

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 108 – Philippians 1:22-2:18

Day 536: Philippians 1:22-26

Verse 22

εἰ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκί, τοῦτό μοι καρπὸς ἔργου· καὶ τί αἰρήσομαι οὐ γνωρίζω.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body
καρπος, ου m fruit, grain, harvest,
outcome, offspring

καρπος ἔργου 'fruitful labour.'

αἰρεομαι choose, prefer
γνωρίζω know

Lightfoot suggests the disjointed grammar reflects the apostle's hesitancy as he does not know what to prefer. He thinks the meaning of the verse is, "But if my living in the flesh will be fruitful through a laborious career, then what to choose I know not."

Fee takes a different view. He says that the sense could be either:

- a) If [it is] 'to live' in the flesh, *then* this for me [means] fruitful labour; and which I shall choose, I cannot tell. Or,
- b) If 'to live' in the flesh this [means] fruitful labour for me, *then* what I shall choose, I cannot tell.

Fee, contrary to Lightfoot, prefers the former.

Verse 23

συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο, τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, πολλῶ [γὰρ] μᾶλλον κρείσσον·

συνεχω hem in, hold prisoner; pass. be occupied with

"I am hemmed in between the two" Lightfoot

δυο gen & acc δυο two
ἐπιθυμια, ας f desire, longing
ἀναλυω return home, depart

Lightfoot suggests that this term, which is used of breaking up camp, reflects the camp-life of the Israelites in the wilderness in contrast with their permanent dwellings in the promised land. Motyer adds that Paul, the old tent-maker, "resorts to the language of his trade... Camp-life is exchanged at death for home-life with Christ." Cf 2 Cor 5:1ff.

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι
μαλλον adv more; rather
κρειπτον and κρεισσον adv. better

πολλῶ γαρ μᾶλλον κρείσσον "for it is much by far better." Eadie

Verse 24

τὸ δὲ ἐπιμένειν [ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ἀναγκαιότερον δι• ὑμᾶς.

ἐπιμενω remain, stay, persist in
σαρξ see v.22

ἀναγκαιοτερος, α, ον (comparitive from ἀναγκαιος, α, ον) more necessary, more pressing, more urgent

"Departure is better, stay more necessary; the one better for himself and the other more necessary for the churches." Eadie

Verse 25

καὶ τοῦτο πεποιθως οἶδα ὅτι μενῶ καὶ παραμενῶ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως,

πεποιθως Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s
πειθω persuade; perf have confidence, be confident

μενῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s μενω remain, stay, abide

παραμενῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s
παραμενω remain, continue in office, serve

Note the use again of the adjective 'all' when Paul mentions the Philippian believers. "This otherwise unnecessary mention of 'all' most likely points to the friction that is currently at work among them." Fee

προκοπη, ης f progress, advancement
πιστις, εως f faith

Belongs with both of the previous nouns. "These two words together summarise his concerns for them in this letter: the first refers to the quality or character of their life in Christ, and especially to their 'advancing,' moving forward, in such; the second denotes the quality of their experience of it. And both of these are 'with regard to the faith,' which may refer to their own faith in Christ, as in 2:17, but in this context more likely refers to the gospel itself." Fee

Verse 26

ἵνα τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν περισσεύῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ διὰ τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

καυχημα, τος n boasting, pride

περισευω increase, abound, excel

"Although a bit strained in its expression, the sense of this clause is straightforward enough. The occasion of Paul's coming to them again (thus 'in me') will cause their 'glorying/boasting' to overflow, and all of this takes place 'in Christ Jesus.' This is how Christ's being glorified 'through life' (v.20) is to find fulfilment." Fee

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγώ

ἐμός, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

παρουσια, ας f coming, arrival, presence
παλιν again, once more

"The return of the released prisoner to Philippi would be of incalculable benefit. It would furnish occasion for deeper and more extended lessons on Christianity, so as that their faith might make progress, and its joy might be resuscitated, and this possession of a faith conscious of progress and buoyant with gladness, would furnish matter of abundant boasting in Christ Jesus, through the apostle's visit." Eadie

Eadie discusses the difficulty of reconciling Paul's words in v.25 with Acts 20:25. He points out that the contradiction is not eased by the supposition of two imprisonments separated by a period of freedom during which Paul may have visited them: that would still be contrary to Act 20:25. Eadie suggests that Paul had no revelation concerning what might be the outcome of his imprisonment and therefore is merely expressing his hopes, sometimes optimistically while at other times less so.

Day 537: Philippians 1:27-30

Verse 27

Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἔλθων καὶ ἰδων ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἄπων ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου,

μονος, η, ον i) adj; ii) adv μονον only
ἀξίως adv (from ἀξιος) worthily
εὐαγγελιον, ου n good news, gospel
πολιτευομαι live, conduct one's life

Means literally, perform your duties as a citizen' cf. Acts 23:1; 3:20 and 2 Tim 2:12 and also the cognate noun πολιτευμα in 3:20. Paul plays on the fact that Philippi was a Roman colony and the Philippians Roman citizens. His meaning is 'live in the Roman colony of Philippi as worthy citizens of your heavenly homeland.' "As Philippi was a colony of Rome in Macedonia, so the church was 'a colony of heaven' [Moffatt 3:20] in Philippi, whose members were to live as its citizens in Philippi." Fee

εἴτε if, whether

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see

ἄπων Verb, pres ptc, m nom s ἀπειμι be away, be absent

τα περὶ ὑμῶν cf. 1:12.

On Paul's expectation that he will hear of them, cf. 2:19.

στήκετε Verb, perf act indic & imperat, 2 pl
ἵστημι pf stand firm, hold ground.

Paul's concern is that they stand fast in the face of opposition.

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

Eadie says that 'spirit' here is human spirit rather than the Holy Spirit. "The image here is that of spiritual conflict, to which unity of action on their part was indispensable." Fee disagrees and maintains that the reference is to the Holy Spirit, cf. Eph 2:18; 4:24. He says that Paul never speaks of people possessing a common 'spirit' meaning one mind. The prepositional phrase is locative – it defines the 'sphere' in which they are to stand firm. The Spirit is the key to the unity of the church.

ψυχη, ης f self, life, 'soul'

συναθροῦντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom pl
συναθλεω fight together with, strive together with, work together with

Cf. 4:3. Eadie (contra Luther, Bengel and Meyer) thinks that this is a reference to the Philippians working one with another rather than with the apostle.

πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις, εως f faith, trust, the Christian faith

Lightfoot thinks ἡ πιστις here means 'The Christian faith' or 'the teaching of the Gospel'. Fee, 'the faith that is the gospel.'

εὐαγγελιον, ου n good news, gospel

Verse 28

καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ·

πτυρομαι be frightened or afraid
μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
ἀντικειμαι oppose, be against

"In the light of several hints within the letter, especially the emphasis on Christ as 'lord' and 'savior,' and of the loyalty of this colony to the cult of the emperor, it seems very likely that the (Roman) citizens of Philippi, who would have honoured the emperor at every public gathering, were putting special pressure on the Philippian believers; their allegiance had now been given to another *kyrios*, Jesus, who had himself been executed at the hands of the empire. The present context, in which Paul asserts that they are undergoing 'the same struggle' he is *now* engaged in – as a prisoner of the empire – gives us good reason to believe so." Fee

ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι who, which
ἐνδειξις, εως f evidence, indication

Eadie thinks that the token or indication spoken of is this lack of alarm. Fee argues that the reference is to the Philippians conducting themselves as Paul has instructed in the previous verses – walking worthily of the gospel and having an eschatological outlook. However, it is surely better, and simpler, to understand the opposition itself as the indication or token spoken of (cf. v.29 and also Paul's argument in 2 Thess 1:5).

ἀπωλεια, ας f destruction, utter ruin
σωτηρια, ας f salvation

Cf. 2 Thess 1:4-7. Lightfoot argues that τοῦτο ἀπο θεου belongs with ἐνδειξις not σωτηρια". He considers the metaphor of these verses to be taken from gladiatorial combat and says, "The Christian gladiator does not anxiously await the signal of life or death from the fickle crowd ... The great ἀγωνοθετης Himself has given him a sure token of deliverance."
Eadie argues that it is *both* the token and the salvation to which it points that are of God.

Verse 29

ὅτι ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεύειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν,

ἐχαρίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
χαριζομαι grant, give

Cf. v.7.

μονος, η, ον see v.27.

This clause appears to interrupt Paul's flow. Fee suggests that this is the result of dictation. Paul began to speak of them being granted 'to suffer on behalf of Christ' but interrupts himself with a 'not only' clause.

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)
πασχω suffer

"Those who oppose them as they proclaim 'the faith of the gospel of Christ' are of a kind with those who crucified their Lord in the first place. And for believers, as with their Lord, the path to glorification leads through suffering and the cross." Fee

Verse 30

τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες οἷον εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί.

τὸν αὐτὸν provides the foundation for Fee's argument that the Philippians are suffering at the hands of the Roman Empire.

ἀγων, ωνος m struggle, fight

"A gladiatorial or athletic contest, as in 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7; compare συναθλοντες v.27." Lightfoot. Paul had suffered persecution at Philippi.

οἷος, α, ον relative pronoun such as, of
what kind

εἶδετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl ὁραω see,
observe, perceive, recognise

"Among the recipients of this letter ... are the jailer and his family and (perhaps) the young slave girl whose having been set free from Satan's tyranny had resulted in the first of his sufferings on behalf of Christ that they 'had seen.'" Fee

ἐμοί Pronoun, dat s ἐγω

"It is evident that he spoke from experience when he tells the Philippians of the double grace of faith and suffering." Eadie

Day 538: Philippians 2:1-4**Verse 1-4**

These verses are again a single complex sentence in the Greek.

Verse 1

Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τις παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί,

Paul's exhortation here is a continuation of the thought begun in 1:27.

"In using εἰ, the apostle does not doubt the existence of these graces or feelings ... but he says, If these do exist among you, put them into action, or manifest them, so as to fill up my joy." Eadie

"The 'if' clauses turn out not to express supposition, but presupposition, and should therefore be translated something close to 'since there is ...'; and the apodosis, instead of expressing the 'then' side of a supposition, takes the form of an imperative based on the presupposition." Fee

παρακλησις, εως f encouragement,
appeal

Paul "begins by appealing to their common experience of Christ's comfort, as a direct response to their common experience of suffering for Christ in the preceding clause (1:29-30)." Fee. Fee thinks παρακλησις here bears the sense 'comfort' rather than 'exhortation' or 'appeal' which is favoured by Lightfoot and others.

παραμυθιον, ου n comfort, incentive

παραμυθιον can mean comfort, and this is the sense preferred by Fee who translates it 'solace.' Lightfoot and Eadie think that it bears the meaning 'incentive' or 'constraint' (so Lightfoot, Eadie), that which constrains behaviour.

Fee thinks that the structure here may be trinitarian and that the love spoken of is the love of God (the Father) cf. 2 Cor 13:13 (14).

κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, sharing in,
participation

Fellowship with the Spirit himself and also fellowship generated by the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor 13:13). "The fellowship of the Divine Spirit is the very basis of that likemindedness, the existence and development of which the apostle covets among them... participation of the Spirit would provide similarity of tastes, pursuits and predilections." Eadie
"If they have been made into a fellowship by the Spirit can they live in any other way but in fellowship?" Motyer.

σπλαγχον, ου n one's inmost self,
affections, heart

οικτιριμος, ου m compassion, mercy

The distinction between σπλαγχνα and οικτιριμοι is that between "root and fruit, the feeling and the act" Motyer. σπλαγχνα means deep inward yearnings.

Fee draws attention to the change in structure and suggests that the sense is 'If God's compassion and mercy have produced these same qualities in you towards me, as you know I have towards you, then complete my joy by having a single mindset among yourselves ...'

Verse 2

πληρωσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμψυχοι, τὸ ἐν φρονοῦντες,

πληρωω fill, make full, fulfill

An expression of Paul's pastoral heart – his joy is bound up with their walking worthily of their calling and advancing the gospel in Philippi. Cf. 1:4.

φρονεω think, have in mind

το αὐτο φρονητε "A general expression of accordance which is defined and enforced by the following clauses." Lightfoot. It is a common mindset, common purpose – a common possession of the 'mind of Christ'. Of τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες Eadie writes, "We regard this [love] as the great or only source and accompaniment of unanimity... Offensive individualism disappears in brotherly love." The sense is the 'same love for one another' that they have experienced in God's love for them.

συμψυχος, ου united in spirit, as one

This compound adjective occurs here only in the NT. 'like-souled' The adjective harks back to 1:27.

Verse 3

μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἠγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing
ἐριθεια, ας f selfishness, selfish
ambition, party-spirit

Cf. 1:17. "The apostle here rebukes the passions which are so fatal to unison ... ἐριθεια is self-seeking – the restless battle to be first, no matter what opposition be encountered, or whose feelings or interests may suffer." Eadie

μηδε negative particle nor, and not
κενοδοξια, ας f conceit, cheap desire to
boast

"personal vanity" Lightfoot. The noun occurs here only in the NT. The adjective is used by Paul in Gal 5:26 in the context of a church where people are 'eating and devouring one another.'

ταπεινοφροσυνη, ης f humility

Lightfoot says that classical writers generally used this word in a negative sense, "grovelling", and comments, "It was one great result of the life of Christ (on which Paul dwells here) to raise 'humility' to its proper level."

"This humility is one of the distinctive features of Christianity, for it rests in absolute dependence upon God for everything." Eadie. It is "a uniquely Christian virtue." Fee

ἄλληλων, οἱς, οὗς reciprocal pronoun one another

ἡγεομαι think, regard, consider

ὑπερεχω be of more value than, be better than, surpass

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

"Humility is not undue self-depreciation, but may co-exist with fervent gratitude for gifts enjoyed, a thorough consciousness of their number and value, and the utmost desire to lay out 'the ten talents' to the utmost possible advantage. But where there is self-assertion or rivalry to secure the 'chief seat' and win applause, then the impulses of such vanity necessarily create alienation and disorder." Eadie.

"As with humility, this does not mean that one should falsely consider others 'better.' As v.4 will clarify, we are so to consider others, not in our *estimation* of them – which would only lead to the many vices Paul has just spoken against – but in our *caring* for them, in our putting them and their needs ahead of our own. After all, this is precisely how Christ's humility expressed itself, as Paul narrates in v. 8. Thus, it is not so much that others in the community are to be thought of as 'better than I am,' but as those whose needs and concerns 'surpass' my own. Here, of course, is the sure cure for 'selfish ambition and vain conceit,' not to mention 'grumbling and bickering' (v. 14)." Fee

Verse 4

μη̄ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες, ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστοι.

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

Some MSS read ἕκαστοι which the UBS Committee considered the result of scribal conformation to the other plurals in context.

σκοπεω pay attention to, watch out (for), be concerned about

The phrase ἀλλὰ καὶ softens the contrast. The command is not to ignore all matters to do with oneself but rather to put others first in one's thinking.

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

Verses 1-4 Reflection

"As Barth rightly pointed out, here is a vivid, miniature expression of the heart of Pauline ethics, not simply because its predicate is grace, but because it is grounded in the character of God as that has been revealed in Christ Jesus, which is the point to be taken up next. As with so much else in this letter, here, too, is a word for all seasons. One can only imagine what might happen if we were to rethink – and re-experience – the love and encouragement that is ours through the Trinity, and on that basis also rethink – and thus reorient – our life in Christ in terms of our relationships to one another. If we ourselves were more truly characterised by the contents of this appeal, we might become a more effective people in the world." Fee

Day 539: Philippians 2:5-11

Verse 5

τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,

Many MSS read τουτο γαρ, seeking to tie these verses with what precedes them. τουτο "is best understood as pointing backward, in this case to vv. 2-4." Fee. The particular aspect of Christ's character which is to the fore here is his self-denying generosity and condescension which is the mark also of the Christian (v.4).

φρονεω see v.2

The 'mind' implied here is 'mind-set'.

ἐν ὑμῖν = 'in the community' [of believers].

Verses 6-11

The majority of modern commentators consider these verses, or at least 6-8, to be an early hymn, though several think Paul to be the author. Fee is less convinced of its hymnic origin.

Concerning these verses Eadie writes, "The example of Christ is living legislation – law embodied and pictured in perfect humanity. Not only does it exhibit every virtue, but it also enjoins it. In showing what is, it enacts what ought to be. When it tells us how to live it commands us so to live... He develops that "mind" which was in Christ and which was manifested in His self-denying incarnation and death... the extent of our Lord's self-denying grace is measured by the distance between equality with God and a public execution on a gibbet."

Verse 6

ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,

μορφη, ης f nature, form

μορφη has to be understood in the light of its dual use here – Christ was in the *form* of God, but took the *form* of a servant. Eadie writes, "It was not the divine nature, but the visible display of it – that which enables men to apprehend it and prompts them to adore it." Fee thinks that the word means more than appearance, "μορφη was precisely the right word for this dual usage, to characterise both the reality (his being God) and the metaphor (his taking on the role of a slave), since it denotes 'form' or 'shape' not in terms of the external features by which something is recognised but those characteristics and qualities that are essential to it. Hence it means *that which truly characterises a given reality*."

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἶμι)

ἄρπαγμος, ου m something to grasp after; something to hold on to

Fee provides a "mini word study" on ἄρπαγμος. He considers two possible meanings for the term:

- i) Moule and others suggest that Greek nouns ending in –μος usually refer not to a concrete thing but are abstract nouns carrying the sense of the cognate verb. Here the meaning is 'grasping' or 'seizing.' "Thus, Christ did not consider 'equality with God' to consist of 'grasping' or being 'selfish'; rather he rejected this particular view of kingly power by 'pouring himself out' for the sake of others. In Moule's terms, equality with God means not 'grasping' but 'giving away.'"
- ii) The noun is a synonym of its cognate ἄρπαγμα ('booty'). The meaning would be 'a matter to be seized upon' in the sense of 'taking advantage of it.'

Fee thinks both suggestions have much to commend them and, "in either case, it could be pointed out, the clause comes out very much at the same point."

Yoder (*Politics of Jesus*) thinks that Paul suggests a contrast with the "Godlikeness promised by the serpent to Adam in the garden, which would have consisted in unchecked dominion over creation. Or perhaps it refers as well to the kind of Godlikeness claimed by Caesar." Ridderbos (*Paul*) also detects a contrast with Adam.

ἠγήσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἠγεομαι think, regard, consider

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

ἴσος, η, ον equal, the same; ἴσα adv equally; το εἶναι ἴσα equality

Fee argues that the meaning is not that Christ abandoned equality with God but that he did not consider equality with God to be exemplified in 'grasping' but in 'emptying.' "In the cross God's true character, his outlandish, lavish expression of love, was fully manifested." The question at issue is 'What does it mean to be like God?'

Verse 7

ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιωματι ἀνθρωπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

κενωω deprive of power, make of no effect

Of what did Christ empty himself? Lightfoot and Eadie are typical of older commentators: He "*emptied*, stripped himself of the insignia of Majesty" Lightfoot. "He laid aside the form of God, the splendour of divinity." Eadie.

Fee, in contrast, argues that it is wrong to suppose that he must have emptied himself *of something*. "That is precisely *not* in keeping with Pauline usage. Just as ἄρπαγμον requires no object for him to 'seize,' but rather points to what is the opposite of God's character, so Christ did not empty himself *of anything*; he simply 'emptied *himself*,' poured himself out. This is metaphor, pure and simple." The meaning of the verb elsewhere is 'to become powerless' or 'to be emptied of significance' cf. 1 Cor 1:17; Rom 4:14. So AV, 'he made himself of no reputation' and NIV 'made himself nothing.' Fee concludes, "The concern is with divine selflessness: God is not an acquisitive being, grasping and seizing, but self-giving for the sake of others."

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

Eadie understands this service to be service to God. In becoming man, the Son took on the role of Servant to the Father's will. He took on the part of obedient man which Adam had abandoned. However, the context would seem to demand also the sense that he became a servant of all – a model for our service of one another.

ὁμοιωμα, τος n likeness

"He came in the 'likeness' of human beings, because on the one hand he was fully identified with us, and because on the other hand in becoming human he was not 'human' only. He was God living out a truly human life, all of which is safeguarded by the expression." Fee

γενόμενος Verb, aor ptc, m nom s γινομαι

There is some variation here in versification. Verse 7 ends with γενομενος in some MSS and versions.

σχημα, ατος n outward form, present form, form, likeness

εὐρεθεις Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s εὐρισκω

"He showed Himself possessed of a true body and a rational soul – that body no phantom or disguise, but an organism like that of all men born of woman, and within it a soul that grew in wisdom as His body grew in stature, being subject to human emotions, and possessed of the usual powers of thought and will. He was 'found in fashion as a man' by those who lived with Him, who saw Him in all aspects, and in every variety of attitude and circumstance; – His mother and kinsmen; His fellow-villagers and friends; His disciples and followers; His enemies and executioners." Eadie

Verse 8

ἐταπεινωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

ταπεινω humble

"From heaven to earth He descended by emptying Himself, but after being on earth, He humbled Himself by His obedience to the death ... He laid aside the form of God, and took the form of a servant; but in that servant's form He still abased Himself even to the cross." Eadie

ὑπηκοος, ον obedient

In becoming a servant, he took on not only the duty of obedient man but also of Saviour – obedience to the demand for atoning sacrifice.

μεχρι unto, as far as

θανατος, ου m death

σταυρος, ου m cross

Cf. Heb 12:2

It is worth quoting here a longer section from Fee. "Here is the very heart of Pauline theology, both of his understanding of God as such and of his understanding of what God has done and is doing in our fallen world. Here is where the one who as 'equal with God' has most fully revealed the truth about God: That God is love and that his love expresses itself in self-sacrifice – cruel, humiliating death on a cross – for the sake of those he loves. The divine weakness (death at the hands of his creatures, his enemies) is the divine scandal (the cross was reserved for slaves and insurrectionists). No one in Philippi, we must remind ourselves, used the cross as a symbol for their faith; there were no gold crosses embossed on Bibles or worn as pendants around the neck or lighted on the steeple of the local church. The cross was God's – and their – scandal. God's contradiction to human wisdom and power: that the one they worshiped as Lord of all, including Caesar, had been crucified as a state criminal at the hands of one of Caesar's proconsuls; that the Almighty should appear in human dress, and that he should do so in this way, as a 'Messiah' who died by crucifixion. Likewise, this is the scandal of Pauline ethics: that the God who did it this way 'gifts' us to 'suffer for his sake' as well (1:29)."

We should not forget that he who was equal with God became accursed of God.

Verse 9

διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα,

διο therefore, for this reason

ὑπερυψωω raise to the highest position, highly exalt

"Paul virtually holds the copyright on ὑπερ compounds in the NT, and in the vast majority of cases they magnify or express excess, not position." Fee. Cf. Rom 8:37.

"It is the doctrine of Scripture that Christ, in dying for men, and because he did die for them, has won for himself eternal renown... Infinite condescension surely merits highest glory." Eadie

Christ's exaltation is the divine vindication of his emptying himself and humbling himself.

χαριζομαι grant, give, bestow

ὄνομα, τος n name, title, authority

What is this 'name'? Lightfoot thinks that it is not any name in particular but rather reflects the Hebrew use of the term 'name', meaning "office, rank or dignity". If any particular name is meant, Lightfoot thinks it is most probably Κύριος. Fee also favours 'Lord as the equivalent of 'Yahweh.' However, in the light of v.10, it could be argued that the 'name' here intended is the name Ἰησοῦς ("Jesus! the name high over all..."). Thus saving grace is enthroned in the highest place in heaven. Neither should we miss the 'Last Adam' theme here. He is enthroned as the *man* Christ Jesus. "He that was known as Jesus among men, specifically as Jesus of Nazareth, He it is who in this very nature commands the homage of the universe." Eadie

Verse 10

ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πάντων γόνων κάμψη
ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ
καταχθονίων,

This verse is modelled on Is 45:23.

γονοῦ, γονατος n knee
κάμψη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s κάμπτω
trans & intrans bend, bow (of the knee)
ἐπουραῖος, ον heavenly, celestial
ἐπιγίαιος, ον earthly, of the earth
καταχθονίος, ον under the earth,
subterranean

Both Lightfoot and Eadie argue that Jesus is not the medium through whom adoration is offered to God, but is himself the object of that adoration: he is the Saviour God. All creation (the simple meaning of the three adjectives) is to acknowledge the person, work and authority of the Lord Jesus. He demands universal submission.

"There is in this language no hint that those who bow are acknowledging his salvation; on the contrary they *will* bow to his sovereignty at the End, even if they are not now yielding to it." Fee

Verse 11

καὶ πάντα γλώσσα ἑξομολογήσεται ὅτι
κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ
πατρὸς.

γλώσσα, ης f tongue
ἑξομολογήσεται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 s
ἑξομολογεω agree; midd confess,
acknowledge, praise

'The the Lord is Jesus Christ,' cf. 1 Cor 12:3;
Rom 10:9.

Despite the occasional demurrer, there can be little question that this confession arose in the early Jewish Christian community, as the Aramaic 'Maranatha' in 1 Cor 16:22 bears striking evidence. Thus, in the very earliest Aramaic-speaking communities, the language that belonged to God alone is now being addressed to Christ in corporate invocation. One can scarcely gainsay the christological implications of this confession in the present passage." Fee

δοξα, ης f glory
πατηρ, πατρος m father

"The acknowledgement of Christ's exultation tends to or issues in the glory of God the Father." Eadie

Day 540: Philippians 2:12-18

Verse 12

Ὡστε, ἀγαπητοὶ μου, καθὼς πάντοτε
ὑπηκούσατε, μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου
μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ
ἀπουσίᾳ μου, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν
ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε·

ὥστε so that, with the result that

In Paul's teaching, ethical demands are made on the basis of what God has done for us in Christ.

Paul is returning now to the matters that prompted him to speak of Christ's self emptying – his concern that the Philippians live out the gospel. Verses 12-18 bring the argument that began in 1:27 full circle.

ἀγαπητός, η, ον beloved
παντοτε always
ὑπακούω obey, be subject to

Whom have they obeyed? The sense here is probably obedience *to the gospel* – hence obedience to the instruction they had received from Paul, but above all obedience to Christ.

παρουσία, ας f presence
μόνον adv only, alone
πολύς, πολλή, πολὺ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου
much, many
μᾶλλον adv more; rather
ἀπουσία, ας f absence
φόβος, ου m fear
τρόμος, ου m trembling

Cf. 1 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 7:15; Eph 6:5, also the OT background in Ex 15:16; Deut 2:25; 11:25; Ps 55:5 (54:6 LXX) and Is 19:16.

Calls for a fear, or proper awe, before God. "One does not live out the gospel casually or lightly, but as one who knows what it means to stand in awe of the living God." Fee

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον see v.7
 σωτηρια, ας f salvation
 κατεργαζομαι work hard at, accomplish

The compound verb here carries the sense of carrying out or of making perfect. The working out of our salvation is part of that process by which we grow in likeness to Christ. Such growth is not effortless. In context, the command is not just to them as individuals but also concerns their corporate life – how they are to live out the gospel as a company of the people of God, cf. v.15.

Verse 13

θεός γάρ ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας.
 ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)

"work mightily', 'work effectively'" Lightfoot
 The Philippians are able to work out their salvation *precisely because* God is himself at work in them and among them.

θελω wish, will

"Not only does God empower their 'doing' (ἐνεργεῖν the infinitive of the verb just used to describe God's own activity), but also the 'willing' that lies behind the doing. This is fully in keeping with Paul's understanding of Christian ethics, which has not to do with obedience to a set of rules that regulate conduct, but first of all with a 'mind that is transformed' by the Spirit. Such a mind is 'conformed' not to this age, but to the character of God, so that behaviour is a reflection of God's will, what is good and pleasing and perfect to him (Rom 12:1-2)." Fee

ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)
 εὐδοκία, ας f good will, pleasure

Lightfoot links this with 1 Tim 2:4. God's will is that all should be saved. Hence God is working out his saving purpose.

Verse 14

πάντα ποιεῖτε χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν,

χωρὶς without, apart from
 γογγυσμος, ου m complaining,
 quarreling, whispering

"The word is constantly used in the LXX of Israel in the wilderness; compare 1 Cor 10:10." Lightfoot

διαλογισμος, ου m dispute, inward
 questioning, controversy

A reference, perhaps, to disputes among the Philippians. Murmuring is rebellion against God and a failure to recognise his purpose. He is at work to refine us and make us like Christ. We are to understand that we are not abandoned but worked upon. The clay is not to complain at the potter but, to change the picture, actively work with the purpose of the potter to display the form of Christ. Paul himself presents us with an example in his reaction to his imprisonment (cf. 1:12; 2:17).

Verse 15

ἵνα γένησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα μέσον γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ,

γένησθε Verb, aor midd depo subj, 2 pl
 γινομαι

ἄμεμπτος, ον blameless, faultless

Cf. Gen 17:1.

ἀκεραιος, ον innocent, guiltless
 τέκνον, ου n child; pl descendants
 ἄμωμος, ον faultless; without blemish

Echoes Deut 32:5 (LXX).

μεσος, η, ον middle

Here, μεσον is used adverbially

γενεα, ας f generation, contemporaries,
 age

σκολιος, α, ον crooked, perverse,
 dishonest

διεστραμμένης Verb, perf pass ptc, f gen s
 διαστρεφω pervert, distort, mislead
 φαινω shine, give light; midd. and pass.
 appear, be seen

"ye appear' not 'ye shine' (φαινετε) as in the AV. The same error is made in Matt 24:27; Rev 2:7 ... φαίνεσθε here should be taken as an indicative not an imperative." Lightfoot. But Fee argues that this is to miss the echo of Daniel 12:3 – the meaning is 'shine.'

φωστηρ, ηρος m light, star; radiance

Cf. Jn 3:19 "They did not only enjoy the light, but they reflected it. They appeared as luminaries in the world, and its only spiritual light came from them. There was deep gloom around them, but they tended to disperse it." Eadie

Verse 16

λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα.

ζωη, ης f life

"By λογον ζωης we understand the gospel"
Eadie

ἔπεχω hold firmly to or offer

Eadie understands it to mean 'hold forth', and says it "describes the mode in which believers are luminaries ... The possession of the gospel is in itself a source of individual enlightenment; but the exhibition of that gospel throws its light on others."
Fee thinks that the parallel with Dan 12:3 suggests that the meaning is 'hold firm.'

καυχημα, τος η ground for boasting,
boasting, pride

ἐμοί Pronoun, dat s ἐγω

κενος, η, ον empty, to no purpose

ἔδραμον Verb, aor act indic, 1s τρεχω
run, exert oneself

Cf. Gal 2:2

κοπιαω work, work hard, labour

"Probably a continuation of the same metaphor, referring to training for the athletic games: compare 1 Cor 9:24-27." Lightfoot.
"What purer joy can be imagined than this – what joy nearer in fulness and loftiness to His, who, on the same day, 'shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied?'" Eadie

Verse 17

ἀλλὰ εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ
λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, χαίρω καὶ
συγχαίρω πᾶσιν ὑμῖν·

σπενδομαι be poured out as a drink-
offering (of one's life), give one's life in
sacrifice

Cf 2 Tim 4:6

θυσια, ας f sacrifice, victim

λειτουργια, ας f service

λειτουργια has the connotation of priestly service (cf. Lk 1:23; Heb 8:6; 9:21). This much is clear, but the picture itself is not without difficulty. Fee writes, "Pictured is the Levitical priest, whose 'service' included the offering of a sacrificed animal, and often a grain offering accompanied by a 'drink offering' of wine poured out in the sanctuary (Num 28:7). In the present application Paul is pictured as the drink offering and the Philippians (apparently) as 'serving' by offering the sacrifice, which has to do with their faith in some way. But none of this is easy to decipher, in part because of the context and in part because Paul's use of sacrificial imagery is so flexible that usage elsewhere is of little or no help here." Many see σπενδομαι as a reference to Paul's possible death on the basis of the parallel with 2 Tim 4:6 – e.g. Eadie who writes, "The apostle's death as a martyr, was felt by him to be a very likely event; and while that death would be a judicial murder, it would yet be an offering poured out on the faith of the Phillipian converts." Fee thinks that this is doubtful as Paul goes on to express confidence that he will be released. He thinks that Paul "is suggesting that his imprisonment, besides being a 'drink offering' to the Lord, is to be understood as his part of their common suffering, the 'drink offering' poured out in conjunction with their 'sacrifice.' ... Thus, it seems most likely, but by no means certain, that both sides of the imagery recall 1:29-30, that God has 'graced' them not only to 'believe' in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. Paul's present imprisonment serves as the 'drink offering,' which accompanies their own suffering in behalf of Christ."

"Thus St Paul's language expresses the fundamental idea of the Christian Church, in which universal priesthood has supplanted the exclusive ministrations of a select tribe or class: see 1 Peter 2:5." Lightfoot

πιστις, εως f faith

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

συγχαίρω rejoice with, rejoice together

Lightfoot argues that the verb here means 'congratulate'. Eadie thinks it means "I rejoice and give joy to you all." Fee that it means that Paul and the Philippians are able to share a common joy in being granted to suffer for the gospel (so v.18). "The joy comes from our relationship with Christ and with one another in Christ, as well as from our eschatological certainty; the suffering must be the direct result of trying to bring others in on the joy, or it deflects from Christ's suffering. Only so can we also rejoice in one another's suffering – as evidence that the proper 'sacrifices' are being offered up to God."

Verse 18

τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ὑμεῖς χαίρετε καὶ
συγχαίρετέ μοι.

το δε αυτο in the same way