

Philippians

Demonstrating Love and Fellowship [2:1-4]

- **Through Unity [2:1-2]**

- Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation offered by love,

Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τι παραμύθιον ἀγάπης,

- The word “Therefore” is οὖν (oun) and indicates that this new chapter starts with a continuation of the idea from the previous section on unity.
- The words “if” here and in the rest of this verse are 1st class conditionals meaning that the things listed here are all assumed to be true.
- The phrase “encouragement in Christ” describes the encouragement that comes from knowing your position of being united with Christ.
- The word “consolation” is παραμύθιον (paramuthion) which means “that which offers consolation”.

- if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,

εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί,

- The phrase “fellowship of the Spirit” describes the fellowship that believers have with one another (and with God) when they walk in the Light by means of the Spirit [1 John 1:5-7; Gal 5:16].
- The word “compassion” is from οἰκτιρμός (oiktirmos) which means “compassion” [Col 3:12], but includes the idea of showing “mercy” [Rom 12:1; 2 Cor 1:3; Heb 10:28].

- make my joy complete by being like-minded,

πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε,

- The verb “make ... complete” is from πληρόω (plēroō) which means “bring to completion that which was already begun”.
- This could also be translated “make full” [Jn 3:29].
- The phrase “by being of the same mind” describes the like-mindedness that believers are able to have through their walk of faith.

- maintaining the same love, united in spirit, focused on one goal.

τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμψυχοι, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες,

- The phrase “united in spirit” is from σύμψυχος (sumpsuchos) which means “harmonious”.
- This word is used only here in the N.T. and describes shared passions and ambitions.
- The phrase “intent on one purpose” is actually “focused on one thing”.
- In this context a goal or purpose is clearly in view.

- Principles of Philippians 2:1-2
 - The moment you place your faith in Jesus as your personal savior you are baptized by the Spirit into union with Christ [Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 12:13].
 - Our union with Christ should be an encouragement to us because, in Him, we have access to every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places [Eph 1:3].
 - As believers, we are the object of God's love which is a source of comfort and consolation in our daily walk [2 Cor 1:3-5; 7:6-7; 2 Thess 2:16-17].
 - We are also comforted through the love of other believers [Phlm 7].
 - This love is not of the flesh, but is manifest in us by God the Holy Spirit [Rom 5:5].
 - One of the spiritual blessings we are able to enjoy is fellowship with other believers, but only when we have fellowship with God [1 John 1:9].
 - This fellowship is of the Spirit who produces in us a kindness and gentleness that we would not have apart from Him [Gal 5:22-23].
 - This inward change of the soul should result in an outward change in our behavior as we show tender affection and mercy toward others [Col 3:12-13].
 - As a body of believers in a local church, we should become more and more like-minded as we mature in our faith [1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 13:11; 1 Pet 3:8-9].
 - This like-mindedness should result in an accord within the body as believers focus in unison on bringing glory to God [Rom 15:5-6; 1 Cor 10:31].
 - As a body of believers strives toward a common goal it is critical that everything they do is done in the sphere of love or it will all be empty and profit them nothing [1 Cor 13:1-3].

• In Humble Selflessness [2:3-4]

- Do nothing from selfish ambition or inflated self-worth,
μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν
 - The word “selfishness” is from ἐριθεία (epitheia) which means “selfish ambition”.
 - We saw this word in Phil 1:17 and it includes the idea of contention that arises from this self-promoting attitude [2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20].
 - The phrase “empty conceit” is from κενοδοξία (kenodoxia) which means “empty arrogance” or “exaggerated self-evaluation”.
 - This word is set in opposition to the verb (κενόω, kenoō) describing Christ’s humility in verse 7.
- but with humility of mind think of one another as more important than yourselves;
ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,
 - The phrase “with humility of mind” is from ταπεινοφροσύνη (tapeinophrosunē).
 - In Colossians this word meant false humility, but it can also mean true humility [Eph 4:2 1 Pet 5:5].
 - The word “regard” is from ἡγέομαι (hēgeomai) which is a thinking word.
 - This word means to give a matter consideration and come to a proper conclusion.
 - The phrase “more important” is from ὑπερέχω (huperechō) which means “be better than”.
 - We will see this word used for “having surpassing value” later in this letter [Phil 3:8].
- do not *merely* give consideration to your own personal interests, but also the interests of others.
μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἐτέρων ἕκαστοι.
 - The word “also” is καὶ (kai) which is not included in all of the manuscripts.
 - This word appears to have been omitted from the Western texts in the interest of ascetics.
 - Text criticism reveals that καὶ (kai) belongs here and is the reason the translators added “merely” to better communicate the meaning of this verse.
 - The phrase “look out for” is σκοπέω (kai) which means “pay careful attention to”.
 - This word describes thoughtful consideration.
- Principles of Philippians 2:3-4
 - The ways of the world tell us that we have to promote ourselves in order to get ahead.
 - In God’s plan for believers, there is no place for self-promotion [Jas 3:13-17].
 - In fact, Scripture advises us to not even associate with selfish people [Prov 23:6-8].
 - The protocol for the believer is to humble himself before the Lord who will exalt him at the proper time [Matt 23:12; Jas 4:10; 1Pet 5:5-6].
 - This is a mindset of humility for the believer that includes not thinking too highly of himself [Pr 3:7; Rom 12:3, 16; 1 Cor 8:1-2].
 - This Christ-like attitude views others as more important than ourselves, giving preference to one another in brotherly love [Rom 12:10].
 - The goal in all of this is to edify our brothers and sisters in Christ [Rom 14:19; 15:1-2; Eph 4:12, 29].
 - This takes thoughtful consideration because not everything we do will edify [1 Cor 10:23-24].