

## Philippians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Paul, being called of the Lord to preach the gospel in Macedonia, having touched at Neapolis of Greece, came to Philippi, the first city, in regard of its situation, within that part of Macedonia, on his way from *Samothracia* (Ac 16:11,12) into that country, through Amphipolis and Apollonia, to Thessalonica. Appian describes this Philippi to be seated on a little hill near the foot of the Pangæan mountain, in old time called Crenides, from the fountains and gold mines adjoining, and Datus or Dathus, from the treasure, agreeing with the island Thasus near it; afterwards enlarged and fortified by Philip king of Macedon, who therefore gave it the name of Philippi, as a frontier town within his dominions on the confines of Thracia. Yet afterwards it fell into the hands of the Romans, and became memorable for the victory which Augustus and Antony obtained there over Brutus and Cassius; and in Paul's time it was a *colony*, Ac 16:12,21. But there is no evidence from Scripture, or the most authentic civil history, that it was (as a learned man would have it) the metropolis of Macedonia when this Epistle was written to it. For it doth not appear that it had so much as a proconsul, or deputy, (as in some other colonies of Macedonia), Ac 16:12, but rather that the magistrates and military officers (Ac 16:20,22,35,36,38) show themselves to be of an under city, which (some affirm) did depend on the great mother city Thessalonica, in a civil sense, and some centuries after (say others) in an ecclesiastical. However, it received Paul, who planted the gospel here; who now being prisoner at Rome, (probably the first, not second time), Php 1:7,13,14,16, with 2Ti 4:6, and having received by *Epaphroditus*, their messenger, Php 2:25, their acceptable and liberal present, Php 4:18, and understood from him their constancy in the doctrine they had received, (though it seems some affecting pre-eminencies did trouble them), he doth most pathetically, as full of paternal affections towards them his dear children, move them to persevere in faith and godliness; and not to be at all discouraged by his present sufferings, but to live as becomes the gospel, in humility and unity; intimating his tender love and care of them in designing to send Timothy to them, and then to come and visit them; whom he cautions to beware of seducers, who might else pervert them in mingling the law and gospel: whereupon he quickens them to a heavenly conversation in the exercise of several graces; and, expressing his thankfulness for their repeated bounty, concludes with his

salutations and apostolical blessing.

### Chapter Summary

Php 1:1,2 Paul saluteth the Philippians,  
Php 1:3-7 and testifieth his thankfulness to God for  
their uninterrupted fellowship in the gospel,  
Php 1:8 his affection for them,  
Php 1:9-11 and prayers for their spiritual  
improvement.  
Php 1:12-20 He informeth them that his bonds at Rome  
had turned out to the advancement of the gospel: which  
many were thereby induced to preach, though with  
different views,  
Php 1:21-24 that, considering how serviceable his life  
might be to the cause of Christ, though for himself it  
were happier to die, he was doubtful in his choice,  
Php 1:25,26 but that he knew he should soon be at  
liberty to visit them again for their comfort,  
Php 1:25-30 He exhorteth them to walk worthy of their  
profession, and to be steady and unanimous in the  
faith, for which they had already been fellow sufferers  
with him.

Ver. 1. Paul and Timotheus; i.e. the author and approver, intimating the  
good agreement between Paul and Timothy, whom they well knew, to gain  
their fuller assent to what should be written, Mt 18:16: see 1Co 1:1 2Co  
1:1.

*The servants of Jesus Christ;* in a special manner being wholly and  
perpetually dedicated to his more immediate service in the ministry of  
reconciliation, Ac 13:2 Ro 1:1 1Co 4:1 2Co 5:18 Ga 1:1 Jas 1:1.

*To all the saints in Christ Jesus;* i.e. all the community of church  
members at Philippi, called out of the world to Christ, sanctified,  
separated, and dedicated to him, by a credible profession of faith in him  
and obedience to him, 1Co 1:2 Eph 1:1 Col 1:2; the apostle now being  
well persuaded of their perseverance, Php 1:6,7.

*With the bishops and deacons:* from the Syriac version it is rendered

presbyters and ministers. And there appears no cogent reason why we should not adhere to the exposition of ancient and modern interpreters, who understand the apostle writing in the plural number, particularly, to the church and her officers living in this city, as meaning the two orders of ordinary standing officers, which are appointed for the church, and not the church for the officers. By the former of which are meant such pastors and teachers as did agree in name, office, and power with the bishops during the apostles' times, as they collect from several other scriptures besides this, compared together, viz. Ac 20:17,20,25,28, with Ac 11:30 1Co 4:1 12:28 1Th 5:12,13 1Ti 3:1-8 5:17 Tit 1:5,7 Heb 13:17 Jas 5:14 1Pe 5:1,3 3Jo 1:1,9: these, whether bishops or elders, having the oversight, rule, guidance, feeding of the people, preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments or mystical ordinances of the gospel, committed to them in common. By the latter, those to whom the special care was committed for serving of tables, the Lord's table and the poor's, together with a receiving and orderly disposing and distributing the collected alms and other goods of the church given to pious uses, according to their own discretion, taking advice of the pastors, for the support and benefit of the poor members of the church who needed as to this temporal life, to orphans, widows, yea, and strangers, especially of the household of faith, that their bodily necessities might be supplied, Ac 6:2, &c. with Ro 12:7,8 Ro 15:25-27 16:1 1Co 12:28 2Co 9:1,2,12 1Ti 3:8, with 1Pe 4:11 Ga 6:10,11 Php 2:1,25,30, with Php 4:18 Jude 1:12. "But two learned doctors amongst us have opposed this and made it difficult, the one by restraining the word *bishops* to diocesans, and the other by enlarging the word *deacons* to note their presbyters. He would have no such order of presbyters as now in the apostles' days; this would have deacons then to be only temporary, not standing officers in the church; and so they agree not. The former finding Clement and Polycarp agreed with the apostle here, as to two distinct orders of bishops and deacons, going upon an unproved supposition that Philippi was then a metropolis, he would, without any satisfactory evidence to one that doubted, infer the bishops here were diocesans; however, the forementioned scriptures compared, all prove the words *bishop* and *elder* in the apostles' days, to be used promiscuously, only the word elders, or presbyters, more frequently than that of bishops; conceiving that the office of presbyters was not in use till after-ages, though he assigns not the time how and when it came in. So that in effect he would have Philippi to be a mother church (that then had several daughter churches) in her infancy. Whereas the apostle writes to those who

were church officers in that city, yet he would have them none of that order which we now call presbyters; thinking, whatever the apostle writes of laying on the hands of the presbytery, there were then no presbyters ordained in the church: which is a singular opinion, of holding all the places in the New Testament where presbyters are named, precisely to intend diocesan bishops in distinction from them who are only deacons, allowing the office of deacons, and the continuance of it, to be appointed therein, when that of elders (acknowledged to be superior) is not. But if, according to this novel tenet, there were not then preaching presbyters, that were not metropolitans or diocesans, how could diocesans have presbyters under them? And if they had none, what should denominate them properly diocesans? When it seems to be of the formal reason of a diocesan, to be chosen out of presbyters, or to have them to govern. And if the diocesan bishops were then as the apostles, who must the pastors and teachers be? 1Co 12:28,29 Eph 4:11,12. Exhorting, teaching, ruling were then present offices, which the apostles *ordained in every church*, Ac 14:23. Cenchrea was no diocess or metropolis, neither was Aquila's and Priscilla's house, Ro 16:3,4 1Co 16:19, yet are said to be *churches*, in the plural number, 1Co 14:33,34. If metropolitanical or diocesan, how hath not the Scripture the name or thing? This appears not to be agreeable to the apostle's way who writes particularly to churches in cities, towns, and countries, as to the Hebrews. He distinguisheth Thessalonica, in directions from Macedonia and Achaia, 1Th 1:7,8; Colosse and Laodicea, Col 4:13. And as there were bishops, plural, in this city of Philippi, so more doing the office in Thessalonica. 1Th 5:12, which was in Macedonia too. And would it not look oddly: Ye Christians of Macedonia are examples to all the Christians of Macedonia? In Colosse were more bishops or presbyters, because there is mention made of Epaphras and Archippus, Col 4:12,17. And would it not appear strange, when they were charged, upon persons being sick, to send for the elders of the church, to conclude the intent of the injunction was to send for all the diocesans of the metropolis? Jas 5:14. If so he would likely have enjoined them to have called the elders of the churches, not of the *church*, of which, in the singular, at Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas were received, *and of the apostles and elders*, Ac 15:4, who were all present at Jerusalem, Ac 21:18, which, under the Roman power, was not the metropolis of Palestine, but Caesarea was chief. The latter, contradictory to the former doctor, and to the office of the Church of England for ordaining of deacons, would have the term *deacons* to note the order of presbyters, looking upon deacons only as temporary and

occasional trustees, whose office Paul in his Epistle did not so much as hint, thinking it unreasonable by *deacon* in those Epistles to understand any other office than that of presbyters as now used. Whereas the word *deacons* being analogous and put absolutely here, in contradistinction to *bishops*, should, according to right reason, be expounded in the most famous and distinctive signification, wherein, no doubt, Luke, a good Grecian, and Paul's companion at Philippi, used it in the Acts, (Ac 6:3,4, &c.), written after this Epistle; unto which special import we should rather understand Paul using it here, for those who were not mere occasional and prudential temporary officers, but such as were to abide in the church: wherein, upon the multiplying of disciples, the bodily necessities of the poor saints, always with us, Joh 12:8, did require such who should have the peculiar care of these committed to them, Ac 20:34,35. We find the apostle in his Epistles evidently enough appointing and describing such a special ministry, yea, and giving directions about it as a distinct branch from prophecy and teaching, if we compare places, Ro 12:6-8, with Ro 15:26,27 16:1 2Co 8:19 9:1,2,12; and what is said in this Epistle, Php 2:25,30 4:18; answerable to Luke's history of the Acts, and to what is written by Peter, 1Pe 4:11; taking in what Paul wrote to Timothy about this office, in distinction from his who was to be apt to teach, that he should be grave, temperate, giving proof of freedom from covetousness, of conversation blameless, having a faithful wife, and governing his family (that he may be hospitable) orderly, 1Ti 3:8-13, qualified to distribute, as in the texts forementioned, &c. The Church of England, in her ordination, hath reference to this special office, when yet it calls deacons, ministers; declaring there, 'It appertains to the deacon's office to assist the presbyter in distribution of the elements, gladly and willingly to search for the poor, sick, and impotent, that they may be relieved. Praying that they may be modest, humble, and constant in their ministration.'

### Philippians 1:2

Ver. 2. The evangelical salutation, as Ro 1:7 Eph 1:2 2Pe 1:2; praying for the free and undeserved favour of God the Father to them, as the fountain, Jas 1:17 together with all inward and outward blessings, flowing thence through Christ the procurer of them.

### Philippians 1:3

Ver. 3. As in most of his Epistles, (viz. Ro 1:8 1Co 1:4 2Co 1:3 Eph 1:3 Col 1:3 1Th 1:2 2Th 1:3 2Ti 1:3), he begins with thanks to God; and here, *my God*, i.e. *whose I am, and whom I serve in the gospel of his Son*, Ac 27:23, with Ro 1:9, whom the Jews and Gentiles do not so acknowledge.

*Upon every remembrance of you;* intimating that he ever bore them upon his heart to God with delight.

### Philippians 1:4

Ver. 4. As in praising of God, the Author of all that grace they had received, in every solemn prayer, so in continuing his fervent and assiduous requests unto God always, 1Th 5:17, for them all: the term *all* being used three times emphatically: compare Lu 2:37 Ro 1:9.

### Philippians 1:5

Ver. 5. Your being joined with us and other Christians in the communion of Christ, and glad tidings of salvation by him, 1Co 10:16,17 1Pe 4:13 1Jo 1:3,7; evidenced by the communication of your bounty, Ga 6:6 Heb 13:16; your stedfastness and perseverance in all Christian duties from the first time of your receiving the gospel.

### Philippians 1:6

Ver. 6. *Being confident of this very thing;* i.e. having thanked God for what he had done and did for them, he expresseth his firm persuasion and charitable hope of their perseverance for the future.

*That he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it;* not from any thing in themselves more than others, but because God the Father, (who is not weary of well-doing), having begun the work of faith in them Php 2:13, with Joh 6:29, who else were dead in sins, as the Ephesians, Eph 2:1, he would preserve and carry on that internal and spiritual work in the

fruits of real Christians, and not leave it imperfect, Ps 138:8 Isa 64:8; but would make it perfect, or perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle them in it, those words being of the same import in Scripture with *perform it*, connoting the difficulty of it.

*Until the day of Jesus Christ*; i.e. either until the day of their death, when the spirits of just men are made perfect, and Christ appears to their particular judgment, Heb 12:23, not as being perfect while here in this state, Php 3:12; or rather, until the day of Christ, or latter day, at judgment, 1Co 1:8 1Th 4:15; when they shall be acknowledged to be blameless, to the glory of Christ, who hath carried them through all, and fulfilled the work of faith in them, and glorified them, 2Th 1:11, and who are his glory, 2Co 8:23.

### Philippians 1:7

Ver. 7. *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all*; i.e. consonant to the law of equity and charity, Ac 4:19 1Co 13:7 Col 4:1, with 2Pe 1:13. It behoves me to pass this judgment on you all, upon good grounds.

*Because I have you in my heart*; not barely in that he had them as it were engraved upon his heart, 2Co 3:2,3 7:3; for he could live and die with them, whom he did continually present unto God (as before).

*Inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace*; but in that (for which they had gotten so much of his cordial affection) they were co-partners with him in the like precious faith, 2Pe 1:1; and holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, Heb 3:1; as children of light, 1Th 5:5; walking in faith and love, 2Th 1:3; maintaining the communion of saints, in showing the reality of the same grace with him, in that, as Php 1:29, it was given to them *in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake*. Which he reckoned they did in compassionately and seasonably supporting and relieving of him in his imprisonment, whereby the gospel was defended, and what he had preached of it was confirmed, by his becoming a real patron of it, in holding fast the profession and ratifying the confession of his faith, in glorying that he was counted worthy to suffer them for the name of Christ, Ac 5:41 1Pe 4:15,16;

wherein they did by all honest means succour him, and showed themselves companions with him, Php 4:14 Heb 10:33.

### Philippians 1:8

Ver. 8. Confirming what he had before written, he appeals to God in the heavens, who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, as in some other Epistles, Ro 1:9 2Co 1:23, with 2Co 11:31 Ga 1:20 1Th 2:5,10; and as Job, Job 16:19; by making a solemn protestation, or oath, to put the matter out of doubt, Heb 6:16, and giving them assurance, (as he lawfully might in this way for God's glory, and their good, De 6:13), of the sincerity and intensesness of his hearty affections towards every one of them, Php 2:26 4:1 with 2Co 9:14.

*In the bowels of Jesus Christ;* not out of any carnal, selfish, or worldly respects; but a really Christian, spiritual, and tender love, seated in the inward parts of this sanctified apostle, Jer 31:33; by the same Spirit that united him unto Christ, who loves his spouse with no common love, but is the spring and procurer, and great exemplar, of that affectionate Christian love, which, like him, they are to exert from the very root of their hearts, purely, unfeignedly, and fervently, *without dissimulation*, Ro 12:9 1Pe 1:22; imitating God and Christ, (Lu 1:78), as Paul here, in the highest degree of dearest affection, did love the Philippians, and elsewhere the Thessalonians, 1Th 2:7,8,11.

### Philippians 1:9

Ver. 9. *And this I pray:* having praised God for their attainments, he returns, (as Php 1:4), in token of his love, to his great petition for them.

*That your love may abound;* viz. that their love both to God and man, showed in their bounty to him, might, as a rising stream from its springing fountain, yet further flow out, and more abundantly communicate itself in all Christian offices, and not abate, (as it seems it afterwards did among the Ephesians, Re 2:4), as our Saviour foretold it would (to in some, Mt 24:12, (see 2Ti 1:13 2Ti 4:10), but continue increasing to the end, 1Th 3:12.



*Yet more and more in knowledge;* being founded on a sound and *saving understanding* of the things of God, and ourselves, Joh 17:3 Ro 3:20 Eph 1:17, with Eph 4:13 2Pe 3:18; and an acknowledgment of *the truth which is after godliness*, Tit 1:1.

*And in all judgment;* in the practical judgment, or internal sense, and particular experience, taste, and feeling the testimony of the Spirit in the heart concerning the grace of God, and adoption, Ro 5:1,5 8:16,17 14:17; when there is not only a right notion in the head, but a true sense and savour of spiritual things in the heart, Heb 5:14; which is when knowledge is not only an empty cloud in the air, but becomes effectual by falling down in a kindly shower upon the heart, warmed with the love of God, and the virtue of Christ's resurrection, as he after gives his own experience, Php 3:10, like David's, Ps 34:8.

### Philippians 1:10

Ver. 10. i.e. To the ends he subjoins, namely, *that ye may approve things that are excellent;* that upon a due expense of circumstances in a judicious trial, upon rightly discerning the differences of things not obvious to every eye, so as to choose and approve those things that are really to be preferred, being the best, Ro 2:18 1Th 5:21 surpassing all desirable things besides, Eph 3:19, as being most acceptable unto God, Ro 12:2.

*That ye may be sincere;* and be upright, Pr 11:20. It is all emphatical word in the original here, being borrowed either from such things as are tried by being held up at the beams of the sun to see What faults or flaws are in them, whether without fraud, or else from such as are clarified by the heat of the sun; and notes here, that Paul would have them to be uncorrupt and impartial in heart and life, in faith and manners; free from prevailing corruptions, of *pure minds*, 2Pe 3:1; purged from the old leaven, 1Co 5:6-8; not suffering the knowledge of Christ to be mixed with traditions and human inventions, but endowed with evangelical simplicity in the sight of God, 2Co 1:12 1Ti 1:5 5:22.

*And without offence;* not erring from the main scope and design of Christianity, or stumbling, so as either actively or passively to trouble and

offend either themselves or others in the heavenly course, but working so prudently, as to give no just occasion of scandal, or laying a snare for one or other, Mt 18:7 Ac 24:16 1Co 10:32; abiding blameless to the coming of Christ, 1Th 5:23.

*Till the day of Christ:* see on Php 1:6; repeated here to engage them unto serious thoughtfulness of that day.

### Philippians 1:11

Ver. 11. *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness;* i.e. not only bringing forth some single, yea, or singular fruit, but replenished, plurally, with the fruits of righteousness, Ac 9:36 Col 1:10; elsewhere called the *fruits of the Spirit*, Ga 5:22 Eph 5:9; in all goodness and truth, as well as righteousness. These are such good works as are not (whatever the papists conceive) causal of righteousness, but are, through the Spirit, (who regenerates the persons, and directs the internal and external actions of those who walk in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham, Ro 4:12), wrought by supernatural grace in the heart *joined unto the Lord*, with whom they are *one spirit*, 1Co 6:17.

*Which are by Jesus Christ;* and without whom, from their own stock and strength, till they be ingrafted into him, Joh 15:1,5, *trees of righteousness*, of the Lord's planting, Isa 61:3, and *his workmanship, created unto good works*, Eph 2:10, they cannot bring forth fruits, and do such good works as are acceptable unto God, 2Co 13:5; but Christ living and dwelling in them by faith, Ga 2:20 Eph 3:17, and God working in them *both to will and to do*, Php 2:13, they *can do all through Christ*, Php 4:13, so that they shall be accepted in him.

*Unto the glory and praise of God;* not being empty vines, bringing forth fruit to themselves, Hos 10:1, but to the eternal honour of him who hath called them, Mt 5:16 1Co 10:31 Eph 1:6,12,14 1Pe 2:12 1Pe 4:11 Re 5:13.

### Philippians 1:12

Ver. 12. *But I would ye should understand, brethren:* to obviate the

insinuations which false teachers and others might make use of from Paul's sufferings, to obstruct the cordial entertainment of those glad tidings he had brought, and to discourage those who did obey the truth, he doth by this friendly compellation (which he often useth) kindly entreat them to consider well, *that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel*; that his imprisonment, and what other troubles from without did befall him in his apostolical office, whereby the overruling providence of God so ordered, that they did (contrary to the intention of his persecutors) rather advantage than hinder the progress of the gospel, increase than decrease the church, since he had opportunity two years, in his own hired house, of teaching with freedom the things of Christ, Ac 28:30,31; whereupon he would not have the Philippians discouraged, but rather comforted, as the Corinthians, 2Co 1:5-7: for:

1. His iron chain in the cause of Christ was more an honour to him, even in the emperor's court, Php 4:22, or guard chamber, Ac 28:16, or judgment hall, Mt 27:27 Mr 15:16 Joh 18:28,33; than those glittering golden ones which others were ambitious to wear, Ac 5:41 Jas 2:2; it being apparent there, and elsewhere, to courtiers, citizens, Jews, and foreigners, that he did not suffer as an evil-doer, 1Pe 2:19,20 3:14; only for the Lord's sake, Eph 3:1 4:1; whose power in his confinement did work in and by him, who approved himself faithful, which, when inquiry was made concerning his suffering, gave occasion to communicate some notions of Christ, and glad tidings of salvation by him.

### Philippians 1:13

Ver. 13,14. *And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds*; and here again, contrary to the expectation of those persecutors, who designed to make havoc of the church, his innocent carriage and constancy in bearing the cross, had all influence upon the greater part of *the brethren* (not according to the flesh, Ro 9:3, but) in the service of Christ.

*Are much more bold to speak the word without fear*; pastors, and teachers, who had been timorous at the first, were greatly imboldened to shake of

carnal fear, and to profess and preach Christ crucified, or the cross of Christ, 1Co 1:18,23, which is *the power of God to salvation*, Ro 1:16, more confidently than ever; as he and Barnabas had done elsewhere, Ac 13:46; and as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who were but secret disciples before Christ's sufferings, upon his death owned him openly for their Lord, Mt 27:57, with Joh 19:39.

### Philippians 1:15

Ver. 15. He doth here tacitly answer an exception which might be made; It were better some of them were silent, than preach so boldly as to procure him hatred, and lessen his reputation;

1. By granting there was somewhat in the allegation, yet it did not conclude against this, that his suffering was advantageous to promote the gospel.
2. By distinguishing of those who were hollow-hearted and false, from an envious principle, designing to disparage this excellent person, who having done much in the lesser Asia and Greece, did now, in the head city of the world, when in prison, also gain proselytes, courtiers and others, for the receiving of Christ; and those were sincere and true-hearted brethren, joining with him in the cause of Christ, and assisting him from true love to Christ, and him his apostle, to get the truth of Christianity entertained in the love of it. The former were evil works, both as to their principle and end, Php 3:2; the latter acted sincerely in both respects, 2Co 2:17.

### Philippians 1:16

Ver. 16. This distinction he did amplify and explain here, by particularly showing the ill motive, manners, and end of the worst sort of preachers, from an ill affection of hatred, emulation, and wrath, 2Co 12:20 Ga 5:20; with an intemperate zeal to render Paul suspected and despicable in the eyes of the church; and to occasion in the emperor a more severe persecution, and heighten the accusers' rage against Paul, and to gain

applause to themselves, and vex his soul under outward troubles.

### Philippians 1:17

Ver. 17. Then intimating the genuine principle and good end of the better sort, who were moved from a prevailing affection to God, the edification and salvation of souls; cordially joining with Paul in carrying on the same design that he did, who was appointed of God, Ac 23:11 1Th 3:3; both by doctrine and obedience, active and passive, to defend the gospel, unto which he was admirably called to be a minister, yea, and here a patron, Ro 1:1 Eph 3:7 with 1Co 1:1; and, as it were, to tread the devil under foot (as Tertullian speaks) in his own house. Intimating from all this, that however the former did with an ill mind, in man's judgment, as circumstances then were with Paul, (some of which we are ignorant of), the latter with a pious desire, preach the gospel; yet the event proved, by the good hand of God, beneficial to promote the gospel: and so it may happen still, when some false brethren, moved by blind ambition and intemperate zeal, may snatch a weapon out of the gospel to vex good and godly pastors in their promulgation of it.

### Philippians 1:18

Ver. 18. *What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in, truth, Christ is preached:* q.d. It doth not follow, that these different intentions of the preachers should hinder the spreading of the gospel, and therefore it should not abate either your confidence or mine in the cause of Christ, since, by the overruling providence of God, that is carried on, both by the one and the other; not only by those who in truth preach the word faithfully, Jer 23:28 Mt 22:16, from a principle of love, (as before), to the same good intent with myself; but also by those who, though they act (as in Php 1:15) out of envy and ill will to me, for base ends under a fair show, 1Th 2:5, yet they occasionally and accidentally, not by any direct causality, do promote the interest of Christ.

*And I therein do rejoice;* and upon this account, that there is so good an effect, as the making known of Christ for the salvation of sinners, I have matter of present joy.

*Yea, and will rejoice;* yea, and hereupon for the future, though some should continue to do that in itself which might aggravate his affliction, yet it should not take his joy from him eventually; however directly and of itself it tend to it, yet indirectly and by accident, God disposing, it should issue well for the furtherance of the gospel.

### Philippians 1:19

Ver. 19. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation:* rendering a reason of what went before, (as the causal particle notes), he doth here oppose his knowledge to the envious preachers' opinion, and his salvation to the affliction they did exercise him with; so that he was fully persuaded, that the trouble they had given, or should give to him, (though in the nature of the thing it had a tendency to take him off from the defence of the gospel, and so to hazard his soul, or, if he stood in defence of it, Nero would persecute him to death), would, upon sure ground, work for his good, Ro 8:28, even the great good, the salvation of his soul; yea, and for some time, (compare Php 1:25), the safety of his life here, Ac 27:34 Heb 11:7. His prison should be an ark to him resting on God's promise, so that he could go on boldly and cheerfully in bearing his testimony to Christ with *the helmet of salvation*, Eph 6:17.

*Through your prayer;* having an interest in their prayers as a means of support, which he intimates they would continue to help him with, 2Co 1:11, as much as if he had downright asked an interest in them, Heb 13:18.

*And the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ;* yea, in the use hereof, that he might have a great measure of the Spirit, promised to those that ask him, Lu 11:13, he looks higher, not doubting but he shall have a renewed subsidy of grace continued to him from the same Spirit, which is in Christ Jesus his Head, Ro 8:9 Ga 4:6; thereby he should be helped in his infirmities, Ro 8:26 1Co 12:11; and receive *grace for grace*, Joh 1:16, out of his fulness, who had not *the Spirit by measure*, Joh 3:34; whereupon, whatever his enemies conceited, he should have undersupplies secretly communicated, like those from the head to the members, which would be effectual and victorious to deliver him from every evil work, and preserve him to the heavenly kingdom, 2Ti 4:18.

## Philippians 1:20

Ver. 20. *According to my earnest expectation and my hope;* he allegeth and explaineth the ground and certainty of his knowledge and persuasion of his enemies' disappointment, and all succeeding well with him, trusting *in the living God,* 1Ti 4:10, who in all death-threatening afflictions hath upon his word engaged himself to support all those that hope in his mercies, Ps 33:18,19 37:7,9 Ps 147:11. Then be sure, when his sincere servants, assisted by his Spirit, wait for his deliverance with their necks stretched out, (as the word here notes), being raised from past experience, intensely and wistly looking for his appearance, shall be able each to say as the apostle intimates.

*That in nothing I shall be ashamed;* negatively, he shall not be left to do any thing which may justly bring him under reproach. His well-grounded hope would not make him ashamed. Ro 5:5, with Ro 8:25; but upon this account he shall have wherewith to answer him that should reproach him, Ps 119:41,42,46 Lu 9:26 2Ti 1:12.

*But that with all boldness;* positively, that he should continue constant in a courageous owning of the truth, and acknowledging of his Lord every way, whether he was delivered from or to death.

*As always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death;* as in the former years of his ministry he had been supported, yea, and victorious, in freely speaking for Christ, preaching and defending of his gospel, Ac 9:27 Ac 14:3, with as much courage as any other, Ac 4:13,29,31, with 2Co 11:21 Ga 6:17: so now he was humbly confident, in his present sad circumstances, Christ should be magnified, (not that himself can become greater), i.e. before men, his glory should be rendered greater and more illustrious, and acknowledged with praise, whether he lived or died, Ro 14:8; yea, in the earthen vessel of his body, 2Co 4:11, (about which he was not solicitous, having resigned it entirely to Christ), either in his enlargement and preaching of the doctrine of Christ, or in his being offered up and sealing it by his martyrdom.

## Philippians 1:21

Ver. 21. Some read it: For Christ is my gain in life and in death; or: For Christ is to me both in life and in death advantage. Both acknowledge it to be brought in as a reason of Paul's hope in life and death; and of his indifferency, in submission to God's pleasure, in life and death, intimating it was all one to him, so Christ was magnified in his body, whether it were by life or by death. They who follow our translation, do expound the proposition disjunctively; the former referring to the honour of Christ, and the latter to the salvation of Paul, which is understood by the name of *gain*. Some understand the former branch efficiently, q. d. I derive myself from Christ, unto whom I am united, he being the principle of it, as Ga 2:20; but others rather objectively and finally, q. d. As I have hitherto made it the business of life to serve Christ in preaching his gospel, so, if he continues my life, I purpose that in my living body, by preaching his gospel, and suffering for his name, as he requireth, he shall be glorified. Then, for the latter branch, if I die, in bearing testimony to Christ, it will be gain to myself, in that I shall be with Christ, which is better for me, Php 1:23, being *present with the Lord*, 2Co 5:8, in whom my *life is hid*, Col 3:3. So that death would not impoverish, but enrich him. They who choose the latter reading, take the proposition conjunctively, to the sense that he accounted gain to him, to have the honour of Christ magnified in his body, whether it happened to him to live or die, since he faithfully served him living or dying, and owned himself to be his both ways, Ro 14:8. He was not (as he saith elsewhere, Ac 20:24) moved with accidentals; neither counted he his *life dear to him to testify the gospel of the grace of God*; reckoning he had no life, but from Christ, whom he made it his business to serve and enjoy; so that if he continued in the body, Christ would gain, in that he designed to spend his life for the edification of his church; and if he died in that cause, Christ would gain by his death, in that his truth would, by the blood of him, who was a martyr, be further sealed, and his interest promoted, and his glory advanced; and he himself would gain, since upon his departure he should be advanced *to be with Christ*, Php 1:23, who alone makes his faithful servants happy in life and death.

## Philippians 1:22

Ver. 22. *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour:* some, from



the various use of the Greek particles, render this first clause interrogatively; But whether to live in the flesh were worth the while? Or more profitable? (understand, than to die). The apostle having intimated the equality and indifferency of his mind in an entire submission to the will of God, whether that glorifying of Christ by his life or that by his death were more eligible, is upon deliberation, finding the advantage to Christ and himself, upon expense of circumstances either way, in an equal balance, weighing one thing with another: living in the flesh, i.e. abiding here in this mortal body, which he thus expresseth by way of diminution, Ga 2:20 1Pe 4:1; in opposition to, and comparison of, dying for and in the Lord, and so being with him, Php 1:23.

*Yet what I shall choose I wot not;* he seems, loving the Philippians as himself, to be at a loss what to determine, if God should permit him his choice, whether by labouring in his ministry for the good of their souls he should bring more fruit to Christ, or by suffering, that which would arise from the blood of a martyr, who himself should receive a crown, 2Ti 4:8.

### Philippians 1:23

Ver. 23. *For I am in a strait between two;* because he knew not what to choose for the best, he was held in suspense, Lu 12:50 Ac 18:5, as one drawn both ways with weighty reasons, which he amplifies with respect to himself and the church, that Christ might be honoured in both: his love to the enjoyment of Christ and the edification of his members constraining him on each hand; the former was more delightful to him, and the latter more profitable for them.

*Having a desire to depart;* being held not only with a bare inclination, but an ardent and perpetually active desire, to loose from this clayey tabernacle, Ps 42:1,2 Ec 12:7 Lu 2:29 12:36 2Co 5:1,4 2Ti 4:6: so to depart as to abide in a better place.

*And to be with Christ; which is far better;* upon being absent from the body to be present with Christ, 2Co 5:8, in paradise, Lu 23:43 1Th 4:17; so to leave the body as to live with and enjoy him in heaven, is by far much better for me.

### Philippians 1:24

Ver. 24. However, with respect to the church, by his staying here in this mortal body he persuades himself, knowing the subtlety of false apostles, who would enter in as *grievous wolves*, Ac 20:29, it was necessary to strengthen them and other churches in the faith of Christ.

### Philippians 1:25

Ver. 25. *And having this confidence;* viz. being persuaded of what went immediately before, how useful the continuance of his life, for a further time in this world, would be to the church of Christ, and particularly to them, he determines (as should seem) with more than probable conjecture; though, upon supposition it should be otherwise, he gives them abundant satisfaction in their adhering to Christ, Php 1:27 2:17.

*I know;* even with a well grounded knowledge, either by a prophetic Spirit, from a particular revelation such as he had sometimes before had, Ac 16:9,10 23:11, or the sanctifying Spirit witnessing with his spirit, Ro 8:16, strengthening his faith and persuasion, helped by their faith and prayer, Php 1:19, compared with 1Pe 1:8.

*I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;* to these ends, that, by his personal presence with them, he might by his ministry further their faith in Christ, their joy in the Holy Ghost, and more abundant glorying in the power of Jesus Christ, for his safety, and being restored to them, as we see in what follows; and Eph 4:1, with 2Ti 4:17, we find, from his first imprisonment at Rome, (when likely this Epistle was written), he was delivered, and for some years restored to the churches which he had planted.

### Philippians 1:26

Ver. 26. Here, in confidence of being again with them, and staying with them, he expresseth an admirable affection to them, that he can be content for a time to be deprived of the glorious sight of Christ, that he might see

and serve them, and that under persecution; that they might, upon his return to them, more abundantly glory together, not in themselves, but, Christian-like, in Christ Jesus, the author of that doctrine he had preached to them, the Captain of their salvation, and the common Head of Christianity.

### Philippians 1:27

Ver. 27. *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ:* q. d. In the mean time, whatever becomes of me, that which is for your part solely incumbent on you, who are brought into the fellowship of the gospel, is to demean yourselves truly agreeable to that state. The original phrase, as afterwards in this Epistle, Php 3:20 4:8, and elsewhere, Ac 23:1, imports, that their deportment should be answerable to their citizenship, that they should behave themselves as might be most to the public good of the society to which they do relate, not being of the world here, any more than their Head, Joh 15:19 17:16. Their course of life should be every way answerable to their high calling, Eph 4:1 Col 1:10 1Th 2:12; bringing forth fruit meet for repentance.

*That whether I come and see dost, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs;* intimating, that it did behove them constantly to adorn the gospel, in the exercise of Christian courage, unanimity, and patience, as well when he was distant from them, as when among them to oversee them: not as if he doubted of returning to them for their greater edification, but further to satisfy them as to his entire submission unto God's pleasure on his journey, or at home, 2Co 5:6,8; and to excite them to shake off sloth, and to discharge their duty with all diligence, which would greatly cheer his heart.

*That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel:*

1. By their stedfast endeavour after a sweet, close, holy, lasting union amongst themselves. For *one spirit*, one soul or mind, here seem to imply one understanding enlightened by the sanctifying Spirit, and one heart, as an inward, uniting principle, which must upon no temptation be changed: compare Php 2:2 3:16 4:2; with Ro 12:16 1Co 1:10 2Co

13:11 Eph 4:2,3 1Pe 3:8; according to our Savior's prayer. Joh 17:11,20-23, which was heard, Ac 1:14 2:16 4:32 5:12. Nor only by their union in heart and mind, but:

2. Their mutual helpfulness in action, as spiritual champions joining their forces together, for the defence of their royal charter, the maintenance of the main principles of Christianity, against all troublers of the church, and subverters of the evangelical faith, 1Co 9:24,25 Ga 5:13 Eph 6:14, with 2Ti 4:7.
3. A courageous spirit under sufferings from their most malignant gainsayers and persecutors, who do wittingly and willingly oppose the truth, and them professing of it, as Simon Magus and others did, Ac 8:18-21 1Ti 1:20 2Ti 1:15.

### Philippians 1:28

Ver. 28. *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries*: the original word which the apostle useth, imports, they should not be appalled or affrighted, as men and horses are apt to be when furiously charged by their deadly enemies, but stoutly receive them, keeping their ground, Mt 10:28 Lu 12:32.

*Which is to them an evident token of perdition*; considering, on the one hand, their most pertinacious rage, it is no other than an evident and convincing argmment, or certain forerunner, of the adversaries' utter ruin, Ex 22:22-24 Ro 2:8,9 2Th 1:5-9.

*But to you of salvation*; but, on the other hand, to sound believers, who behave themselves as becomes the gospel, a manifest demonstration of their everlasting welfare and glory, Mt 5:10 Mt 10:32,39 Ro 2:7,10 Eph 3:13 2Th 1:6,7.

*And that of God*; by the disposal of the all-wise and righteous Governor, who may for a time permit his or his people's adversaries to domineer, Job 1:12 Pr 16:4; but being *a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb 11:6, will of his grace lenify the sharpness of the cross, enable believers to hold out against all the opposition of their enemies, make them *partakers*

*of his holiness*, and bring them to glory, Heb 12:10,11 2Ti 2:11,12: which might abundantly comfort the Philippians, as others, Ga 6:17.

### Philippians 1:29

Ver. 29. *For unto you it is given;* be adds a further argument to move them unto that he had exhorted, from God's freely bestowing, of his mere grace, what he had required of them.

*In the behalf of Christ;* upon the account of Christ's merit and mediation; not that they could have either evangelical faith, or patience, by virtue of their own strength, Php 4:13.

*Not only to believe on him;* that they did not only believe Christ, but believe on him, was not from any power of their own, Joh 6:37,44, but of God's free gift, Eph 2:8, as they had an instance amongst them in Lydia, Ac 16:14; unto her and others was this victorious grace of faith freely given by the hearing of the word, which was not unto many others that heard, Mt 13:11 2Th 3:2 Tit 1:1; and as the grace itself was given, so was the exercise of it.

*But also to suffer for his sake;* upon the account of Christ, patience was given; so that *to suffer*, here, doth not only import a power to suffer, but actual suffering; not only the habit of faith, but the act of believing, even as the fruits of trees at the first creation were produced, as well as the trees which had a power to bear them: wherefore, if, by the grace of God, and Spirit of faith, they were empowered actually to believe, Mr 9:24 1Co 15:10 2Co 4:13, having *trust through Christ God-ward*, 2Co 3:4; and upon the same account they were continually enabled to suffer, not simply, but in bearing testimony to Christ, Ac 5:41 1Pe 3:14 4:16; they might be of good comfort and courage, to the daunting of their adversaries.

### Philippians 1:30

Ver. 30. And be heartened to partake with him in the like trials he sustained when amongst them, Ac 16:19-24, and which he now was enduring at Rome, Php 1:13; an example of suffering unto them, if they

would but await the blessed issue of his agony.

## Philippians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Php 2:1,2 Paul earnestly recommends to the Philippians mutual love and union,  
Php 2:3 lowliness of mind,  
Php 2:4-8 and that charitable condescension for the good of others, exemplified in the life and death of Christ,  
Php 2:9-11 for which God had exalted him to be Lord of all.  
Php 2:12,13 He exhorteth them to carefulness in working out their own salvation,  
Php 2:14,15 to obey the will of God cheerfully and universally, that so they might distinguish themselves from the rest of the world by a bright example of virtue,  
Php 2:16-18 and by their steadiness give him, cause to rejoice in the success of his labours, who would gladly lay down his life to serve them.  
Php 2:19,20 He hopeth to send Timothy to them shortly, whom he greatly commendeth,  
Php 2:21-30 as he doth the affection and zeal of Epaphroditus, whom he sendeth, with this Epistle.

Ver. 1. The apostle, reassuming his exhortation in the former chapter to unanimity, Php 1:27, doth here, by way of inference from what went immediately before, press them in a very affectionate manner, with a kind of rhetorical relation, and obtestation, as it were, adjure them.

*If there be therefore any consolation in Christ;* if any such exhortation, (as the word is rendered, Ac 13:15 1Th 2:3 1Ti 4:13), in the name of Christ, might avail with them to cheer him and one another by their loving concord and being unanimous. Or as we, rendering it *consolation*; ( so Ro 15:4 2Co 1:4); *If*, which he may well suppose, and strongly affirm that he took it for granted, the main body of them had in some measure found by his ministry, what he here moves them to complete, (compare Php

1:6,7,27), in expectation to find more of what they had experimented, whatever indisposition might have crept upon some by the insinuations of the false apostles; yet, this *consolation in Christ* may be considered either:

1. Actively: q.d. If ye would comfort me afflicted, in the concerns of Christ, or if ye have any Christian comfort which doth only proceed from those that are in Christ, (not from moral philosophy), or which is wont to be in those who worship the same Christ, let me his apostle be a partaker thereof. Or:
2. Passively, 2Co 7:4,6 Phm 1:7: If you, being in Christ, find any consolation against your afflictions, forasmuch as you have received it by my ministry, we, being both in suffering circumstances, should be further comforted by a sweet agreement.

*If any comfort of love*; the Syriac renders it, any speaking to the heart, any solace from good and comfortable words did reach your hearts, Joh 11:19,31 1Co 14:3 1Th 2:11 5:14, cheered with the love of God or Christ, or the brethren: or refreshed with my love to you, Php 1:8,9; or would that I should be comforted with your love to me, (as he himself and others were with the gracious affections of the Corinthians, 2Co 7:7), which ye ought unfeignedly.

*If any fellowship of the Spirit*; if ye have any communion with me in the graces of the Spirit, and *stand fast in one spirit*, Php 1:27, and would show that you do persevere in *the same Spirit*, 1Co 12:4, which acts in all the members of the mystical body of Christ, that do in him their Head partake of it.

*If any bowels and mercies*; if ye are duly affected with any real sympathy and commiseration towards me in my bonds for Christ, such inward affections as were moving in him towards them; Php 1:8, with Lu 1:78 2Co 7:15 Col 3:12; the latter word emphatically expressing the sense of the metaphor in the former. Then he, having thus pathetically urged these arguments, and closely followed them to embrace the matter proposed, puts them upon.

## Philippians 2:2

Ver. 2. *Fulfil ye my joy;* viz. the exercise of those graces he had been joyful for, which would be an addition to that joy he had for them, and the making of it much more abundant, contributing as much as the friends of the Bridegroom here can to the completing of it, Joh 3:29.

*That ye be like-minded;* which is when they believe and affect the same things, agreeable to the mind of God, Php 3:15 Ac 4:32 Ro 12:16 2Co 13:11.

*Having the same love;* having the same mutual sincere charity, Eph 4:2 Col 3:14.

*Being of one accord;* being unanimous in their honest designs, Joh 17:22 1Pe 3:8.

*Of one mind;* agreeing as to the main in the same judgment and opinion, to promote the interest of Christ, 1Co 1:10 Ga 5:7,10.

## Philippians 2:3

Ver. 3. Here, the better to engage them to embrace what he had so pathetically exhorted them to, he doth dissuade them from animosity, an affectation of applause, and self-seeking; and direct them to modesty and self-denial.

*Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory;* intitating, they should by no means indulge all inordinate affection to strive and quarrel with one another, provoking each other by an ambitious emulation to cross or excel others; this arguing a carnal temper, opposite to true Christianity, Php 2:14 Ro 2:8 Ga 5:16,24,26, being the very bane of true Christian concord, Ro 13:13 Jas 3:16, and destructive to faith, Joh 5:44 2Co 12:20.

*But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves;* but cherish and exercise true Christian modesty and meekness, (which is of another kind than that the heathen philosophers did prescribe), in a due preference of each other, Mt 11:29 Ro 12:10 Eph 4:2 5:21 1Pe 5:5; as the



apostle himself gave example, 1Co 15:8,9.

*Question.* If any say: How is this consistent with what the apostle writes to them to think of *praise* and *good report*, Php 4:8, and of himself, *not a whit*, and *nothing, behind the very chiefest apostles?* 2Co 11:5 12:11; and further, how can some think others better than themselves in truth, unless they reckon good evil and evil good? I answer,

1. Be sure Christian modesty and real humility, with prudence and mildness, are very commendable graces, and *in the sight of God of great price*, 1Pe 3:4. And therefore what he doth afterwards exhort to in this Epistle, doth very well agree with what he doth write here; where:
2. He is treating of grace and godliness, whereas in those places to the Corinthians he writes of some certain gifts, which, by reason of the insinuations of false apostles against him, he was necessitated, in magnifying of his apostolical office and authority, 2Co 10:8, to mention, being as it were compelled to it by the ingratitude of some of them at Corinth who had been influenced by the false apostles, 2Co 12:5,6; yet you may see there, he doth not glory of himself, or his person, but acknowledges his infirmities, 2Co 11:30, and that unfeignedly, speaking the truth every where, 2Co 12:6, which he makes evident to them from the nature of the thing itself, 2Co 10:12,13,15,16 12:12; appealing to God, as witness in the case, 2Co 11:31, referring all the glorying the, put him upon, to the grace of God through Christ, 1Co 15:10 2Co 11:31, when they had cast contempt on his ministry, 2Co 10:10-13,18. So that in respect of gifts and external privileges, wherein are distinctions of superiors and inferiors, Php 3:4, he doth not urge that every Christian should prefer every other to himself, wherein it is evident there is a real difference; but in respect of the persons, the honesty and piety of others in God's sight, (lest a man, by thinking himself something when he is nothing, should deceive himself; Ga 6:3), since in his judgment they may be endowed with some hidden quality we know not of, and be accepted with him. Hence:
3. Our estimation and preference of others to ourselves, who as Christian brethren are obliged to serve one another, Ga 5:13, is not taken simply, and with an absolute judgment, as if it were necessary to give them the pre-eminence in all things: but, as to this, that a man may think there is

some defect in himself, which it may be is not in another; or with a suspense; Perhaps he is not better in truth, but considering my heart is deceitful, and possibly he may be more without guile, I judge it not meet to prefer myself to him God-ward; but seeing mine own black legs, and being bound in love to confess mine own and cover the infirmities of my brother, who labours to walk answerably to his profession, it is safe for me to prefer him, who may have some good latent which I have not, and whereupon he is to be esteemed by me. Wherefore:

4. The right management of the duty which the apostle calls for to preserve unanimity, depends upon a right and due estimation of God's divers gifts and graces which flow from *the same Spirit*, 1Co 12:4, and a humble sense of our own infirmities: so that however one Christian may excel with some singular endowments, yet he ought to think they were not bestowed upon him that he should be puffed up, or value himself above what is meet upon that account before God, being he hath received them of God, 1Co 4:7, but judge himself for his own defectiveness and faultiness, which will afford himself matter of abasement and humility; when yet with respect to others, whose hearts he knows not, he in charity thinketh the best, 1Co 13:4,5; and if in this case he should be mistaken, his modest apprehensions would be acceptable to God (designing to approve that which he doth) and profitable to himself. To engage theIn further unto Christian concord, he here directs them as to their aim and scope, (according to the import of the word), that it should not be their own private interest, but the common good of Christianity, becoming those who have true Christian love, 1Co 10:24 13:5; not as if he did disallow providing for their own, 1Ti 5:8, or studying to be quiet, and doing their own business, 1Th 4:11; but that every member of Christ, while he considers his own gifts, graces, honour, and advantage, would remember that he is not born only to serve himself or Pharisaiically to conceit well of himself in the contempt of others, Lu 18:11; but also, and that much rather, he should consider his relation to the Head, and every other member of the body, and so consult the gifts, graces, honour, and edification of others, especially when more eminently useful, knowing that members should have the same care one for another, 1Co 12:24-28.

## Philippians 2:4

Ver. 4,5. *Let;* most translations do express the causal or rather illative Greek particle, which ours doth here omit as an expletive. However, the apostle doth urge them to the exercise of self-denial, mutual love, and a hearty condescension to one another, from the great example of Jesus Christ, 2Co 8:9: that so the mind which was in Christ may be perceived in us, who, if spiritual, judge all things and have the mind of Christ; being enlightened by the same Spirit, we do judge as he coming in the flesh did: or: Let the same affection be found in you that was really in him, Mt 11:28 Joh 13:15.

## Philippians 2:6

Ver. 6. *Who,* i.e. relative to Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God by nature, very God extant with his Father before the beginning, Joh 1:1 Ga 4:4 1Ti 3:16 6:14-16 Tit 2:13; the express image and character of his Father's person, which implies a peculiar subsistence distinct from the subsistence of his Father, Joh 8:42 2Co 4:4 Col 1:15 Heb 1:3; concerning whom, every word that follows, by reason of the Socinians, and some Lutherans, is to be well weighed.

*Being;* i.e. subsisting, in opposition to taking or assuming, Php 2:7; and therefore doth firmly prove Christ pro-existing in another nature to his so doing, namely, his actual existing of himself in the same essence and glory he had from eternity with the Father, Joh 1:1,2 17:5 2Co 8:9 Re 1:4,8,11.

*In the form of God;* to understand which clearly:

1. The word *form*, though it may sometimes note somewhat outward, and so infer the glory of Christ's miracles, yet we do not find it any where so used in Scripture: it is true it is once used there for the outward visage, Mr 16:12, which had excelling splendour and beauty, giving occasion to conceive majesty in the person, Mt 27:2 2Pe 1:16, (however, his resplendent garments could not be accounted *the form of God*, ) yet being, Luke saith, Lu 24:16, the eyes of the persons which saw were holden, that for a time they could not acknowledge him, it

argues that the appearance Mark speaks of noted only an accidental form.

2. Whereas the *being* or subsisting Paul here speaks of, respects (what the best philosophers in their most usual way of speaking do) the essential form, with the glory of it, since the verbs, in other scriptures of the same origin, signify somewhat inward and not conspicuous, Ro 12:2 2Co 3:18 Ga 4:19; especially when there is a cogent reason for it here, considering *the form of God*, in opposition to *the form of a servant* afterward, and in conjunction with equality to God, which implies the same essence and nature, Isa 40:25 46:5, it being impossible there should be any proportion or equality between infinite and finite, eternal and temporal, uncreate and create, by nature God and by nature not God, Ga 4:4,8, unto which the only living and true God will not suffer his glory to be given. Neither indeed can he *deny himself* who is *one*, and besides whom there is no other true God, or God by nature, De 4:35 6:4 2Ti 2:13; *who only doeth wondrous things*, Ps 72:18: for to all Divine operations a Divine power is requisite, which is inseparable from the most simple essence and its properties.

*Being*, or subsisting, *in the form of God*, imports not Christ's appearance in exerting of God's power, but his real and actual existence in the Divine essence, not in accidents, wherein nothing doth subsist: neither the vulgar nor learned do use to say any one doth subsist, but appear, in an outward habit; why then should any conceit the apostle means so? The Gentiles might speak of their gods appearing; but then, even they thought the Deity was one thing, and the habit or figure under which, or in which, it appeared was another Ac 14:11: so that *subsisting in the form* intimates in the nature and essence of God, not barely, but as it were clothed with properties and glory. For the apostle here treats of Christ's condescension, proceeding from his actual existence, as the term wherein he is co-eternal and co-equal to God the Father, before he abated himself with respect unto us. For he says not the form of God was in Christ, (however that might be truly said), that the adversaries might not have occasion to say only there was somewhat in Christ like unto God; but he speaks of that wherein Christ was, viz. *in the form of God*, and so that form is predicated of God, as his essence and nature, and can be no other thing. None can rationally imagine that God was an external figure, wherein Christ was subsisting. For subsistence implies some peculiarity relating to the substance of a

certain thing, whence we may conclude the Son to be of the same (not only of like) substance with the Father, considering what significantly follows. He *thought it not*, esteemed, counted, held (so the word is used, Php 2:3 3:7,8 1Th 5:13 2Th 3:15 1Ti 1:12 1Ti 6:1 Heb 10:29 11:26), it not *robbery*, it being his right by eternal generation; i.e. he did not judge it any wrong or usurpation, on that account of his *being in the form of God*, to be equal to his Father, being a subsistent in the same nature and essence with him. From openly showing equal majesty with whom he did not for a time abstain, in that he could reckon this robbery, as if such majesty were that which did not agree to his nature, ever presupposing this inherent right, to his great condescension, or abasing himself, which follows as the term to which: or, he resolved for a time not to show himself in that glory which was his own right, but freely condescended to the veiling of it. He did not really forego (neither was it possible he should) any thing of his Divine glory, being the Son of God still, without any robbery or rapine, equal to his Father in power and glory, Joh 10:33 1Jo 5:7,20.

*Thought it not robbery*; Paul doth not say, (as the Arians of old would pervert his sense), he robbed not, or snatched not, held not fast equality with God; or, (as the Socinians since), Christ thought not to do this robbery to God, or commit this rape upon God, so as that he should be equal to him, but acknowledged he had it of the free gift of God, chopping in the adversative particule, *but*, where it really is not: whereas we read not in the sacred text, he *thought not to do this robbery*, but, he *thought it not robbery* to be equal to God; which two are vastly different, even as much as to have the Godhead by usurpation, and to have it by nature. In the former it is, q.d. Christ did not rob or snatch away the equality; in the latter, the equality which Christ had with God, he thought it no robbery; he reputed not the empire he might have always continued in the exercise of, equal with the Father, as a thing usurped, or taken by force (as one doth hold that he hath taken by spoil, making show of it). For when he had said he had subsisted in the form of God, he could (before he condescended) say also, he was equal to God, i.e. the Father, without any robbery, rapine, or usurpation. And if Socinus urge that it is absurd and false in any sense to say, God thought he had robbed, or taken by robbery, the Divine essence; then this contradictory, God thought not he took by robbery the Divine essence, is rational and true; as when it is said, God cannot lie, or God changeth not, as 1Sa 15:29 Isa 55:8 Mal 3:6. What things are denied of God, do not imply the opposites are affirmed of him. The particule *but*,

which follows in its proper place before *made himself of no reputation*, may be fairly joined with this sense. For if Christ should know that by rapine and unjust usurpation he was equal to God, (as likely the attempt to be so was the sin of our first parents, which robbery of theirs Christ came to expiate), he had not emptied himself, nor vouchsafed to abase himself.

*To be equal with God;* neither is Christ said to be equal to God only in respect of his works, (which yet argue the same cause and principle, Joh 5:19,21,23,26,27 10:37), but absolutely, he thought it not robbery to be altogether equal with God, as subsisting in the same nature and essence, the original phrase connoting an exact parity. All the things of Christ (though he chose to have some of them veiled for a time) are equal to God; so some expound the neuter plural emphatically, (as usual amongst the Greeks), to answer the masculine singular foregoing, to express the ineffable sameness of the nature and essence of the Divine subsistents. It may be read: He counted it no robbery that those things which are his own should be equal to God, i.e. the Father; or rather, that he himself should in all things be equal or peer to God. For had Christ been only equal by a delegated power from God, why should the Jews have consulted to kill him, for making himself equal with God? Which with them was all one as to make himself God, Joh 5:18 10:33. But that he spake of his eternal generation, as owning him for his own Father, with whom he did work miracles, even as the Father did in his own name, by his own power, of himself, for his own glory: neither will the evangelist's saying: *The Son can do nothing of himself*, Joh 5:19, infer an inequality with the Father, when what he doth is equally perfect in power and glory with the Father's, whence, as son, he hath it by nature. For (looking lower) though every son receives from his father human nature, yet he is not less a man than his father, or his father more a man than he; the son having a being of the same perfection which is naturally in both. However the Father, to whom Christ is in subordination as the Son, and in office a servant, undertaking the work of mediation, may be said to be greater than the Son, that can only be understood with respect to the order of their working, if we compare texts, Joh 14:28 16:13-15. Neither, when Christ accounted it not robbery to be equal with God, is he said (as the adversaries urge) to be equal to himself, but to another person, viz. God the Father. Things may be equal which are so diverse, that yet they may be one in some common respect wherein they agree: wherefore when Christ is said to be equal with the Father, he is distinguished from him in person and subsistence, yet not

in essence, wherein it is his due to be his equal, and therefore one.

### Philippians 2:7

Ver. 7. *But*; some expound this particle as a discretive, others an adversative, or redditive.

*Made himself of no reputation*; i.e. most wittingly emptied himself, or abated himself, of the all fulness of glory he had equally with God the Father, that, considering the disproportion between the creature and the Creator, he, in the eyes of those amongst whom he tabernacled, appeared to have nothing of reputation left him, Da 9:26. It is not said the *form of God* was cut off, or did empty itself; but he who did suffer *in* the form of God, made himself of no account, did empty, abate, or abase himself, (so the apostle elsewhere actively and passively useth the word, 1Co 11:15, with 2Co 9:3), and that indeed while subsisting in the form of God, (according to agreement, Zec 6:15 13:7), not by laying aside the nature of God, but in some other way, i.e. his own way, kept secret till he was pleased to manifest it, Ro 16:25 Col 1:26; by freely coming in the flesh, 1Ti 3:16 Heb 10:7; which is such an astonishing wonder, and mysterious abasement, as gains the greatest veneration from his saints. Thus for a little time laying aside, at his own pleasure withdrawing, and going aside from his glorious majesty, he lessened himself for the salvation of his people. He had a liberty not to show his majesty, fulness, and glory during his pleasure, so that he could (as to our eyes) contract and shadow it, Joh 1:14 Col 2:9. His condescension was free, and unconstrained with the consent of his Father, Joh 3:13; so that though the Scripture saith: *The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, 1Ki 8:27 Isa 66:1 Mr 5:7 Ac 7:48, yet the Son of the Highest can, at his own pleasure, show or eclipse his own glorious brightness, abate or let out his fulness, exalt or abase himself in respect of us. However, in his own simple and absolute nature, he be without *variableness* or *shadow of turning*, Jas 1:17 being his Father's equal, and so abides most simple and immutable; yet respectively to his state, and what he had to manage for the redemption of lost man, with regard to the discovery he made of himself in the revelation of his Divine properties, the acknowledgment and celebration of them by the creatures, he emptied himself, not by ceasing to be what he was before, equal with his Father, or laying down the essential form of God, according

to which he was equal to God; but by taking *the form of a servant*, wherein he was like to men, i.e. assuming something to himself he had not before, viz. the human nature; veiling himself, as the sun is said to be veiled, not in itself but in regard of the intervening cloud, Mt 27:39-45; what could hinder that he should not manifest his excellency now more, then less clearly; men one while acknowledging and praising it, another while neither acknowledging nor praising of it, then again praising of it, yet more sparingly? He, by taking the form of a mean man, might so obscure the dignity of his person, as to the acknowledgment of him to be the Son of God, equal with his Father, that in vouching himself to be so he might be accounted a blasphemers; Joh 10:36; and, during that appearance, not seem to be the Most High; even as a king, by laying aside the tokens of his royalty, and putting on the habit of a merchant, when all the while he ceaseth not to be king, or the highest in his own dominions. Hence the Most High may be considered, either in regard of his nature, wherein he holdeth the highest degree of perfection, or in regard of those personal acts he performs in the business of our salvation. In the former, Christ is the Most High; in the latter, our Mediator. So *the form of God* was the term from which, and *the form of a servant* the term to which, he moved in his demission, or abasement; which did not simply lie in an assumption or union of the human nature to the Divine, for this doth abide still in Christ highly exalted, but in taking the form of a servant, which with the human nature he took, by being *sent forth, made of a woman, under the law*, Ga 4:4, but by his resurrection and glorification, lest that relation or habit of a servant, (being such a one who was also a Son, and a Lord, Heb 1:2, with Heb 3:6), when yet he retains the human nature still. As therefore he was *of the seed of David according to the flesh*, Ro 1:3, though before he had not flesh; so he took the form of a servant in the likeness of man, according to his human nature, although before he took that form he could not have human nature: he did not annihilate any thing he was before, only, of his own accord, bowed down himself, and veiled his own glory, in taking our nature, therein to be a servant unto death.

*And took upon him the form of a servant*; taking, (in the Greek, without any copulative *and* before it), in opposition to being, or subsisting; he *was* in the form of God, which he had before, and *took* this, which he had not then, into the unity of his subsistence, by a personal union, Heb 2:16. He was the servant of God, Isa 42:1 Mt 20:28, in the whole work of his condescension, which was gradual, else the apostle's art to engage the



Philippians to condescension had not been cogent from Christ's example. For:

1. He being increate, did assume to himself a created (not angelical, but) human nature with no reputation, in that regard taking *the form of a servant*, wherein he was like a man, as the next clause explains this. It was an infinite, inconceivable condescension of the Son of God, to take our nature into union with himself, whereby he who was very God, in all things like unto his Father, became like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, Ro 8:3 Heb 2:17. Hence:
2. He did not immediately advance the nature he took into glory, but became a servant in it to his Father, to perform the most difficult service that ever God had to do in the world; he was not only *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, as soon as a man, Ro 8:3, of the seed of Abraham, Heb 2:11-16; but subject to the law, Lu 2:42,51 Ga 4:4, in a mean condition from his birth, despicable in the judgment of the world, his mother poor, &c., Isa 53:2,3 Mt 2:14 8:20 13:55 Mr 6:3 Lu 2:7,22,24 22:27; so that in finishing his work he was exposed to scorn, Ps 22:6,7 Isa 53:1,2; however, all the relation of his service was to God the Father, as his antecedent correlate.

To the further clearing of what went before, the apostle adds, *in the likeness*, or habit, *of men*, without any copulative particle, by apposition for fuller explication, (compare forecited parallel places), connoting his employment, (rather than condition), having a true body and a reasonable soul for this purpose, according to the prophecy, to be servant to his Father, Isa 42:1. And if the adversaries say: He only took on him the form of a servant, when he suffered himself to be beaten, &c.; it is easily answered: These were only consequents upon the form of a servant; one may be a servant, and yet not beaten; and when they so treated our Saviour, he accounted it dealing with him as a malefactor, Lu 22:52. Christ obeyed not men, but God the Father, to whom alone he was servant, when made man, Ps 40:6-8. It is the nature of lord and servant, to relate to each other. Every servant is a man (brutes are not servants). Labouring in service accompanies the human nature, which is common to Christ with other men, on whom it crept by the fall: Christ regards none others' will but the will of his Father, how hard soever it was, even to the laying down of his life for the reconciling of his church to him. And be sure he died as

a man, and not only in the habit of a servant. Only in human nature could he (as it follows without a particle in the Greek) be made like unto men, or in the likeness and habit of men. The Hellenists do use words of similitude, when they design sameness, or the thing itself, and that indeed essentially. For however it be urged, that likeness be opposed to the same, and that which is true, Joh 9:9, yet not always; as one egg is like to another, there is convenience in quality, and that in substance is included. Christ is like to other men in human properties, and an afflicted state, so that sameness of nature cannot be denied, Ro 8:3 Heb 2:16,17; or rather sameness of kind, though not of number, it being by a synecdoche to be understood generally, Ge 1:3 Mt 1:16 Joh 1:14 Heb 4:15 1Jo 1:1 1Jo 4:2,3. The properties of human nature are of the essence he took, who was found in habit as a man, when yet he was separate from sinners, 2Co 5:21, with Heb 7:26; yet the apostle's business here, is not of Christ's sinlessness in that condition, but of his condescending love, in taking on him that condition, being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin. It is a likeness of nature to all men, and not a likeness of innocency only to the first, Ge 5:1, that Paul here speaks of: And as it is said, Joh 1:14: *The Word was made flesh*; so here, Christ is *made in the likeness of men*, that we may understand it is the same numerical person, who was *in the form of God*, that was made man; the abasement of God-man being so great, that he was made like to man, i.e. to mere and bare man, though he was more. Nor only did he appear in many forms, (as might be under the Old Testament), or was joined to man, but personally assumed a true body and a reasonable soul, and so was very man, as well as very God. For when it is not said simply made man, but with that addition, *in the likeness*, it is done to a notable limitation of his station on each part; on God's part it imports, Christ did not lay aside the Divine nature, but only (veiled) his majesty and power; on man's, to exclude sin, viz. that he was true man, yet only like to all other men. But what is now the natural affection of all men from the fall of Adam, and is an infirmity and abatement, as to that, he was without sin, and only in the likeness of sinful flesh.

### Philippians 2:8

Ver. 8. To be *found* is a mere Hebraism, not unusual in the New Testament, not importing any question of the thing, but only the thing certainly happening beyond expectation. It notes here, not his being

apprehended of the soldiers when betrayed by Judas, being before his humble obedience, but his being, and really appearing to be, (as the Greek word is elsewhere used, Php 3:9 Ge 5:24 2Co 5:3 Ga 2:17 Heb 11:5, with 1Pe 1:7), as a man, simply considered, among men, which was before his being scourged, &c. consequent upon his apprehension. Now being made man, not reserved for a time, like the angels, for heaven itself and the view of angels; neither, from the privilege of the first man, (which Adam could not keep), did he reserve himself for the inhabiting of Paradise only: but, after the manner of men, he stayed in this earth amongst and conversed with them, and therefore is said to be *in the fashion* of men, or *as a man*; whereby his habit and deportment is more especially expressed, as his essence in the foregoing phrase.

*Man*, here, is considered according to what is proper unto human nature, not having the article prefixed, as if it connoted the first man, Adam, only *man* as man; the particle *as*, here, not intimating only likeness, without reality of nature, (as the Marcionites conceited), but as a confirming and assuring particle, noting certainty, Joh 1:14. Some indeed take *fashion* more strictly, as noting only the external figure of Christ's body; others, more largely and commodiously, for the whole outward species of human nature: whence the truth of the human nature shined out, not only in the figure and matter of the body, with true flesh and bones, the habit of his members, mouth, eyes, &c., that he might be seen and touched, 1Jo 1:1, as he himself allegeth, Lu 24:39 Joh 20:20,27, growing *in wisdom and stature*, Lu 2:52; but his labouring with hunger, thirst, and weariness, eating, drinking, sleeping, watching, speaking, gestures, being moved with pity, sorrow, joy, weeping, in all which his human nature was evidenced of God, and easily found of men who conversed with him, Joh 4:29 9:11 18:22. What the Socinians urge, that this gainsays his being incarnate, from Samson's saying, *I shall be weak, and be as another man*, Jud 16:7,11; there is no strength in the allegation, that Samson, of Dan's tribe, Jud 13:2, should be compared with Christ coming from heaven, (as they themselves do not deny), *found in fashion as a man*: because Samson, being stronger than a hundred men, if he were dealt so and so withal would become as other men, (for that is the import of the words), no stronger than any other man, Jud 16:17; whereas here, it is not said as one, any, or every, but simply *as a man*: and from those in power dying as other men, Ps 82:7. When they scoffingly ask: Doth it evidence these to be incarnate? It is answered: Though he who was strong as many became weak as any one

man; they who live in power die in weakness, as other men do, and are not said to be incarnate: yet he who, being equal with God, took on him the form of a servant, and was in this world a very man, may very well be said to be incarnate, 1Ti 3:16.

*He humbled himself*; he doth not say he was humbled or depressed by the just judgment of God, but of *himself*, voluntarily, on his own accord, without any constraint. He did really submit himself to the will of his Father, unto whom he was a servant, both in regard of the Divine nature, which he veiled, and also the human in his whole life, Lu 1:48, both outwardly and inwardly, Php 2:5, in thoughts and affections, as well as actions and passions: wholly yielding his own will and appetite to God, by a patient subjection to affliction, not in showing humility only, but really undergoing it. For we find this low degree of his humiliation opposed to his superexaltation, in the following verse, and agreeing with what Isaiah prophesied of him, Isa 53:7, expounded by Philip, Ac 8:32.

*And became obedient unto death*; without the copulative in the Greek, and expressing the manner of his humiliation, being of his own free will, and not by any force; made *obedient*, i.e. to God, (*Not my will, but thine be done*), to others, parents and magistrates, for God, according to the prescript of his law and will, in his life-time *unto death*, and in death; *unto* being taken here, not exclusively, but inclusively, for the further amplification of the obedience, Mt 26:42 Joh 4:34 8:29,46 Heb 10:9. Had he staid in his life for degrees of obedience, his condescension had been admirable, but that he should submit to a penal and painful death, (taking in his burial, and abiding in a separate state till the third day), this is stupendous: aggravated by the shame of dying on *the cross*, willingly and meekly yielding himself, though a *Son*, to that ignominious, cursed death, De 21:23 Ac 5:30 Ga 3:10,13 Heb 12:2; far more reproachful than beheading, hanging, or burning; out of unspeakable love, to bring us nigh unto God, Ro 5:19 Col 2:14 1Pe 2:24 3:18. Upon these considerations, how should Christians in mutual love condescend to each other!

### Philippians 2:9

Ver. 9. *Wherefore*; some take this particle illatively, connoting the consequent of Christ's exaltation, upon his antecedent humiliation, as

elsewhere, Joh 10:17 Ac 20:26 Heb 3:7 2Pe 1:10; the apostle showing the sequel of his sufferings to be glory, according to that of Lu 24:26. This the Ethiopic version favours. Christ respecting not himself, but us, and our good, the glory that he had eternally, but veiled for a time, emerging (as the sun out of a cloud) upon his finishing the work his Father gave him to do, Joh 17:5 Ro 9:5. Others take the particle causally, intimating Christ's meriting his own exaltation and our salvation, and his accepting of superexcellent glory as a reward of his unparalleled obedience, though he might have challenged it by virtue of the personal union, Heb 13:20, with Heb 12:2: obedience superior to angels' required a recompence superior to their glory, and Christ might, upon his exquisite obedience, demand his own mediatory glory, as being our Head, and that being the beginning and cause of ours. However, whether the particle of order note that of consequence, or causality, or both, there is no need of controversy, (because of the communication of properties), since the person of Christ, as God-man, was glorified.

*God also hath highly exalted him;* the Greek elegancy imports superexalted, or exalted with all exaltation, answering to his gradual humiliation; above the grave in his resurrection, the earth in his ascension, and above the heavens, at his Father's right hand, upon the throne of his glory, to judge the world, Eph 1:20-22 4:10.

*And given him a name:* some take *name* literally, restraining it to *Jesus*, but those letters and syllables are not above every name, it being common to others, Ezr 2:2 10:18 Hag 1:1 Ac 7:45 Col 4:11 Heb 4:8, though upon a different account it was to Christ, even before his incarnation, Lu 1:31. Others, for the name of the only begotten Son of God the Father, Joh 1:14, (with Heb 1:4, and Heb 5:8), who was more eminently manifested in his exaltation, to angels and to men, than before. Others, not for any title, but the thing consequent upon his humiliation, surpassing that of all creatures, potentates on earth, and angels in heaven, Eph 1:20,21. Name imports power, Ac 3:6 4:7 Re 5:12; of the Christ, the Saviour, Mt 12:21 Joh 4:42 Ac 4:11,12 10:43, at God's right hand, where he living to intercede, makes all comfortable to us, who in his name alone do believe, pray, praise, and do all that shall find acceptance, Mt 18:20 28:19 Joh 1:12 3:18 14:13 Ro 10:13,14 Col 3:17. Power to confer all for the good of his church being given him upon his death, when with respect to the creatures he received a glory, not in regard of himself, and in itself, but in regard of its patefaction

to others; from which glory, during the time of his humiliation, he had by a voluntary dispensation abstained; and the exercise of that authority conferred upon him as Mediator in that human nature, he had so obediently subjected himself to the cross. Though as God there was a manifestation, yet there was no intrinsical addition of glory; he did as man receive the name, or glory, he had from all eternity as God. So that the name or glory given relates to him according to both natures, as Mediator, God-man: not as God, so he could not be exalted at all, being the Most High; not as mere man, so a creature is not capable of Divine worship, which in what follows is expressly required to be given to him, who is superexalted by God's right hand, above every name, and every thing known by any name, Ac 2:24,33,36 5:31 1Co 15:25 Re 17:14, with Re 19:16.

### Philippians 2:10

Ver. 10. *At the name of Jesus;* in the old translation by bishops in Queen Elizabeth's time, (and some say in the manuscripts of this), it is *in* the name. However, in ours now, it is not appositively, *at* the name Jesus; but constructively, *of* Jesus, intimating, that the power, glory, and majesty of him who hath that name, unto which every knee is bowed, is that name which is above every name; which would not hold true, if the name were taken for the very word *Jesus*, that (as before) being common to others in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, yea, and English. Besides, neither in letters, nor syllables, nor sound, nor time, hath that word any thing above other words.

*Every knee should bow:* bowing of the knee is meant metonymically, and metaphorically, because some of those hereafter named, from whom the homage is due, have neither knees nor tongues, yet must, either willingly or by constraint, yield subjection and obedience to the sovereign authority of Christ, here and hereafter, Mt 11:27 28:18 Joh 5:22,23 Ac 3:15; all creatures being made subject to him, Heb 2:8. Some of the papists, searching for their subterraneous, fictitious purgatory, would restrain it to men, but that would straiten and diminish the august glory of Christ, exalted above every name, who had, even here in his humiliation, homage from unclean spirits, Mr 5:6,7,10,12 Lu 8:31 Jas 2:19; how much more when at his tribunal his consummate glory shall be manifest to all! Which the apostle hath ultimately a reference to, according to the evangelist, Mt

16:27 24:30. Then shall his equality with his Father, and his superlative glory as Mediator, be manifested to all, good and bad, angels as well as men, who shall be subjected to his sovereign Majesty, as the Lord God omnipotent; the good willingly, and the bad by constraint, Isa 45:23 Ac 17:31 Ro 2:16 14:10,11 2Co 5:10.

*Of things in heaven;* good angels, from whom he had homage and service here, Ps 97:7 Mt 2:13 4:11 Lu 1:30,31 2:13 Heb 1:6 at his resurrection, and ascension, Mt 28:6 Ac 1:11 much more in his glory, Mt 24:31 25:31 Eph 1:21,22 Col 1:16 2:10 2Th 1:7 and the spirits of just men made perfect, Heb 12:22,23 Re 4:6, &c.; Re 5:9,10.

*And things in earth;* good men willingly, Ps 110:3 Ac 10:33 1Jo 5:3; and bad by force, Ps 2:9 Lu 19:27 Heb 2:14.

*And things under the earth;* either the dead, who are hid in the earth, and shall be raised by the power of Christ, in, or upon them, Ac 24:15; or, devils, and wicked souls; for though devils move in the air by God's permission, Eph 2:2; yet hell is the place prepared for them, and the wicked, Mt 7:23 25:41 Lu 8:31 2Pe 2:4 Jude 1:6. Upon Christ's exaltation, all things above, and in the world, are subjected to his dominion. If it be said: On the earth, and under it, they rebel; I answer: They are bound to obey, Mt 4:9,10, and will be forced to submit to the penalty for disobedience. Christ doth at present exercise a sovereignty over bad men and devils, in limiting and punishing them as he pleaseth, Job 1:11,12 Lu 4:34,35 Lu 8:32 19:27 2Pe 2:6 Re 2:10.

### Philippians 2:11

Ver. 11. By *tongue*, not only every language, people, and nation is meant; because it is to be understood, as before particularized, of angels as well as men, for though angels properly, and by nature, want tongues, (as well as knees, which are both here joined, and must not be severed, in the worship given to Christ), yet in their manner of speaking to men, under an extraordinary dispensation, they may use them, (or that which is equivalent), 1Co 13:1; and, in a way proper to them, can *confess*, or express, their adoration of Christ, Re 7:9-12, either with delight, or by a forced subjection, Re 6:16, and acknowledge that he is Lord, i.e. of glory,

Ro 11:36 1Co 2:8 8:6, the Son of God, 2Co 4:5 Heb 1:2,4, having only power to command the soul and conscience, Jas 4:12, and to save, Heb 7:27, being *Lord both of the dead and of the living*, Ro 14:9.

*To the glory of God the Father*; some render, in the glory of the Father. Either in that the honour of Christ redoundeth to the honour of the Father, Pr 10:1, with Joh 5:23 Eph 1:6: or the Father doth most glorify the Son in his exaltation, who had most glorified him in his humiliation, Joh 12:28, with Joh 17:5,6.

### Philippians 2:12

Ver. 12. *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed*: having confirmed the example of Christ's admirable condescension and affection from the glorious issue of it, he doth here reassume his exhortation, with a friendly compellation, commending their former sincere endeavours to obey the gospel (so Php 1:5, and Php 2:15) in following Christ, Mt 11:28, and moving them to persevere in obedience and love to God and man.

*Not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence*; that it might be evident, whether the eye of their pastor were upon them or not, a prevailing love to Christ, and their own souls' welfare, was prevalent with them; but especially, being he was now detained from them, and might be jealous of some defects in them, Jas 3:2 1Jo 1:8, did engage them more than any thing to embrace his exhortation, which he enlargeth in other words.

*Work out your own salvation*: he moves them as saints, Php 1:1, in whom God would perfect his work begun, Php 2:6, having given them to believe and suffer, Php 2:29, that they would seriously and earnestly busy themselves in those things, which on their parts are necessary to salvation, as Joh 6:27 Heb 6:9, and without which it cannot be had, as Php 1:10 Mt 24:13 Col 3:10,12, &c.; 1Ti 1:18,19 6:19 2Ti 2:5 4:7,8 2Pe 3:17; yea, press on in the way to their own salvation, as he moved, 1Ti 4:16, not that they should not be solicitous about others, for that mutual care is implied, as elsewhere required, Heb 3:13 10:24; but that every one should strenuously go on towards the mark with a special regard to himself, and the temptations he may meet with, knowing he must bear his own burden,



Ga 6:1,5, and therefore should take heed lest he fall. The papists' arguings hence that our actions are sufficient and meritorious causes of salvation, are altogether inconsequent. For the apostle doth not say our actions work out salvation, but: *Work out your own salvation*, which is much different. It were absurd to say, because the Jews were enjoined to eat the passover with loins girt, that loins girt were eating of the passover. Indeed, what the papists urge is contrary to this doctrine of Paul, who doth elsewhere place blessedness in remission of sins, and shows eternal life is the gift of God, Ro 4:6,7 6:23; and we are saved by grace, not of works, Ro 3:20,24,25 4:16 Eph 2:8 Tit 3:5 and contrary to the main scope of the apostle, which is to beat down pride and conceit of deserving, and persuade to humility. He drives at this, that we should not be idle or lazy in the business of salvation, but work together with God, (yet as instruments, in whom there is no strength which is not derived from him), that we may evidence we do not receive his grace in vain, 2Co 6:1,2. But this co-operation doth not respect the acquiring or meriting of salvation, which is proper to Christ alone, and incommunicable to any others, Ac 4:12, who cannot be said to be their own saviours: this co-operation, or working out, respects only the application, not the performing of the payment, which Christ hath abundantly perfected: but the embracing of the perfect payment, is not that which can be the cause and foundation of right for which it is deservedly conferred; but only the way and means by which we come to partake of salvation.

*With fear and trembling*; i.e. with a holy care to do all acceptably: he doth by these two words mean not any servile fear and slavish despondency, arising from doubting, Php 4:4, but only a serious, filial fear, implying a deep humility and submissiveness of mind, with a reverential awe of the Divine Majesty, and a solicitude to avoid that evil which is offensive to him and separates from him. We find these words used to the like import, Ps 2:11 Da 5:19; Da 6:26 Ro 11:20 with 1Co 2:3 2Co 7:5 Eph 6:5; connoting that, after the example of Christ, we should be humble, and though we distrust ourselves, yet we are to trust solely to God, (as an infant may be afraid, and yet cling fast to and depend upon, begging help of, the parent, going over a dangerous precipice), for the accomplishment of our salvation.

## Philippians 2:13

Ver. 13. That they might not be negligent in working out their salvation with humility, from any conceit or carnal confidence any might have that they could believe and repent when they pleased, imagining their wills to be as pliable to good as evil; the apostle urgeth the effectual grace of God, as a powerful inducement and encouragement to embrace his exhortation.

*For it is God which worketh in you:* they should not despond of any attaining salvation, or think they did labour in vain in the diligent use of means, and should altogether fall under the dominion of sin, considering, though they were free agents, yet the efficiency and sufficiency was of God, Ro 6:13,14 1Co 4:7 2Co 3:5; who worketh within them powerfully and effectually, carrying on the work through all difficulties and obstacles, with victorious efficacy, till it be wrought, Php 1:6 Isa 41:4 Heb 13:20,21: God worketh not only by suasion to gain assent, but by a special energy effecting what he would have us to do.

*Both to will:* and not only in a general way, Ac 17:28, but in a special way, making us willing, Ps 110:3, remotely in regard of the principle, nextly in regard of the act: circumcising the heart, De 30:6; taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh, Eze 11:19 36:26,27; causing light to shine out of darkness, 2Co 4:6; and so renewing the will, to choose that which is savingly good, the natural bent of which, before the influence of this insuperable grace, stands another way, Joh 8:44, viz. to will and do contrary: yet he doth not necessitate by any compulsion, but powerfully, yet sweetly, and suitably to man's free faculty, incline the will to that which is good, Joh 6:37,44, i.e. to a certain effect. For the will influenced to will that it doth perform, it undoubtedly wills somewhat that is certain, and so is determined by God.

*And to do;* to do that which is savingly good. Whereupon being made willing, it hath not only an inclination, and doth not only exert a wounding, but, being moved by God's insuperable grace, 1Co 3:7, that will is effectual, and is the very deed, where the command of the will is executed to the glory of God, as the author. As in alms, not only doth God incline the will to relieve the poor, but further contributes special gracious aids to perform what was (deliberated, which evinceth that it is from another principle than ourselves. It is not, that ye may be able to will, and may be

able to do; but he worketh *both to will and to do*: which connotes the very act itself; that ye will to believe, obey, pray, persevere, and that ye do believe, obey, pray, persevere: of unwilling, he makes willing; and further, *to will and to do*. It is true, to will, as it is an act of the will, is ours by creation; and to will well is so far ours, we being made effectually willing by God's grace: yet not ours, as though of ourselves we begin to will, or go on, but it is of him who worketh in us. Not that we cannot will well, but that of ourselves we cannot will well. The precept therefore requiring our obedience does not show what we can or will of ourselves, but what we ought to will and to do by God's special help. But though God work in us obedience, yet we obey, we ourselves act, being acted of God.

*Of his good pleasure*; not for any previous disposition in any of us, but of, or according to, his own good pleasure, Lu 10:21 Eph 1:5,9,11 2:8 2Th 1:11, with 2Ti 1:9. In working out our own salvation, the very beginning in the will, as well as the perfection, is ascribed to the efficacy of God; his good pleasure is the procreating and helping cause of this work on the will, and not the will's good pleasure.

#### Philippians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Do all things without murmurings*; the apostle here subjoins to his exhortation to condescension and humility, a dissuasive from the opposite vices, moving them to do all that was incumbent on them as Christians without private mutterings, secret whisperings, and complainings, which might argue their impatience under the yoke of Christ, while put upon doing or suffering such things; either reflecting on God's providence, as the Israelites of old, Nu 11:1, &c.; 1Co 10:10; reckoning they had hard measure: or rather, (here considering the context), grudging at others, as the Greeks and Jews had done, Lu 5:30 Joh 6:41,42 Ac 6:1; yea, and some of the disciples were found guilty of this ill temper against their Master, Joh 6:61. Christian charity disallows grudgings, 1Pe 4:9 Jude 1:10; and also *disputings*; hot and eager contests and quarrellings about those things wherein the life and main business of religion is not concerned, but the unity of the Spirit of holiness is opposed, Mt 18:1 Mr 9:33 Lu 9:46 Ro 14:1 2Co 12:20, with 1Ti 1:6 2:8.

### Philippians 2:15

Ver. 15. *That ye may be blameless and harmless;* that ye behave yourselves so that none can justly reproach you, Lu 1:6 and though you cannot altogether put to silence foolish men, Joh 15:25 1Pe 2:15, yet they cannot have any just cause to stain your reputation; but you may be found sincere, simple, void of guile, Mt 10:16 Joh 1:47 Ro 16:19 1Pe 2:1, with 1Pe 1:14.

*The sons of God, without rebuke;* without such spots and blemishes as are inconsistent with your adoption, or sonship, Eph 5:27. Sons of God, in regard of their relation, should be careful, as much as may be, that they do not expose themselves to the biting reproofs of those carping neighbours who are not of their Father's family, So 4:7 Mt 5:48 Eph 1:4 Jude 1:24.

*In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;* who show by their lying in wickedness, 1Jo 5:19, and the uncured spots, yea, even plague sores, upon them who have notoriously corrupted themselves, that they are a perverse, crooked, untoward, and adulterous generation, De 32:5 Ps 125:5 Mt 12:39 Ac 13:8,10.

*Among whom ye shine as lights in the world;* in conversing with such a sort of men, ye either do, or ought, unanimously to show yourselves to be light in the Lord, Mt 5:14,16 Eph 5:8,15; enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, Mal 4:2, to give a more clear light, that however the uncivil wicked would bespatter you, and cast reproach upon you in the necessary exercises of religion; yet, you not suffering as murderers, thieves, busybodies, &c., 1Pe 4:4,15,16, you will then, especially if Christ's faithful ambassadors, show yourselves to be not such lantern or torchbearers as accompanied treacherous Judas, Joh 18:3, (however the ill men you live among may reckon you no better), but such light-bearers under Christ, (the Seventy use the word for stars, Ge 1:16 Da 12:3 Re 1:16,20), as irradiate the world; not a house, as a candle doth, but the world, as stars do, Re 12:1.

### Philippians 2:16

Ver. 16. *Holding forth the word of life;* carefully bearing before you, and

stedfastly showing, not only by your profession, but conversation, the Lord Jesus Christ, 1Jo 1:1, whose gospel is the word of life, in that *it is the power of God to salvation*, Ac 13:26 Ro 1:16. He doth not say, holding forth carnal institutions, nor human traditions; but that word, wherein is to be had *eternal life*, Joh 5:39 6:68.

*That I may rejoice in the day of Christ:* he quickens them from the consideration of the glorious joy he should have in their salvation, at the day of Christ, (see Php 1:6), when he and they should, of God's free grace, receive an abundant reward, viz. of his ministry and exhortation, and of their embracing it, and working out their salvation by God's special assistance.

*That I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain;* for it would be evident to his, as well as their, everlasting comfort, when he should see them, that his laborious ministry amongst them had not been frustrate, or fruitless in the Lord, Mt 25:21 1Co 3:8,9 15:58. Then, in a more glorious way they would be his *joy and crown*, than they were at present, Php 4:1.

### Philippians 2:17

Ver. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered:* that he might further confirm and encourage them in their duty, he doth not here conclude the certainty of his death, at his first imprisonment, having expressed before some confidence of his surviving it, Php 1:19,25; but, in imitation of Christ, *the good Shepherd*, Joh 10:11, to demonstrate his constant affection to them, (as he doth to others, 2Co 12:15 1Th 2:8), he argues upon supposition of his own death, which might afterwards happen, 2Ti 4:6; using an elegant allegory, borrowed from legal offerings, Le 2:6 Nu 15:5,7 Nu 23:4 Jud 11:13; to show that he could cheerfully lay down his life for their salvation; not for reconciling them to God, for that was done before by Christ's own offering up himself, Heb 7:27, a sacrifice of a sweet smell unto God, Eph 5:2; but whereby they might be confirmed in the faith sealed with his blood, for bearing witness to Christ, precious to God, Ps 116:15. The Greek word he hath here, is borrowed from the usage in sacrificing, of pouring wine or oil upon the victim, Ex 30:9 2Ki 16:13 Jer 19:13, when that which was poured forth was called the drink-offering, to the confirming of covenants.

*Upon the sacrifice; by sacrifice,* he means either specially their alms, prepared by them, and presented by Epaphroditus, for supporting him in his sufferings, and in the person of the apostle offered up unto God, Php 4:18 2Co 9:12; or, more generally, the Philippians' conversion, because sanctified by a principle of faith, and so made a sacrifice. For he doth more than once write of believers being offered, and resigned to God, under the notion of a sacrifice, Ro 12:1 15:16; and so doth another, 1Pe 2:5.

*And service of your faith;* to bring them unto which by his ministration, was a very pleasing service to him, who by pouring out his blood in this martyrdom, would confirm the doctrine of the gospel, or new covenant, and fix it more strongly in the hearts of them and others of God's chosen people.

*I joy;* whereupon he expresseth his joy and delight in that, which, upon this supposition, would in the issue be so much to their honour and advantage, when it should seem good to the Lord. They would reckon it no small honour, to have him, the apostle that planted the gospel amongst them, satisfied in their vouching of the truth, which therefore could not but be profitable to the establishing of them in it, who had cordially embraced it.

*And rejoice with you all;* whereupon he doth heartily congratulate with each of them, the meanest as well as the greatest of them, who would be so privileged.

### Philippians 2:18

Ver. 18. *For the same cause also do ye joy;* he expects the like affection and sympathy in every one of them, that upon the account of his sufferings they would the more readily, cheerfully, and courageously believe in and suffer for Christ: considering the difference between death threatened by man, for our sticking close to God, Mt 10:28, and denounced for slipping aside from God, in whole or in part, 2Th 1:5.

*And rejoice with me;* and that would be a congratulation of him, who should account their being established in the faith with mutual love and unity, a fulfilling of his faith, as before, Php 2:2.

### Philippians 2:19

Ver. 19. *But I trust in the Lord Jesus;* diverting from his former exhortation, the more to comfort them, he expresseth his good hope (which in respect of the object we translate *trust*) in the Lord Jesus, exalted above every name, that he would be pleased, some way or other, to afford him such liberty, notwithstanding his restraint.

*To send Timotheus shortly unto you;* that he should, within a little while after the arrival of Epaphroditus, now upon his return, despatch Timothy to them.

*That I also may be of good comfort;* not for their further benevolence, but for the composing of their spirits, and settling of their affairs, which to him, solicitous of their souls' welfare, (as in a like case for others, 1Th 2:19, with 1Th 3:5), would be great satisfaction.

*When I know your state;* when he should be certainly acquainted how things went with them; who might justly expect his sympathy, Ro 12:15 1Co 12:26 2Co 11:28,29.

### Philippians 2:20

Ver. 20. *For I have no man likeminded;* for which purpose I have designed Timothy, who joins with me in this Epistle, and is most of the same mind with myself, endued with the same Spirit, faith, and love; finding none of like soul to him with myself, in desiring your prosperity, and so have pitched upon him.

*Who will naturally care for your state;* who, being cordial to me and you, will, without regard to lucre, ingenuously and sincerely, above all the rest I have here, propagate the kingdom of Christ amongst you, and promote your salvation in watching for your souls, as one that must give an account, that he may do it with joy, Heb 13:17.

## Philippians 2:21

Ver. 21. He doth here further commend Timothy, compared with the generality of those who with him did attend the ministry of the gospel at Rome, where it seems (whatever the papists pretend) Peter did not then preside as metropolitan. When he saith *all*, he doth not necessarily imply every individual besides Timothy, (though, as before, he knew not one like-minded as he was), but almost all, (as the universal sign is elsewhere synecdochically taken, Jer 6:3 Mt 10:22 Mr 1:5), or the most part of those then employed in the ministry, who were then at liberty, and whose inclinations, probably, he had inquired into.

*Seek their own;* did, though not simply and absolutely, yet after a sort, seek their own profit, ease, safety, pleasure, and satisfaction; called *their own*, in regard of their civil right, and the world's opinion, but yet at God's disposal, Hag 2:8. These they did (as John Mark in another case) prefer to a long and tedious journey, for the service of Christ, unto Philippi.

*Not the things which are Jesus Christ's;* so that they did postpone the glory of Christ, the safety and edification of the church there, to their own things. Wherefore he doth not mean it absolutely, that they did not seek the things of Christ, or that they did deny Christ, for it is apparent, even when he penned this Epistle, Php 1:13,14, with Ac 28:14,15, and Ro 1:8, there were many that did seriously seek Christ; but comparatively, and in a sort, they did not seek the things of Christ so intently as they should, 1Co 10:24,33, but failed as others did in other cases, Mt 26:58 2Ti 4:16; not as if all minding of their own things were denied to Christ's ministers, 1Ti 3:4,5 5:8; but they did slip their necks from under the yoke, and did not mind the glory of Christ in the church of Philippi, as he did.

## Philippians 2:22

Ver. 22. However others were found in some respects defective to the service of Christ, yet he appeals to their experience of the integrity and fidelity of Timothy in conjunction with himself, when he preached the gospel amongst them, and afterwards, Ac 16:1 17:15 18:5 Ac 19:22 20:4; which he amplifies and illustrates by a simile, when he saith, *as a son with*



*the father*; q. d. Just as a genuine and obedient son is wont to retain the spirit of his father that begat him: and Paul doth metaphorically call Timothy his *own son*, begotten by the gospel, 1Ti 1:2, his *dearly beloved Son*, 2Ti 1:2, and *faithful in the Lord*, 1Co 4:17, *likeminded* with himself, Php 1:1; with whom he had not only preached, but *served in the gospel*, Php 1:1, given himself wholly to the thing. He doth not say, served me, or under me, but *with me* in the gospel, i.e. to advance the glory of Christ in promoting the gospel, by helping with Paul, and labouring, working the work of the Lord, as Paul also did, and being sometime a sufferer under restraint for that service, as Paul himself, Heb 13:23, for the gospel, which is not a domination, but ministration, wherein this great apostle owns Timothy as his fellow minister.

#### Philippians 2:23

Ver. 23. *Him therefore I hope to send presently*; seeing the matter was thus, he thought not of any other to employ in the service of their faith, but hoped, i.e. *in the Lord Jesus* as Php 2:19, in a short time after his present writing, to send this excellent, humble, and approved young man, who would naturally care for their concerns, Php 2:20.

*So soon as I shall see how it will go with me*; even without any delay, (though as yet, to accompany Epaphroditus, he could not spare him, who was so useful to him in his bonds, to take care for things necessary to the propagation of the gospel, in the ample city of Rome), from the hour he should come to a certainty what would be the issue of his present imprisonment, which if it should end in his being offered up, he had satisfied them before, as it would be for his own advantage, Php 1:21, so, by the providence of God, no disservice to their faith, Php 2:17,18; from which, with ready submission to God's will, whatever occurred, it seems he had a greater inclination to conceive a good hope of freedom.

#### Philippians 2:24

Ver. 24. *But I trust in the Lord*; so he expresseth his strong persuasion, as the word we translate *trust*, being seldom used, but when the thing trusted imports the object.

*In the Lord;* i.e. Jesus, whom he doth absolutely and eminently call Lord, being so *highly exalted* above all others, Php 2:9, not only here, but elsewhere, Php 2:29 3:1 4:1,4,10; on whom he doth wholly depend, and to whom he doth submit for the issue.

*That I also myself shall come shortly:* before he had suggested his persuasion of abiding with them, Php 1:25, and here, that he might satisfy them he had not changed his mind, he adds for their comfort, that they might not be discouraged in their sufferings, what apprehensions he had, after a while, of being set at liberty (if God pleased); and if so, he would have them conceive, soon after he had done what was necessary at Rome, (for him who had care of all the churches), he designed to follow Timothy to them.

### Philippians 2:25

Ver. 25. *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus;* in the mean time he gives them an account why he esteemed it needful to send back Epaphroditus (whom some, but without sufficient warrant, would have to be the same with Epaphras, Col 1:7 4:12 Phm 1:23) unto them, not as if he had failed in doing what he was intrusted with, but for other weighty reasons.

*My brother and companion in labour;* he would have them to know he had nothing to blame him for, but all in his commendation, whom in the common faith he owned to be his Christian brother, and fellow helper, or fellow worker in the business of the gospel, as he calls others in the like circumstances, Ro 16:3,21 2Co 8:23 Col 4:11 1Th 3:2 Phm 1:24.

*And fellow soldier;* and a faithful and a constant associate with him in the Christian warfare, 2Co 10:4 1Ti 1:18 Phm 1:2, under Christ their Captain, against all the assaults of the devil, and the carnal world, which are continually warring to destroy real Christianity.

*But your messenger;* but your apostle, which must be understood largely, as it is sometimes put for any evangelist, deacon, or minister of the gospel, Ro 16:7,9, well rendered by us in this place *messenger*, compared with

Php 4:18 2Co 8:22,23; not being a special apostle of Christ, Mt 10:2, but an officer of the church at Philippi, delegated by them to carry relief to Paul.

*And he that ministered to my wants;* unto whom, it seems, he did not only deliver the present for his support according to his trust and commission, wherein he faithfully served the church, but also, as their public minister, greatly help Paul the prisoner in what he stood most in need of, which Paul could not but value, being the Romans were so mild as to permit him, a captive, so good attendance and assistance; yet, to declare his affections to the church at Philippi, he chose rather to deny himself his necessaries, than not to comfort them in remitting their faithful messenger, so greatly desiring their welfare, with this letter to them.

#### Philippians 2:26

Ver. 26. *For he longed after you all;* he gives them the first reason of his present sending, not that Epaphroditus was unwilling to stay longer with him, but because he was greatly concerned for all of them of the church at Philippi, who had his heart, as they had Paul's, Php 1:8 4:1 Ro 1:11; solicitous to be with them to do their souls good.

*And was full of heaviness;* especially, considering their great affection to him, whom they had intrusted in this service, he was in such distress for them, that his spirits were even ready to fail him (as Mt 26:37) from sympathy, 2Co 11:29.

*Because that ye had heard that he had been sick;* knowing how much the certain report of his dangerous sickness in those circumstances, when they could understand nothing of his recovery, would affect them.

#### Philippians 2:27

Ver. 27. *For indeed he was sick nigh unto death;* by reason he was really taken with such a disease, as in its own nature was mortal, and in its tendency brought him even to death's door, as Isa 38:1.

*But God had mercy on him;* but God, who is the great Physician, and unto whom it belongs to show mercy unto those who address to him, (without whom bodily physicians can do nothing), by compassionating of him in his misery, was pleased to restore him to health, as 2Ki 20:5,6. But if any say: Would it not have been great mercy to have taken him from the miseries of this life, which are here prolonged? Consider Php 1:21. It may be answered:

1. Death itself, as it is a privation of life, and opposite to nature, was not desirable by Paul any more than by our Saviour, but might be looked upon as a kind of misery, not to be preferred to life looked upon in itself, but with respect to another, viz. as it is a passage to eternal life; so it is desirable for that life into which it leads the godly, and so is to be preferred to the miserable condition of this life. Paul speaks here of mercy respecting the former, considering that this life itself is a favour of God, for the service of him, and our neighbour. Further:
2. God's mercy here respects not only the grievous sickness of Epaphroditus, but the joint affliction that the loss of him would be both to the Philippians and to Paul, in thus juncture, as we may see from what follows.

*And not on him only, but on me also;* what power had Paul for working of miracles, was chiefly to convince infidels, and he could only exert it when God saw good for his own glory. Therefore he magnifies God's mercy here in a more ordinary way, as a return to prayer, when he was so afflicted for his colleague's illness; being upon an office of kindness and compassion, his loss would be in its tendency a ground of so much sorrow to the church, as well as to himself.

*Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow;* his Christianity had not extinguished his natural affections, but if the church had then been bereft of Epaphroditus, it would have added the affliction for his loss to his affliction by his suffering for Christ, it would have doubled his affliction, (yet somewhat in a different sense from that, Php 1:16), it being an ill temper not to be grieved for the affliction of the church, Am 6:6; yet all our affections are to be moderated according to the will of God.

### Philippians 2:28

Ver. 28. *I sent him therefore the more carefully;* after his recovery, without delay, denying myself the comfort of his society, I have despatched him away to you.

*That, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice;* to the end that he whom you looked upon as dead might seasonably appear among you in person, and cheer you up in your troubles for him and me.

*And that I may be the less sorrowful;* and that I, who, by reason of your kindness to me, have occasioned his absence from you, might upon his safe return to you have somewhat to alleviate my grief, 2Co 6:10.

### Philippians 2:29

Ver. 29. *Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness:* hereupon, having given his due character, he chargeth them all, officers and people, to entertain him as a servant of the Lord, (as Christ would have them receive his servants, Mt 10:40,41, even with all spiritual joy), as sometimes the Galatians had received him, Ga 4:14.

*And hold such in reputation;* yea, as it becometh saints, Ro 16:2, to have such in esteem very highly for their work's sake, 1Th 5:13.

### Philippians 2:30

Ver. 30. *Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death;* by reason he was so zealous about the work of the ministry in the general, or in special to carry on that service, as the church's messenger, he was intrusted with, Php 4:18, not only in conveying their benevolence on so long and hazardous a journey, for the relief of the Lord's prisoner, which Christ would own and reward as his work, Mt 25:39,40, but in attending him (whom he was sent to visit) in his confinement, both within doors and abroad, as occasion required, (for it seems the Romans were so generous as to give free egress and regress to his visitants, Ac 28:30), whereby he contracted that forementioned disease that hazarded his life.

*Not regarding his life;* the preservation of which with respect to the work he was about, he did not consult, (Joh 12:25,26), but made little account of it, (as Es 4:16), yea, did even despise it in the service of Christ, as the original word doth import, being borrowed from those whose lives are hazarded in being cast to be devoured by beasts in the theatre, which he himself, by sad experience, sometime knew the meaning of, 1Co 15:32.

*To supply your lack of service toward me;* so faithful was he to his trust for the honour of his Lord, that to the very utmost of his strength, yea, and beyond it, that which he reckoned those who sent would have done themselves had they been present, (considering what the gospel requires, Ga 6:2 Heb 13:3), that he, Onisephorus-like, 2Ti 1:16, according to his measure made supply of in their absence.

### Philippians 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Php 3:1-3 Paul exhorteth to rejoice in the Lord, and to beware of the false teachers of the circumcision,  
Php 3:4-6 showing that as a Jew he had better grounds of confidence than they.

Php 3:7-11 But that he disclaimed them all, trusting only to the justification which is of God by faith, and hoping to partake of the resurrection through Christ.

Php 3:12-14 He acknowledgeth his present imperfection, and that he was still anxiously striving for the prize,

Php 3:15,16 exhorting others to be like-minded,

Php 3:17 and to follow his example.

Php 3:18,19 For many were enemies to the gospel, being earthly minded,

Php 3:20,21 but his conversation and views were heavenly.

Ver. 1. Finally; moreover, or as to what remains, i.e. by way of conclusion to the antecedent matter, and transition to the general exhortation, he here premiseth to the subsequent admonition.

*My brethren;* willingly repeating the title of *brethren*, to show the respect he had for them, and to sweeten that he was about to subjoin.

*Rejoice in the Lord;* he moves them (as we, with almost all, do translate it) not as saluting or bidding them farewell, Lu 1:28 2Co 13:11; but to rejoice in the Lord, as Php 4:4, either connoting the object matter of their joy, compared with Php 3:3, or rather the efficient, importing for and according to the will of the Lord, in a manner agreeable to the pleasure of him who affords a ground of rejoicing in the midst of your tribulations and afflictions; considering his mercy, Php 2:18,27,29, they might taste how good the Lord is, as elsewhere, Ps 37:4 Jer 9:24, with Ro 5:11 2Co 10:17 1Th 5:16 1Pe 1:8; and so not after a carnal and worldly, but spiritual and Christian manner, to cheer up themselves in him, when the world frowns most, Ps 4:6,7.

*To write the same things to you;* writing of the same things cannot be referred to any other epistles which he wrote to the Philippians, but to those things which, while present with them, he had delivered to them by word of mouth, as Php 4:9: compare Isa 28:10 Ro 15:15 2Pe 1:12 1Jo 2:21.

*To me indeed is not grievous;* for my part, I do not do it with regret, nor account it tedious, (as some teachers do), as if I were ashamed of it, that I should do any thing superfluous, or not necessary, in writing again the same things for the matter of them, that I had before preached to preserve you from falling, as others have done, Php 3:18.

*But for you it is safe;* because this repetition of the same doctrine, though in another way, is pertinent to your edification, (yea, as some read, it is necessary), it is greatly advantageous for your stability in the faith, and to caution and keep you in safety, from the insinuations of false teachers, that I now give you a brief memorial in writing of those things, that you may be cautioned, and they may not, especially in this day of adversity, slip out of your memories, or be lost.

### Philippians 3:2

Ver. 2. Beware; he cautions all, both officers and people: and though the

original word doth signify to look with mind and eye, yet it is also frequently rendered, to take heed, Mr 8:15 12:38 8:9,23,33 1Co 16:10 2Jo 1:8.

*Of dogs;* of those dogs, (with the article emphatically proposed), a metaphor borrowed from those voracious, fierce, impure animals, whose price was not brought into the Lord's house, De 23:18 Pr 26:11 Isa 66:3 2Pe 2:22; to connote the false apostles, who endeavoured to corrupt the gospel with Judaism and profaneness, even antichristianism; compare Ps 22:16,20 Mt 7:6 15:26 Re 22:15. Some think the apostle may allude unto the proverbial speech: Take heed of a mad dog, forasmuch as false teachers, being acted as with a certain madness, would bite Christ and his apostles, and tear his body; and these mad dogs were the more dangerous, in that they did not bark so much as bite. Hence they say, Take heed of a dumb dog and still watcher. There were of several sorts, enemies to the cross of Christ, Ga 5:12 1Th 2:14,15; some more secret, as Absalom against Amnon, 2Sa 13:22, pretending contrary to their practice, 2Ki 8:13 13:22. Our Saviour bade his disciples beware of such, Mt 10:17, which he found to be of this temper, Ps 22:16,20 55:15; though some of them were but dumb dogs, Isa 56:10: some such there were amongst the Philipplians, who, notwithstanding their fair pretext, were enemies to the cross of Christ, did secretly disparage his true apostle, and tear his flock: see Php 3:18, with Php 1:15,16.

*Beware of evil workers;* such as pretended to labour in promoting the gospel of Christ, but secretly were doing mischief amongst Christians, not serving the glory of Christ but their own bellies, Php 3:18,19; being, as he elsewhere calls them, *deceitful workers*, 2Co 11:13, glorying in the flesh, Ga 6:13.

*Beware of the concision;* by an elegant allusion to the name circumcision, which rite the Jews did glory in, and some false teachers of Christianity, after the time of reformation, did urge as necessary to salvation, and require it from others, Ac 15:1 Ga 5:2,4 Ga 6:12. These Paul here, in a holy sarcasm, charges the Philipplians to take heed of, under the contemptible name of *the concision*, or cutting off, intimating that the exterior part of that typical work, which was done in the cutting off the foreskin, was now, from the coming of Christ, altogether made a mere cutting off the skin, condemned by God in the heathens, as a profane



incision, Le 19:28 21:5, where the LXX. use the same preposition in the compound word, the apostle here doth in contempt of the thing; which could now bring nothing of profit, nothing of holiness, nothing of honour to any Christian, could no more avail or advantage a man now, than if it were conferred on a beast, being no seal of the covenant now, but a stickling for that rite (when abolished by Christ) which was a mere rending of the church, and in that effect a cutting off from it, Ga 5:10,12. And the apostle doth three times significantly repeat this word, *beware* of these enemies to Christian purity and unity, to show how necessary it was to avoid their insinuations, against which he is more sharp in his Epistle to the Galatians.

### Philippians 3:3

Ver. 3. In opposition to and confutation of *the concision*, he speaks of himself, and all true believers in the fellowship of the gospel, partakers of the same grace and Spirit with him, Php 1:5,7 Php 2:1; and saith, *we*.

*Are the circumcision;* using a metonymy, are the circumcision now acceptable, and not displeasing to God, i.e. we are what is really signified by it, and therefore as to the main intent of it are the circumcised (it being usual to put circumcision for circumcised, Ac 11:2 Ro 3:30 4:12 15:8 Ga 2:7,8,9,12 Col 4:11 Tit 1:10): he doth not mean with respect to carnal circumcision, i.e. which is outward in the flesh, but which is inward in the Spirit, Ro 2:28,29, made without hands by the circumcision of Christ, with whom we are buried in baptism, Col 2:11,12; and being Christ's are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of the promise, Ga 3:29.

*Which worship God in the spirit;* i.e. who have cut off all carnal confidence of salvation in any external services, (which they of the concision contend for), and do worship God, not with carnal, but spiritual worship, such as now under the gospel he doth require, Joh 4:23,24 Ro 1:9; from a renewed heart (Joh 3:8 1Pe 3:15; yielding peculiar adoration to the Lord our God, with a sincere mind, and by the assistance of his Spirit in the exercise of faith and love, Ro 8:5,6,26,27 Eph 3:16,17 6:18 Heb 10:22; according to the same rule he hath prescribed, Php 3:16, with Ro 12:1,2 Ga 6:16, in and through Christ, Heb 13:15.

*And rejoice in Christ Jesus;* in whom alone (not in Moses also, as false teachers would join them) glorying we trust for acceptance with God, 2Co 5:9 Ga 6:14; in communion with whom is ground of rejoicing through Christ, who is the substance or body of Mosaic shadows, Php 3:9.

*And have no confidence in the flesh;* and not rest, or trust, or place our hope in any carnal or external privilege or performance, or any other besides Jesus Christ, to commend us to God, Ga 3:2, 11-13.

### Philippians 3:4

Ver. 4. *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh:* to prevent any cavil about what he said, as if he did magnify Christ, and forbear glorying in those external privileges they did so much bear themselves upon, out of envy to them for what they had; he here argues upon supposition, (as elsewhere, to cut off occasion from boasters, 2Co 11:12,18,21,22), that, if it were lawful, and would turn to any good account, to confide in the flesh, he had the same ground the impostors had, and might build up that in himself which he had destroyed in others, Ga 2:18.

*If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:* yea, and to compare things by a just balance, if any of those he had justly taxed, or any other in conceit might hold his head higher in that way, he could produce not only as much, but much more ground of trust in those external rites, &c. as he that was most excellent; only that it was in vain, and of no value, Php 3:7.

### Philippians 3:5

Ver. 5. *Circumcised the eighth day;* or, there was, or I had, the eighth day circumcision; so it may by a usual supply of the verb be read, (as also what follows), without a metonymy. He begins with his birth privilege, intimating that he was not proselyted, but born within the pale of the church, and dedicated to God under the seal of the covenant at the day of God's appointment, Ge 17:12.

*Of the stock of Israel;* not sprung from ethnic parents, not an Ishmaelite,

or Edomite, but a genuine Israelite, Ro 11:1 2Co 11:22.

*Of the tribe of Benjamin;* of that more honest division where the temple stood, Jos 18:28, of the tribe of Benjamin, the son of beloved Rachel, and his father's darling, Ge 44:20; under God's special protection, De 33:12, forward in the reformation, Ezr 1:5.

*An Hebrew of the Hebrews;* a true descendant by Jacob from Abraham the father of the faithful, called an Hebrew, (Eber joined not in building Babel), Ge 10:21,25 14:13 1Sa 4:6; signifying that he was of the truly ancient lineage which retained the Hebrew tongue, Joh 8:33,39 Ac 22:2 Ro 4:12 2Co 11:22.

*As touching the law, a Pharisee;* by religion and stricter observation of the law, according to the prescript most in vogue, of that sect which for learning, knowledge of the Scripture, and reputation for holiness, was the most eminent, Ac 26:5; yea, and his father was of this order before him, Ac 23:6.

### Philippians 3:6

Ver. 6. *Concerning zeal;* not lukewarm, but exceedingly fervent in the strictest observances of the Pharisaic order, which was much in external devotion, Lu 18:12, very solicitous for proselytes, Mt 23:15,25. Herein he was above his equals for years, being exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers, Ga 1:14, (and his zeal had been very commendable had it been in a good matter, Ga 4:18), that which the false apostles contended much for.

*Persecuting the church;* which he showed all manner of ways in his rage against the church of Christ, conceived by the Pharisees to be opposite to the law of Moses, Ac 9:1 22:3,4 26:9-12 Ga 1:13.

*Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless;* he rises higher yet in his personal obedience; he might have been a zealot in his sect, and yet a hypocrite, if not of a scandalous life; but it seems, in the external observation of those things which the ceremonial or moral law did prescribe, he was, in the eye of man, of a blameless conversation,

resembling Zacharias and Elisabeth, Lu 1:6. Men could not tax him, he had behaved himself so conscientiously, Ac 23:1; yet when he had his eyes opened, he found here was no such matter of confidence for him before God, 1Sa 16:7 1Co 4:4. This external performance he found, when enlightened, was far short of internal and perfect obedience, Ro 7:7; and therefore he saw it necessary to change the ground and foundation of his confidence, all that he before rested on, unto Christ alone, 1Co 3:11 2Co 5:17; not seeking to receive honour from men, but that from Christ only, Joh 5:44.

### Philippians 3:7

Ver. 7. Having argued how he might have had as great a plea for confidence of his acceptance with God as any, if it would have held from the recited particulars, he now shows, how advantageous soever they had, in the judgment of others as well as himself, been reckoned to be, before he was effectually called, yet, since the scales fell off his eyes, that he could discern the truth, he was so far from accounting them profitable, that indeed he accounted them prejudicial; so far from an advantage, that they were a damage to him, looking for salvation by Christ alone, Mt 21:31 Ro 9:30. They were but as pebbles that hide the Pearl of price, Mt 13:46; as ciphers to this figure, that can make any thing valuable, therefore by Paul preferred to all before.

### Philippians 3:8

Ver. 8. *Yea doubtless*; he very emphatically, in the Greek, expresseth his stronger resolution upon further deliberation.

*And I count all things*; as he had reckoned and rated when he was first wrought upon to entertain Christ, so at present he did not alter his judgment, in the valuation of any thing he had rejected; yea, he speaks universally, what he did but indefinitely, using the present tense with a discrete particle: he disesteemed, not only his Jewish privileges and exercises before, but his Christian after conversion, as of any worth to commend him to God, or as any matter to be rested on for his justification before God; showing he did not ascribe his being accepted to eternal life,

unto his own works after he was renewed, and now had so many years served God in his apostolical ministry, performed such excellent works, planted so many churches, gained so many souls to Christ, passed through perils for the name of Christ. He remarkably puts in *all*, not only which he had before recited, but to all works as such whatsoever, yea, and to all whatsoever could be thought on besides Christ.

*But loss;* whatever they be in themselves, they are but loss or damage, of no worth to me, as to any dependence on them for acceptance with God.

*For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord;* compared with the surpassing worth and excellency in the fiducial, experimental (as is plain from what follows) knowledge of Jesus Christ, in his person, offices, and benefits, wherein an eye of faith can discern transcendent mysteries, Isa 53:2 Joh 17:3 1Jo 5:20 1Ti 3:16 1Pe 1:12; to be adored by the sincere servants of so excellent a Lord, Mr 5:30,33; to have an interest in whom, and to enjoy whom, every thing besides is despicable.

*For whom I have suffered the loss of all things;* for whom (he adds) he did not only account them loss, (as Php 3:7), in his judgment and readiness to lose them, but he actually sustained the loss of them, Ac 20:23 1Co 4:13 2Co 11:23, &c.: as to any plea for his acceptance, he suffered them all to go in this case, which he could not do till God, of his rich and insuperable grace, wrought this resolution in him, by his Holy Spirit; then he willingly did it.

*And do count them but dung;* yea, and upon a right stating of the accounts he reckoned he was no loser by the exchange, in that he did esteem them, in a just balance, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, 1Co 2:13, in point of trust, those excellent things with an excellent Christ, to be no better than dung, as we with the Syriac and others translate the word; or dogs', meat, refuse cast to the dogs, with others; and might agree with the gust of those, Php 3:2, whom he calls *dogs*, Mt 15:26 Mr 7:27. Those much conversant in Greek authors do criticise largely upon the word, which is acknowledged on all hands to import things, if not loathsome, yet vile and contemptible, as chaff, &c.; and so not absolutely, but in their respect, did Paul account all things in comparison of Christ, even our good works proceeding from a heart sanctified but in part; he doth not mean of the substance, but quality of the trust or merit placed in them; not in

themselves, but in regard of confidence in them, as to pardon and acceptance with God: not in point of sanctification, but justification, the apostle is here speaking to. So to rely upon them would not only comparatively, but positively, be greatest loss, as keeping from Christ, who is the greatest gain, for which the loss of all besides was to be sustained.

*That I may win Christ;* that he might gain him, and be assured of an interest in him, whom he had above described in his state of humiliation and exaltation, and enjoy communion with him, Mt 11:28 Lu 14:26,33 2Co 4:6 1Jo 5:12; of whom he would receive more, and for whom he would do more, aiming at the making of Christ himself his own, by some kind of propriety, 1Co 1:30.

### Philippians 3:9

Ver. 9. *And be found in him;* a learned interpreter reads it actively, and may find, or recover, in him, all my losses. But following our own translation: by winning of Christ, the apostle doth not only mean the profession of the faith of the gospel, but his union with Christ, and participation of him, which, in the judgment of the all-seeing God, will answer all damages, when a man comes to stand in judgment at his tribunal here or hereafter, Ro 8:1; this being the only course can be taken to be *found of him in peace* at the last, 2Pe 3:14, for out of him is to be *under the curse*, Ga 3:10 Eph 2:3,12,13. It is necessary, therefore, that a man be implanted into him, who in his priestly office acted in our name towards God, Heb 5:1 10:7; and that he abide in him, our Head, Joh 6:56 15:4 Eph 5:30 Col 2:6,7 1Jo 5:12, and not be found in himself.

*Not having mine own righteousness;* that we might more fully understand his meaning of being found in Christ, he defines it negatively and positively, by distinguishing of a twofold righteousness, supposing one necessary to his acceptance with God:

1. Inherent, within him, which he called his *own*, as being personally performed by him.

*Which is of the law,* he describes it to be in a conformity to the law, and

the righteousness which the law requires, and those works of it, which if a man do, loving God with all his heart, he shall live in them, Ro 2:13 3:27,28 10:5. He makes no distinction of any works done by him before or after conversion, but declares he dare not adventure to be found in any personal inherent righteousness of his own, as to the special end of his justification before God, Ga 3:10-12. He doth not say, not having good works, unto which he was created in Christ Jesus to walk in them, Eph 2:10; but, *not having mine own righteousness*; he could not trust to any thing within him, as to his standing before God; however he was now enlightened, and acted by a better principle, having a better end than while a Pharisee, he could not upon that account have confidence towards God, no more than Noah, who was a prophet and preacher of righteousness, and in his generation, as to his inherent righteousness, the most perfect and just man; or Abraham, Ge 15:6 Ro 4:3; or David, Ps 130:3 143:2. But:

2. He stays upon a righteousness without him, which is not his own by any acquisition of his, but the righteousness of another, Tit 3:5-7, viz. of Christ, without which he would not be found, and in which he would be found, i.e. *that which is through the faith of Christ*, having him for its object; which he doth elsewhere oppose to the deeds of the law, or works of righteousness that he had done, Ro 3:28 Ga 2:16 Tit 3:5; as he doth believing unto doing, which describe these two sorts of righteousness, in the one of which he would be found at his trial for justification, in the other he would not, Ro 1:17 10:5,10,11.

Hence, he doth by the following expression signify more clearly the righteousness he stays himself upon, and wherein he would be found at God's tribunal, viz. the same righteousness which Noah had an eye upon (typified by the ark) when, by preparing an ark, he became *heir of the righteousness which is by faith*, Heb 11:7: *the righteousness which is of God by faith*; not his own, but counted unto him for righteousness; as unto Abraham, who *believed God*, Ro 4:3; as unto David, unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, Ro 4:6. This righteousness of God which he imputes upon believing, is not originally the believers' own inherent righteousness, but the righteousness of another in another, and theirs only derivatively from him, in whom believers are *made the righteousness of God*, 2Co 5:21 (who are not said to be made the mercy of God): unto them, being *in Christ Jesus*, he is *made righteousness*, 1Co 1:30, yea, *the righteousness of God*, Ro 1:17, (these are spoken of by the

apostle distinctly, as here, so elsewhere, Ro 10:3, with Ro 9:30,31), as not only freely given and imputed of God, but as being only of value in the judgment of God to justify, because performed by him, who is not only man but God, Ac 20:28 Ro 3:21,24,25 10:3. Not that it can be meant of the essential righteousness of God; for the righteousness by the faith of Christ, Ro 3:22, or that which constitutes them righteous in God's sight, upon their receiving of Christ and being implanted into him, was that obedience which he yielded unto God for them, voluntarily doing and suffering his will, Joh 15:13 Ro 5:6-8 Php 2:8 1Ti 6:13 Heb 9:14. For this obedience in their stead being fully performed by him who had the Divine and human nature conjoined in himself, was of infinite value, so that his mediatorial righteousness being some way imputed to those who are found in him, they are found righteous before God in his just judgment, as living members of Christ, to whom they are united by the Spirit and faith, Joh 6:56 15:4 Eph 5:30,32 Col 1:27. This mystical head and body making but one Christ, and thereupon his righteousness is reputed theirs (and thereby they are set right with God) in such a measure as is meet for it to be communicated from Head to members, who partake of the thing imputed, the righteousness which satisfied the law, and therefore most proper to justify against it, and answer the demands of it. And in that it is said to be *the righteousness of God by faith*, we consider faith as the means whereby we came to be interested in it. Faith itself is not the righteousness, which is *upon*, not in the believer, Ro 3:22, entering into judgment with God; but the righteousness which believers find in Christ, which was ordained of God to denominate them righteous. The law (which requires obedience) having its end in nothing but the righteousness which satisfied it, called the righteousness of Christ, Ro 10:4, with Tit 2:13 2Pe 1:1; wherein the law is established, Ro 3:31, and its righteousness fulfilled, Ro 8:4; inherent graces are not called the righteousness, but our own, Mt 5:20 Lu 21:19 Ro 10:8 2Co 8:8 Col 1:4 1Pe 1:21. Christ is so far righteousness as he is the end of the law, and that he is in the satisfaction itself, not in remission, which is an effect of it.

### Philippians 3:10

Ver. 10. *That I may know him;* as consequent upon the former he had by winning of Christ, he doth here insist upon sanctification, which would result from faith's exerting itself in a further saving, experimental



knowledge of Christ, to be found in whom, he undervalued all besides conformity to Christ in holiness, being to have communion with him in righteousness, 1Co 1:30; God having appointed those who are found in Christ, to be conformed to his image in holiness, Ro 8:29 2Co 3:18. This saving knowledge is expressed elsewhere in Scripture by the senses, Joh 10:4 2Co 2:14 4:6 Eph 1:18 1Pe 2:3. All and only those found in Christ, do so know him, Joh 5:20 6:46,69 Heb 8:11; and desire so to know him, Php 1:9, that they may have a lively sense of his power, communion, and conformity.

*The power of his resurrection;* the power of his resurrection in us; i.e. from the death of the soul, under a privation of spiritual life, and the image of God, unto newness of life, by the effectual working of the same Spirit which raised Christ himself from the dead, Ro 6:4,10 Eph 1:20 2:5,6; called *the first resurrection*, Re 20:5; when the soul is raised from under the dominion of sin where it lay.

*The fellowship of his sufferings;* by communion of Christ's sufferings, is not meant of bearing a part in the merit of his personal sufferings, but of being partaker of his sufferings in his members, or mystical body, whether inward or outward, (though this chiefly), Mt 20:23 Ac 9:4 Ro 8:17 2Co 1:7 4:10,11 Ga 5:24 Col 1:24 2Ti 2:11,12.

*Being made conformable unto his death;* some read, while made conformable to his death, not only in dying to sin, Ro 6:5,6, but in being conformed to his image in suffering, Ro 8:29; dying daily, or always living ready to be delivered to death for Jesus' sake upon his call, Ro 8:18 2Co 4:11. Such was his Christian temper, that he could cheerfully go through sufferings by reason of some communion and conformity he had in them with Jesus Christ.

### Philippians 3:11

Ver. 11. Being found in whom, after justification and sanctification, he doubts not to be glorified, (by a figure of a part, resurrection of the body, for the whole), though he expresseth himself as one that must pass through difficulties ere he attain not only to a spiritual resurrection from sin, but a glorious one of the body from the grave, even such a one as will be an

elevation or ascension of the body united to the soul, not only exempted from the grave, but exalted into the air, to be for ever with the Lord, 1Th 4:14,17; from whom he was assured no death should separate him, Ro 8:38,39 2Ti 4:8; who lived by faith in expectation of the time and the manner of it, 1Co 15:14,19,30,32 1Pe 1:6,7, that he should be then completely holy in his measure as Christ himself is.

### Philippians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:* by an elegant anticipation and correction, lest any should conclude from what he had written, as if he were now arrived at the height he aimed at in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and a full and perfect stature in that body, or almost at the very pitch, he doth here make a modest confession of his not attainment, (whatever false apostles might pretend to), 2Co 10:12 12:6,7; but of his earnest desire and utmost endeavour to be raised to the complete holiness he was designed to, *in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Eph 2:6.

*But I follow after;* he did pursue with all vigour, as those labouring in the agonistics, with all his might and main, not desponding of obtaining the goal, 1Co 9:26, with 2Co 4:8; with groanings and longings after utmost perfection, 2Co 5:4,6,7 2Pe 3:12; as those perfected in glory, Heb 12:23.

*If that I may apprehend that;* if that, or whether that, (not as intimating any uncertainty, but his more earnest contending for holiness in the Christian race), I may lay hold on that attainment to be as holy as men shall be at the resurrection.

*For which;* even as, or *for which,* ( as we render it well so, Php 4:10), i.e. for which end, or for this purpose, to be perfectly sanctified and glorified at the resurrection.

*I am apprehended of Christ Jesus;* he was at his effectual calling laid hold on by Christ, being found in whom, he was striving after perfection. This *apprehended* is a metaphor borrowed from those that run in a race, one taking hold of another to draw him after to win the prize as well as himself. He eyed Christ having taken him into his hand, as one that would

not suffer him to be plucked out by any opposers, Joh 10:28. He knew that Christ, having brought him nigh unto God, and undertook to work such a measure of holiness in him, one day would completely glorify him, so that, whatever he passed through, nothing should be lost, Joh 6:39.

### Philippians 3:13

Ver. 13. *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended;* he repeats, in somewhat a different manner of expression, what he had written in the former verse, with a friendly compellation, gently and kindly to insinuate a caution against the false teachers' suggestion about perfection in this state, from the instance of himself, so eminently called to be an apostle of Christ, (1Co 10:12), who, after all his labours and sufferings for his sake, did reckon he had not yet arrived to the height of what he was called to.

*But this one thing I do;* but he would have them to understand that he was so intent upon this one thing, for which he was brought by the Spirit into communion with Christ, as if there were not any thing else worthy of his thoughts: as Ps 27:4 Lu 10:42.

*Forgetting those things which are behind;* like a true spiritual racer, not minding what he had received by grace from him who had took hold of him, or how much he had run of his Christian race, reckoning it was much short of the whole, or the main intended by Christ in taking hold of him.

*And reaching forth unto those things which are before;* but straining forward, as it were, with all his force and skill, casting himself like a dart towards the mark, so running that he might obtain (1Co 9:24) all and the whole, that was his particular portion for ever, to be received from God, as the purchase of Christ, even the total that God had in and by Jesus Christ designed him, and in Christ bestowed upon him, out of his rich grace, as his special allotment.

### Philippians 3:14

Ver. 14. *I press toward the mark;* he did not look back, Lu 9:62, nor was lazy, but did follow hard, with an eager pursuit, (Mt 11:12), after the

perfection that was in his eye; not erring from, his main scope; considering what he had received was but in part, he did still press for more, upon that ground that Christ had apprehended him for more, as if he were stretching out his hands to lay hold of it.

*For the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;* trusting he should, through grace, be kept all along, maugre all difficulties, in the hand of Christ, till upon his account he should be fully possessed of all that was aimed at, even that which is styled the prize, or victorious palm of our high calling; and the Christians' may well be termed a high calling, considering their heavenly birth when called, and laid hold of by Christ, Joh 1:13, and the purchased inheritance eternally settled upon such spiritual, high-born princes, Eph 1:14 Re 1:6; who are by one oblation *perfected for ever*, Heb 10:14; which will appear most glorious when they are raised up in Christ, who will then give out all the salvation he hath called us unto.

### Philippians 3:15

Ver. 15. A learned man reads it from the Greek to this purpose: As many therefore as are perfect, let us think this; and if ye think any thing otherwise, even this also God will, or may, reveal to you, (besides what we have attained to), to walk by the same rule, to think the same thing: conceiving it not congruous to the sense, or syntax, but alien from all manner of speaking, to translate it imperatively: *Let us walk by the same rule*. But following our own translation:

*Let us therefore, as many as be perfect;* from the instance of himself, imitating Christ, in loving condescension and lowliness of mind, Php 2:3,5, worshipping God in the spirit, and not having confidence in the flesh, Php 3:3, in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, Php 3:10, pressing forward to absolute perfection, he here doth with himself encourage as many rulers and ruled who were settled in the fundamentals of Christianity, and who had made progress in holiness, to mind that main business of religion, for the prevention of what might ensue upon exasperating differences; whereupon he styles them comparatively perfect in the way, not in the heavenly country, 1Co 13:10; which doth not disagree with what he said before, if we further distinguish of a perfection:

1. Of integrity and sincerity, which some call of parts; as a perfect living child, that hath all the parts of the parent, so, upon the new birth, every real believer receiving *grace for grace*, Joh 1:13,16.
2. Of maturity, proficiency or degrees where grown to a full stature in Christ; here relatively and comparatively to others, who are more rude, ignorant, and weak brethren, since, in regard of their progress in godliness, they are not taken up with childish things, 1Co 13:9-11, with 1Co 14:20; but are grown more adult, and no more children, 1Co 2:6 Eph 4:13,14 Heb 5:13,14 6:1; which he doth elsewhere, in regard of their experimental knowledge, call *spiritual*, Ga 6:1, who here *worship God in the spirit*, Php 3:3: as many as are sincere, of whatsoever stature, whether bishops, deacons, or private Christians.

*Be thus minded*; he would have them to be so minded as he himself was, in renouncing all carnal confidence, acknowledging their gradual imperfection, and still to be striving and contending to a fuller measure of holiness, till they come to be consummate in Christ.

*And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded*; and if any, through ignorance of Christ and themselves, conversing with those ready to mislead them, should be of any other persuasion in some things only, considering the different attainments of the strong and weak, and thereupon the variety of sentiments, whence would spring some differences not only in opinions but practices amongst them, (which yet hindered not their agreement in what they were attained to),

*God shall reveal even this unto you*; he hoped Christ, who had already called or apprehended those sincere ones, would in due time rescue them from so dangerous an error, 1Jo 2:20,27, if they would attend upon him in the use of means to come to the knowledge of the truth, with faith and prayer, yielding up themselves to be taught of him.

### Philippians 3:16

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained*; however, let us, or we ought to, walk in obedience to Christ, love to him and each other, according to the light we have already received, trusting he would make

known his mind more clearly to us. Our using the light we have well, is the ready way to have more: it behoves us, then, to live suitably to that degree of the knowledge of Christ we have attained, 1Jo 2:3-5 but still within our lines, with regard to the same rule.

*Let us walk by the same rule:* whether in this metaphorical allusion the apostle do borrow his phrase from architects, soldiers, or racers, is not much material. Be sure he had an eye to that *same rule* which was well known to them, and by which he regulated himself, and therefore it was such a canon as really had a Divine stalp upon it, that very canon in exact conformity whereunto God's Israel might be sure of the best peace, Ga 6:16 Php 4:7. The unerring word of God, exemplified in the condescending love of Christ, whom he had proposed to their imitation, in whom he was found, and the fellowship of whose sufferings he desired to know more perfectly, being heavenly-minded, in opposition to those who became enemies to his cross, Php 3:18,19: With Ga 6:14,15; the rule of faith, love, and a Christian life, or heavenly conversation, which he doth elsewhere call a walking in the Spirit, and according to the Spirit, in opposition to walking in and after the flesh, Ro 8:1,5 Ga 5:16.

*Let us mind the same thing:* in like manner, all of us who are spiritual, grown Christians, should be so affected, being of one accord, one mind, and one judgment, in imitation of Christ; so far that the adult, or better grown Christians, should not despise the weak or less grown, neither should they judge the adult; but in the fundamental articles, those main principles of the Christian institution wherein we all agree, in that common salvation towards which we all press, agreeable to the analogy of faith, we should still be perfecting holiness in the fear of God, by the same rule of faith, and loving and mutual condescension, by the unity of our judgments in the main business of religion, the concord of our affections, the concurrence of our ends, our consent and delight in the same truth: we should declare to the church of God, in our differences Christ is not divided, but in the variety of persuasions in lesser matters, (not fundamental), the purity, holiness, and peace of the church is still preserved, Php 2:14. The main principles attained wherein dissenting parties agree, being the measure of all other doctrines, to hold nothing inconsistent with the majesty or truth of the foundation; to walk circumspectly, and in order, according to that wherein is a harmony; not to break our rank, or leave our station, contrary to received prescripts;

wherein every Christian is to exercise a judgment of discerning for himself, Ro 14:23, and not impose on each other, (as that sort of Christian Jews who did compel the Christian Gentiles, Ga 2:14,15, &c.) superadding no preter-evangelical doctrine, Ga 1:8,9; to live godly, agreeably to known truths; to serve God soberly and prudently, (with due moderation), in our places, consonantly to *the measure of the rule God hath distributed to us*, 2Co 10:13, holding the truths wherein we agree in love, unity, and constancy. It being more reasonable that the many truths wherein we agree, should cause us to join in love, which is a Christian duty, rather than the few opinions wherein we disagree, should cause a breach in affection, which is a human infirmity.

### Philippians 3:17

Ver. 17. *Brethren, be followers together of me;* he doth here not only propound his own single example to the brethren at Philippi, as he doth to others elsewhere, 1Co 4:16, implying the limitation there expressed, viz. as he and others were followers of God and Christ, 1Co 11:1 Eph 5:1 1Th 1:6 2:14; but, by a word expressing joint consent, he would have them to be fellow imitators or fellow followers of him and others in what he had exhorted them to, yea, with one heart.

*And mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample;* so they would be like other churches which he had planted, that had an eye upon his example; whom he would have them accurately to observe, following their faith, and *considering the end of their conversation*, Heb 13:7, agreeing with his, and Timothy's, (who joined with him in this Epistle), and other's, in opposition to those who were causal of division, Ro 16:17 1Co 1:12, even such as he describes, Php 3:18,19; who did not lord it over God's heritage, but were ensamples (in faith, love, and humility) to the flock, 2Co 1:24 1Ti 4:12 Tit 2:7,8 1Pe 5:3.

### Philippians 3:18

Ver. 18. He doth, as in a parenthesis, according to our Bibles, allege reasons for his proposals.

*For many walk;* there were not a few who did at present walk otherwise, being *evil workers*, Php 3:2, not to be imitated or followed, Mt 7:22,23.

*Of whom I have told you often;* of which, as a faithful watchman, he had again and again given them warning.

*And now tell you even weeping;* and now also by this present writing, out of great compassion to their immortal souls, he did repeat it again with tears in his eyes.

*That they are the enemies of the cross of Christ;* they were such who did in the general (whatever they might under a fair show pretend) oppose the gospel of Christ, yea, did in effect under the cloak of profession, that which was in a tendency to evert the true Christian doctrine, discipline, and holiness. They did go about to mingle the law and the gospel, to join Moses with Christ for justification, as Php 3:4, &c.; Ga 2:21, and so undervalue redemption from the curse, Ga 3:13 5:2,4. In special, these Epicureans (as it should seem they were by the following character, rather than real Christians) might rightly be called enemies, because they did seem by their sensuality to restore the kingdom to those whom Christ had on his cross openly spoiled of it, Col 2:15, that they might gratify the Jews in urging the necessity of circumcision; so undermining the virtue and merit of Christ's passion, defirming the end of it, as the Jews did him in it, and in times of trial avoid persecution, Ga 6:12,14, they showed themselves by interpretation really to be enemies to Christ crucified, 1Co 1:23,24 2:2.

### Philippians 3:19

Ver. 19. *Whose end is destruction;* their condition will at last be miserable, as he had limited above, Php 1:28, of their being under the dismal *token of perdition*; their end will be *according to their works*, 2Co 11:15. However they may live delicately at present, in gratifying their sensual appetites, be free from persecution, admired and respected by many, and please themselves in their present course, yet their fruit and wages at the last cast will be dreadful, Ro 6:21,23 Ga 6:8 Re 18:8 19:20,21.



*Whose God is their belly;* the great business of these is, their sensuality, their good eating and drinking; they mind the pleasing of their carnal appetite, as if it were their God, 2Pe 2:13,18 3:3; instead of our Lord Jesus Christ, really they serve their own belly, Ro 16:18, love their pleasures indeed more than God, 2Ti 3:4.

*And whose glory is in their shame;* yea, they boast of those things whereof they ought to be ashamed, thinking it reputation they have got many to imitate them, Joh 5:44 12:43 they are puffed up with that which should rather make them to blush, 1Co 5:2, as being attended at last with confusion.

*Who mind earthly things;* however under the colour of Christianity, they at present are taken up in the pursuit of their sensual and earthly enjoyments. The Greek word comprehends the actions and operations of the mind, will, and affections, importing they did inordinately mind, favour, and relish sublunary accommodations, Ro 8:5, the profits, ease, bounty, pleasure, and glory of this world, preferring them in their hearts to the things of Christ.

### Philippians 3:20

Ver. 20. *For our conversation is in heaven;* he here adds a further reason why he would have them to be fellow followers of him, and such-like as he, because though they were not already in heaven, yet their citizenship was there, the privileges of that city did belong to them, who, according to the municipal laws of that corporation (which cannot lose its charter or be discorporated) whereof they were free denizens, made it their business to demean themselves with minds above the earth, Php 1:27 2Co 4:18 Eph 2:6 Col 3:1 accounting nothing inconvenient to any one of them, which was for the advantage of the whole community; they set their affections on things above, Joh 14:2 2Co 12:2-5 Heb 13:14.

*From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;* and reason good, for from thence, or from that place, in the heavens, or heaven, they stedfastly expect him who is both Lord and Christ, Ac 1:11 1Co 1:7 1Th 1:10 2Ti 4:8 Tit 2:13, to come not only as their judge, 2Ti 4:8, but as their heart-comforting Saviour, Heb 9:28.

## Philippians 3:21

Ver. 21. *Who shall change our vile body;* who shall transform the body of our humility, or our lowliness, i.e. our lowbrought body, the singular for the plural, our humble and mean bodies, which depend upon and are beholden to our eating and drinking, and the actions which follow thereupon, that do humble and lower them, Lu 1:48; now, it may be, languishing with pains, sickness, and many infirmities, perhaps cooped up in a noisome prison, and, it may be, an unclean dungeon, sown in dishonour and weakness in the grave, 1Co 15:43.

*That it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body;* that they may be conformed to Christ's incorruptible, impassible, and immortal body, and so glorious, 1Co 15:51-53, in their proportion agreeing with the blessed body of our Lord when he shall appear, 1Jo 3:1-3, and they shall see him with the eyes of their bodies, made like unto his, Job 19:26,27 Col 3:4, not in equality, but only in respect of the same qualities that his body hath, 1Co 15:51,52 1Th 4:17. A conformity agreeable to that of head and members, that like as the sun is the fountain of all that glory which the stars have, so shall our Lord and Saviour Christ's glory be of all our glory, Da 12:3 Mt 16:27 1Co 15:40,41 2Co 4:14 Re 21:11,23. But we must not imagine that our bodies shall be raised to the same height and degree of glory that his is: and therefore in regard of that power and majesty which is included in the body of Christ from the hypostatical union, our bodies will not be conformable, or made like to his; but in glory which he obtained from his resurrection. For the body of Christ may be considered either:

1. In its nature, and so there will be an agreement betwixt the bodies of saints and Christ's body; or:
2. In regard of its subsistence in the person of the Word, and so there will be none.

For it is impossible that the saints should be raised up to the same union with the Godhead which Christ hath. But however their bodies may be tormented here, by unreasonable persecutors, then they shall be like to his glorious body.

*According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself:* how incredible soever this may appear to be unto carnal reason, Ac 17:32 26:8, yet he who thought it no robbery to be equal with God the Father, and therefore can do what he pleaseth, Lu 18:27, can, by the same Divine power whereby he himself was raised from the grave, Joh 5:21,26,29 Eph 1:19,20, subject all things to himself, destroy death and the grave, 1Co 15:24-27 Heb 2:8,14, raise them up to the throne of his glory, Mt 19:28, and make them like the angels in glory.

## Philippians 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Php 4:1 Paul exciteth to steadfastness in Christ,  
Php 4:2 and after some particular admonitions,  
Php 4:3,4 exhorteth generally to religious joy,  
Php 4:5 moderation,  
Php 4:6,7 trust in God with prayer,  
Php 4:8,9 and to every branch of moral goodness.  
Php 4:10-14 He testifieth his joy in the care shown by the Philippians for his supply in prison, though being always content he was above want,  
Php 4:15-17 and commendeth their former liberality to him, not for his own sake, but for the good that would redound to them from it.  
Php 4:18,19 He acknowledgeth the receipt of their late bounty, assuring them that God would both accept and reward it.  
Php 4:20-23 He giveth glory to God, and concludeth with salutations, and a blessing.

Ver. 1. Therefore; this particle connotes that which follows to be inferred by way of conclusion from what he had premised in the close of the former chapter, in opposition to the shame of the earthly-minded, concerning the glory of the heavenly-minded.

*My brethren;* he affectionately owns them to be his brethren in *the common faith*, Tit 1:4.

*Dearly beloved;* those who, not being enticed by the insinuations of seducers, did adhere to him, had his sincere affections, Php 2:12.

*And longed for;* whose safety and felicity every way he most heartily desired, Php 1:8 2:26; with Ro 1:11 1Th 3:6.

*My joy;* intimating how their faith and holiness did at present afford matter of rejoicing to him, Php 1:4,7,8, with 1Th 2:19,20.

*And crown;* he was not ambitious of man's applause, but accounted them his honour and glory, the great ornament of his ministry, whereby they were converted to Christ, (as elsewhere in Scripture a crown is taken figuratively, Pr 12:4 14:24 16:31 17:6), 1Th 2:19; the reward which had some similitude with the honour they had who were victorious in a race, Php 2:16,17; as Jas 1:12 1Pe 5:4 Re 2:10 Re 3:11.

*So stand fast;* he exhorteth them not barely to stand, but so to stand that they did not fall, 1Co 10:12. Hereupon he adds, *in the Lord;* i.e. considering their relation unto Christ, they would derive power and virtue from him, into whom they were implanted, to persevere, conformably to his will, in Christian concord, till they were made like to him, Php 3:21, with Php 1:27 Joh 15:4,7 1Co 15:58 16:13 Ga 5:7 Eph 6:11,14.

*My dearly beloved;* in whom looking upon them, (the more to fix them), he pathetically and rhetorically repeats his endearing compellation *beloved*.

#### Philippians 4:2

Ver. 2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche:* after his general persuasive to perseverance, he doth here particularly by name with great affectionateness importune two women, who had been very useful in that church for the furtherance of the gospel, that they would come to a better understanding of each other, and the interest of religion amongst them, who received the gospel upon Paul's preaching, Ac 16:13.

*That they be of the same mind in the Lord;* as he had moved all to love,

unity, and amity, (as it became disciples of Christ), Php 2:2; so he doth here especially move them unto unanimity, according to the mind of the Lord, and his way, for the sake of him whose honour is to be preferred to all private concerns, Ro 15:5.

### Philippians 4:3

Ver. 3. *And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow;* he subjoins his most importunate request to some eminent person who did faithfully and sincerely draw in the same yoke of Christ with him, even such another in that church at Philippi, (whom they well knew from the freedom he used when he planted the gospel amongst them, or might more distinctly know from Epaphroditus), as he had represented Timothy to be, Php 2:20. Some, both ancient and modern, would have this to be Paul's own wife, whom he left behind; but seeing it doth not appear that when he wrote this Epistle he had ever staid above two months at Philippi, he elsewhere reckons himself amongst the unmarried, 1Co 7:8, and wished those who had the gift of continency to continue so, under the sharp persecution of the church, for which he was frequent in journeying, labours, and prisons, 2Co 11:23, there is no cogent argument to evince that he was then married, however he had liberty to have had a wife, as well as Peter and others: see Mt 19:29 22:28, with 1Co 9:5. Some conceive by *yoke-fellow* here is meant the lawful husband of one of the forenamed honourable matrons: others, one called by that proper name in Greek; but the epithet annexed doth not so well suit. It may suffice to say it was an intimate colleague and sincere companion of Paul's, who was alike affected with him, drawing in the same yoke, for the furtherance of the gospel, his genuine helper; whose special aid, by advice, prayer, and otherwise, he solicited on the behalf of those pious women, who aforesaid (though not by public preaching in the church, which he elsewhere disallowed, 1Co 14:34,35 1Ti 2:12, but privately) had not only wrought, but earnestly striven together with him, by teaching youth, and other women, good things, Tit 2:3,4 putting themselves in hazard with him, in that difficult work he had amongst them, and enduring troubles with him for the propagation of the gospel, Php 1:27 Ac 16:13; as Phebe, and Priscilla, and Mary, elsewhere, Ac 18:2,3,26 Ro 16:1-3 1Ti 5:10 2Ti 4:19; in offices proper to their sex.

*Clement*, probably, was some church officer of Roman extract in that

colony at Philippi; whether he, about whose order in the catalogue of Roman bishops historians dispute, there is no certainty.

*And with other my fellow labourers;* the rest, whom he doth not name, but only describe by the assistance they gave him in the holy work of the gospel, probably were other church officers.

*Whose names are in the book of life;* whose names he did in charity apprehend to be enrolled in heaven, as our Saviour speaks to the rejoicing of his seventy disciples, Lu 10:20. We are not to think there is any material book wherein their names were written, but that he useth it as a borrowed speech, intimating his persuasion of them, (as of the election of others, 1Th 1:4, with 1Pe 1:2), that their life was as certainly sealed up with God, as if their names had been written in a book for that purpose; looking upon them by their fruit as truly gracious persons, whom God had effectually called according to his purpose, Ro 8:28,29,33; which is a book written, Ex 32:32 Isa 4:3 Eze 13:9 Da 12:1 Re 3:5 13:8 20:12 21:27; wherein the Lord knows who are his, 2Ti 2:19.

#### Philippians 4:4

Ver. 4. He doth here, considering the importance of Christian cheerfulness, which he had twice before put them upon, Php 2:18 3:1, stir them up to true rejoicing, not only by repetition of the injunction, but by extending the duty to all times, and under all conditions. For though there be woe to the enemies of Christ's cross, who laugh at his followers, Lu 6:25; yet they who are really found in him, have evermore ground of rejoicing, for all the benefits of God they have through him, and the far more excellent they do expect to receive upon his account, Joh 16:33 1Co 1:31 1Th 5:16 1Pe 1:8.

#### Philippians 4:5

Ver. 5. *Let your moderation be known;* exercising an even temper of mind, in governing the sensual appetite, with modesty, patience, and gentleness, in opposition to all impetuosity and inordinacy of affections, yea, to all excess and exorbitances in words and actions.

*Unto all men;* both in the eye of the church, and those without, according to our Saviour's sermon and example, Mt 5:16,39-41 17:27; not rigorously insisting upon our own rights, but with due self-denial putting the best construction upon the words and deeds of others; not troubling our hearts, Joh 14:1; banishing that solicitude about the good things of this life, which he doth in the next verse caution against: so 1Co 7:29-32.

*The Lord is at hand;* considering the cogent motive of the Lord's approach, as Heb 10:25 Jas 5:8; not only in regard of his Deity, whereby he reigns amongst his enemies, Ac 17:27 Jer 23:29; nor in regard of his special aids to his servants: Ps 14:5; but in regard of his coming to judgment, and setting all things right in a just distribution of rewards and punishments, to comfort his children, and confound those that disobey him, Mt 18:34,35 Mr 10:29,30 Col 3:24 Col 4:1 Heb 10:37 1Pe 3:8,9 Re 22:20. But still we must remember, when we conceive of the Lord's being at hand in regard of death and judgment, we must not take our own but God's measures, in waiting our appointed time during his pleasure, Mt 24:36 Ac 1:7.

#### Philippians 4:6

Ver. 6. *Be careful for nothing;* he dissuades not from a spiritual care, arising from a good principle, according to a right rule, for a good end; this care of diligence, in a due manner, within our own sphere, is incumbent on us, both for spirituals and temporals; as Php 2:20; with Ro 12:11 2Co 11:28 12:14 2Th 3:10 1Ti 5:8 2Ti 2:15: yet he earnestly dissuades from and prohibits all carnal solicitude, or carking, distrustful, worldly care, which doth divide and, as it were, split the heart in pieces; that anxious solicitude which doth torture the mind with such thoughts as our blessed Lord will not allow so much as one of them to be predominant in his real disciples, Mt 6:25, because such immoderate, distracting care, is on our part a disparagement to our heavenly Father's good providence, Mt 6:32; with Ps 55:22 127:1,2 Mt 4:18,19 1Pe 5:7. The remedy against which he doth here subjoin.

*But in every thing;* but in all things, or in every occurring necessity, whether prosperous or adverse; sacred or civil, public or private: some render it, every time, in every condition, on every occasion.

*By prayer;* by petition or appreciation of good to ourselves or others; mercies, or blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

*And supplication;* and by a deprecation of evils felt or feared, wrath and judgments deserved.

*With thanksgiving;* with a grateful acknowledgment of mercies received, benefits conferred, and deliverances vouchsafed; implying that no prayer is acceptable to God, without this ingredient of thankful resentment of his favours.

*Let your requests be made known unto God:* our affectionate desires should be opened to God, and poured forth before him; not that he is ignorant of us or our wants in any circumstances, but that he accounts himself glorified by our addresses to him, in seeking to be approved and assisted of him in every condition.

### Philippians 4:7

Ver. 7. He adds, as an encouragement to prayer, *the peace of God*, who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, so that upon believing and obeying the gospel, they who really do so are reconciled to him, 2Co 5:19,20, and at peace with him, Ro 5:1, through Christ, who leaves and gives peace to his, Joh 14:27. It is then *the peace of God*, in that he is the object, the donor, the author of it, by his Spirit, to those who persevere in the communion of Christ, as in Php 4:9, have the God of peace with them, and a sense thereof in their own spirits.

*Which passeth all understanding:* how it transcends a finite understanding, may be answered:

1. In that he who hath perceived it, before he had done so, could not sufficiently conceive in his own mind what at length it might be, 1Co 2:9: hence:
2. After it is perceived, it cannot be that any one should esteem and express the power and virtue of it, according to the worth and



excellency of the matter. Not that the peace should affect the heart, the will without the intervention of the understanding; since it is said to keep the heart and mind; and, Re 2:17, the *white stone* given to believers (whereby this peace is signified) is of that kind, *which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it*; and it is no new thing in Scripture, to say that doth exceed all understanding, which human understanding doth not so distinctly conceive as to be able to express it, as Eph 3:19. So man's mind doth receive that which is taken into admiration, that it perceives something always to remain, which it hath notice of, yet cannot so perceive as to express the whole of it.

*Shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*; wherefore they who are really interested in this peace shall be kept as in a garrison, 1Pe 1:5. So their whole souls shall be in safety against the assaults of Satan, their affections and reasoning shall be so kept in order, that, through Christ, they shall not finally fall.

#### Philippians 4:8

Ver. 8. As to what remains, he doth, with the fair compellation of *brethren*, furthermore propose to their serious consideration, living in the neighbourhood of the Gentiles, what he doth here, hastening to a conclusion, heap up and fold together: especially, *whatsoever things are true*, agree with truth and doctrine, in word and conversation, which show candour and sincerity of conscience, both with reference to believers and to infidels, Ps 15:2 Eph 4:14,15,25.

*Honest*; venerable and grave, as *becometh the gospel*, Php 1:27, to adorn the gospel of God our Saviour, Ro 12:17 13:13 Tit 2:10; avoiding what may argue levity or dishonesty in gesture, apparel, words, and deeds, 2Co 7:2.

*Just*; giving what is due to every one by the law of nature, or nations, or the country, without guile, and not injuring any one, Ru 3:13 Ne 5:11 Mt 22:21 Ro 13:7,8 Col 4:1 1Ti 5:8 Tit 1:8 2:12.

*Pure*; keeping themselves *undefiled in the way*, Ps 119:1, from the pollution of sin, 1Joh 3:3, and the blemishes of filthy words and deeds,

Eph 4:29 5:3-5.

*Lovely;* whatsoever may gain the real respect of, and be grateful to, good men, in an affable deportment acceptable to God, Tit 3:2.

*Of good report;* whatsoever is in a tendency to maintain a good name; not to court vain-glory or popular applause, Ga 1:10, but that which may be for the honour of Christ, and the reputation of the gospel among the Gentiles, Ro 15:2 1Pe 2:12; in agreement with the word of God; otherwise we must pass through evil as well as good report, Lu 16:15 2Co 6:8.

*If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise;* and upon supposition there be really any other commendable practice amongst any, any praiseworthy deportment.

*Think on these things;* diligently consider and prosecute these things.

Philippians 4:9

Ver. 9. *Those things, which ye have both learned;* he recommends to their serious practice not new things, but those weighty matters which they had before learned of him when preaching amongst them.

*And received, and heard;* yea, and approved as worthy to be kept.

*And seen in me;* and that all things might be more lively and affecting, with an increase of words, he moves with this, that his doctrine was exemplified by his own practice when amongst them, (as he had hinted before, Php 3:17), expressing the same thing by his life which he did by his word, 1Ti 4:12 1Pe 5:3.

*Do;* whereupon he would have them to be doers also of the same things, 1Th 1:6 2:13 Heb 13:7 Jas 1:22.

*And the God of peace shall be with you;* and in this practice you have comfort from the presence of the God of peace, (as above, Php 4:7), who will embrace and prosper you, being reconciled to you in Christ, and at peace with you: so Ro 15:5,33 16:20 2Co 13:11 1Th 5:23.

## Philippians 4:10

Ver. 10. *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly;* he signifies that he had been much raised in true spiritual (not carnal) joy, that the Lord had by his Spirit wrought in them such enlargedness of heart, as did show itself in their care of him for the sake of Christ. What follows, a learned man writes, may be rendered, that now at last, ye could bring to maturity the care of me; for whom indeed ye had been careful, but had not the ability. The apostle's phrase is borrowed from trees, which in the winter season keep their sap within the bark, in the spring and summer grow green, and yield their fruit: so was the Philippians' care of Paul, suffering in Christ's cause; for the Greek word we translate *flourished again*, or revived, is sometimes used actively, and transitively. So in the Seventy, Eze 17:24; with the apocryphal writer, APC Sir 1:18 11:22 50:11: and so it may be expounded here, not only of reviving, growing green, and budding again, (which is less than the thing is), but of bringing forth fruit. For their care of Paul was in their heart, but by reason of troubles it could not exert itself, or yield fruit, but only in the season, (as Mt 21:34), which the apostle, softening his speech, allegeth as an apology for them: he doth not say there was not any opportunity in respect of himself, but a seasonableness in respect of them; they being destitute of a faculty of bringing forth fruit, Php 4:17, (which yet they always nourished in their most intimate affections towards him), till the present, when at length they had a seasonableness and an ability given them of God, to the perfecting of that fruit for the apostle. For what we translate *wherein*, may, as Php 3:12, be translated, for where: compare the use of the particle and article, Mt 18:4, with Mt 26:50 Ro 5:12.

## Philippians 4:11

Ver. 11. *Not that I speak in respect of want:* he doth anticipate any conceit they might have, as if he had a mean soul, and his joy were solely for the fruit of their care he had received in the supply of his want, as the same word is elsewhere used, Mt 12:44.

*For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content;*

because he knew better things; being instructed at a higher rate, he had practically learned to rest satisfied with his own lot, 2Co 11:27, accounting God's allowance a sufficiency to him in any condition, 1Ti 6:6,8. How adverse soever his state was, he had attained to such equanimity that he could be content with such things as he had, Heb 13:5, and cheerfully and patiently submit to God's most wise disposal of him, knowing his most righteous and tender hearted Father would never leave nor forsake him, having already given him greater things than any of these sublunary ones he could stand in need of, Ro 8:32.

### Philippians 4:12

Ver. 12. He explains the equality of his mind he had through grace attained to, in a free submission to God, either in the absence or affluence of external good things.

*I know both how to be abased;* in a mean and ignominious state, he had spiritual skill to exercise suitable graces without murmuring, or repining when trampled on, 1Co 4:11 2Co 11:27; having entirely resigned his will to the will of God.

*And I know how to abound;* in a higher state, had in much esteem, and well accommodated.

*Every where and in all things I am instructed;* yea, in all circumstances religiously initiated and taught, fortified against temptations on all hands.

*Both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need;* when faring well, and having a large revenue, to be temperate, 1Co 9:25, humble, and communicative, 1Ti 6:18. When hungry and poor, not to be distressed, but confident our heavenly Father will provide enough in his season, Mt 6:32 7:11 2Co 4:8, giving an elixir at present that will turn all into gold.

### Philippians 4:13

Ver. 13. Having written of the great things he had learned, that it might not

be attributed to his proud conceit, or give occasion to any others' vanity to boast, (as he had recourse before to the Divine efficiency to will and do, Php 2:13), he rests solely for power upon Christ, being found in whom, when he saith he *can do all things*, we are not to understand it absolutely, but restrictively to the subject matter he had before mentioned in the precedent verses, intimating he could by the Lord's help use well both prosperity and adversity: or, all those things the Lord called him to and put him upon. Not, as the papists urge, that any mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but that he by faith being united to Christ, by the power of his Spirit dwelling in him, hath in the Lord righteousness and strength, Isa 45:24; and thereupon hath a sincere respect to all God's commands, as David had, Ps 119:6; so also had Zacharias and Elisabeth, Lu 1:6; in opposition to Pharisical obedience: not by any power he had of himself, but through Christ strengthening of him, so that God would accept of his sincere performance (though not every way perfect) of what was incumbent on him.

#### Philippians 4:14

Ver. 14. Lest any should suspect, from what he had suggested of his contentment, that he was not much affected with their liberality, but might have done as well without as with it, and they might have spared their bounty and labour, he doth prudently commend their Christian commiseration, (as the phrase is, Ac 10:33), and give them to understand how acceptable their seasonable supply was to him, who did so joyfully resent their kindness to him, in that it was well-pleasing to God, Ro 12:15; they did so effectually sympathize and take a share in the oppression he sustained for the cause of Christ, 2Co 1:7, and remember him in his bonds as if it were their own case, Heb 13:3 Re 1:9.

#### Philippians 4:15

Ver. 15. He amplifies the present favour the Christians at Philippi had vouchsafed to him, by a thankful recollection of their former liberality.

*In the beginning of the gospel;* soon after he had preached and planted the good things of salvation amongst them, Php 2:22 Ac 16:12,13,40.

*When I departed from Macedonia;* comparing their first benevolence with other churches, when leaving of Macedonia, Ac 18:5 2Co 11:9.

*No church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only;* none of the rest of the churches had, for the spiritual things received of him in his ministration, distributed of their carnal or temporal, (though that was their duty beyond dispute, 1Co 9:7,11,13,14 Ga 6:6 1Ti 5:17,18), but they alone: which might at once commend their Christian liberality, and evince that he in preaching of the gospel was not mercenary, not having exacted a reward from others, but preached the gospel freely, 2Co 11:7.

#### Philippians 4:16

Ver. 16. They, for their parts, were most commendable in this matter, that when he was in Thessalonica, the mother city, (not above twenty-five miles distant), their care for his comfortable livelihood was more than once manifested, he passing again and again through Macedonia, 1Co 16:5 2Co 1:16; which argues his thankful resentment of the constant purpose of their mind to succour him upon all occasions.

#### Philippians 4:17

Ver. 17. Neither would he have any of them to think, as if his commendation of them were any oblique insinuations, with design to draw something more from them; he would have them to understand he did not seek himself, or theirs for his use, (as elsewhere, 1Co 10:33 2Co 12:14), but his great intent was, that they themselves might of God's grace have the fruit of their charity they had showed to him, Php 1:11 4:10; which, in the balancing of the accounts, (by accepting as it were of Christ's will, Pr 19:17 Mt 10:42 25:35,36,40), will turn to their best advantage.

#### Philippians 4:18

Ver. 18. He further testifies his thankfulness from the effect their gratuity

had upon him, by three words here which declare the same thing, viz. that he was abundantly satisfied, having all that he could wish, even enough and more; so that he did not expect any thing more than what he had already received by their faithful messenger Epaphroditus; which he further commends from its great acceptableness to God, in allusion to the sweet odours in the sacrifices that God himself took pleasure in, Le 2:1,2 3:16 Heb 13:16; so that that present God himself would accept through Christ, as if it had been offered to himself, 1Pe 2:5. It is true, the Socinians, to lessen the meritoriousness of Christ's sacrifice of himself, which the apostle mentions, Eph 5:2, with respect to Ge 8:21, would by this text corrupt that: but the truth is, it hath nothing like with that, for the benevolence and gratuity of the Philippians is said by Paul to be *an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, &c.*; but it is not said that the Philippians themselves did give themselves and dour of a sweet smell, as it is said Christ gave himself *for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*; which being once offered for all, was sufficient to take away sin, Heb 10:10,12. And therefore their reasoning is fallacious from that parity they suggest. It is true, believers and their good works are as sweet odours, Ro 12:1, acceptable, but in Christ, 1Pe 2:5, because they please God only for him, for his sake and merit. But Christ, because he doth appease God himself, who smells a savour of rest in his sacrifice, which all others under the law did but shadow, receiving their efficacy from his: Christ did it by himself, believers and their services are only acceptable in him.

### Philippians 4:19

Ver. 19. *But my God*: see Php 4:3: he saith *my God*, because he imputeth and owneth that to be done to himself which is done according to his mind unto any of his ambassadors, he having received the gift from their hand by Paul.

*Shall supply all your need*; will, in a gracious return to Paul's prayer, abundantly answer (yea, above all he could ask or think) all their expectations, Ps 41:1-3, with 2Co 9:8,10.

*According to his riches in glory*; agreeably to his own fulness and rich mercy, Ps 24:1 1Co 10:26 Eph 2:4; gloriously, or *riches of his glory*, Eph

3:16, and goodness, Ro 2:4 9:23; sustaining and defending them liberally and powerfully here, to his own glory, and taking them hereafter into everlasting glory.

*By Christ Jesus*; through the mediation of, and by virtue of their communion with, Christ Jesus.

### Philippians 4:20

Ver. 20. From thanking of the Philippians, the holy man passeth to a giving of thanks unto God, the first cause, that they might not be elated. He had *my God*, Php 4:19; now, *our Father*; not only adoring him as Maker of all, but as Father of all the faithful as well as of Paul, being born of him in Christ, Joh 1:12,13, through whom he takes a fatherly care of them, Mt 6:32. Christ saith, *my Father*, Joh 20:17, as being his only Son by eternal generation; and he allows believers to say *our Father*, as being his children by adoption. Unto whom they are obliged to ascribe praise, and always to give thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph 5:20. And this indeed hath been their practice, which should be ours, Ro 1:25 9:5 11:33,36 16:25,27 Eph 3:21 1Ti 1:17 1Pe 4:11 5:11 2Pe 3:18 Jude 1:25 Re 1:6, &c. It intimates, their hearts being full with the glory of God, their pens and months were enlarged accordingly, exciting others to the like doxologies. To almost all which in the forecited places (as here) *ever and ever* is added, connoting absolute eternity, and joining past, present, and future ages together. This form of *Amen*, affixed in the close, doth signify how his heart did give, and rejoiced to give, all blessedness to our Father in Christ, as rejoicing that he is so blessed a God.

### Philippians 4:21

Ver. 21. He doth friendly embrace and wish happiness to all and every sanctified one who is a member of Christ, hath entirely resigned up to him, and doth abide in him. Then shows, that most probably his colleagues and fellow labourers in the Christian church at Rome, (calling such elsewhere *brethren*, 1Co 1:1 Col 1:1 4:7 Phm 1:1,7,20), Php 1:14 2:25 1Co 16:20, do so likewise.



### Philippians 4:22

Ver. 22. The rest of the Christians at Rome do the same; more especially they of Nero the emperor's own family and court, his domestics, Php 1:13. It seems there were some there truly pious and Christian: but however some conceit, there is no real evidence that Seneca was of that number; he being not a courtier, but a senator, who left no real token (we know of) that he was a Christian.

### Philippians 4:23

Ver. 23. He concludes this (like his other Epistles) much as he began, (see on Php 1:2), praying the same grace of the Lord might abide with them, which he had prayed to them all, Php 1:1.

*Amen;* not at all doubting, but with full confidence trusting, all should be firm, as he had prayed.

*It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.*