Therefore He raised His hand in an oath against them, To overthrow them in the wilderness, Ps. 106:24-26*

The Holy Spirit warned the Corinthians that a lesson should be learned. No one in the church should ever complain, grumble or murmur as some of them did.

*nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 1Cor. 10:9-10*

It is clear from the account that discouragement and speaking against God is part of tempting Christ. We cannot expect a life of ease and blessings. Christ suffered and we are treating Him with contempt when we feel mistreated and unhappy if we must endure the same treatment.

*the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Num 21:4-6*

It is an insult both to God and His Christ when the people bought with the precious blood of the Son of God are unhappy, griping, and grumbling about the way they are being treated or the difficulty of the laws He has given. Nothing God asks us to do is not for our own best interest.

*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 1Jn. 5:3*

*And the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. 25 Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.' Deut 6:24-25*

They are not a burden, nor are they unfair. Nothing God asked us to do is above and beyond what is equitable and just. He never requires too much.

*Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" Lk. 17:9-10*

Complaining destroys the very purpose for which God called us. How can we glorify, praise and adore God and Jesus and at the same time feel we are not being treated fairly?

Along with complaining the life and work of the Christian must be separated and completely removed from "disputing." This is a neutral word for reflection, calculation, consideration and reckoning. But in the NT it is not neutral. These are the evil reasonings of those who seek to destroy Jesus or calculations that lead to pride or doubt. These are the evil thoughts of (Mt. 15:18), the futile thoughts of those who give up God (Rom. 1:21) the futile thoughts of the wise (1Cor. 3:20), and the evil thoughts of those who use partiality between the rich and the poor (Jas 2:4).

*dialogizomai* (NT:1260) **reflect on, consider; dialogismos** (NT:1261) **thought, consideration** ... 1. In usage outside the NT *dialogizomai* forcefully accents ... **the thought of calculating consideration**. ... a reckoning. ... **In the NT these concepts are employed almost exclusively with a negative connotation.** 2. In the majority of occurrences of the verb, it is used for **the deliberations of Jesus' opponents ... or of the disciples** ... These deliberations are **directed against either Jesus or something in the immediate environment**. ... Phil 2:14 (*dialogismos* with *goggusmos*) and 1 Tim 2:8 (*dialogismos* with *orgé*) ... **negative tendencies**. The concern is with **anxious reflection and the consideration of doubt...which must be avoided...** (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1260)

Those who love the Lord and seek to be genuine disciples do not deliberate and seek for reasons why what has been commanded is unreasonable. It is the step before murmuring and complaining. When Christians start deliberating on "why do I have to study the Bible?", "Why do I have to attend all services", "Why do I have to teach the lost?", they are sinning. No one has the right to question God in regard to the things he has asked us to do.

### 15. that you may become blameless and harmless,

When we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling and do everything without complaining or vain reasoning, the purpose and result (*hina*) will lead to becoming blameless and harmless. The process of becoming (*ginomai* – verb of being), blameless and harmless begins with working out our own salvation completely separated from any discontent or the reasoning that results from it. In this way, as quickly as possible, they will remove all blemishes and character flaws that cause harm and trouble.

*amemptos* unblameable (**from a, negative, and memphomai, to find fault**) ... (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:273)

*memphomai, amemptos* ... **memphomai means "to blame," "to scold," "to upbraid," ... "to chide," "to reproach," ... "to declare oneself dissatisfied with something,"** ... *amemptos*, **a person or object which is "without blame," "blameless,"** ... For *amemptos*, as for most words constructed with an a privativum, there is **no direct equivalent in Heb. Several positive terms are used such as pure, perfect, pious, righteous, ...** (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:273)

We can see harmless as the reason there is no blame. This is the sincere Christian who doesn't complain or reason because he is unmixed with anything but love, truth and submission. There is nothing foreign in his character since he is working out his own salvation with fear and trembling.

*akeraios* ... occurs only three times in the N. T. **the fundamental notion of *akeraios* ... is the absence of foreign admixture: ... Wine unmingled with water is *akeraios* ... To unalloyed metal the same epithet is applied.** ... That, we may say, is *akeraios*, which is in its true and natural condition ... freedom from disturbing elements. ... And finally, to sum up all, we may say, **that as the *akakos* (= 'innocens') has no harmfulness in him, and the *adolos* (= 'sincerus') no guile, so the *akeraios* (= 'integer') no foreign admixture, and the *haplous* (= 'simplex') no folds.** (Trench's NT, Synonyms NT:185)

*akeraios*, lit., "unmixed, with absence of foreign mixture" (**from a, negative, and *kerannumi*, "to mix"**), "pure," is used metaphorically in the NT of **what is guileless, sincere, Matt 10:16, "harmless"** (marg., "simple"), i. e. with **the simplicity of a single eye, discerning what is evil, and choosing only what glorifies God:** Rom 16:19, "simple (unto that which is evil)," KJV marg., "harmless"; Phil 2:15, "harmless," KJV marg., "sincere." The Greeks used it of wine unmingled with water, of unalloyed metal; (from Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:185),

The other two places this term is used helps round out our understanding of what God seeks here.

*"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Mt. 10:16*

*For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. Rom. 16:19*

The fruits of working out our own salvation is to be free from fault, free from guile, and innocent.

### children of God without blemish

To be children of God is a precious and wonderful thing. Those who believe in Jesus have the right, the Spirit bears witness with ours if we are, Only God's love could bestow such a wonderful gift and those who have it should purify themselves as He is pure by keeping His commandments and love our brethren.

*He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: Jn. 1:11-12*

*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. Rom 8:16-17*

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1Jn. 3:1-3*

*In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. 1Jn. 3:10*

Children of God refers to more than simply a relationship. It also refers to likeness. In order to be

like God, in order to be true children with the characteristics of one's father, Christians must be like God. Paul promises we will take on the characteristics of God in this world if we will strive with all our being for the attributes listed in this section. We were begotten by God at baptism, and the family relationship continues and we grow more and more like him. We are partakers of the divine nature. (2Pet. 1:4). Only by cheerfully fulfilling our Father's desires in this world can we fully take on his characteristics.

A third quality will also be produced by working out salvation with fear and trembling, without murmuring or disputing. God's children will continue to grow until they have cleansed the outward blemishes that plague the worldly minded.

*amōmos* ... [NT:299] is **faultless, without blemish, free from imperfections**. It refers **especially to character**. *amemptos* [NT:273] is strictly unblamed, one with whom no fault is found. ..." Berry's NT Synonyms NT:299)

*āmōmos*, adj. from the priv. a (1), without, and mōmos (3470), spot, blemish. **Spotless, without blemish**. In Class. Gr., used as a technical word to designate the absence of something amiss in a sacrifice or something which would render it unworthy to be offered (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:299)

Those seeking to destroy Daniel found this same problem.

*Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. 4 So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. 5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Dan. 6:3-5*

**in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,**

There are different types of generations in the history of this world. The generation Moses took out of Egypt was a perverse and rebellious generation. The generation Joshua led into the promised land was far different from the generation that followed.

*So the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord which He had done for Israel. 10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel. Judg 2:7-8*

Each generation has its own characteristics.

*There is a generation that curses its father, And does not bless its mother. 12 There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness. 13 There is a generation — oh, how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up. 14 There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, And whose fangs are like knives, To devour the poor from off the earth, And the needy from among men. Pr. 30:11-14*

It is interesting that in the life of Paul, who lived in the fulness of time, was now calling them crooked and perverse. Yet the gospel had been preached in 30 and it was now sixty so one generation had come and gone and another was about to leave. The generation that lived just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the severe persecutions that followed was called crooked.

This term was used of a very windy crooked road, something that is twisted and tangled, or bent and warped. When applied to a generation of people, their moral compass and deeds were equally as crooked, warped, twisted and tangled.

*skolios* ... "curved, crooked," was especially used (a) of a way, Luke 3:5, with spiritual import (see Pr 28:18, Sept.); it is set in contrast to *orthos* and *euthus*, "straight"; (b) metaphorically, of what is morally "crooked," **perverse, froward, of people belonging to a particular generation**, Acts 2:40 (KJV, "untoward"); Phil 2:15; of tyrannical or unjust masters, 1 Peter 2:18,..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4646)

*skolios*, curved, winding, twisted, tangled, Lat. obliquus, Hdt., Eur., etc.: **bent sideways, ... metaph. crooked, i.e. unjust, unrighteous**, Il., Hes., etc.; ... Hence *skoliotēs* (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4646)

*skoliós*; ... adj. from *skéllō* (n.f.), to dry. **Crooked, bent or warped from dryness, such as wood**. Of a way or parts of it (Luke 3:5 quoted from Isa 40:4; Sept.: Prov 2:15; Isa 42:16). **Figuratively, meaning crooked, perverse, wicked** (Acts 2:40; Phil 2:15; Sept.: Ps 78:8 Prov 22:5). Of masters, perverse, unjust, in contrast to *epieikeia* (1933), gentle, tolerant (1 Peter 2:18)..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4646)

An accurate yet terrible description Paul gave to Timothy a few years later gives us an idea of such a generation.

*But know this, that in the last days **perilous times will come**: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! 2Tim. 3:1-6*

While corrupt is warped and crooked, perverse is twisted, wrested, distorted and perverted. Morally, these are corrupt, misled and seduced.

*diastréphō*, from *diá* (1223), denoting separation, and *stréphō* (4762), to turn. **To turn or twist throughout or to distort, pervert**. Used metaphorically meaning to pervert; trans. spoken of persons meaning to turn away, seduce, mislead (Luke 23:2; Acts 13:8; Sept.: Ex 5:4; 1 Kings 18:17, 18). **Of things, meaning to pervert, wrest, corrupt** (Acts 13:10, "to turn aside divine truth" [a.t.]; Sept.: Prov 10:9; Mic 3:9). The perf. pass. part., *diestramménos*, **perverted or perverse, corrupt, vicious** (Matt 17:17; Luke 9:41; Acts 20:30; Phil 2:15). ..."

(Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1294

*diastrephō* twist; confuse ... 1. This compound verb appears 7 times in the NT (Phil 2:15; Matt 17:17 par. Luke 9:41; Luke 23:2; Acts 13:8,10; 20:30). **On three occasions it appears in connection with a citation from Deut 32:5 LXX** (Phil 2:15; Matt 17:17 par.). ...” (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1294)

When God told Moses to write the song for Israel to remember when they had gone through all the curses God had foretold, He used these two terms together.

***“They have corrupted themselves; They are not His children, Because of their blemish: A perverse and crooked generation. 6 Do you thus deal with the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you? Deut 32:5-6***

Perhaps this designation would apply to any generation, but the terrible things that were about to happen to Israel, and the cruelty of the nation that inflicted it upon them helps us to understand just how wicked, corrupt and perverse they were.

Those who work out their own salvation with fear and trembling can remain pure and clean in the midst of the very worst of generations. What a great promise from God.

**among whom you shine as lights in the world,**

*among whom you SHINE as lights in the world, NKJV; ESV*

*among whom ye ARE SEEN as lights in the world, ASV among whom you APPEAR as lights in the world, NASU*

Although there are two ways to translate the word “shine, it doesn’t change the meaning of the explanation. In many passages it is translated shine as “the sun and moon, or a lamp. Yet much more common is the sense of visible or manifested. But to be manifested or to shine are saying the same thing in different words. If one shines they will be seen and if one is manifested he will also be seen.

1. The active *phainō* is found both in the transitive sense “to manifest,” “to show” from Homer ... and also in the intransitive sense “to shine,” “to gleam,” ... *phainomai* for “to shine,” “to gleam,” esp. “to light up,” “to arise and shine,” of heavenly bodies, of persons “to become visible,” “to show oneself,” ... to appear as something,” “to make a show,” ... 2. In the NT the active *phainō* ... in the sense “to shine” of the sun in Rev 1:16, the sun and moon in Rev 21:23, the lamp John 5:35; ... is often used literally for “to shine,” “to light up,” “to rise and shine,” e.g., the star in Matt 2:7, stars in Phil 2:15 (fig.), lightning Matt 24:27; the light of the lamp Rev 18:23 vl. But much more common is the general sense “to be visible, manifest” James 4:14, or quite unemphatically “to occur” ...” (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:5316)

The more a disciple works out salvation with fear and trembling, and the less he is murmuring or disputing the more quickly this shining or becoming manifest will be seen. One of the interesting differences between this word and the equally common synonym “*dokeo*” is the reality of the manifestation. While the disciples were warned not to appear as fasting, it was because they really were fasting, not just putting on a pretense. It is also used of the tares appearing, the tombs outwardly appearing beautiful, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene.

*dokeō* [1380], *phainomai* [5316]. ***dokein* expresses the subjective mental estimate or opinion about a matter which men form, their *doxa* concerning it, which may be right (Acts 15:28; 1 Cor 4:9; ... but which also may be wrong; involving as it always must the possibility of error ... *phainesthai* on the contrary expresses how a matter phenomenally shows and presents itself, with no necessary assumption of any beholder at all... Thus, when Plato (Rep. 408 a) says of certain heroes in the Trojan war, ... , he does not mean they seemed good for the war and were not, but they showed good, with the tacit assumption that what they showed, they also were. ... *dokein* signifying ever, as we have seen, that subjective estimate which may be formed of a thing, not the objective show and seeming which it actually possesses, it will follow that our rendering of James 1:26 is not perfectly satisfactory: “If any man among you seem to be religious ... and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” *phainesthai* ... At Matt 6:18 (“that thou appear not unto men to fast”), ... the disciples in this verse are warned, not against the hypocrisy of wishing to be supposed to fast when they did not, ... but against the ostentation of wishing to be known to fast when they did; ... The force of *phainesthai*, ... We render (Phil 2:15), “among whom ye shine as lights in the world;” where, instead of ‘ye shine,’ it should stand, ‘ye are seen,’ or ‘ye appear.’ ...” (Trench’s NT NT:5316)**

Clearly the best commentary on the verse is found in the sermon on the Mount.

***“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matt 5:14-16***

Peter’s words mirror those of Paul and Jesus looking at it from a different perspective.

***Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1Pet. 2:11-12***

This partially answers the question of who sees them as lights. The world can only see it through the good works, which after seeing might bring a question, giving them the opportunity to give an answer for the hope that is in them. What of God and the angelic hosts. Does our spiritual shining appear as pinpoints of light in a dark and dismal world.

***But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble. Pr. 4:18-19***

*This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that **God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.** 6 **If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** 7 **But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.** 1Jn. 1:5-7*

If Christians are going to be living epistles, known and read of all men. If they are to be the lights that brings glory to God through their good works, then they are going to have to think carefully and act properly.

*You are our epistle written in our hearts, **known and read by all men;** 3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. 2Cor. 3:2-3*

***But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2Cor. 3:18***

## **16. holding fast the word of life;**

*holding FAST the word of life, NKJV  
holding FAST the word of life, NASU*

*holding FORTH the word of life; ASV  
holding FAST to the word of life, ESV*

This verse concludes the section of personal exhortation to the Philippians regarding how they are to serve others. He will move on in verse 17 to his own example of self-sacrifice and then conclude the section with Timothy and Epaphroditus each manifested the mind of Christ by counting others better than themselves. As seen above “*holding fast*” has two meanings. It could be the either the evangelistic holding forth or the conviction and steadfastness of holding fast.

*epéchō, from epí (1909), upon, and échō (2192), to have, hold. To have or hold upon, to hold out towards, to direct upon. ... (I) In the NT, used of the mind, to fix the mind upon, give heed to, pay attention, followed by a dat. and with nous (3563), ... In common with Eng., to hold up or on, meaning to hold back in the sense of to retain, not to lose (Phil 2:16), persevering in the acknowledgement and practice of the Christian doctrine. ... epéchō, prosechō ... to hold firmly to a particular belief - 'to hold firmly to, to continue to believe.' ... 'as you continue to hold to the word of life' Phil 2:16. It is also possible to understand epechō in Phil 2:16 as meaning 'to offer.' ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1907)*

As in the preceding verse, since both are true, it matters little which way we understand it. All Christians are to hold fast and hold forth the word of life. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1Tim. 3:15) with all the members holding fast their convictions in the truth. The church has been given exclusively the task of going into all the world to preach and make disciples. Paul told Timothy something similar.

*Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. 1Tim. 4:15-16*

## **that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ,**

The Holy Spirit has revealed to Paul that these things were essential for salvation. If they will do these things then these brethren will be part of the great work that he has done. He spoke more fully about this to the Corinthians many years earlier. The work of apostles, prophets, preachers, teachers, elders and deacons were very different from those who work with inanimate objects like brick or stone. They will stay exactly where placed and the work will reveal the true craftsmanship of the building. That is not true of those who work with God’s people. Moses worked as hard as Joshua but with far less of show for it. For Paul to glory in the sense he is using the word here, the Philippians must be faithful and hard working.

*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 1Cor. 3:11-15*

Paul here spoke of his own feelings. The word “glory” refers to his own self-esteem along with feelings of worth and value. Did my life make any difference? Did I help others along the way? If these brethren will work on the things outlined above then Paul’s answer will be yes. Boasting can be good in the sense of self-esteem and a sense of confidence and accomplishment as it is used here.

*kauchaomai boast (verb) (NT:2744) ... kauchéma, ... pride, arrogance; object of boasting (NT:2745) ... kauchésis, boasting (NT:2746): ... These 3 words appear in the NT a total of almost 60 times. ... The verb is most often intransitive and means **boast, the context indicating whether taking pride in a positive sense or boasting in the negative sense of bragging is in mind** ... A certain difference in meaning, based on the forms of the words, exists between the two nouns. *Kauchéma* expresses **what is said in boasting** (cf. 2 Cor 9:3), **the reason for boasting** (e.g., Gal 6:4), and **the basis for boasting** or that which makes it possible ... *kauchésis* designates more often **the action of boasting as such** (so 2 Cor 7:14; 8:24). ... (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2744)*

Everyone who seeks to build up the church of the Lord on the foundation of Jesus Christ will find these types of building materials. There are disciples of gold, silver and costly stone, and sad to say, there are disciples of wood, hay and stubble. The quality of these materials, and the efforts of those who seek to build with them determine the lasting value of their efforts. Paul felt very

keenly the great role the members of the congregations played in the value of his work. They had the ability to make all that he did shine, or make it all vain.

*that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient — Rom. 15:16-19*

*For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy. 1Th. 2:19-20*

**that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain.**

Paul often spoke of his work as an apostle and preacher as the running of a race.

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ... 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 1Cor. 9:24-26*

*And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Gal 2:2-3*

*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Tim 4:6-8*

Paul intended to and did run with patience the race set before him. But it will only be because of the efforts of the brethren he baptized and made disciples that that race will bear any fruit. He doesn't want his life to be spent in vain, empty and fruitless like so many of the prophets before him. The work alone will be enough for him to have a crown, but he would like his life to end with many brought to the Lord.

*"kenos,... empty; 1. prop. of places, vessels, etc., which contain nothing... metaph. empty, vain; devoid of truth... 2. of men, empty-handed, without a gift:... metaph. destitute of spiritual wealth, ... 3. metaph. of endeavors, labors, acts, which result in nothing, vain, fruitless, without effect... in vain to no purpose..." (Thayer, p. 343; 2756)*

If the Philippians quit now or at any time in the future then all of Paul's work with them would have been in vain. In order to make what Paul has done meaningful and of value they must continue to the very end of their lives. The labor was intense and wearisome. He was beat and exhausted with the great effort he had put forth.

*kopos, kopiao ... In secular Greek kopos means a. beating, weariness as though one had been beaten, and b. the exertion or trouble which causes this state, In prose it is the proper word for physical tiredness induced by work; exertion or heat. Expressing severe labour, ... Along the same lines kopiaō means a. to tire, ... (in battle), and b. to make great exertions, to wear oneself out, whether through physical or mental effort, ... (Kittel, TDWNT NT:2872).*

*kopiāō ... from kópos (2873), labor, fatigue. To be worn out, weary, faint, used intrans. (Matt 11:28; ) To weary oneself with labor, to toil, used in an absolute sense (Luke 5:5; Acts 20:35;) of the lilies (Matt 6:28; ); of a teacher who labors in the gospel (John 4:38; 1 Cor 15:10; 16:16)... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2872*

**17. Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith,**

Paul now turns to the darkest and most dismal of all prospects and turns it into a beautiful and meaningful sacrifice. Paul still does not know what the verdict of the trial will be. He may be put to death. If he is put to death then it will be because of his efforts among the Gentiles of whom the Philippian church was one. He now considers this as a sacrifice in behalf of them. The term offered is a word used in the Old Testament and brought into the septuagint and then into the NT.

*spendo ... [in LXX chiefly for nasac [OT:5258] to pour out as a drink-offering, make a libation; passive ... spendomai I am poured out or offered as a libation ... Phil. 2:17 ... 2Tim. 4:6 Abbott-Smith Manual Greek Lexicon NT:4689)*

*So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. 2Sam. 23:16-17*

A sacrifice is a victim offered up in behalf of another. Paul considers his own pending death as making him a victim offered up as a sacrifice in their behalf.

*thusia primarily denotes "the act of offering"; then, objectively, "that which is offered" (a) of idolatrous "sacrifice," Acts 7:41; (b) of animal or other "sacrifices," as offered under the Law, Matt 9:13; 12:7; ... (c) of Christ, in His "sacrifice" on the cross, Eph 5:2; Heb 9:23, where the plural antitypically comprehends the various forms of Levitical "sacrifices" in their typical character; 9:26; 10:12,26; (d) metaphorically, (1) of the body of the believer, presented to God as a living "sacrifice," Rom 12:1; (2) of faith, Phil 2:17; (3) of material assistance rendered to servants of God, Phil 4:18; (4) of praise, Heb 13:15; (5) of doing good to others and communicating with their needs, Heb 13:16; (6) of spiritual "sacrifices" in general, offered by believers as a holy priesthood, 1 Peter 2:5. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2378)*

Not only is he the sacrifice, but he is also working as a priest in offering it.

*leitourgia* akin to *leitourgos* (see MINISTER, A, No. 2.), to which the meanings of *leitourgia* correspond, is used in the NT of "sacred ministrations," (a) priestly, Luke 1:23; Heb 8:6; 9:21; (b) figuratively, of the practical faith

of the members of the church at Philippi regarded as priestly sacrifice, upon which the apostle's lifeblood might be poured out as a libation, Phil 2:17; (c) of the "ministration" of believers one to another, regarded as priestly service, 2 Cor 9:12; Phil 2:30...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3009),

Paul, like Stephen before him, was in a position where his zeal in fulfilling the commands of the Lord could possibly bring the death sentence upon him. Should this occur it will have a great faith boosting affect on those who witnessed it. He believed what he preached and died for it. If this be the case then Paul will view it as the ultimate service which he could render to their faith.

There are many such passages in the NT where our actions are seen as a sacrifice to God working and functioning as priests of old

*that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Rom 15:16-17*

*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 2 Tim 4:6-7*

*For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. 2 Cor 2:15-16*

*And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Eph 5:2*

*Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. Phil 4:18-19*

*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. Rom 12:1-2*

*Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Heb 13:15-16*

**I am glad and rejoice with you all:**

Should this be the ultimate end, do not cry for Paul. He has already spoken of this in 1:19-24. His own personal feelings are that it is better for him to depart and be with Christ. If he can by his departing offer one last great boost to their own faith and zeal for the Lord, then he will be joyous and rejoicing.

He is filled with joy at the prospect of being spent for their souls. The weeping and mourning would only be for their loss, but Paul wants them to know that it is not a loss to him.

**18. For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.**

Paul here and now expresses to them that if it should come to that, far from murmuring and questioning why it had to be that way, that they will see the truth in all of it and rejoice right along with Paul. Paul's own maturity in this section shines forth clearly. There is not an ounce of selfishness left in him. He sees his own death in the light of its value to others. He is not simply looking to his own things, but to the things of others also. This letter might have been full of self-pity and whining. It is not. It is full of faith, hope and unselfish devotion to the needs of others.

## **2:18-24 The example of Timothy.**

At first glance this looks like it is just the next phase in the book and an explanation of events at Rome. Yet in introducing both Timothy and Epaphroditus, Paul also continues the theme of putting on the mind of Christ. Timothy has the mind of Christ and will "truly care for your state." Epaphroditus has the mind of Christ and "came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me." These both mirror the mind of Christ in every way. It certainly puts them into the category of "counting others better than himself" and "looking also to the things of others."

**19. But I hope in the Lord Jesus**

As an inspired apostle, Paul here reveals something similar to what James revealed.

*Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Jas. 4:13-16*

Christians have no control over their lives. The heathen speak as though they are in complete control over everything, but no one has such control and by faith the disciple makes it clear that he knows His life is in God's hand and it is only by God's grace and will that Paul can say he will soon send Timothy. It is a matter of faith and trust and of want God to control our life. If God doesn't want us to be involved in a certain activity, we too should not want to be involved.

**to send Timothy shortly unto you,**

A brief overview of Timothy's life and his relationship with Paul will help get a full picture of this section. Paul met Timothy on his second missionary journey (although he may have been instrumental in his conversion since he calls him his true son in the fiath.

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, **a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.** 3 **Paul wanted to have him go on with him.** And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. Acts 16:1-4

After selecting and bringing him along, Timothy never disappointed Paul as John Mark had. He went with Paul to Galatian and worked with him in Philippi, Berea, and Thessalonica. His name is added to several of Paul's letters probably because the information Paul received had come from him.

*For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.* 1Cor. 4:17

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,* 2 Cor 1:1

*Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,* Phil 1:1

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,* Col 1:1

*1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,* 1 Thess 1:1

*1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,* 2 Thess 1:1

Most of what we learn about Timothy are found in the letters written to him. Either just before or as Paul met him prophecies were given about him.

*This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,* 1Tim. 1:18-19

*Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.* 1Tim. 4:14

Even his mother and grandmother are mentioned and their influence on him described.

*when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.* 6 *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.* 2Tim. 1:5-6

His relationship with Paul over the years is summed up in the final letter written to him just before Paul's death.

*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra — what persecutions I endured.* 2Tim. 3:10-11

*you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.* 15 *and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* 2Tim. 3:14-15

Luke tells us that Timothy went with him at least as far as Asia on his way to Jerusalem with the bounty for the needy saints. Perhaps along with Luke he went with him to Rome. He is again with Paul in his imprisonment at Rome although we are not told when or how long he had been with him.

**that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.**

Paul has not seen the Philippians for at least three years. He has had some correspondence with them through Epaphroditus, but that could have been a year or more previous. He has no real idea how things are progressing there. This lack of knowledge has led to a concern which can be comforted only by new information on the present state of things. Epaphroditus is evidently to be sent right then and there with the letter, but he was not to return.

He wants news about their state so he can be comforted.

*eupsuchēō, from eúpsuchos (n.f.), of good courage, which is from eú (2095), well, and psuché (5590), soul, mind. To be animated, be in good spirits ...* Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2174)

*eupsucheō ... : to be or to become encouraged and hence cheerful - 'to be encouraged, to take courage, to become encouraged.' 'so that I may be encouraged by news about you' Phil 2:19. 'but now I beg you, take courage' Acts 27:22. ...* (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2174)

When Paul finds out how things are going to turn out for him in the trial he will send Timothy with that news and then Timothy will return to him with a report on how they are doing. This will lead to Paul's happiness and contentment for he is concerned about his friends and fellow workers after this long absence.

**20. For I have no man likeminded,**

This begins a very difficult Scripture. The term no man is a strong negation. There are none. Yet Paul had many co-workers, Barnabas, Luke, Silas, even Epaphroditus in this next verse.

*"oudeis... and not one, no one, none, no; it differs from meideis as ou does from me... 1. with nouns... 2. absolutely, ... nothing whatever, not at all, in no wise..."* (Thayer, p. 462; 3762)

*oudeis ... a negative reference to an entity, event, or state - 'no one, none, nothing.' oudeis 'no prophet is accepted in his own hometown' Luke 4:24; 'no one can serve two masters' Matt 6:24; 'I have done no wrong to*

the Jews' ..." Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3762

Is Paul saying that of all his co-workers there is not like Timothy. Like minded is literally of equal soul with Timothy.

*isópsuchos*: adjective from *ísos* (2470), equal, and *psuché* (5590), soul, mind. To be activated by the same motives, of like character, like-minded (Phil 2:20). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2473)

So Paul is affirming that no one is like Timothy when it comes to being like minded, but likeminded to what? This is why it is so important to keep this in context. He has already explained what this likemindedness refers to.

*fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2:2-6*

Timothy has gone further down this road than all his other co-workers. This is such a difficult path to enter. To put everyone else's needs above our own is very complex and hard to maintain. Most people will serve others, but still want to reserve some time for themselves. They have their own things. There is nothing wrong with this, but some take it a step further.

*But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord — how he may please the Lord. 33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world — how he may please his wife. 1 Cor 7:32-34*

This is the reasoning those who teach celibacy would use. The giving up of all worldly concerns to serve Christ is a special gift Timothy possessed. Paul simply held him up for the ability Timothy had gained that none of his other co-workers had attained and which they would not take offense as it is something one chooses to do.

*Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? 1 Cor 9:5*

Timothy had gone this far. He "does not look only to his own things," and "counts others better than himself." Paul selected this term as an explanation of why Timothy was so special. No one had a soul like or equal to Timothy. Timothy's devotion to God with his soul, and his devotion to others is of such a high and noble calibre that there just isn't any one else like him that Paul could send.

### who will care truly for your state.

Timothy has no guile, nor is he pushing himself beyond what he truly is capable of doing. He is genuine, legitimate, and his care and concern is real.

*gnésios*: pertaining to possessing purported good character or quality - 'genuine, real.' ... 'trying to find out how genuine your love is' 2 Cor 8:8... 'who genuinely cares about you' Phil 2:20. Greek-English Lexicon NT:1104)

*gnésios*; adv. from *gnésios* (1103), legitimate. Sincerely (Phil 2:20). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1104)

Timothy will sincerely and genuinely care about them. He has learned from Paul and Jesus. He truly, without hypocrisy and pretending, without selfish motivations and desires to put himself forward in factiousness, cares about how other Christians are doing. His concern is that of a brother to his family. He has careful and anxious concern for them leading him to be intent on it and striving to help them in whatever way he can.

*merimnao*; *merimna* ... has the same wealth of meaning as the Eng. "to care" ("care"). It means a. "to care for someone or something," e.g., children, ... Then it means b. careful or anxious "concern about something," This concern for or about something may have a future orientation, and it can thus mean either c. "to be intent on something," ... "to strive after something," ... even to the point of "ambition," ... d. "anxious expectation of something," "anxiety in face of something, of what may come," ... in this sense often linked with phobos ... has the sense of e. "solicitude" or "grief" about something, ... or of f. "brooding," "speculating," "enquiring"; ... Often without any specific object there is ref. to cares as the worrying and tormenting cares which belong to human life ... (Kittel TDWNT; 3309)

## 21. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.

Once again we must move cautiously through this section. Who is the "they all"? Does it take in all of Paul's traveling companions? Does it take in all the saints at Rome? Does it refer to all the other people that Paul knows? When this is compared with Paul's words in his final epistle in the same city (Rome) written to this same Timothy with the death sentence passed upon him, it carries a clearer message:

*Give diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you; This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 16 The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 2 Tim 1:15-17*

*Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. 12 And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come — and the books, especially the parchments. ... 16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. 17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached*

*fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 2Tim. 4:11-18*

From these passages it would appear that even during the days of the apostles truly dedicated people were few and far between. Yet, this was a dire circumstance not often repeated. It is not stated that they fell away from the Lord, only that they did not stand with Paul. In a time where being close to Paul could bring death, the bar was much higher.

None could be found in the entire Roman church to take a stand with Paul during his second imprisonment.

What exactly did Paul mean here? Does he infer that all the Christians in Rome were purely selfish and had no love for anyone not even Christ? This would certainly not fit in well with the letter written to the Romans. If they were so reprobate that they had no love whatever for the Lord and his cause Paul would have to rebuke them sharply for lack of faith. No, it is not in the supreme acts of selfishness that this problem is to be found.

Their problem lay in priorities. There are those who are Christians and will give up enough for Christ to be Christians, but who will not go above and beyond what they deem their call of duty. They will serve Christ, but when an exceptionally difficult responsibility comes along they will not offer to take it. They will hope for another to take it, for they love Christ and their brethren, but not above themselves. Christian growth in motivation seems to follow along the same lines for most people. It begins with fear and dread of God and of being cast into hell. This is the motivation which prompts many to obey the gospel. It soon progresses into a desire to go to heaven and be with God. This is the motivation which many Christians use to keep them faithful. For some, and these are the rare ones that Paul speaks of here, the love of God reaches into their hearts and they leave all motivations which are directly related to gain for themselves. These are the ones who serve God and their fellow man primarily for the sake of helping them.

*I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, Rom. 9:1-3*

How many could wish such a thing? That they could lose their own hope of heaven in order to save others from a fate in hell? This was Paul's attitude, it was also Timothy's, but few others could Paul point out who had it. From what he says above it appears that no one in Rome other than Timothy had it at that time. It was Paul's hope to instill it into the hearts of the Philippian also. It's path can only be found by a diligent study of the words in Phil 2:1-11.

Reading in Greek instead of English gives a better sense. "*For they all seek also their own interests and not only the things of Christ.*" it would more clearly understood.

Once again the point is simple and of a single focus. It is not everything, but only the motivation and *agape-love*. These are not necessarily character flaws, just lack of growth and an inability to see just how deep it can go. Timothy saw it better than everyone else Paul was associated with at that time. Perhaps too he is only thinking of those who are in Rome with him at that time.

## **22 But you know his proven character,**

They had been watching Timothy since the first day they entered Philippi. They had watched how he handled the persecution of Paul and Silas and how he had held up and continued in the work. Perhaps they had seen other things as well. But they knew, along with Paul that Timothy had been tested in battle, and was both reliable and trustworthy.

**The stem word is *doke (doche)* "watching" *dokimos* as an adj. both of person and object thus denotes, a. **tested in battle,** "reliable," "trustworthy," b. a man who is tested, significant, recognized, esteemed, worthy" ... or an object which is tested, genuine or valuable... it is particularly used of metals,... *adokimos*, the opp of *adokimos*, .... *dokime*. This word is very rare, there being no instances prior to Paul. It means "testing" or "certifying, ... *dokimion* is a neuter of an abject. *Dokimios*, "tested," "genuine,"... *dokimazein*. This verb is found everywhere in the sense of "to test," "to try." ... *dokimasia* means "testing"... (Kittel Vol 2 p 255-256)**

*"dokime... 1. in an active sense, a proving, trial... 2. **approvedness, tried character...** 3. a proof [objectively], a specimen of tried worth..." (Thayer p 154; 1382)*

Timothy had been with Paul for at least 10-12 years. During that time many incidents had come up where Timothy's soul and character had been tested. Through persecution, deprivation, trials and loss, Timothy had retained his integrity and his love for Paul and for God. He had been with Paul during those early days at Philippi. He had proven himself over long years of service to be a very dedicated and faithful disciple.

## **that as a son with his father**

As an an apostle of Jesus Christ, and a man old enough to be Timothy's father, led to Timothy and Paul holding a very special relationship. Timothy's love for God and his Son Jesus, his love for the kingdom and for its growth throughout the entire world, were enough to endear him to Paul as well as to make him love Paul as a father. He loved Paul for his works sake. There had evidently sprung up between Paul and Timothy a love which comes from shared work and mutual respect. These

two thus labored together, both with the same mutual goals and desires. Paul then gives Timothy the greatest of all compliments:

**he served with me in the gospel.**

As Jesus had taken the form of a servant, so Paul Timothy was a servant with Paul in the gospel. He uses the term for slavery because that is exactly how he and Timothy served Jesus. This was not a casual service.

*“doulos sundoulos, doule douleuo, douleia. ... All the words in this group serve either to describe **the status of a slave or an attitude corresponding to that of a slave.** ... The meaning is so unequivocal and self-contained that it is superfluous to give examples of the individual terms or to trace the history of the group. ... Hence **we have a service that is not a matter of choice for the one who renders it, which he has to perform whether he likes or not, because he is subject as a slave to an alien will, to the will of his owner...**” (Kittel, Vol 2, p. 261-280; NT:1401)*

This is a wonderful example for all to strive to follow. Thus this attitude on Timothy's part had given him the great ability to be used in many capacities in the cause of Christ that were closed to those whose selfish feelings would not allow them to be “meet for the masters use.” (II Tim. 2:20-21).

**23. Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me:**

Although there is a sense of urgency, nothing has yet been decided. Although in the previous chapter Paul expressed his own sense of how things were going to go, he did not yet know of a certainty. But as soon as he does know, “from that very hour” he would

*exautes, "at once" (from, ek, "out of," and autes, the genitive case of autos, "self or very," agreeing with "hour" understood, i. e., "from that very hour"), is translated "forthwith" in the RV in Mark 6:25 (KJV, "by and by"); Acts 10:33 (KJV, "immediately"); 11:11 (ditto); 21:32 (ditto); 23:30 (KJV, "straightway"); Phil 2:23 (KJV, ... (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1824),*

Only one thing holds him from sending him right then. The outcome of Paul's trial is soon to be decided. He will hold Timothy with him until that time. Then he will send him forth with that news and with the duty of spending some time with them to care for and help them to grow.

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

Once again Paul expresses his own hope that he will be set at liberty and will be allowed to visit them himself. Paul leaves it completely in the hands of the Lord. But he has confidence that his prayers will be answered and he will once again be set at liberty and continue to do all the things that need to be done.

He has expressed himself clearly on this in 1:19-27 where he speaks of his own feelings regarding his coming death. For him it will be the best of all possible things. For those left behind, it will mean the end of all possible help for them from him. With these two thoughts clearly in his mind and with his own feelings that their needs outweigh his personal desires he had been praying to and trusting in the Lord that he will soon be released and be allowed to be with them once again.

Everything that was stated about Timothy also applies to Epaphroditus. He is a part of this narrative, not simply to fill them in on the details, but to once again illustrate the mind of Christ to us.

**25. But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus,**

This is an example of Paul's willingness to sacrifice something that benefitted him for the needs of others. He had learned that this was troubling and concerning to the brethren there at Philippi, and that it was also bothering Epaphroditus, that word had come to them that he had been sick. After Paul weighed and compared the two alternatives, he came to a conclusion he now passes on to them.

*hegeomai... 2. i.q. to consider, deem, account, think... hegeomai and nomizo denote a belief resting not on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts; ... (Thayer, p. 276; 2233)*

*“hegeomai... signifies "to lead"; then, "to lead before the mind, to suppose, consider, esteem"; translated "esteem" in Phil 2:3, KJV, RV, "counting"; in 1 Thess 5:13, "esteem"; in Heb 11:26 (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2233)*

As the facts on one side (keeping Epaphroditus with him to continue helping him in his work) and the facts on the other side (easing their minds and comforting them), he found there was only one side that was really “necessary.” By the bonds of love and friendship, Paul felt constrained and under compulsion to send him back.

*“anagkaios, ...necessary; a. what one cannot do without, indispensable... b. connected by the bonds of nature or of friendship;...c. what ought according to the law of duty to be done, what is required by the conditions of things;” (Thayer, p. 36; NT:316)*

*anagkaios ... with or by force: 1. act. constraining, applying force, ... under compulsion, 2. of arguments,*

forcible, cogent, ll. **passive constrained, forced**, 2. **necessary**, ... 3 necessary things, needs, as food, sleep, the appointed order of things, laws of nature, 4. absolutely necessary, **indispensable**, barely sufficient; the least height that was absolutely necessary, 5. of persons, connected by necessary ties, i.e. related by blood, ld., etc. (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:316)

Although some have put forth the possibility that there was no one else but Epaphroditus to send the letter to them, and that very well could have been the case. This would certainly have made it necessary to send Epaphroditus, but in the context here it doesn't fully fit the ideas of this chapter. If we take all that Paul said here, the necessity was in the needs of others. As we break down the entire passage we see 4 things on the one side that made it necessary and 6 things on the other side that made it a difficult decision.

#### **What made it necessary**

**since** he was (1) **longing for you all**, and (2) **distressed you had heard he was sick**.

**Therefore** I sent him the more eagerly,

**in order that** when you see him again (3) **you may rejoice**, and (4) **I may be less sorrowful**.

Paul also makes it clear what made this a difficult decision. Epaphroditus was:

#### **What made it difficult**

(1) **was my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier**,

(2) **but your messenger** and (3) **the one who ministered to my need**;

(4) **for the work of Christ he came close to death**, (5) **not regarding his life**,

(6) **to supply what was lacking in your service toward me**.

Paul made it very clear. He was a man who had worked tirelessly for the work of Christ. A man who would therefore have endeared himself to Paul. Thus he as a fellow worker and a fellow soldier. He had ministered to Paul's needs and in so doing had come close to death. Yet in all of this he had never once refused to do anything that would hazard his life. He was a man compelled with a sense of duty to supply what the money he had brought could not bring.

#### **my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier**,

That Paul had a great deal of respect and appreciation for this man's faith and courage is apparent from the glowing words used to describe him. He is first of all a brother which would include all baptized believers who in that act have become born again into the family of God. It is interesting to see how many times and how many different ways this term was used in the letters of the apostles.

One of the great blessings given to us when we are baptized into Christ is the adoption into the family of God. With Jesus as our brother and all of us a children of God, we are all brothers and sisters. Paul used this term in a complimentary way as also did Peter.

*Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and **Sosthenes our brother**, 1Cor. 1:1*

*Now concerning **our brother Apollos**, 1Cor. 16:12*

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and **Timothy our brother**, 2Cor. 1:1*

*I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find **Titus my brother**; 2Cor. 2:13*

***Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord**, will make all things known to you; Eph. 6:21-22*

***Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord**, Col. 4:7*

*with **Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you**. Col. 4:9*

*sent **Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ**, 1Th. 3:2*

*and Timothy our brother, To **Philemon our beloved friend and fellow laborer**, Philem. 1-2*

*because **the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother**. Philm. 7*

*I appeal to you for **my son Onesimus**, whom I have begotten while in my chains, Philm. 10-11*

*that you might receive him forever, 16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave — **a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you**, both in the flesh and in the Lord. Philm. 15-16*

***Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord**; refresh my heart in the Lord. Philm. 20*

*Know that **our brother Timothy has been set free**, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. Heb. 13:23*

*By **Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him**, I have written to you briefly, 1Pet. 5:12*

*as also **our beloved brother Paul**, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 2Pet. 3:15-16*

***I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ**, Rev. 1:9*

Not only is he Paul's brother, but he is also a fellow worker. A man who worked side by side on an equal footing shouldering the work. A co-worker and co-laborer, working side by side in the great cause of furthering the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"*sunergos*, "**fellow-worker**," "**helper**," ... and the derived *sunergeō* "**to work with**," "**to help**," "**to help to something**" ... The reference is to a **work or achievement which is more or less equally divided among fellow-workers** ... The noun *sunergos* occurs 13 times in the NT, always plural ... Paul uses *sunergos* in

various connections for his pupils and companions,... describes the sphere of common labour. One is not to see in all this unconditional equality with the apostle. Paul never yielded to anyone the singularity of his position. But he honoured his companions by using this and similar terms, thereby consolidating their authority in the churches. ..." (Kittle, TDWNT; NT:4904)

While the term soldier is used many times in the NT for the soldiers who crucified Jesus, guarded Peter in Prison and took Paul to Rome, the spiritual use is only found here, in Philemon and once in Timothy. The whole armor of God in Ephesians and Paul's warning to Timothy reveal exactly how the Holy Spirit used the term.

*You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. 2Tim. 2:3-5*

Only those who have endured such hardship with Paul could be given this term. As a fellow soldier, Paul deemed Epaphroditus as and equal in this great battle.

*sustratiōtēs ... fellow soldier, comrade ... Only figurative in the NT. Phil 2:25, of Epaphroditus (with adelphos sunergos) as a term of honor (cf. vv. 29 f.); Philem 2, of Archippus. This usage presupposes the metaphor of the struggle of faith on behalf of the gospel in a world hostile to God (cf. Phil 1:27-30; 3:18; 4:3; Rom 13:12; 2 Cor 6:7; 10:3-6; 1 Thess 5:8; Col 2:1; Eph 6:10 ff.) ... According to Suetonius ... Caesar honored his own troops by addressing them as commilitones ... sustratiōtai). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4961)*

Thus in three different ways Paul honors their messenger. We have shared the same conflicts, he has helped and worked by my side in carrying the gospel to whatever place it need be. He could be his legs going where Paul could not go while he was a prisoner in Rome. By these words, since his arrival in Rome, Epaphroditus had been an indispensable helper to Paul. One whom he now sorrows to see go, but will give him up for the greater good by sending Epaphroditus home to Philippi with the letter which along with his own return will give them great comfort.

### but your messenger

Generally messenger is *angelos* from which we get angel because angels are God's messengers. Whenever someone is sent with a message or a gift, he would be considered an *angelos*. Paul doesn't use *angelos*, but *apostolos*. As Jesus had sent His apostles out to serve him giving their lives in His service, so had the Philippians with Epaphroditus. He was not just a messenger who brought funds to Paul. He was sent as a servant to serve Paul.

*"apostolos, "an apostle," is translated "messengers" in 2 Cor 8:23 regarding Titus and "the other brethren," whom Paul describes to the church at Corinth as "messengers of the churches," in respect of offerings from those in Macedonia for the needy in Judea; in Phil 2:25, of Epaphroditus as the "messenger" of the church at Philippi to the apostle in ministering to his need; (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:652)*

While what the messengers of the churches that brought the money to Jerusalem did after bringing the money is not mentioned, Epaphroditus not only brought money, but had either been commissioned to remain and help Paul, or had volunteered to do so. Paul will speak of the money he brought in the last chapter, but here focuses on the services he had rendered after he brought the money.

*Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. Phil. 4:18*

### and the one who ministered to my need;

This word is only used five times in the NT. Civil government is "God's minister," angels are God's ministers, Jesus is the "Minister of the sanctuary," Paul is a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, and Epaphroditus ministered to Paul's needs while he was in prison.

*leitourgos ... , denoted among the Greeks, firstly, "one who discharged a public office at his own expense," then, in general, "a public servant, minister." In the NT it is used (a) of Christ, as a "Minister of the sanctuary" (in the Heavens), Heb 8:2; (b) of angels, Heb 1:7 Ps 104:4; (c) of the apostle Paul, in his evangelical ministry, fulfilling it as a serving priest, Rom 15:16; that he used it figuratively and not in an ecclesiastical sense, is obvious from the context; (d) of Epaphroditus, as ministering to Paul's needs on behalf of the church at Philippi, Phil 2:25; here, representative service is in view; (e) of earthly rulers, who though they do not all act consciously as servants of God, yet discharge functions which are the ordinance of God, Rom 13:6." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3011)*

Since its root meaning is a public serving the needs of others, that is clearly its meaning here. Either appointed by, or volunteered above and beyond, Epaphroditus was a serving Paul's needs. These were needs that money could not fulfill. Doing those things for Paul which, since he was chained to a soldier and limited in his movements could not do.

*"chreia... necessity, need: such things as suited the exigency, such things as we needed for sustenance and the journey,... to supply what is absolutely necessary for life... there is need, followed by an accusative with infinitive... there is need of something... to have need of (been in want of) something... to have need... the condition of one deprived of those things which he is scarcely able to do without, want, need... one's necessities..." (Thayer, p. 670; 5532)*

He was sacrificing his life for Paul.

## 26 since he was longing for you all,

With a seldom used conjunction, Paul then emphasized an additional ground and motive for the reason he was sending him back to them.

*epeidé*, conjunction from *epeí* (1893), as, because, and *dé* (1211), indeed, a particle of affirmation or emphasis. As indeed, as now, spoken in the NT only of a ground or motive, meaning since indeed, since now, because now, inasmuch as, ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1894)

This time the reason comes from within the heart of Epaphroditus. There was a deep longing within his heart for the church at Philippi. Through various ways Paul had become aware of this great concern and being a caring and selfless man, it weighted on his heart.

*epipotheo*... : to long for something, with the implication of recognizing a lack - 'to long for, to deeply desire, deep desire....' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 1971)

*epipotheo*... "to long for greatly" (a strengthened form of *potheo*, "to long for," not found in the NT), is translated "I long," in Rom 1:11; in 2 Cor 5:2, RV, "longing" (KJV, "earnestly desiring");..." (Vine's, NT:1971)

## and was distressed

This word is only used three times in the NT and the other two describe Jesus anguish in the garden of Gethsamane as he is offering up strong cries to God. Here it is used of the state of mind in Epaphroditus knowing that others were worried about him, but with no means to ease their mind.

*adémoneō* "to be troubled, much distressed," is used of the Lord's sorrow in Gethsemane, Matt 26:37; Mark 14:33, KJV, "to be very heavy," RV, "to be sore troubled": of Epaphroditus, because the saints at Philippi had received news of his sickness, Phil 2:26, ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:85)

## because you had heard that he was sick

*dióti*; conj. made up from *diá* (1223), for, and *hóti* (3754), that. On account of this or that, for this reason, that, simply because, ..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1360)

"*dioti*, conjunction for *diá touto hoti for the reason that, since*, 2. indirect, *wherefore, for what reason*," (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT:1360)

His sorrow came from the realization that his brethren were worried about his state since they had heard that he was very ill. Thus the strong feelings of one who "counts others better than himself" and "doesn't look only to his own things" is again brought out clearly in this man's attitude. How many today would be more concerned about a congregation that had heard they were sick and were worried about them, than about themselves, being glad that others were very concerned about them?

## 27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him,

Though the illness itself is not mentioned, the terrible affects of it are clearly brought out. He was nigh unto death. "Nigh unto" is defined:

*paraplésion*; adverb, nearby, from *pará* (3844), close to, and *plésios* (4139), near. Nearby, close to, similarly (Phil 2:27, meaning he was sick near to death. ...) (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3897)

His illness brought him right to the door and entrance of death. He was nearby and close to it.

Whether Paul knew this because of a direct revelation from God, or simply by the fact that his prayers from Epaphroditus had been answered and Paul is simply acknowledging his understanding of God's rule in the world. Whether God intervened directly or providentially is immaterial. That this man lived when so near to death was an act of mercy on God's part either way.

"*eleos*... mercy; kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them;..." (Thayer, P. 203; 1653)

"*eleos* is the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it." (Vines Expository Dictionary 1656)

It is evident from here and in 2Tim. 4:20 where Paul left Trophimus in Miletus sick, that the apostles did not use their healing abilities on Christians simply to alleviate suffering. They were used to confirm the word and evidently for nothing else. Paul waited on God. It was God who would either use natural means and allow him to be healed or it would be God who would allow him to die and pass from this world. In this case God showed mercy on him and allowed him to continue to live.

## and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

God's mercy had not only extended to Epaphroditus, but also to Paul. The sorrow of having him sick was a great and painful concern. He did not want him to die and although his prayers were fervent, as long as his life hung in the balance and he did not know what God's will would be the sorrow pressed upon him and he knew if he had died that sorrow would have been compounded, first for his own loss but also for the loss of Epaphroditus.

"*lupe*, *lupeo*... "pain," "sorrow" (*lupein*, to cause pain," *lupeisthai*, "to experience sorrow" "to be sad"), ... *lupe*

can mean **physical pain as well as sorrow of spirit**. Physically *lupe* can denote any pain, though esp. that caused by hunger or thirst by heat or cold... or by sickness... *lupe* is sorrow, pain or anxiety at misfortune or death, or anger at annoyances or hurts, esp. insults and outrages..." (Kittel vol. 4 p 313; 3077)

Men who had proven themselves to be a great asset in the cause of Christ were sorely missed when they passed from this earth. As it progressed and became more serious and severe, and the outcome more grave and less sure he must have felt anxiety and sorrow. If then he had passed over into death, Paul's sorrow would have become far greater because he would have lost a brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier. Greater still because Philippi would have lost a messenger and minister.

### **28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly,**

With the therefore, all the previous things are summed up. He was to bring the letter, it would alleviate his own deep concerns as well as the Philippians, he longed to see them and it would rejoicing to them and a lessening of the sorrow Paul was feeling. For all these reasons, the decision was made and would be eagerly and hastily fulfilled.

*spoudaioterōs* the comparative adverb corresponding to *spoudaios* signifies "**the more diligently**," Phil. 2:28, RV (KJV, "carefully"). The adverb *spoudaios* denotes "**diligently**," 2 Tim 1:17 (some mss. have the comparative here); Titus 3:13; or "**earnestly**," Luke 7:4 (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:4708),

*spoudaios* akin to A, No. 2 and B, No. 1, **primarily signifies "in haste"; hence, diligent, earnest, zealous**, 2 Cor 8:22, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4705)

The more Paul thought on these reasons the more earnest and zealous he became in seeing it through.

### **that when you see him again you may rejoice,**

An additional reason (*hina* reason and cause) This diligence and earnestness had also been brought about by his knowledge of what it would accomplish for the Philippians when they saw him again. Paul too "*counts others better than himself*" and "*looks to the things of others*" in this matter. Instead of keeping him with him now that he is again well, he determines to send him back as the better and more advantageous course of action. This will bring about their rejoicing and also:

### **and I may be less sorrowful.**

The final reason is it would make Paul less sorrowful. All the thoughts above have led Paul to a mind containing concern and grief. Grief for the Philippians over their concern and grief over Epaphroditus regarding his sorrowful mind and desire to see them again. This can only be alleviated by sending him back.

*alupos* denotes "**free from grief**" (**a, negative, lupe, "grief"**), comparative degree in Phil 2:28, "**less sorrowful**," **their joy would mean the removal of a burden from his heart**. Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:253)

### **29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;**

With all these reasons and explanations, everything is covered and there will be no stigma or trouble for Epaphroditus that he has returned early. It had been his and their intent that he remain with them for a more extended period of time, but with all these other factors, he should be received back among them not as someone who had failed in his mission, but had more than succeeded. The reception should be one of excitement and joy. They should receive him back as a great man in their midst.

*pros-dechomai* The verb *prosdechomai* occurs 14 times in the NT: ... in the sense of **receive (somebody) means "offer hospitality" to that person**. The Pharisees and scribes criticize Jesus' keeping company with tax collectors and sinners and accuse him of receiving sinners and eating with them (Luke 15:2). **Paul asks that the Romans receive Phoebe (Rom 16:2) and the Philippians to receive Epaphroditus (Phil 2:29) "in the Lord."** (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4327)

*prosdechomai* "**to receive to oneself, to receive favorably**," also "to look for, wait for," is used of "receiving" in Luke 15:2; Rom 16:2; Phil 2:29. (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:4327)

It appears from all these explanations that Paul was concerned lest the brethren view his return as some form of disgrace in which he let Paul down. Paul will see to it that this could never happen. It is the furthest thing from the truth! They ought to receive him with feelings of joy for a job well done. All such men (of this kind and sort of character.

"*toioutos... such as this, of this kind or sort...* a. joined to a noun... with the article ... **one who is or such a character, such a one...**" (Thayer, p. 627; 5108)

All men who have done as this man had done, taking on the task, doing it to the best of his ability and dealing with adversities there were beyond his control did not lesson the greatness of the deed.

*entimos* lit., "in honor" (*en*, "in," *time*, "honor": 1), is **used of the centurion's servant** in Luke 7:2. "**dear**" (RV marg., "precious... or honorable"): "**more honorable**"; Phil 2:29, "**honor**" (KJV, "reputation"), **of devoted servants of Christ**, in 1 Peter 2:4,6, "**of Christ, as a precious stone**, 1 Peter 2:4,6..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1784)

Men such as Epaphroditus should be considered very precious by the church. They should be viewed as people who are dear and valued highly. Paul wants this man to be so viewed.

### **30 because for the work of Christ he came close to death,**

In this passage Paul reaches the very height of praiseworthy actions on the part of this man. Truly he was among the finest of examples of what he tried to get them to see in 2:1-11. For the work of Christ, for His cause and His kingdom this man brought himself "nigh" death.

*méchri, méchris*; adv. **marking a terminus both of place and time.** The latter spelling occurs before a vowel. It differs, therefore, from *áchri* (891) in that *áchri* fixes the attention upon the whole duration up to the limit, leaving the further continuance suspect, while *méchri* **refers solely to the limit implying that the action terminates there.** (l) Used in the NT as a prep. with the gen. meaning unto, until. ... Used **metaphorically of degree or extent** (Phil 2:8,30; 2 Tim 2:9; Heb 12:4). ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3360)

He came so close to death to death that it was of great concern. He used a term that means in the vicinity, near at hand, close by and imminent.

*engus, enggizo prosengizo ... engizo* **"to bring near"**: mostly intransitive: **"to approach"** ... *engus* a. "in the vicinity," **"close by"** ... b. Temporally **"near at hand."** ... c. In counting "almost": ... (Kittel, TDWNT 1448)

*"engizo* **"to draw near, to approach,"** from *engus*, "near," *is used* (a) *of place and position, literally and physically, Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1; Luke 12:33; 15:25; figuratively, of drawing near to God, Matt 15:8; Heb 7:19; James 4:8; (b) of time, with reference to things that are imminent, as the kingdom of heaven, Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; the kingdom of God, Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11; the time of fruit, Matt 21:34; the desolation of Jerusalem, Luke 21:8; redemption, 21:28; the fulfillment of a promise, Acts 7:17; the Day of Christ in contrast to the present night of the world's spiritual darkness, Rom 13:12; Heb 10:25; the coming of the Lord, James 5:8; the end of all things, 1 Peter 4:7. It is also said of one who was drawing near to death, Phil 2:30...."* (from Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:1448),

Hence his love for Christ and his work which was in Rome tied with the labor of the apostle led him as far as and right next to death itself. He did not shrink back even when death itself stared him in the eye.

### **not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.**

The honor came from the mind of Christ. This is exactly what Jesus did. Epaphroditus looked upon his life in comparison to his obligations to Christ exactly the same way Paul did. He was willing to "cast or throw beside" his life.

*paraboleuomai*, lit., **"to throw aside"** (*para*, "aside," *ballo*, "to throw"), hence, **"to expose oneself to danger, to hazard one's life,"** is said of Epaphroditus in Phil 2:30, RV, "hazarding." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:3851)

*paraboleuomai ... (an idiom, literally 'to hand over life'): to expose oneself willingly to a danger or risk - 'to risk, to risk one's life.'* "risking his life" Phil 2:30. ... "men who have risked their lives on behalf of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" Acts 15:26...." Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3851)

Whether this was planned by the Philippian church with the willing participation of Epaphroditus is not stated, but strongly implied. Whatever the reason, Paul here revealed that he had fulfilled that purpose. He had offered himself as a means of doing for Paul what the money from Philippi could not do. The funds might have made his physical life easier, but only willing hands and hearts could carry the word forth to those Paul could not go to personally. He had done this without any regard to his own life because he was prepared to fill up the desire of the Philippian church that whatever Paul needed would be supplied with the service Epaphroditus could supply. He had done this up to the fullest extent possible. His supply had filled this goal to the very brim. Paul had no complaints and was completely satisfied with what he had been willing to do for him.

*"anapleroo... (ana to, up to, e.g. to fill a vessel up to the brim; up to the appointed measure or standard...) ... 1. to fill up, make full... I Th. 2:16 (to add what is still wanting to complete the number of their sins; on the meaning, cf. Gen 15:16; Dan 8:23; 9:24; Mt 23:32..." (Thayer, p. 41; 378)*

*"anapléroō to bring something to completion, with emphasis upon the process - 'to bring to completion, to cause to be complete.'* 'to the point of bringing to completion the sins (that they had) always (committed)' 1 Thess 2:16." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:378)

Epaphroditus had in fact so perfectly fulfilled these desires that he had brought himself close to death and had put his life into jeopardy in order to supply whatever could not be supplied by the Philippians with the money.

Each Christian who considers first and foremost the example of Jesus, and then adds to it the examples of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus should seek by imitation to follow their steps. All the other things that seemed so important to those living in the first century have crumbled into dust. Only the acts of unselfish devotion to the needs of Christ and his cause are remembered by the Lord and they will abide for eternity. Every Christian must choose for himself where his priorities must be in their own "priestly service" to God and His people.

*leitourgia* akin to *leitourgos* (see MINISTER, A, No. 2.), to which the meanings of *leitourgia* correspond, is used in the NT of **"sacred ministrations," (a) priestly,** Luke 1:23; Heb 8:6; 9:21; (b) **figuratively, of the practical faith of the members of the church at Philippi regarded as priestly sacrifice, upon which the apostle's lifeblood**

**might be poured out as a libation, Phil 2:17; (c) of the "ministration" of believers one to another, regarded as priestly service, 2 Cor 9:12; Phil 2:30...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3009),**