

## Philippians 2:1-11

### Context

1. *What can you learn about the person or situation to which the letter is written?*
  - a. Given the emphasis on unity, perhaps there was some type of disharmony or conflict in the congregation (1-4)
2. *What clues are there about the author and his circumstances?*
  - a. He desires
3. *What was the main point of the passage immediately before this one? Are there logical or thematic connections to the passage you are reading?*
  - a. Main point: Stand firm together in a manner worthy of the gospel
  - b. Logical/thematic connections:
    - i. One mind (1:27; 2:2, 5)
    - ii. So/then (2:1)

### Observations

1. *Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text? Are there key connecting words (for, therefore, but, because) that indicate the logical flow of the passage?*
  - a. Key connecting words
    - i. So/then (1)
    - ii. if ... [then] (1ff.)
    - iii. and (2)
    - iv. or (3)
    - v. but (3)
    - vi. not only ... but also (4)
    - vii. though (6)
    - viii. but (7)
    - ix. and (8)
    - x. even (8)
    - xi. Therefore (9) – result
    - xii. and (9)
    - xiii. so that (10) – purpose
    - xiv. and (10) – x2
    - xv. and (11)
    - xvi. to (11) – result
  - b. Other connecting words (relative pronouns, etc.)
    - i. which (5) – description of mind
    - ii. who (6) – description of Christ Jesus
    - iii. that (9) – description of the name

Note 1: Some words function as connectors (conjunctions) sometimes and in other ways at other times (prepositions, etc.)

- “to”
  1. (4) – where the reader should look
  2. (6) – “to be” (infinitive)
  3. (8) – the extent of Christ’s obedience
- “that”

1. (11) – content of confession

2. *What is the main point or points? What supporting points does the author make?*

Main Point  
(a)

a. **So ... complete [Paul's] joy (1, 2)**

i. if ... (1)

Condition  
(i)

1. there is any encouragement in Christ
2. any comfort from love
3. any participation in the Spirit
4. any affection and sympathy

ii. by ... (2)

General how to  
(ii)

1. being of the same mind
2. having the same love
3. being in full accord and one mind

iii. Do nothing ... (3)

1. from rivalry or conceit

Specific how to  
(iii – v)

iv. But ... count others more significant than yourselves

1. in humility

v. Let each of you look ... (4)

1. not only to his own interests
2. but also to the interests of others.

vi. Have this mind (5)

The compelling  
example of Christ  
(vi)

1. [Have] among yourselves

2. [this mind] which is yours

a. in Christ Jesus

i. who ... did not count equality ... a thing to be grasped (6)

1. though he was in the form of God
2. [equality] with God

ii. but made himself nothing (7)

1. taking the form of a servant
2. being born in the likeness of men

iii. And ... he humbled himself (8)

1. [he] being found in human form
2. [humbled] by becoming obedient

a. to the point of death

i. even death on a cross

iv. Therefore, God has highly exalted him (9)

v. and [God has] bestowed on him the name

1. [the name] that is above every name
2. [bestowed] so that every knee should bow (10)

a. [bow] at the name of Jesus

b. [every knee] in heaven

c. and [every knee] on earth

d. and [every knee] under the earth

3. and [bestowed so that] every tongue should confess

(11)

a. that Jesus Christ is Lord

b. to the glory of God the Father

3. *What surprises are there in the flow of the argument?*

- a. That it is framed in the context of Paul's personal joy

## **Meaning**

1. *How does this text relate to other parts of the book?*
  - a. Paul's joy for the Philippians (1:4; 2:2)
  - b. One way in which their lives can be worthy of the gospel of Christ (1:27)
    - i. Their partnership in the gospel (1:5)
  - c. Increasing, abounding love as a desire of Paul for them (1:9; 2:2)
  - d. The resulting glory of God (1:11; 2:11)
2. *How does this passage relate to Jesus?*
  - a. The humble example of Christ serves as a significant motivator for the believer (2:5ff.)
  - b. In Christ, this mind/attitude is available to us (2:5)
  - c. The passage teaches a wealth of doctrinal truth about Christ – his identity, his work, the relationship between the Father and the Son, his relationship to creation
3. *What does this teach you about God?*
  - a. The ultimate purpose of God's work in and through Christ was to glorify himself (2:11)
4. *How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?*
  - a. A congregation should pursue unity for their pastor's personal joy and because of the example of the church's Lord and Savior.

## **Application**

1. *How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?*
  - a.
2. *Is there some attitude you need to change?*
  - a.
3. *How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?*
  - a.