

Philippians 2

Philippians 2.1-4

V1 – Rhetorical questions - **Is there any doubt in the use of "if"?** No – a very forceful way to write (the "If-Then" argument in public speaking and debating)

-**Any encouragement in Christ?** Of course; how could we live without Christ?

-**Any fellowship of the Holy Spirit?** *Romans 8* – if we don't have the Spirit, we do not have Christ

-**Any consolation of love?** Yes

-**Any affection and compassion?** Yes

-This is like the Declaration of Independence: *We hold these truths to be self-evident....*

V2 – Notice: **If all these statements are true...?** Then the church is to be united

-**Did Paul believe in "unity-in-diversity"?** No

-**Did Paul believe in the ecumenical movement and the United Church of Christ?** No

-**Which congregation was divided into four groups?** The church at Corinth

-**What made Paul happiest?** To see a church that was united

-In other letters Paul begged churches to be united (*1 Cor. 1, Rom. 14, Colossians 2.20-22*)

V3 – **What attitudes are we not to have?** Selfishness and conceit

-There is no indication that the church at Philippi had these problems

-**Why then was Paul writing this to them?** To prevent such problems from developing

-**The proper attitude to have?** Esteem each other more highly than ourselves

V4 – **Another attitude?** Watch for the needs of others

Philippians 2.5-11

V5 – **Who is our example in all this?** Jesus

V6 – **Was Christ God...?** See *John 1.1-2* (there is a serious problem with the Jehovah Witnesses' translation)

-*Luke 18.18-19* – only God is good

-*"grasped"* = NASB footnote: utilized, asserted

-*V 6* – Jesus' humility prevented any bragging that he was God

-**The title Jesus preferred?** Son of Man

V7 – Christ *"emptied himself"* = set aside the glorious characteristics of the Godhead

-**What form did Jesus assume?** That of a human being (man)

-**Why did he take on human form?** *Heb. 4.15* – to be tempted as we are

V8 – **The extent of his humility?** His death on the cross

-**Other forms of humility?** Birth in a stable, step-son a carpenter, 12 lowly men as apostles

-**What act of humility did Jesus do shortly before his crucifixion?** *John 13.5-20* – washing feet of the apostles

V 9 – What did God the Father do? Exalted Jesus and gave him a glorious name: Jesus Christ

V 10 – Who should bow to Jesus? All beings

-Will atheists someday bow the knee to Jesus? Yes

V 11 – All tongues will confess Jesus as Lord at the end of the world

-It is going to be easier to do it now than to wait until then

Philippians 2.12-18

V 12 – Why was Paul so proud of the church at Philippi? They had always obeyed God (whether or not he was present made no difference)

"When the cat's away, the mice will play" did not apply to the church at Philippi

-Which congregations deteriorated so badly when Paul left? Corinth and Galatians

-Congregations are not static – they are always changing

-Example: the church at Ephesus (*Acts 20*), compare with Ephesus in *Rev. 2.1-7* (had lost their first love about 35 years later), the church at Colossae fell to Gnosticism

-What does it mean to work out our own salvation? Individual problems must be worked out

-What denominational doctrines are refuted by v 12? Mormons and the baptism for the dead - impossible according to this verse (also refutes purgatory and predestination)

V 13 – When a father leaves directions for his son and his son follows them, it is the father working through his son

-God works through us when we obey him

V 14 – Do we ever grumble today? Many times

-Paul set the example in not grumbling about what happened to him at Philippi

V 15 – What does our lack of grumbling show? That we are the church of God

-Is our generation "crooked and perverse"? (thought question)

-As we live faithful lives, how does the world see us? As lights

-On the job with evil people, they will start coming to us for advice, etc., because we are Christians - there is less bad language and better behavior when we are present

V 16 – Secret: holding to the word of life

-Why was Paul hoping the church at Philippi would remain faithful? So that his work would not be in vain

V 17 – Paul's attitude toward execution? He was not afraid, if the Philippians remained faithful

V 18 – What did Paul urge the Philippian Christians to do? To have his joy and outlook

Philippians 2.19-30 – His two co-workers in Rome: Timothy and Epaphroditus

V 19-20 – Did the church at Philippi know Timothy? Yes (on the Second Missionary Journey)

-See *Acts 16.1* – Timothy, Luke, Paul, and Silas started the church in Philippi

-According to *v 19-20*, why was Timothy being sent to Philippi? To get news to send to Paul for encouragement and to build up the church at Philippi

V 21 – Describe some of the preachers in Rome? Self-centered – See *2 Tim. 4.16*

V 22 – Why would Timothy look upon Paul as his father? Paul baptized him, Timothy's father was not mentioned as a Christian, so he had very close ties with Paul

-Does *v 22* mean that we can call a preacher by the title "Father"? – Read **Matt. 23.9**

V 23 – Paul was awaiting the outcome of his trial

-If he was sentenced to death, there would be no need for Timothy to return

V 24 – Paul's belief about the outcome of his trial? To be acquitted (declared innocent)

-*Acts 26.32* – Agrippa had already said he should be released (a very weak case)

V 25 - Epaphroditus – a brother from the church at Philippi

-Why had he been sent to Paul? To take the contribution from the church at Philippi and to assist Paul – See *Philippians 4.18*

-How did Paul describe Epaphroditus? *...my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, your messenger, a minister to my need*

V 26 – What had the Philippians heard? That Epaphroditus was sick

-How could they have heard this? Via the Egnatian Way (Christians from Rome stopping at Philippi)

V 27 – Was he sick? Yes, he almost died

-Expression "*sorrow upon sorrow*"? Paul was in prison and was deeply concerned about Epaphroditus

V 28 – Epaphroditus was on the way back to Philippi

V 28-30 – Almost a letter of recommendation (praise for Epaphroditus)

-Notice the close ties that held the First Century Christians together

-Nothing holds people together as much as our faith in Christ

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