

Philippians Chapter Two

Essentials for Unity (vv. 1-4)

VERSE 1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion (Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τι παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί [*part ei if + pro.nom.f.s. tis any + conj oun therefore + noun nom.f.s. paraklesis encouragement + prep en + noun loc.m.s. Christ + part ei if + pro.nom.f.s. tis + noun nom.nt.s paramuthion; 1x incentive; “consolation” + noun abl.f.s. agape love + part ei if + pro.nom.f.s. tis any + noun nom.f.s. poinonia fellowship + noun gen.nt.s. pneuma Spirit + part ei if + pro.nom.nt.s. tis any + noun nom.nt.p. splanchnon affection + conj kai + noun nom.m.p. oiketrmos mercy, compassion*]),

VERSE 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose (πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμψυχοι, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες [*aor.act.imper.2p. pleroo make complete + pro.gen.m.s. ego “my” + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. chara joy + conj hina (result) + d.a.acc.nt.s + pro.acc.nt.s autos “the same” + pres.act.subj.2p. phoneo think + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. agape + pro.acc.f.s. autos same + pres.part.nom.m.p. echo have; “maintaining” + adj.nom.m.p. sumphuchos united in spirit; 1x + adj.acc.nt.s heis one + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.p. phoneo think; “intent on...purpose”*]).

VERSE 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit (μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν [*adj.acc.nts. medeis nothing + prep kata according to; "from" + noun acc.f.s. eritheia selfishness + conj mede nor + prep kata + noun acc.f.s. kenodozia conceit*]), **but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves [one another]** [ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν [*conj alla but + d.a.w/noun instr.f.s. tapeinophrosune humility + pro.acc.m.p. allelon one another + pres.dep.part.nom.m.p. hegeomai regard + pres.act.part.acc.m.p. huperecho be of more value than, better than + pro.gen.m.p. eautou one another*]);

VERSE 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others (μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἐτέρων ἕκαστοι [*neg me not + d.a.acc.nt.p. to; "interests" + pro.gen.m.p. heautou himself; "your personal" + pro.nom.m.s. ekastos each; "own" + pres.act.part.nom.m.p. skopeo pay attention to; "look out" + conj all but + conj kai also + d.a.acc.nt.p. to "the interests" or "the things" + pro.gen.m.p. heteros another, other + pro.nom.m.p. ekastos each*])

ANALYSIS: VERSES 1-4

1. Vv. 1 & 2 constitute an appeal for unity among the believers at Philippi.
2. "Therefore" (conj. *oun*) ties this appeal to v. 27 where the subject unity is expressed as "standing firm in one spirit, with one mind..."
3. Vv. 28-30 (parenthetical remarks) provided necessary encouragement to remain unaffected by the opposition maintaining a solid front in the angelic conflict.
4. Verse 1 of this chapter has four first class conditional clauses each introduced by the particle "if" (*ei*).
5. The first class condition assumes a thing to be true for sake of argument.
6. The idea here in the Greek is: "if and there is..."
7. The four "if" clause each describe an aspect of what it takes to have a unified mind-set within a local church.
8. So mutual relations among the recipients is in view here.
9. This is apparent from vv. 2-4.
10. The indefinite pronoun "any" (*tis*) occurs in all four clause and in each instance introduces a Christian virtue that is necessary to achieve unity of mind and purpose.
11. The noun "is" (*estin*) is assumed in these four first class clauses.

12. “If there is any encouragement in Christ” (and there is) points to all the things God does to encourage positive volition in all the circumstances confronting believers who are committed to the faith.
13. Here both corporately and individually there is comfort/encouragement as a part of the heritage of positive volition.
14. “In Christ” refers to union with Christ.
15. In order to experience “encouragement” (*paraklesis*) believers must be in fellowship and doctrinally united (Acts 9:41 “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.”; Rom. 15:4-5 “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” Now may the God who give perseverance and encouragement grant your to be of the same mind with one another according to Jesus Christ.”; 2 Cor. 1:3-7 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and deliverance, or if we are comforted it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer, and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that your are shares of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.”).
16. The second “if” clause—“if there is any consolation of love” refers to a friendly word of support.
17. The noun “consolation” (*paramuthion*) only occurs here in the NT.
18. It has its source in “love” the quintessential fruit of the spirit (1 Cor. 13).
19. The “consolation” desired is between the apostle and his readers.
20. Paul’s third ground of appeal—“fellowship of the Spirit”—refers to the indwelling and filling ministries of God the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:2; 1 Cor. 12:13).
21. So Paul here is referring to the Philippians “participation in the Spirit” which is activated via Rebound.
22. To the extent that a local body (i.e., church) sustains being in fellowship this puts and end to factions and cliques.
23. Paul’s fourth and final ground of appeal to unity—“if any affection and compassion”—has two related be different aspects of interaction among believers.
24. “Affection” (*splagchnon*; nt.p.), “the viscera” were considered in the ancient world as the seat of one’s deepest feelings.
25. This term is applied to God in Lk. 1:78; and both of Christ and Paul in Phil. 1:8; as a manifestation of being in fellowship in Col. 3:12; of one toward another in Phm. 1:7, 12; 1 Jn. 3:17.
26. The second term “compassion” (also a pl. *oiktirmos*) translated “mercy/mercies” refers to overt displays and concerns over the sufferings of others (5x; Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:3; Col. 3:12; Heb. 10:28).
27. The relationship between the two terms is that one is the root and the other is the fruit.
28. The Philippians are called upon to display these things toward one another and toward their spiritual leader.

29. In v. 2 the verb “make...complete” (aor.imper. *pleroo* fulfill, bring about [of Scripture]; finish, bring to completion, etc.) acts as the apodosis to the “if” clauses in v. 1.
30. While this imperative functions syntactically as the main verb of a long sentence (vv. 2-4), the subject is not the main subject.
31. The main subject is unity among the Philippians.
32. A by-product of said unity is that they will “complete” something that was already in process.
33. This by-product is the “joy” they will “complete” if they stay true to their calling.
34. Paul possessed the Christian fruit of “joy” while in prison.
35. Yet his joy was not disconnected from eternal circumstances, which had to do with the spiritual status of his churches.
36. Paul already is taking “joy” in the Philippians (1:4; 4:1).
37. His cup of joy will be filled to the brim if the Philippians remain unified.
38. “Being of the same mind” is a *hina* clause and here gives content to “make my joy complete” and partakes of the imperative force of the main verb.
39. What he is asking of the Philippians is that they all think alike with respect to the things they have learned and the issues they were facing.
40. “Being of the same mind” has the pres.act.subj.2p verb *phoneo* meaning “to think” or “to hold an opinion.”
41. In other words, ‘to be in agreement.’
42. This state produces harmony within the local body (cf. 1Cor. 13:11 “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded (*to auto phoneite*), live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.”
43. The same construction *to auto phonete* is here in v. 2.
44. “Maintaining the same love” also takes on the imperative force of the main verb “make my joy complete.”
45. For an extended dissertation on love see 1 Cor. 13.
46. The Philippians are to exhibit the same love that God has for them.
47. “United in spirit” (adj. *sumpsuchoi*) is a plural of *sumpsuchos* which literally means, “souls together.”
48. This picks up and supports the “one soul/mind” in 1:27.
49. A similar compound is used of Timothy at 2:20 (*ioupsuchos*)—“kindred spirit.”
50. “Intent on one purpose” (*to hen phonounes*) repeats the verb in “being of one mind.”
51. What Paul means by this is found in vv. 5-11, with the challenge to be like Christ in His kenosis.
52. In v. 3a Paul addresses things which undermine unity within the local body.
53. The verb form must be supplied (“Do) and the force of the verb is an imperative.
54. Literally, “Nothing according to selfishness or empty conceit.”
55. For *eritheia* see 1:17.
56. The noun can mean “selfish ambition” (cf. Rom. 2:8; 2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:20; Phil. 1:17, 2:1; Jam. 3:14, 16).
57. Individuals in Philippi’s highly stratified honor culture were deeply embedded in patronage networks that operated across the social classes.
58. An ambitious local aristocrat would expect support from his friends, clients, and persons in his extended household.
59. This led to factions and rivalry.

60. So the noun carries with it the notion of a party spirit generated by selfish ambition.
61. The noun translated “empty conceit” (*kenodozia*), occurring only here, comes from *kenos* meaning “empty” and *doza* meaning “glory.”
62. It refers to that which is the grounds for boasting which is completely baseless.
63. It is not without accident that the two parts of the compound noun (*kenos* + *doza*) occur in vv. 6-11.
64. In those verses the self-emptying One (Jesus Christ) in His incarnation and humiliation receives divine vindication through glorification and the worship of all creation.
65. Believers in Philippi are enjoined to avoid the self-centeredness and self-adulation that was so much on display in their class-conscious culture.
66. They are enjoined to emulate a completely opposite demeanor are seen in v. 3b.
67. The is introduced by the strong adversative “but” (*alla*) followed by the instrumental case (“with”).
68. “Humility of mind” is the compound noun *tapeinophrosune* which reflects a mind-set that is concerned about the welfare of others.
69. This noun is used in both a good sense of “humility” (cf. Acts 20:19; Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:12; 1Pet. 5:5) and in a bad sense (cf. Col. 2:18, 23).
70. In secular Greek *tapeinos* (“humble”) was used of the posture of a slave or the servile nature inferior social classes.
71. The evaluation of persons according to social standing among the Romans particularly in a colony like Philippi, where humility would have been anything but a virtue.
72. But over against this is the reality that God chooses the unimportant and insignificant.
73. God looks upon the lowly (Ps. 101:18); God gives grace to the lowly (Ps. 112:4-6); God pays attention to the prayers of the lowly (Ps. 101:18) while He opposes the scoffers (Isa. 2:11; Ezek. 17:34).
74. Humility of mind is essential to the unity of believes within a local assembly.
75. This compound comprising “humility” and “mind” refers to a mind-set on the part of believers as they are related to one another.
76. The difference between for instance a slave or a poor person who was compelled into a state of humility is that the believer regardless of social status chooses to humble himself as did Christ who chose weakness, servant hood, and subjection as the path to eternal glory.
77. It may be that Paul coined this compound to counter the cultural values and social codes in which believers like the Philippians found themselves.
78. Paul proceeds to define this humble mind-set in the phrase “regard one another was more important than yourselves.”
79. “Regard” is a pres.dep.part.nom.m.p. (*hegeomai* consider, regard) an acts as an imperative.
80. Again, there is a verbal link with Paul’s presentation of Christ in v. 8).
81. “As more important than” (pres.act.part.acc.m.p. *huperecho* be better than, be of more value than, surpass).
82. Other uses of this term: Phil. 3:8 “More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.; 4:7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”
83. This term occurs in connection with submission to rulers (Rom. 13:1; 1Pet. 2:13).
84. So superiority in importance is the honor code for the Royal family as individuals relate themselves to “one another” (reciprocal pronoun *heautou*).

85. In the honor culture of Roman Philippi the idea is this: believers are to regard one another as taking precedence when circumstances dictate.
86. V. 3 has to do with a mental attitude while v. 4 addresses overt behavior vis-à-vis one's fellow believers.
87. Paul is not telling believers to not be concerned with their "own personal interests" as that would be impossible.
88. "But also" sets the two set of "interests" (acc.nt.p.def.art. *ta*; 'the things') in contrast.
89. The idea is that a believer is to be willing and ready to come to the aid of another believer.
90. The negative is the weak one (*me*) with the imperatival participle "pay attention to" or "watch out for" or "look out for" (*skopeo*).
91. This approach (Royal family honor code) involving a new mental attitude and a new modus operandi was revolutionary considering the cultural norms in Philippi where self interests and self-exaltation was the norm.