

## 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 Epaphroditus within the cause of Christ.

Read **Philippians 2** out loud 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?

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#### 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?

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## **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?

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### **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 one’s 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?

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