

PHILIPPIANS 2 | *Jesus' Model Mindset*

Unity through Humility

1 So if (εἰ) there is any encouragement (παράκλησις) in Messiah, any comfort (παραμύθιον)¹ from love (ἀγάπη), any participation (κοινωνία) in the Spirit, any affection (σπλάγγνον) and sympathy (οἰκτιρμός), 2 complete (πληρῶω, aor.) my joy by being of the same mind (φρονέω, pres.), having the same love (ἀγάπη), being harmonious (σύμψυχος) and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) keep counting (ἡγέομαι, pres.) others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind (φρονέω, pres. act.)² among yourselves, which is yours in Messiah Jesus,

The Mindset of Jesus

6 who:

Though he was in the form (μορφή)³ of God,⁴ did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied (κενῶω, aor. act. ind.)⁵ himself by taking (λαμβάνω, aor. act. part.)⁶ the form (μορφή) of a servant (δοῦλος), being born in the likeness (ὁμοίωμα)⁷ of men. 8 And being found in human form (σχήμα),⁸ he humbled (ταπεινῶω, aor. act.) himself by becoming obedient (ὀπήκοος) to the point of death, even death on a cross.

¹ “[P]ert. to that which offers encouragement, esp. as consolation, means of consolation, alleviation” (BDAG, 769).

² “[L]et the same kind of thinking dominate you as dominated Christ Jesus” (BDAG, 1066).

³ “[F]orm, outward appearance, shape gener. of bodily form” (BDAG, 659).

⁴ “The hymn is organised around three nouns (*theos*, *doulos* and *kyrios*) which indicate three stages of the work of Christ (God, servant and Lord)” (Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 641-643).

⁵ “[O]f divestiture of position or prestige: of Christ, who gave up the appearance of his divinity and took on the form of a slave, ...he emptied himself, divested himself of his prestige or privileges” (BDAG, 539).

⁶ Subtraction through addition.

⁷ “[F]orm, appearance.... There is no general agreement on the mng. in two related passages in which Paul uses our word in speaking of Christ’s earthly life. The expressions ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων... **Phil 2:7** and ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας **Ro 8:3** could mean that the Lord in his earthly ministry possessed a completely human form and that his physical body was capable of sinning as human bodies are, or that he had the form of a human being and was looked upon as such..., but without losing his identity as a divine being even in this world. In the light of what Paul says about Jesus in general it is prob. that he uses our word to bring out both that Jesus in his earthly career was similar to sinful humans and yet not totally like them” (BDAG, 707).

⁸ “[T]he generally recognised state or form in which someth. appears, *outward appearance, form, shape of pers.*” (BDAG, 981).

9 Therefore God highly exalted (ὑπερυψώω, aor. act.)⁹ him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—in heaven, on earth, and under the earth— 11 and every tongue confess (ἐξομολογέω)¹⁰ that Jesus Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Co-Workers with God

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you (pl.) have always obeyed (ὑπακούω), so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, keep working out (κατεργάζομαι, pres.)¹¹ your own salvation (σωτηρία) with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God who is working (ἐνεργέω, pres.) in you (pl.) both to desire (θέλω, pres.) and to work (ἐνεργέω, pres.) for his good pleasure.

Blameless in the Day of Messiah

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless (ἄμεμπτος)¹² and innocent (ἀκέραιος),¹³ children of God without blemish (ἄμωμος)¹⁴ in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation (γενεά),¹⁵ among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Messiah I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

Timothy's Proven Worth

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. 20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Messiah. 22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served (δουλεύω) with me in the gospel. 23 I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me. 24 And I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

⁹ “[T]o raise to a high point of honor, *raise, exalt*...act. raise τινά someone to the loftiest height” (BDAG, 1034).

¹⁰ “[T]o declare openly in acknowledgment, *profess, acknowledge*” (BDAG, 351).

¹¹ “[T]o bring about a result by doing someth., *achieve, accomplish, do*...to cause a state or condition, *bring about, produce, create*” (BDAG, 531). **1 Co 15:10** 10 ...I [Paul] laboured (κοπιῶω) harder than any of [the other apostles], though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

¹² “Blameless, faultless” (BDAG, 52).

¹³ “[L]it. ‘unmixed’; in our lit. only fig. *pure, innocent*” (BDAG, 35).

¹⁴ “[P]ert. to being without fault and therefore morally blameless, *blameless*” (BDAG, 56).

¹⁵ “[T]he sum total of those born at the same time, expanded to include all those living at a given time and freq. defined in terms of specific characteristics, *generation, contemporaries*” (BDAG, 191).

Epaphroditus' Proven Worth

25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother, co-worker (συνεργός), and co-soldier (συστρατιώτης), and your messenger and minister to my need, 26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor (ἔντιμος)¹⁶ such men, 30 for he nearly died for the work of Messiah, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

¹⁶ “[P]ert. to being highly regarded because of status or personal quality, *honoured, respected*...of rank distinguished” (BDAG, 340).

Observations

1. About the Father we learn:

- a. He highly exalted Jesus (v. 9)
- b. He gave Jesus the name that is above every name (v. 9).
- c. He will be glorified when every knee bows the knee to Jesus (v. 11).

2. About Jesus we learn:

- a. There is exhortation/encouragement/comfort in him (v. 1).
- b. His mindset is available to us as believers (v. 5).
- c. He was in the form of God (v. 6).
- d. He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped (v. 6).
- e. He emptied himself by taking the form of a servant (v. 7).
- f. He was born in the likeness of men (v. 7).
- g. He was found in human form (v. 8).
- h. He humbled himself by becoming obedient (v. 8).
- i. He humbled himself to the point of death on a cross (v. 8).
- j. He has been highly exalted by the Father (v. 9).
- k. He has the name that is above every name (v. 9).
- l. Every knee in heaven, on earth, and under the earth will bow at his name (v. 10).
- m. Every tongue will confess that he is Lord (v. 11).
- n. His day is coming (v. 16).
- o. Paul hopes and trusts in him (vv. 19, 24).
- p. He has interests, but many do not seek his interests (v. 21).

3. Commands to the Philippian believers include:

- a. Be of the same mind (Php 2:2).
- b. Have the same love (Php 2:2).
- c. Be in full accord and of one mind (Php 2:3).
- d. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit (Php 2:3).
- e. In humility count others more significant than yourselves (Php 2:3).
- f. Look to the interests of others (Php 2:4).
- g. Have the humble mindset of Jesus among yourselves (Php 2:5).
- h. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Php 2:12).
- i. Do all things without grumbling and disputing (Php 2:14).
- j. Be blameless, innocent, children of God without blemish (Php 2:15).
- k. Hold fast to the word of life (Php 2:16).
- l. Be glad and rejoice with Paul (Php 2:18).
- m. Receive Epaphroditus in the Lord with all joy (Php 2:29).
- n. Honour such men as Epaphroditus (Php 2:29).

4. About Timothy we learn:

- (1) He is genuinely concerned for the Philippians' welfare (Php 2:20).
- (2) He seeks the interests of Jesus (Php 2:21).
- (3) His worth is proven (Php 2:22).
- (4) He has served with Paul in the gospel as a son with a father (Php 2:22).

5. About Epaphroditus we learn:

- a. He is Paul's brother, co-worker, and co-soldier (Php 2:25).
- b. He is the Philippians' messenger and ministry to Paul's need (Php 2:25).
- c. He longs for the Philippians (Php 2:26).
- d. He nearly died for the work of Messiah (Php 2:30).
- e. He risked his life to complete the Philippians' service to Paul (Php 2:30).

Discussion Questions | Lesson Four

- 1. BLESS and Prayer.**
- 2. Philippians At a Glance (p. 10).**
- 3. Philippians 1.**
 - a. What are your chapter one paragraph themes? What's Paul's flow of thought?
- 4. Read Philippians 1:27-2:11.**
- 5. Philippians 2.**
 - a. Is everyone clear how to do a chapter study?
 - b. What are the nine steps of completing a chapter study of any book of the Bible?
 - c. What key words and phrases did you mark?
 - d. What lists did you create?
 - e. What contrasts or comparisons
 - f. Any terms of conclusion?
 - g. Any time expressions?
 - h. What is your chapter theme?
 - i. Who memorised Php 2:12-15?
- 6. Philippians 1:27-30.**
 - a. Paragraph theme?
 - b. How are we to live a life worthy of the gospel?
 - c. How are we to strive side by side for the gospel today?
 - d. What contrast do you see in v. 28? Do you agree with Paul about these categories?
 - e. Has it been granted to us to suffer for Jesus' sake? Why?
 - f. What conflict is Paul referring to in v. 30? Are you personally engaged in this conflict?
- 7. Philippians 2:1-5.**
 - a. Paragraph theme?
 - b. How does Php 2:1 relate back to the previous chapter?
 - c. What repeated words do you see in Php 1:27-2:5?
 - d. What does Paul mean by "if" in Php 2:1?
 - e. Define the four "ifs" in v. 1. Why does Paul mentions these things here?
 - f. Why does Paul repeat the word "mind" so much?
 - g. What did you learn from the cross-references on humility?
 - h. How are we to complete Paul's joy today? What are some practical applications of vv. 3-4? What will this look like in everyday life?
- 8. Philippians 2:6-11.**
 - a. Paragraph theme?
 - b. Who are these verses about, and what do we learn about him?

- c. How does this paragraph relate to the previous paragraph? Why does Paul begin discussing Jesus here?
- d. What are the steps of Jesus' humiliation?
- e. Why did Jesus allow himself to be humiliated like this?
- f. Did Jesus empty himself of his divine attributes when he became a man (v. 7)?
- g. Why does it say, "even death on a cross"?
- h. What did you learn from the cross references on Jesus' humility?
- i. What was God's response to Jesus' obedience?
- j. Describe Jesus' exaltation.
- k. Why did God exalt Jesus? Is he exalted right now?
- l. Who will recognise Jesus' exaltation? When will this recognition occur?
- m. Why is the glory of God the Father mentioned in v. 11?
- n. Are you ready to bow the knee to Jesus and acknowledge that he is the Lord?
- o. How does Jesus' humiliation and exaltation relate to the Philippians? How does it relate to us?

9. Application.

- a. What lessons for life (LFL) are you taking away from your study of Php 2:1-11?
- b. Who is crying out for help in your life? Who needs to hear about what your learning
- c. Who would you like to introduce to inductive Bible study?

10. Prayer.

Discussion Questions | Lesson Five

1. BLESS and Prayer.

2. Philippians at a Glance (p. 10).

3. Read Philippians 2.

- a. What are your Philippians 2 paragraph themes?

4. Philippians 2:12-13.

- a. What is the “therefore” there for? How do vv. 12-13 relate to vv. 1-11?
- b. Why does Paul call the Philippians “my beloved”?
- c. What is the Philippians past record of obedience?
- d. What does Paul mean by “work out your own salvation”?
(1) Introduce *The Three Phases of Salvation*.
- e. What does Paul mean by “fear and trembling”?
- f. What is the “for” there for?
- g. Is the “you” singular or plural? Does that matter?
- h. What does God work in us?
- i. How would you explain these verses in your own words?

5. Philippians 2:14-18.

- a. What is the key to being blameless, innocent, and without blemish in our generation?
- b. How do we shine as lights in the world today?
- c. In what ways is our current generation crooked and twisted?
- d. How do we hold fast to the word of life?
- e. What is the day of Christ, and what does Paul want to happen in the day?
- f. What will have to happen for Paul to be proud in the day of Christ?
- g. How purposeful is Paul?
- h. What does Paul mean by being poured out as a drink offering?
- i. Why does Paul emphasise gladness and joy so much?
- j. How would you explain these verses in your own words?

6. Philippians 2:19-24.

- a. What does “in the Lord Jesus” mean (vv. 19, 24, 29)?
- b. What do we learn about Paul’s circle of associates in Rome?
- c. In what way does Timothy stick out from the rest of Paul’s associates?
- d. What do we learn about discipleship from Paul’s relationship with Timothy?

7. Philippians 2:25-30.

- a. How does Paul describe Epaphroditus?
- b. How would Epaphroditus’s death have impacted Paul, if it had occurred?
- c. Why is Paul eager and anxious to send Epaphroditus back to the Philippians?
- d. How does Paul want the Philippians to respond when Epaphroditus returns?
- e. How did Epaphroditus complete what was lacking in the Philippians’ service to Paul?

8. Application.

- a. What commands are there for us to obey?
- b. What principles are there for us to apply at home, at work, at church, or in our community?
- c. Who needs help in your life? Who needs to hear about what your learning?

9. Prayer.

PHILIPPIANS 2 | *The Mindset of Jesus*

1. Introduction.

- a. Image.
 - (1) A Christian Air Force couple choosing to adopt two special needs children with severe physical disabilities and behavioural challenges.
- b. Needs.
 - (1) It is difficult for us to put others first when there is so much we want to accomplish in life. We have goals, and time is running out. We fear we're not accomplishing much. We tend to focus more and more on ourselves as we get older.
 - (2) We experience frustration at the disunity we experience in our relationships. If any disunity begins to surface, we often give up and go somewhere else.
- c. Subject.
 - (1) Only through humility, as exemplified by Jesus, can we experience true unity in human relationships.
- d. Outline.
 - (1) Unity through Humility (Php 2:1-4).
 - (2) The Model Mindset of Jesus (Php 2:5-8).
 - (3) The Result of the Model Mindset (Php 2:9-11).
 - (4) Specific Application.

2. Philippians 2.

- a. Php 1:27-30 goes with Php 2:1-11.
- b. Php 2 is the model mindset of Jesus. Php 3 is the model mindset of Paul. Sandwiched between these two model mindsets are two practical examples—Timothy and Epaphroditus. Jesus, Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus are all examples for us—both in how to think and how to live.

3. Unity through Humility (Php 2:1-5).

- a. To begin, Paul lists four realities that provide the basis for unity (v. 1).
 - (1) **Php 2:1** 1 Therefore (οὖν) if (εἰ) there is any encouragement (παράκλησις) in Messiah, any comfort (παραμύθιον)¹⁷ from love (ἀγάπη), any participation (κοινωνία) in the Spirit, any affection (σπλάγχνον) and sympathy (οἰκτιρμός)¹⁸....
 - (a) The “therefore” ties Php 2:1 to Php 1:27-30 and especially the suffering of Php 1:30. The subject continues to be unity in the midst of conflict and suffering.
 - (b) In biblical Greek, εἰ plus the indicative signifies a first class conditional. The four realities Paul lists are assumed to be true.
 - (2) The four realities that provide the basis for unity among believers are:
 - (a) Encouragement (παράκλησις) in Messiah.

¹⁷ “[P]ert. to that which offers encouragement, esp. as consolation, means of consolation, alleviation” (BDAG, 769).

¹⁸ These four things are there for us. But we can't enjoy them with a prideful mind. If we want these things, we must be humble.

- (b) Comfort from [the Father's] love.
 - 1) **2 Co 13:14** 14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Messiah, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- (c) Fellowship/participation/sharing (κοινωνία) in the Holy Spirit.
- (d) Affection and sympathy among believers.
 - 1) **Php 1:8** 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
- (3) With these realities set, Paul proceeds to what the Philippians are now to do.
- b. The Philippians are to complete Paul's joy by developing a unified mindset (v. 2).
 - (1) **Php 2:2** 2 ...Complete my joy by being of the same mind (φρονέω, pres.), having the same love (ἀγάπη), being in full accord and of one mind.
 - (2) Paul's joy is not yet complete. For him to be truly happy, the Philippians must be unified. To accomplish this they must:
 - (a) Have the same mindset.
 - 1) The verb φρονέω means to have the same mindset, not to have the same opinions about everything (Gordon D. Fee, *NICNT*, 185). The present tense indicates ongoing action.
 - (b) Have the same love (ἀγάπη).
 - 1) **Php 1:9** 9 ...It is my prayer that your love (ἀγάπη) may abound more and more....
 - (c) Be united in spirit.
 - 1) σύμψυχος: “united in spirit”, *harmonious*” (*BDAG*, 961).
 - 2) **Php 1:27** 27 ...Standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel....
- c. To be unified, the Philippians must consistently do four things (vv. 3-5).
 - (1) **Php 2:3-5** 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) keep counting (ἡγέομαι, pres.) others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind (φρονέω, pres. act.)¹⁹ among yourselves, which is yours in Messiah Jesus....
 - (2) The unity to do list includes these four items:
 - (a) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit (v. 3).
 - 1) **Php 1:17** 17 The former proclaim Messiah out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.
 - 2) **Ga 5:26** 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.
 - (b) Count others more significant than yourself (v. 3).
 - (c) Look to the interests of others (v. 4).
 - 1) We are to bear one another's burdens (Ga 6:2).
 - 2) We are to please our neighbours for their good (Ro 15:1-3).
 - 3) We are to seek the good of our neighbour (1 Co 10:24).
 - (d) Have the mindset of Jesus (Php 2:5).
 - 1) This, the fourth task on the to do list, is the one that summarises all else.
 - 2) It is amazing the mindset of Jesus is available to us (1 Co 2:16).

¹⁹ “[L]et the same kind of thinking dominate you as dominated Christ Jesus” (*BDAG*, 1066).

(3) Are there any examples of this unity mindset?

4. The Model Mindset of Jesus (Php 2:5-8).

- a. **Php 2:5-8** 5 Have this mindset (φρονέω, pres.) among yourselves, which is yours in Messiah 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. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- b. Jesus was and is truly God (v. 6). This is of course a crucial doctrine of our faith.
 - (1) He is the Word who became flesh (Jn 1:14).
 - (2) He called God his own Father, making himself equal with God (Jn 5:18).
 - (3) The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus for blasphemy, because they understood he was making himself to be God (Jn 10:33).
 - (4) In Jesus the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily (Col 2:9).
- c. Jesus did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped (v. 6).
 - (1) Paul's focus is Jesus' mindset because he wants the Philippians to share his mindset.
 - (2) Jesus made a conscious decision to become a human being. He thought carefully about what he was doing and why. He saw that his substitutionary death as the God-man was the only thing that could save humanity from sin and death.
- d. Jesus emptied himself by taking the form of a servant (v. 7).
 - (1) This is subtraction by addition. Jesus always had and always will have the μορφή of God. He emptied himself by means of adding the μορφή of a servant.
 - (a) μορφή: "[F]orm, outward appearance, shape gener. of bodily form" (BDAG, 659).
 - (2) Jesus became the Servant predicted by Isaiah (Is 53:11).
 - (a) See *Jesus as Servant*.
 - (3) Jesus came to serve (Mark 10:45).
- e. Jesus became truly human (vv. 7-8).
 - (1) **Php 2:7-8** 7 ...Being born in the likeness (ὁμοίωμα) of men. 8 And being found in human form (σχῆμα)...
 - (a) Jesus came as a common man and not as an outwardly powerful king. He was born in a barn, not a palace. He rode on a donkey, not a horse. One would think if God did come as a man, he would come as a magnificent man. But not Jesus. He was the son of a carpenter from Nazareth, a very insignificant city.
 - (2) Jesus, truly God, became truly man:
 - (a) To give his life as a ransom for us (Mk 10:45).
 - (b) To die for us (He 2:9-10).
 - (c) To destroy Satan and atone for our sins (He 2:14-18).
 - (3) As the unique God-man, Jesus is like us and yet not totally like us.
 - (a) Likeness (ὁμοίωμα) means: "[F]orm, appearance" (BDAG, 707).
 - (b) Form (σχῆμα) means: "[T]he generally recognised state or form in which someth. appears, outward appearance, form, shape of pers." (BDAG, 981).
 - (4) "Jesus is truly God and truly man in one person forever."
- f. Jesus' model mindset led him all the way to the cross (v. 8).

- (1) **Php 2:8** 8 ...He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- (2) Jesus' death on the cross is the greatest act of humility imaginable. There has been nothing like it before or since. In the Roman world, crucifixion was the most painful and shameful way to die. It was reserved for non-Romans and the worst criminals.
- (3) God asked his Son, Jesus, to accomplish the most difficult task imaginable. Jesus, in obedience to his Father, said yes and did it. See *Obedience*.

5. The Result of Jesus' Model Mindset (Php 2:9-11).

- a. **Php 2:9-11** 9 Therefore God highly exalted (ὑπερυψώω, aor.)²⁰ him [Jesus] and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—in heaven, on earth, and under the earth— 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- b. As a result of the cross, God highly exalted Jesus (v. 9).
 - (1) The Son shared equal glory with the Father before the world existed (Jn 17:5).
 - (2) What's new after the cross is that the God-man shares equal glory with the Father (Da 7:13-14; Mt 28:18).
 - (a) **Da 7:13-14** 13 ...Behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a Son of Man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
 - (b) **Mt 28:18** 18 ...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me [Jesus, as the God-man].
 - (3) The result of humiliation is exaltation.
 - (a) **1 Pe 5:6** 6 ...Humble (ταπεινώω) yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you at the proper time.
- c. God gave Jesus the name above every name (v. 9).
 - (1) Jesus, as the God-man, has inherited a name more excellent than that of the angels (He 1:3-4).
 - (a) **He 1:3-4** 3 After making purification for sins, [Jesus] sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.
- d. The result is all spiritually responsible beings (angels and men) will:
 - (1) Bow the knee to Jesus (v. 10); and
 - (a) Paul alludes to Is 45:23:
 - 1) **Is 45:23** 23 By myself I [Yahweh] have sworn. From my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.
 - 2) "Here Paul writes against the background of Isaiah's defense of monotheism. There is only one Lord, before whom every knee will bow and by whom every tongue will swear (Is 45:21-23). The effect of Paul's

²⁰ "[T]o raise to a high point of honour, *raise, exalt*...act. raise τινά someone to the loftiest height" (*BDAG*, 1034).

allusion to Isaiah is to prove that Jesus of Nazareth must be worshiped as the Lord God of Israel” (Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 641-643).

(2) Confess Jesus as Lord (v. 11).

(a) To confess (ἐξομολογέω) means “to declare openly in acknowledgment, *profess, acknowledge*” (BDAG, 351)

(b) “Jesus is Lord” is the earliest of Christian creeds.

1) **Ro 10:9** 9 ...If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord [Yahweh] and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

2) **1 Co 12:3** 3 ...No one can say “Jesus is Lord [Yahweh]” except in the Holy Spirit.

(c) All angels and men will publicly acknowledge Jesus, the God-man, is Yahweh, the Lord of all creation. Jesus’ full title is “the Lord Jesus Messiah.” The term “Lord” signifies Jesus is Yahweh.

(d) Jesus, not the Roman emperor Nero, is the Lord and Saviour.

1) “By the time of our letter, the primary titles for the emperor were *Kyrios* and *Sōtēr* (“lord and saviour”). Not only so, but the cult of the emperor, where the emperor was honoured in a way approaching deification, had found its most fertile soil in the Eastern provinces. In a city like Philippi this would have meant that every public event (the assembly, public performances in the theatre, etc.) and much else within its boundaries would have taken place in the context of giving honour to the emperor, with the acknowledgment that (in this case) Nero was ‘lord and saviour’” (Gordon D. Fee, *NICNT*, 31).

(e) All angels and men will worship Jesus, the Lamb who was slain.

1) **Re 5:11-13** 11 Then I [John] looked, and I heard around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb [Jesus] who was slain, to receive power, wealth, wisdom, might, honour, glory, and blessing! 13 And I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and in the sea, and all that is in them saying, To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing, honour, glory, and might forever and ever!

(f) Worship of Jesus will be voluntary or enforced. But all will worship him.

e. The ultimate result of Jesus’ humiliation and exaltation is the Father’s glory (v. 11).

6. Co-Workers with God (Php 2:12-13).

a. **Php 2:12-13** 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you (pl.) have always obeyed (ὕπακούω), so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, keep working out (κατεργάζομαι, pres.) your own salvation (σωτηρία) with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God who is working (ἐνεργέω, pres.) in you (pl.) both to desire (θέλω, pres.) and to work (ἐνεργέω, pres.) for his good pleasure.

b. The Philippians have a reputation for obedience; that obedience must continue (v. 12).

(1) Just as Jesus humbled himself by becoming obedient (v. 8), so the Philippians must humble themselves by being obedient (v. 12).

- c. The “therefore” connects vv. 12-13 with vv. 1-11. Vv. 12-13 describe the manner and means by which the impossible mindset and lifestyle of vv. 1-11 are to be carried out.
- (1) Walking by the Spirit is the only way it can be done (Ro 8:4).
 - (2) It takes a lifetime to develop the mindset of Jesus.
 - (3) God must equip us to do his desire (Heb 13:20-21).
 - (a) **Heb 13:20-21** 20 Now the God of peace... 21 equip you in every good thing to do his desire, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Messiah....
 - (4) “The Christian life is a supernatural way of life that demands supernatural means of execution” (R. B. Thieme, Jr.).
 - (5) “The Christian life can be explained only in terms of Jesus Christ, and if your life as a Christian can still be explained in terms of you..., you are not yet living it” (W. Ian Thomas).
- d. “Salvation” here refers to phase two salvation (sanctification) not phase one salvation (justification). See *The Three Phases of Salvation*.
- e. Our phase two salvation (sanctification) is a cooperative project between God and ourselves. It is not all God, nor is it all ourselves. We are co-workers with God for our own sanctification. We are to “work out” (v. 12) what God “works in” us (v. 13).
- (1) God energises (ἐνεργέω) us (v. 13) to achieve ([]) our sanctification (v. 12).
 - (2) κατεργάζομαι, pres.: “[T]o bring about a result by doing someth., *achieve, accomplish, do...to cause a state or condition, bring about, produce, create*” (BDAG, 531).
 - (3) ἐνεργέω, pres.: “to bring someth. about through use of capability, *work, produce, effect*” (BDAG, 335).
 - (4) Paul worked harder than the other apostles, but its as the grace of God within him (1 Co 15:10).
 - (5) We are no longer co-workers with Satan.
 - (a) **Eph 2:1-2** 1 ... You were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience....
 - (6) It doesn’t matter whose watching (v. 12).
- f. The attitude we are to have as our sanctification is being worked out is fear and trembling (v. 12).
- (1) φόβος means “reverence, respect” (BDAG, 1062).
 - (a) **Ac 9:31** 31 ...The church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.
 - (b) **2 Co 7:1** 1 ...Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.
 - (c) **Eph 5:21** 21 ...Submitting to one another out of reverence for Messiah.
- g. The goal of our sanctification is God’s good pleasure (v. 13).
- (1) God gets pleasure from co-working with us, as a grandparent does with his grandchild.
- h. Application. Keep obeying God as you have previously. Don’t worry about whose watching. Accomplish your phase two salvation from the world, the flesh, and the

devil as you revere God. Work out what he works in you. He energises you to desire and carry out his wonderful plan.

7. Shining as Lights in the World (Php 2:14-18).

- a. **Php 2:14-18** 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless (ἄμεμπτος) and innocent (ἀκέραιος), children of God without blemish (ἄμωμος) in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation (γενεά), among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Messiah I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
- b. Don't grumble or dispute—ever (v. 14).
 - (1) To grumble (γογγυσμός) means “an utterance made in a low tone of voice (the context indicates whether the utterance is one of discontent or satisfaction), *behind-the-scenes talk*.—Negative aspect: *complaint, displeasure*, expressed in murmuring” (BDAG, 204).
 - (a) The Exodus generation is the prime example (Nu 14:27). See *Verses on Grumbling*.
 - (b) Grumbling is a response of doubt, not of faith.
 - (2) To dispute (διαλογισμός) means “verbal exchange that takes place when conflicting ideas are expressed, *dispute, argument*” (BDAG, 232).
 - (3) Grumbling and disputing destroy relationships and local churches.
- c. The result of no grumbling and disputing is innocence at Jesus' coming (v. 15). Paul echoes what he's said before:
 - (1) **Php 1:10** 10 ...So that you [Philippians] may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah....
- d. The role of Philippians is to shine as lights in a dark world (v. 15).
 - (1) Humanity has lost its way. It has become crooked and twisted (Dt 32:5).
 - (2) We are the light of the world (Mt 5:14-16).
- e. The means by which the Philippians may shine is by continuing to hold fast to sound doctrine (v. 16).
 - (1) To hold fast (πέχω, pres.) means “to maintain a grasp on someone or someth....” (BDAG, 362).
 - (2) The word of life is the gospel message about Jesus (Ac 5:20; 1 Jn 1:1), sound doctrine (Ti 2:1).
- f. The outcome will be Paul's pride over the Philippians in the day of Messiah (v. 16).
 - (1) In Jesus, Paul takes pride in his work for God (Ro 15:17).
 - (a) Paul is a coach, and the Philippians are his team. As a coach, Paul wants to celebrate the Philippians' championship victory.
 - (2) Paul is very focused on the day of Messiah (Php 1:6, 10).
 - (a) See *The Day of Messiah*.
- g. The Philippians are to rejoice with Paul, even if he is martyred in Rome (vv. 17-18).
 - (1) The food offering is the Philippians' faith in Jesus, and the drink offering is Paul's sacrificial death. See Ex 29:38-41 and Nu 15:5-10.
 - (2) Paul will eventually be poured out as a drink offering (2 Ti 4:6).
 - (3) Whether Paul lives or dies, the Philippians are to rejoice (vv. 17-18).

- (4) Paul and the Philippians may rejoice because they know humiliation will result in exaltation (Php 2:8-9).

8. Timothy's Proven Worth (Php 2:19-24).

- a. **Php 2:19-24** 19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. 20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Messiah. 22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served (δουλεύω) with me in the gospel. 23 I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me. 24 And I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.
- b. Paul's plan is to send Timothy to the Philippians soon (vv. 19, 23).
- (1) This is a strange place for Paul to discuss travel arrangements!
- (2) The Philippians know Timothy well. He was with Paul when Paul first came to Philippi (Ac 16:1, 12).
- (3) Paul loves to check up on churches through personal visits and sending disciples.
- (4) Local churches need periodic accountability from the outside.
- c. The proof of Timothy's worth is:
- (1) His genuine concern for Philippians (v. 20).
- (2) His pursuit of the interests of Jesus, not his own interests (v. 21).
- (3) His service as Paul's disciple for many years (v. 22).
- (4) Timothy is a living demonstration of the mindset of Jesus (Php 2:5).
- (5) Paul is sending his best to the Philippians because he cares deeply about them.
- d. Paul expects the churches to respect Timothy (1 Co 16:10-11).
- (1) **1 Co 16:10-11** 10 When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. 11 So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers.
- e. Paul's hope is to personally visit the Philippians himself (v. 24; cf. Php 1:24-26).
- (1) Paul does actually see the Philippians again, probably more than once (1 Ti 1:3).

9. Epaphroditus' Proven Worth (Php 2:25-30).

- a. **Php 2:25-30** 25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother, co-worker (συνεργός), and co-soldier (συστρατιώτης), and your messenger and minister to my need, 26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honour such men, 30 for he nearly died for the work of Messiah, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.
- b. The Philippians had sent Epaphroditus to Paul with a financial gift (v. 25; cf. Php 4:18). Paul is now sending back Epaphroditus to the Philippians (v. 25). He is the carrier of this letter.
- c. Epaphroditus is Paul's co-worker and co-soldier, who nearly died for the work of Messiah, risking his life in his service to Paul in prison (v. 25).

- (1) Epaphroditus is another living demonstration of the mindset of Jesus.
- d. Having recovered from illness, Epaphroditus longs to return to the Philippians (vv. 26-27, 30).
- e. Paul is experiencing sorrow and anxiety in prison (vv. 27-28), though of course he chooses to be joyful (Php 2:17-18).
- f. Paul asks the Philippians to welcome and honour Epaphroditus as he deserves (v. 29).
 - (1) To honour (ἔντιμος) means “pert. to being highly regarded because of status or personal quality, *honoured, respected*...of rank distinguished” (BDAG, 340)..
 - (2) Paul routinely urges churches to honour his gospel co-workers and co-labourers (1 Co 16:15-18).

10. Application.

- a. Within the context of the Trinity’s encouragement, comfort, and fellowship, we are to pursue unity through sharing the same servant mindset that Jesus had when he went all the way from heaven to the cross (vv. 1-11).
 - (1) Specifically, be a servant to those closest to you. Don’t make the mistake of looking outside your current relationships. Be a servant right where you are. Just ask the question, how may I serve you? Can I help you with anything?
 - (2) Focus on the first S in “BLESS.”
 - (3) Illustrations:
 - (a) The elder in Dallas who confessed that he never stopped when his wife wanted to.
 - (b) The husband in China who suddenly began to make tea for his wife.
- b. Co-work your sanctification with God with awe and reverence for him (vv. 12-13).
- c. Shine as a light in the world by refusing to grumble (vv. 14-15).
- d. Like Timothy and Epaphroditus, be living examples of Jesus’ mindset (vv. 19-30).
 - (1) Be genuinely concerned for the welfare of believers and churches (v. 20).
 - (2) Seek the interests of Jesus, not your own interests (v. 21).
 - (3) Serve as a disciple with a disciple-maker in the gospel (vv. 22).
 - (4) Minister to the needs of disciple-makers (v. 25).
 - (5) Serve as co-labourer and co-soldier of disciple-makers (v. 25).
 - (6) Be willing to die for the work of Messiah (v. 30).