

Philippians 2 (NIV) Study Guide

Background: Although Paul is writing from house arrest in a private residence, he was chained night and day to a Roman soldier. As discussed in **Philippians 1**, the church of Philippi has “supplied” for Paul’s need (by funds to cover his expenses as well as sending physical help as we shall see in chapter 2). All was done so that the cause of Christ would be able to “progress”.

As we move into **Philippians 2**, Paul will outline the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ, relating that with our own earthly walks as His disciples and discussing the role of Timothy and Epaproaditus within the cause of Christ.

Read **Philippians 2** out loud and and complete the verses and questions for Day 1.

Day 1 (verses 1-4)

Philippians 2 begins with the connecting word, “Therefore”. As you briefly look back at Philippians 1, what is it “there” “for”? What was Paul talking about right before Philippians 2?

Verse 1-2:

- Therefore if you have any _____ from being _____ with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common _____ in the Spirit, if any tenderness and _____,
- then make my joy complete by being _____, having the _____ love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

After looking at these 2 verses as a whole, what can unity in the church provide for us as God’s people?

- We can
 - have _____ from being united with Christ
 - be comforted from His _____
 - have any common sharing in the _____
 - have _____ and compassion for one another
 - Have _____ joy by being like-minded
 - have the _____ love, being _____ in spirit and of one mind.

Verse 3-4:

- Paul tells the Philippians:
 - to do _____ out of selfish ambition or _____ conceit.
 - that they should, in _____, value others _____ yourselves.
 - To not look to their _____ interests, but each of them should look to the _____ of others.
- **Question:** How would you describe what Paul is trying to teach the Philippian church about how to keep unity in the church through humbleness?

Day 2 (verses 5-11)

Yesterday, Paul, began to speak to the Philippian believers about unity within the church through humbleness. That unity, as we discussed together, is rooted in like-mindedness. And that “like” or same mindedness is to have Christ’s mind.

Today, Paul will teach the Philippians how Christ’s unity with God’s plan of the cross is displayed for us as the ultimate example of humility.

Read **Philippians 2** out loud and complete the verses and questions for Day 2.

Verse 5:

- In your _____ with one another, have the _____ mindset as Christ Jesus:;

Verse 6:

- Who, being in very _____ God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own _____

Verse 7:

- rather, he _____ himself _____ by taking the very nature of a _____, being made in human _____.

Verse 8:

- And being found in appearance as a _____, he humbled himself by becoming _____ to death — even death on a _____!

Verse 9-11:

- Therefore _____ exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is _____ every name,
- that at the name of Jesus _____ knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and _____ the earth,
- and every tongue _____ that Jesus _____ is Lord, to the _____ of God the Father.

• **Question:** In **Philippians 1:6-11**, how does Paul describe the nature of Christ Jesus?

Day 3 (verses 12-18)

Read **Philippians 2** out loud and complete the verses and questions for Day 3.

Verse 12:

- Therefore, my dear _____, as you have always _____—not only in my presence, but now much more in my _____—continue to _____ out your salvation with _____ and trembling,
- **Question:** What do you hear Paul telling the believers in the Philippian church to do in verse 12?

Verse 13:

- for it is _____ who works in you to will and to _____ in order to fulfill _____ good purpose.
- Write out **Proverbs 19:21:** _____

Verses 14:

- Do everything _____ grumbling or arguing,

Verse 15:

- so that you may become
 - _____ and pure,
 - “children of _____ without fault in a warped and _____ generation.”
 - Then you will _____ among them like stars in the sky.

Verse 16:

- as you hold _____ to the word of life.
- And then I will be able to _____ on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in _____.

How would you summarize, **from verse 14-16a**, how Paul instructs the Philippians what their part is to walk out a Christlike life? _____

Verses 17-18:

- But even if I am being _____ out like a drink offering on the _____ and service coming _____ your faith, I am glad and _____ with all of you.
- So you too should be _____ and rejoice with me.

How would you summarize, **verses 17-18?** _____

Day 4 (verses 19-24)

Yesterday, Paul, shared with the believers at Philippi that their ongoing devotion and non-grumbling unity gives him strength. Their progress in the faith comforts him that his service for God with them was not in vain. Instead of them wasting energy worrying about what is physically happening to him, Paul encourages them to rejoice that the Lord's work is being accomplished even in the midst of his trial (i.e. "being poured out like a drink offering").

Today's verses will speak of Timothy, who Paul is sending to the Philippians in his absence. Paul will endorse Timothy of his ability in the Lord to serve for Paul by describing Timothy's character in relation to those Christlike qualities he has already written about earlier in his letter.

Read **Philippians 2** out loud and complete the verses and questions for Day 4.

Verse 19:

- I hope in the _____ Jesus to send Timothy to you soon
- Paul hopes that when he sends Timothy to the Philippians that "I also may be cheered when I receive _____ about you".

Verse 20:

- I have _____ one else like him, who will show _____ concern for your welfare.

Verse 21-22:

- For everyone looks _____ for their own interests, not those of _____ Christ.
- But you know that Timothy has _____ himself, because as a son with his father he has _____ with me in the work of the gospel.
- **Question: according to verses 20-22, why does Paul have confidence in Timothy to serve the Philippian believers as Paul, himself, would?** _____

Verse 23:

- I hope, _____, to send him as soon as I see how things go _____ me.
- **Question: based upon verse 23, why is Paul not sending Timothy to the Philippian church right away?** _____

Verse 24:

- And I am confident in the _____ that I myself will come _____.

Background:

Paul's statement, in verse 24, here indicate that he's expecting release. That fact would lend to the thought that again, this is most likely his house arrest that we studied in **Acts 28**. Scholars are not certain about the timing, though, since it is not specifically written down as some other writings of scripture have done. (where they cite who was ruling and specific locations). We have to conclude that the Lord's Spirit did not move on Paul's heart to write these specifics and take the scripture at face value. What we do know is that Paul was not allowed to move from his place of imprisonment, he was able to have visitors and accept their financial help and had supplies to write his letters. In light of this being a letter to encourage fellow believers to find joy in the midst of their sufferings, that helps us to follow his example of finding contentment in the midst of wherever our life circumstances fit within God's plan for us.

Day 5 (verses 25-30)

Read **Philippians 2** out loud and complete the verses and questions for Day 5.

Verse 25:

- But I think it is _____ to send back to you, _____,
- Paul says that Epaphroditus is “my brother, co-worker and _____ soldier,
- Paul says that Epaphroditus is also “_____ messenger, whom you _____ to take care of my needs.
- **Questions:**
 - Who sent Epaphroditus to take care of Paul? _____
 - If the Philippian church sent Epaphroditus to take care of Paul, what would that tell us about the relationship between Epaphroditus and the Philippian church believers?

Verse 26:

- For he (Epaphroditus) longs for _____ of you and is _____ because you heard he was ill.
- **Question:** why do you think, in verse 26, that Epaphroditus longs for the believers in the Philippian church and is distressed because they heard he was ill? (Think about how we, as parents, downplay our sicknesses to our children sometimes) _____

Verse 27:

- Indeed he was ill, and _____ died.
- But God had _____ on him, and not on him only but also on _____, to spare me sorrow upon _____.
- **Question:** why would Epaphroditus dying bring Paul “sorrow upon sorrow”? _____

Verse 28:

- Therefore I am all the _____ eager to send him, so that when you see him _____ you may be glad and I may have _____ anxiety.
- **Question:** why do you think Paul has anxiety over the Philippic believers being worried about the physical state of Epaphroditus? _____

Verse 29-30:

- So then, welcome him _____ the Lord with _____ joy, and _____ people like him,
- because he almost _____ for the work of _____.
- He _____ his life to make up for the help you yourselves could _____ give me.

Thought point:

The Greek word for “supply” (epichorēgia) has the thought to cover ones needs (a generous and abundant provision). In light of that definition, what do you think that Paul meant by Epaphroditus supplied what was lacking in their service to Paul (**verse 30**)? What was Paul lacking that was provided by Epaphroditus coming physically to Paul? Do we see this in our own support of missionaries versus those who physically go? How would you explain what Paul might be saying here?
