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**Word Pictures in  
the New Testament -  
Philippians**

**A. T. Robertson**





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## Word Pictures in the New Testament - Philipians

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**Author(s):** Robertson, A. T. (1863-1934)

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**Description:** A. T. Robertson was a renowned Greek New Testament scholar. His work on the Greek language is still consulted today. *Word Pictures in the New Testament* is his insightful treatment of that book. In the Greek New Testament, there are a variety of meaningful pictorial nuances implicit in the Greek constructions. These nuances are often lost in translation. *Word Pictures in the New Testament* explains them. Robertson examines Greek constructions from many different Testament passages. He provides background to many of the Greek words and their connotations in the original Greek, thereby shedding new light on the meaning of passages. Many readers have gained a new, richer understanding of the New Testament by studying *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. And although no technical knowledge is required to study this work, familiarity with the Greek language makes this work much easier to digest. Consequently, it is ideal for pastors, theologians, and students of the New Testament.

Tim Perrine

CCEL Staff Writer

**Subjects:** The Bible  
New Testament  
Works about the New Testament

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# **Word Pictures in the New Testament**

**Philippians**

**A.T. Robertson**

## Chapter 1

1:1 **Paul** [*Paulos*]. He does not mention his apostleship as he usually does. Omitted also in I and II Thess. and Philemon. **Timothy** [*Timotheos*]. In no sense the author, but associated with Paul because with him here in Rome as in Corinth when I and II Thessalonians written and in Ephesus when I Corinthians sent and in Macedonia when II Corinthians written. Timothy was with Paul when the Philippian church was founded ([Ac 16:1,13; 17:14](#)). He had been there twice since ([Ac 19:22; 20:3f.](#)). **To all the saints** [*pāsi tois hagiois*]. The word saint [*hagios*] here is used for the professing Christians as in [1Co 1:2](#) which see as well as [Ro 1:7](#) for the origin of the word. The word “all” [*pāsi*] means that all individual believers are included. Paul employs this word frequently in Philippians. **In Christ Jesus** [*en Christōi Iēsou*]. The centre for all Christian relations and activities for Paul and for us. **In Philippi** [*en Philippois*]. See on [Ac 16:12](#) for discussion of this name. **With the bishops** [*sun episkopois*]. “Together with bishops,” thus singled out from “all the saints.” See [Ac 20:17,28](#) for the use of this most interesting word as equivalent to [*presbuteros*] (elder). It is an old word from [*episkeptomai*], to look upon or after, to inspect, so the overseer or superintendent. In the second century [*episcopos*] (Ignatius) came to mean one superior to elders, but not so in the N.T. The two New Testament church officers are here mentioned (bishops or elders and deacons). The plural is here employed because there was usually one church in a city with several pastors (bishops, elders). **And deacons** [*kai diakonois*]. Technical sense here of the other church officers as in [1Ti 3:8-13](#), not the general use as in [Mt 22:13](#). The origin of the office is probably seen in [Ac 6:1-6](#). The term is often applied to preachers ([1Co 3:5; 2Co 3:6](#)). The etymology [*dia, konis*] suggests raising a dust by hastening.

1:3 **Upon** [*epi*]. Basis of the thanksgiving. **All** [*pāsēi*]. Note frequent use of “all” here [*pāsēi, pantote*], always, [*pāsēi*], again, [*pantōn humōn*], you all). The use of “you all” recurs several times ([4, 7 bis, 8](#)).

1:4 **With joy** [*meta charas*]. Keynote of the Epistle. Paul is a happy prisoner as in Philippi when he and Silas sang praises at midnight though in prison ([Ac 16:25](#)).

1:5 **For your fellowship** [*epi tēi koinōniāi humōn*]. “On the basis of your contribution” as in [2Co 8:4; 9:13; Ac 2:42](#). The particular kind of “partnership” or “fellowship” involved is the contribution made by the Philippians for the spread of the gospel ([1:7](#) [*sugkoinōnous*] and [4:14](#) where [*sugkoinōnēsantes*] occurs). **In furtherance of the gospel** [*eis to euaggelion*]. “For the gospel.” **From the first day until now** [*apo tēs prōtēs hēmeras achri tou nun*]. As when in Thessalonica ([Php 4:15f.](#)), in Corinth ([Ac 18:5; 2Co 11:7-10](#)), and now in Rome.

1:6 **Being confident** [*pepoithōs*]. Second perfect active of [*peithō*], to persuade. **This very thing** [*auto touto*]. Accusative of the inner object with [*pepoithōs*], “this thing itself.” **Will**

**perfect it** [*epitelesei*]. Future active indicative of [*epiteleō*], will fully [*epi-*] finish. God began and God will consummate it (see [2Co 8:6](#); [Ga 3:3](#) where both words occur together as here), but not without their cooperation and partnership. **Until the day of Jesus Christ** [*achri hēmeras Christou Iēsou*]. The second coming as in verse 10. See [1Th 5:2, 4](#); [2Th 1:10](#); [2:2](#); [1Co 1:18](#); [3:13](#); [2Co 1:14](#); [Ro 13:12](#). Paul never sets the time for the Lord's return, but he is cheered by that blessed hope.

1:7 **Because I have you in my heart** [*dia to echein me en tēi kardiāi humas*]. Or “because you hold me in your heart.” Literally, “because of the holding me (or you) in the heart as to you (or me).” One accusative is the object of the infinitive [*echain*], the other is the accusative of general reference. There is no way to decide which is the idea meant except to say that love begets love. The pastor who, like Paul, holds his people in his heart will find them holding him in their hearts. **In the defence** [*en tēi apologiāi*]. Old word (our word apology, but not our idea of apologizing), in the original sense in [Ac 22:1](#); [25:16](#). So also in verse 16 below. **Confirmation** [*bebaiōsei*]. Old word from [*bebaiō*] [*bebaios, bainō*], to make stable. In N.T. only here and [Heb 6:16](#) about oath. **Partakers with me of grace** [*sugkoinōnous mou tēs charitos*]. Literally, “my co-sharers in grace” (objective genitive). “Grace prompted them to alleviate his imprisonment, to cooperate with him in defending and propagating the gospel, and to suffer for its sake” (Vincent, *Int. Crit. Comm.*).

1:8 **My witness** [*martus mou*]. Same solemn oath in [Ro 1:9](#). **I long after** [*epipothō*]. Longing [*pothos*] directed toward [*epi*] the Philippians. Old word, chiefly in Paul in N.T. **In the tender mercies** [*en splagchnois*]. Literally “in the bowels” as the seat of the affections.

1:9 **May abound** [*perisseuēi*]. Present active subjunctive of [*perisseuō*], may keep on overflowing, a perpetual flood of love, “yet more and more” [*eti mallon kai mallon*], but with necessary limitations (river banks), “in knowledge” [*en epignōsei*], in full knowledge “and all discernment” [*pāsēi aisthēsei*]. The delicate spiritual perception [*aisthēsis*], old word from [*aisthanomai*], only here in N.T. as the verb only in [Lu 9:45](#) in N.T.) can be cultivated as in [*aisthētērion*] ([Heb 5:14](#))

1:10 **So that ye may** [*eis to humas*]. Either purpose or result [*eis to*] plus infinitive as in [Ro 1:11,20](#); [3:26](#), etc.). **Approve the things that are excellent** [*dokimazein ta diapheronta*]. Originally, “test the things that differ.” Cf. same idiom in [Ro 2:28](#). The verb was used for assaying metals. Either sense suits this context, but the first step is to distinguish between good and evil and that is not always easy in our complex civilization. **Sincere** [*eilikrineis*]. Old word of uncertain origin from [*krinō*], to judge, by [*heilē*] (sunlight) or to sift by rapid rolling [*eilos*]. At any rate it means pure, unsullied. **Void of offence** [*aproskopoi*]. Alpha privative [*pros*] and [*koptō*], to cut, “not stumbled against” (not causing others to stumble)

or if active “not stumbling against.” Passive sense probably, not active as in [1Co 10:32](#). Common in the papyri, though not in ancient Greek writers.

1:11 **Fruits of righteousness** [*karpon dikaiosunēs*]. Singular, collective idea, fruit of righteousness. Accusative case retained with perfect passive participle.

1:12 **The things which happened unto me** [*ta kat' eme*]. “The things concerning me” = “my affairs” as common in Josephus. **Have fallen out rather** [*mallon elēluthen*]. “Have come rather.” Second perfect active indicative of [*erchomai*]. **Unto the progress** [*eis prokopēn*]. Late word from [*prokoptō*], common verb, to cut or strike forward, but this late substantive does not occur in classical Greek. It is a technical term in Stoic philosophy for “progress toward wisdom” and it appears also in the papyri and the LXX. In N.T. only here, verse [25](#); [1Ti 4:15](#).

1:13 **Throughout the whole praetorian guard** [*en holōi tōi praitōriōi*]. There were originally ten thousand of these picked soldiers, concentrated in Rome by Tiberius. They had double pay and special privileges and became so powerful that emperors had to court their favour. Paul had contact with one after another of these soldiers. It is a Latin word, but the meaning is not certain, for in the other New Testament examples ([Mt 27:27](#); [Mr 15:16](#); [Joh 18:28,33](#); [19:9](#); [Ac 23:35](#)) it means the palace of the provincial governor either in Jerusalem or Caesarea. In Rome “palace” would have to be the emperor’s palace, a possible meaning for Paul a provincial writing to provincials (Kennedy). Some take it to mean the camp or barracks of the praetorian guard. The Greek, “in the whole praetorium,” allows this meaning, though there is no clear example of it. Mommsen and Ramsay argue for the judicial authorities (*praefecti praetorio*) with the assessors of the imperial court. At any rate Paul, chained to a soldier, had access to the soldiers and the officials.

1:14 **The most of the brethren** [*tous pleionas tōn adelphōn*]. “The more part of the brethren.” The comparative with the article with the sense of the superlative as often in the *Koinē*. **In the Lord** [*en Kuriōi*]. It is not clear whether this phrase is to be connected with “brethren” or with “being confident” [*pepoithotas*], probably with [*pepoithotas*]. If so, then “through my bonds” [*tois desmois mou*] would be the instrumental case and mean that by means of Paul’s bonds the brethren “are more abundantly bold” [*perissoterōs tolmāin*].

1:15 **Even of envy and strife** [*kai dia phthonon kai erin*]. “Even because of” (accusative after [*dia*]). Surely the lowest of motives for preaching Christ. Envy is an old word and an old sin and strife [*eris*] is more rivalry than schism. It is petty and personal jealousy of Paul’s power and prowess by the Judaizers in Rome whom Paul has routed in the east, but who now exult at the opportunity of annoying their great antagonist by their interpretation of Christ. Jealousy is always against those of one’s own class or profession as preachers with

preachers, doctors with doctors. **Of goodwill** [*di' eudokian*]. Because of goodwill toward Paul.

1:16 **Of love** [*ex agapēs*]. Out of love to Paul as well as to Christ. Put [1Co 13](#) here as a flashlight.

1:17 **Of faction** [*ex eritheias*]. Out of partisanship. From [*eritheuō*], to spin wool, and that from [*erithos*], a hireling. The papyri examples suit the idea of selfish ambition (Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary*). See [2Co 12:20](#); [Ga 5:20](#). **Not sincerely** [*ouch hagnōs*]. "Not purely," that is with mixed and impure motives. **To raise up affliction for my bonds** [*thlipsin egeirein tois desmois mou*]. Now that Paul is down they jump on him in mean and nagging ways. Dative case in [*desmois*]. "To make my chains gall me" (Lightfoot).

1:18 **What then?** [*ti gar?*]. Sharp problem put up to Paul by the conduct of the Judaizers. **Only that** [*plēn hoti*]. Same idiom in [Ac 20:23](#). [*Plēn*] is adverb [*pleon*] (more besides). As a preposition [*plēn*] means "except." This essential thing Paul sees in spite of all their envy and selfishness that Christ is preached. **Whether in pretence** [*eite prophasei*]. Either from [*prophainō*], to shew forth, or [*prophēmi*], to speak forth, the ostensible presentation often untrue. See [Ac 27:30](#). Paul sees clearly through the pious pretence of these Judaizers and rejoices that people get some knowledge of Christ. Some Christ is better than no Christ. **Yea, and will rejoice** [*alla kai charēsomai*]. Note affirmative, not adversative, use of [*alla*]. Volitive use of the future (second future passive) indicative [*charēsomai*] of [*chairō*]. Paul is determined to rejoice in spite of the efforts of the Judaizers to prod him to anger.

1:19 **Will turn** [*apobēsetai*]. Future middle indicative of [*apobainō*], old verb, to come from, to come back, to turn out. **To my salvation** [*eis sōtērian*]. For his release from prison as he strongly hopes to see them again ([1:26](#)). Lightfoot takes the word to be Paul's eternal salvation and it must be confessed that verse [20](#) (the close of this sentence) does suit that idea best. Can it be that Paul carried both conceptions in the word here? **Supply** [*epichorēgias*]. Late and rare word (one example in inscription of first century A.D.). In N.T. only here and [Eph 4:16](#). From the late verb [*epichorēgeō*] (double compound, [*epi, choros, hēgeomai*], to furnish supply for the chorus) which see in [2Co 9:10](#); [Ga 3:5](#).

1:20 **Earnest expectation** [*apokaradokian*]. In Paul alone from [*apokaradokeō*] (in papyri). See on [Ro 8:19](#) for only other example. **Shall be magnified** [*megalunthēsetai*]. Future passive indicative of [*megalunō*], old verb, to make great, from [*megas*] (great). See [Ac 19:17](#). **In my body** [*en tōi sōmati mou*]. See [Ro 12:1f](#). It is harder often to make Christ great in the body than in the spirit.

1:21 **For to me** [*emoi gar*]. Fine example of the ethical dative. Paul gives his own view of living. **To live is Christ** [*to zēin Christos*]. No copula [*estin*], but [*to zēin*] (the act of living

present active infinitive) is the subject as is shown by the article [*to*]. Living is coextensive with Christ. **Gain** [*kerdos*]. Old word for any gain or profit, interest on money (so in papyri). In N.T. only here, [Php 3:7](#); [Tit 1:11](#). **To die** [*to apothanein*], second aorist active infinitive, single act) is to cash in both principal and interest and so to have more of Christ than when living. So Paul faces death with independence and calm courage.

1:22 **If this is the fruit of my work** [*touto moi karpos ergou*]. There is no [*ei*] (if) here in the Greek, but [*touto*] (this) seems to be resumptive and to repeat the conditional clause just before. If so, [*kai*] just after means **then** and introduces the conclusion of the condition. Otherwise [*touto*] introduces the conclusion and [*kai*] means **and**. **I wot not** [*ou gnōrizō*]. “I know not.” It seems odd to preserve the old English word “wot” here. But it is not clear that [*gnōrizō*] (old causative verb from [*ginōskō*] means just to know. Elsewhere in the N.T., as in [Lu 2:15](#); [Ro 9:22](#), it means to make known, to declare. The papyri examples mean to make known. It makes perfectly good sense to take its usual meaning here, “I do not declare what I shall choose.”

1:23 **I am in a strait** [*sunechomai*]. “I am held together.” Present passive indicative of the common compound verb [*sunechō*], to hold together, to hem together as in [Lu 8:45](#). “I am hemmed in on both sides” (Lightfoot). **Betwixt the two** [*ek tōn duo*]. “From the two (sides).” Pressure to live on, pressure to die and be with Christ. **To depart** [*eis to analusai*]. Purpose clause, [*eis to*] and the aorist active infinitive [*analusai*], old compound verb, to unloose (as threads), to break up, to return ([Lu 12:36](#), only other N.T. example), to break up camp (Polybius), to weigh anchor and put out to sea, to depart (often in old Greek and papyri). Cf. [*kataluō*] in [2Co 5:1](#) for tearing down the tent. **Very far better** [*pollōi mallon kreisson*]. Double comparative (triple Lightfoot calls it because of [*pollōi*] like Isocrates and the *Koinē* often. See [2Co 7:13](#) for [*perissoterōs mallon*]. [*Pollōi*] is the instrumental case of measure (by much).

1:24 **In the flesh** [*en tēi sarki*]. So B D G, but Aleph A C do not have [*en*]. Unnecessary with [*epimenō*], to abide by (common verb).

1:25 **And abide with you all** [*kai paramenō pāsin humin*]. Common Pauline idiom to repeat the simple verb [*menō*] as a compound [*paramenō*], future active indicative), old verb, to remain beside followed by locative case. See same idiom in [*chairō, sunchairō*] ([Php 2:17](#)).

1:26 **In Christ Jesus in me** [*en Christōi Iēsou en emoi*]. “In Christ Jesus” as the basis for the glorying [*kauchēma*], “in me” as the instance in point. **Through my presence** [*dia tēs emēs parousias*]. The word so often used of the second coming of Christ, but here in its ordinary sense as in [2:12](#); [1Co 16:17](#).

1:27 **Let your manner of life** [*politeuesthe*]. Old verb from [*politēs*], citizen, and that from [*polis*], city, to be a citizen, to manage a state's affairs, to live as a citizen. Only twice in N.T., here and [Ac 23:1](#). Philippi as a colony possessed Roman citizenship and Paul was proud of his own possession of this right. The Authorized Version missed the figure completely by the word “conversation” which did refer to conduct and not mere talk as now, but did not preserve the figure of citizenship. Better render, “Only do ye live as citizens.” **Striving** [*sunathlountes*]. Rather, “striving together” as in an athletic contest. Late and rare word (Diodorus). “The very energy of the Christian faith to produce energetic individualities” (Rainy). “Striving in concert” (Lightfoot). **For the faith** [*tēi pistei*]. For the teaching of the gospel, objective sense of [*pistis*] (faith).

1:28 **Affrighted** [*pturomenoi*]. Present passive participle of [*pturō*], old verb, to frighten. The metaphor is of a timid or scared horse and from [*ptoeō*] [*ptoa*], terror). “Not startled in anything.” **By the adversaries** [*hupo tōn antikeimenōn*]. These men who were lined up against (present middle participle of [*antikeimai*]) may have been Jews or Gentiles or both. See [2Th 2:4](#) for this late verb. Any preacher who attacks evil will have opposition. **Evident token** [*endeixis*]. Old word for proof. See [2Co 8:24](#); [Ro 3:25f](#). “An Attic law term” (Kennedy) and only in Paul in N.T. **Perdition** [*apōleias*]. “Loss” in contrast with “salvation” [*sōtērias*]. **And that** [*kai touto*]. Idiomatic adverbial accusative. “It is a direct indication from God. The Christian gladiator does not anxiously await the signal of life or death from the fickle crowd” (Lightfoot).

1:29 **In the behalf of Christ** [*to huper Christou*]. Literally, “the in behalf of Christ.” But Paul divides the idea and uses the article to again both with [*pisteuein*] and with [*paschein*]. Suffering in behalf of Christ is one of God's gifts to us.

1:30 **Conflict** [*agōna*]. Athletic or gladiatorial contest as in [1Ti 6:12](#); [2Ti 4:7](#). The Philippians saw Paul suffer ([Ac 16:19-40](#); [1Th 2:2](#)) as now they have heard about it in Rome.

## Chapter 2

2:1 **If** [*ei*]. Paul uses four conditions in this verse, all of the first class, assuming the condition to be true. **Comfort** [*paraklēsis*]. Rather, “ground of appeal to you in Christ.” See [1Co 1:10](#); [Eph 4:1](#). **Consolation** [*paramuthion*]. Old word from [*paramutheomai*], persuasive address, incentive. **Of love** [*agapēs*]. Objective genitive, “in love” (undefined as in [1Co 13](#)). **Fellowship** [*koinōnia*]. Partnership in the Holy Spirit “whose first fruit is love” ([Ga 5:22](#)). **Any tender mercies** [*tis splagchna*]. Common use of this word for the nobler [*viscera*] and so for the higher emotions. But [*tis*] is masculine singular and [*splagchna*] is neuter plural. Lightfoot suggests an error of an early transcriber or even of the amanuensis in writing [*ei tis*] instead of [*ei tina*].

2:2 **Fulfil** [*plērōsate*]. Better here, “fill full.” Paul’s cup of joy will be full if the Philippians will only keep on having unity of thought and feeling [*to auto phronēte*], present active subjunctive, keep on thinking the same thing). **Being of one accord** [*sunpsuchoi*]. Late word here for the first time, from [*sun*] and [*psuchē*], harmonious in soul, souls that beat together, in tune with Christ and with each other. **Of one mind** [*to hen phronountes*]. “Thinking the one thing.” Like clocks that strike at the same moment. Perfect intellectual telepathy. Identity of ideas and harmony of feelings.

2:3 **Through vainglory** [*kata kenodoxian*]. Late word, only here in N.T., from [*kenodoxos*] [*kenos, doxa*], [Ga 5:26](#), only here in N.T.), empty pride. **In lowliness of mind** [*tēi tapeinophrosunēi*]. Late and rare word. Not in O.T. or early Greek writers. In Josephus and Epictetus in bad sense (pusillanimity). For ostentatious humility in [Co 2:18,23](#). One of the words, like [*tapeinos*] ([Mt 11:29](#)) and [*tapeinophrōn*] ([1Pe 3:8](#), here alone in N.T.) that Christianity has ennobled and dignified ([Ac 20:19](#)). **Better than himself** [*huperechontas heautōn*]. Present active participle of [*huperechō*] in intransitive sense to excel or surpass with the ablative, “excelling themselves.” See [Ro 12:10](#).

2:4 **Looking** [*skopountes*]. Present active participle of [*skopeō*] from [*skopos*] (aim, goal). Not keeping an eye on the main chance for number one, but for the good of others.

2:5 **Have this mind in you** [*touto phroneite en humin*]. “Keep on thinking this in you which was also in Christ Jesus” [*ho kai en Christōi Iēsou*]. What is that? Humility. Paul presents Jesus as the supreme example of humility. He urges humility on the Philippians as the only way to secure unity.

2:6 **Being** [*huparchōn*]. Rather, “existing,” present active participle of [*huparchō*]. In the form of God [*en morphēi theou*]. [*Morphē*] means the essential attributes as shown in the form. In his preincarnate state Christ possessed the attributes of God and so appeared to

those in heaven who saw him. Here is a clear statement by Paul of the deity of Christ. **A prize** [*harpagmon*]. Predicate accusative with [*hēgēsato*]. Originally words in [-*mos*] signified the act, not the result [-*ma*]. The few examples of [*harpagmos*] (Plutarch, etc.) allow it to be understood as equivalent to [*harpagma*], like [*baptismos*] and [*baptisma*]. That is to say Paul means a prize to be held on to rather than something to be won (“robbery”). **To be on an equality with God** [*to einai isa theoi*]. Accusative articular infinitive object of [*hēgēsato*], “the being equal with God” (associative instrumental case [*theōi*] after [*isa*]. [*Isa*] is adverbial use of neuter plural with [*einai*] as in [Re 21:16](#). **Emptied himself** [*heauton ekenōse*]. First aorist active indicative of [*kenōō*], old verb from [*kenos*], empty. Of what did Christ empty himself? Not of his divine nature. That was impossible. He continued to be the Son of God. There has arisen a great controversy on this word, a [*Kenosis*] doctrine. Undoubtedly Christ gave up his environment of glory. He took upon himself limitations of place (space) and of knowledge and of power, though still on earth retaining more of these than any mere man. It is here that men should show restraint and modesty, though it is hard to believe that Jesus limited himself by error of knowledge and certainly not by error of conduct. He was without sin, though tempted as we are. “He stripped himself of the insignia of majesty” (Lightfoot).

2:7 **The form of a servant** [*morphēn doulou*]. He took the characteristic attributes [*morphēn*] as in verse 6) of a slave. His humanity was as real as his deity. **In the likeness of men** [*en homoiōmati anthrōpōn*]. It was a likeness, but a real likeness (Kennedy), no mere phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics held. Note the difference in tense between [*huparchōn*] (eternal existence in the [*morphē*] of God) and [*genomenos*] (second aorist middle participle of [*ginomai*], becoming, definite entrance in time upon his humanity).

2:8 **In fashion** [*schēmati*]. Locative case of [*schēma*], from [*echō*], to have, to hold. Bengel explains [*morphē*] by *forma*, [*homoiōma*] by *similitudo*, [*schēma*] by *habitus*. Here with [*schēma*] the contrast “is between what He is in Himself, and what He *appeared* in the eyes of men” (Lightfoot). **He humbled himself** [*etapeinōsen heauton*]. First aorist active of [*tapeinoō*], old verb from [*tapeinos*]. It is a voluntary humiliation on the part of Christ and for this reason Paul is pressing the example of Christ upon the Philippians, this supreme example of renunciation. See Bruce’s masterpiece, *The Humiliation of Christ*. **Obedient** [*hupēkoos*]. Old adjective, giving ear to. See [Ac 7:39](#); [2Co 2:9](#). **Unto death** [*mechri thanatou*]. “Until death.” See “until blood” [*mechris haimatos*], [Heb 12:4](#)). **Yea, the death of the cross** [*thanatou de staurou*]. The bottom rung in the ladder from the Throne of God. Jesus came all the way down to the most despised death of all, a condemned criminal on the accursed cross.

2:9 **Wherefore** [*dio*]. Because of which act of voluntary and supreme humility. **Highly exalted** [*huperupsōse*]. First aorist indicative of [*huperupsōō*] [*huper*] and [*hupsos*] late and rare

word (LXX and Byzantine). Here only in N.T. Because of Christ's voluntary humiliation God lifted him above or beyond [*huper*] the state of glory which he enjoyed before the Incarnation. What glory did Christ have after the Ascension that he did not have before in heaven? What did he take back to heaven that he did not bring? Clearly his humanity. He returned to heaven the Son of Man as well as the Son of God. **The name which is above every name** [*to onoma to huper pan onoma*]. What name is that? Apparently and naturally the name **Jesus**, which is given in verse 10. Some think it is "Jesus Christ," some "Lord," some the ineffable name Jehovah, some merely dignity and honour.

2:10 **That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow** [*hina en tōi onomati Iēsou pan gonu kampseī*]. First aorist active subjunctive of [*kamptō*], old verb, to bend, to bow, in purpose clause with [*hina*]. Not perfunctory genuflections whenever the name of Jesus is mentioned, but universal acknowledgment of the majesty and power of Jesus who carries his human name and nature to heaven. This universal homage to Jesus is seen in [Ro 8:22](#); [Eph 1:20-22](#) and in particular [Re 5:13](#). **Under the earth** [*katachthoniōn*]. Homeric adjective for departed souls, subterranean, simply the dead. Here only in the N.T.

2:11 **Should confess** [*exomologēsētai*]. First aorist middle subjunctive of [*exomologeomai*] with [*hina*] for purpose. **Lord** [*Kurios*]. Peter ([Ac 2:36](#)) claimed that God made Christ "Lord." See also [1Co 8:6](#); [12:3](#); [Ro 10:9](#). Kennedy laments that the term Lord has become one of the most lifeless in the Christian vocabulary, whereas it really declares the true character and dignity of Jesus Christ and "is the basis and the object of worship."

2:12 **Not as in my presence only** [*mē hōs en tēi parousiāi monon*]. B and a few other MSS. omit [*hōs*]. The negative [*mē*] goes with the imperative [*katergazesthe*] (work out), not with [*hupēkousate*] (obeyed) which would call for [*ouch*]. **Much more** [*pollōi mallon*]. They are not to render eye-service only when Paul is there, but much more when he is away. **Work out** [*katergazesthe*]. Perfective use of [*kata*] (down) in composition, work on to the finish. This exhortation assumes human free agency in the carrying on the work of one's salvation. **With fear and trembling** [*meta phobou kai tromou*]. "Not slavish terror, but wholesome, serious caution" (Vincent). "A nervous and trembling anxiety to do right" (Lightfoot). Paul has no sympathy with a cold and dead orthodoxy or formalism that knows nothing of struggle and growth. He exhorts as if he were an Arminian in addressing men. He prays as if he were a Calvinist in addressing God and feels no inconsistency in the two attitudes. Paul makes no attempt to reconcile divine sovereignty and human free agency, but boldly proclaims both.

2:13 **Which worketh in you** [*ho energōn en humin*]. Articular present active participle of [*energeō*] from [*energōs*] [*en, ergon*] one at work, common verb from Aristotle on, to be at work, to energize. God is the Energy and the Energizer of the universe. Modern scientists,

like Eddington, Jeans, and Whitney, are not afraid to agree with Paul and to put God back of all activity in nature. **Both to will and to work** [*kai to thelein kai to energein*]. “Both the willing and the working (the energizing).” God does it all, then. Yes, but he puts us to work also and our part is essential, as he has shown in verse 12, though secondary to that of God. **For his good-pleasure** [*huper tēs eudokias*]. So Whitney puts “the will of God” behind gravitation and all the laws of nature.

2:14 **Without murmurings** [*chōris goggusmōn*]. See on [Ac 6:1](#) for this late onomatopoeic word from [*gogguzō*], to mutter, to grumble. **Disputings** [*dialogismōn*]. Or questionings as in [Lu 24:38](#). The grumblings led to disputes.

2:15 **That ye may be** [*hina genēsthe*]. Rather, “that ye may become” (second aorist middle subjunctive of [*ginomai*], to become). **Blameless** [*amemptoi*]. Free from censure [*memphomai*], to blame). **Harmless** [*akeraioi*]. Unmixed, unadulterated as in [Ro 16:19](#). **Without blemish** [*amōma*]. Without spot, “unblemished in reputation and in reality” (Vincent). **In the midst of** [*meson*]. Preposition with genitive. **Crooked** [*skolias*]. Old word, curved as opposed to [*orthos*], straight. See on [Ac 2:40](#). **Perverse** [*diestrammenēs*]. Perfect passive participle of [*diastrephō*], to distort, to twist, to turn to one side [*dia*], in two). Old word. See [Mt 17:17](#); [Ac 13:10](#).

2:16 **As lights in the world** [*hōs phōstēres en kosmōi*]. As luminaries like the heavenly bodies. Christians are the light of the world ([Mt 5:14](#)) as they reflect the light from Christ ([Joh 1:4](#); [8:12](#)), but here the word is not [*phōs*] (light), but [*phōstēres*] (luminaries, stars). The place for light is the darkness where it is needed. **Holding forth** [*epechontes*]. Present active participle of [*epechō*]. Probably not connected with the preceding metaphor in [*phōstēres*]. The old meaning of the verb [*epechō*] is to hold forth or to hold out (the word of life as here). The context seems to call for “holding fast.” It occurs also with the sense of attending to ([Ac 3:5](#)). **That I may have** [*emoi*]. Ethical dative, “to me as a ground of boasting.”

2:17 **And if I am offered** [*ei kai spendomai*]. Though I am poured out as a libation. Old word. In N.T. only here and [2Ti 4:6](#). Paul pictures his life-blood as being poured upon (uncertain whether heathen or Jewish offerings meant and not important) the sacrifice and service of the faith of the Philippians in mutual service and joy (both [*chairō*] and [*sunchairō*] twice in the sentence). Joy is mutual when the service is mutual. Young missionaries offer their lives as a challenge to other Christians to match their money with their blood.

2:19 **That I also may be of good comfort** [*hina kagō eupsuchō*]. Present subjunctive with [*hina*] in purpose clause of the late and rare verb [*eupsuchēō*], from [*eupsuchos*] (cheerful, of good spirit). In papyri and [*eupsuchēi*] (be of good cheer) common in sepulchral inscriptions. **When I know** [*gnous*]. Second aorist active participle of [*ginōskō*].

2:20 **Likeminded** [*isopsuchon*]. Old, but very rare adjective [*isos, psuchē*], like [*isotimos*] in [2Pe 1:1](#). Only here in N.T. Likeminded with Timothy, not with Paul. **Truly** [*gnēsios*]. “Genuinely.” Old adverb, only here in N.T., from [*gnēsios*] ([Php 4:3](#)), legitimate birth, not spurious.

2:21 **They all** [*hoi pantes*]. “The whole of them.” Surely Luke was away from Rome at this juncture.

2:22 **The proof** [*tēn dokimēn*]. “The test” as of metals ([2Co 2:9; 9:13](#)). Three times they had seen Timothy ([Ac 16:13; 19:22; 20:3f.](#)). **With me** [*sun emoi*]. Paul’s delicacy of feeling made him use [*sun*] rather than [*emoi*] alone. Timothy did not serve Paul. **In furtherance of** [*eis*]. See [Php 1:5](#) for this use of [*eis*].

2:23 **So soon as I shall see** [*hōs an aphidō*]. Indefinite temporal clause with [*hōs an*] and the second aorist active subjunctive of [*aphoraō*]. The oldest MSS. (Aleph A B D) have [*aphidō*] (old aspirated form) rather than [*apidō*]. **How it will go with me** [*ta peri eme*]. On the force of [*apo*] with [*horaō*] (look away) see [Heb 12:2](#). “The things concerning me,” the outcome of the trial. Cf. [1Co 4:17, 19](#).

2:24 **In the Lord** [*en Kuriōi*]. Not a perfunctory use of this phrase. Paul’s whole life is centred in Christ ([Ga 2:20](#)).

2:25 **I counted it** [*hēgēsamēn*]. Epistolary aorist from the point of view of the readers. **Epaphroditus** [*Epaphroditon*]. Common name, though only in Philippians in N.T., contracted into Epaphras, though not the same man as Epaphras in [Col 1:7](#). Note one article [*ton*] (the) with the three epithets given in an ascending scale (Lightfoot), brother [*adelphon*], common sympathy), fellow-worker [*sunergon*], common work), fellow-soldier [*sunstratiōtēn*], common danger as in [Phm 1:2](#). [*Mou*] (my) and [*humōn*] (your) come together in sharp contrast. **Messenger** [*apostolon*]. See [2Co 8:23](#) for this use of [*apostolos*] as messenger (missionary). **Minister** [*leitourgon*]. See on [Ro 13:6; 15:16](#) for this ritualistic term.

2:26 **He longed after** [*epipothōn ēn*]. Periphrastic imperfect of [*epipothēō*] ([Php 1:8](#)), “he was yearning after.” **You all** [*pantas humas*]. So again ([1:5, 7, 8](#)). **Was sore troubled** [*adēmōnōn*]. Periphrastic imperfect again (repeat [*ēn*] of the old word [*adēmoneō*] either from an unused [*adēmōn*] [*a*] privative and [*dēmos*], away from home, homesick) or from [*adēmōn, adēsai*] (discontent, bewilderment). The *Vocabulary* of Moulton and Milligan gives one papyrus example in line with the latter etymology. See already [Mt 26:37; Mr 14:33](#). In any case the distress of Epaphroditus was greatly increased when he knew that the Philippians (the home-folks) had learned of his illness, “because ye had heard that he was sick” [*dioti ēkousate hoti ēsthenēse*], “because ye heard that he fell sick” (ingressive aorist). **He was sick** [*ēsthenēse*]. Ingressive aorist, “he did become sick.” **Nigh unto death** [*paraplēsion thanatōi*].

Only example in N.T. of this compound adverbial preposition (from the adjective [*paraplēsios*] with the dative case.

2:28 **Ye may rejoice** [*charēte*]. Second aorist passive subjunctive with [*hina*] in final clause of [*chairō*], to rejoice. **That I may be the less sorrowful** [*kagō alupoteros ō*]. Present subjunctive with [*hina*] and comparative of old compound adjective [*alupos*] [*a*] privative and [*lupē*], more free from grief). Beautiful expression of Paul's feelings for the Philippians and for Epaphroditus.

2:29 **In honour** [*entimous*]. Old compound adjective [*en, timē*], prized, precious (Lu 7:2; 14:8; 1Pe 2:4,6). Predicate accusative. Noble plea in behalf of Christ's minister.

2:30 **Hazarding his life** [*paraboleusamenos tēi psuchēi*]. First aorist middle participle of [*paraboleuō*] (from the adjective [*parabolos*], to place beside. The old Greek writers used [*paraballomai*], to expose oneself to danger. But Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 88) cites an example of [*paraboleusamenos*] from an inscription at Olbia on the Black Sea of the second century A.D. where it plainly means "exposing himself to danger" as here. Lightfoot renders it here "having gambled with his life." The word [*parabolani*] (riskers) was applied to the Christians who risked their lives for the dying and the dead.

## Chapter 3

3:1 **Finally** [*to loipon*]. Accusative of general reference, literally, “as for the rest.” So again in 4:8. It (or just [*loipon*]) is a common phrase towards the close of Paul’s Epistles (2Th 3:1; 2Co 13:11). In Eph 6:10 we have [*tou loipou*] (genitive case). But Paul uses the idiom elsewhere also as in 1Co 7:29; 1Th 4:1 before the close of the letter is in sight. It is wholly needless to understand Paul as about to finish and then suddenly changing his mind like some preachers who announce the end a half dozen times. **To write the same things** [*ta auta graphain*]. Present active articular infinitive, “the going on writing the same things.” What things? He has just used [*chairete*] (go on rejoicing) again and he will repeat it in 4:4. But in verse 2 he uses [*blepete*] three times. At any rate Paul, as a true teacher, is not afraid of repetition. **Irksome** [*oknēron*]. Old adjective from [*okneō*], to delay, to hesitate. It is not tiresome to me to repeat what is “safe” [*asphales*] for you. Old adjective from [*a*] privative and [*sphallō*], to totter, to reel. See Ac 21:34.

3:2 **Beware** [*blepete*]. Three times for urgency and with different epithet for the Judaizers each time. **The dogs** [*tous kunas*]. The Jews so termed the Gentiles which Jesus uses in a playful mood [*kunariois*], little dogs) to the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mt 15:26). Paul here turns the phrase on the Judaizers themselves. **The evil workers** [*tous kakous ergatas*]. He had already called the Judaizers “deceitful workers” [*ergatai dolioi*] in 2Co 11:13. **The concision** [*tēn katatomēn*]. Late word for incision, mutilation (in contrast with [*peritomē*], circumcision). In Symmachus and an inscription. The verb [*katatemnō*] is used in the LXX only of mutilations (Le 21:5; 1Ki 18:28).

3:3 **For we** [*hēmeis gar*]. We believers in Christ, the children of Abraham by faith, whether Jew or Gentile, the spiritual circumcision in contrast to the merely physical (Ro 2:25-29; Col 2:11; Eph 2:11). See Ga 5:12 for [*apotemnein*] (to cut off) in sense of mutilation also. **By the Spirit of God** [*pneumati theou*]. Instrumental case, though the dative case as the object of [*latreuō*] makes good sense also (worshipping the Spirit of God) or even the locative (worshipping in the Spirit of God). **No** [*ouk*]. Actual condition rather than [*mē*] with the participle. **In the flesh** [*en sarki*]. Technical term in Paul’s controversy with the Judaizers (2Co 11:18; Gal 6:13f.). External privileges beyond mere flesh.

3:4 **Might have** [*echōn*]. Rather, “even though myself having.” **Confidence** [*pepoithēsīn*]. Late word, condemned by the Atticists, from [*pepoitha*] (just used). See 2Co 1:15; 3:4.

3:5 **Thinketh to have confidence** [*dokei pepoithenai*]. Second perfect active infinitive. Old idiom, “seems to himself to have confidence.” Later idiom like Mt 3:9 “think not to say” and 1Co 11:16, “thinks that he has ground of confidence in himself.” **I yet more** [*egō mallon*]. “I have more ground for boasting than he” and Paul proceeds to prove it in the rest of verses

**5, 6. Circumcised the eighth day** [*peritomēi oktaēmeros*]. “In circumcision (locative case) an eighth day man.” Use of the ordinal with persons like [*tetartaios*] ([Joh 11:39](#)). Ishmaelites were circumcised in the thirteenth year, proselytes from Gentiles in mature age, Jews on the eighth day ([Lu 2:21](#)). **Of the stock of Israel** [*ek genous Israēl*]. Of the original stock, not a proselyte. **Benjamin** [*Beniamin*]. Son of the right hand (that is, left-handed), son of Rachel. The first King, Saul (Paul’s own Hebrew name) was from this little tribe. The battle cry of Israel was “After thee, O Benjamin” ([Jud 5:14](#)). **A Hebrew of the Hebrews** [*Ebraios ex Ebraiōn*]. Of Hebrew parents who retained the characteristic qualities in language and custom as distinct from the Hellenistic Jews ([Ac 6:1](#)). Paul was from Tarsus and knew Greek as well as Aramaic ([Ac 21:40](#); [22:2](#)) and Hebrew, but he had not become Hellenized. **A Pharisee** [*Pharisaios*]. In distinction from the Sadducees ([Ga 1:14](#)) and he continued a Pharisee in many essential matters like the doctrine of the resurrection ([Ac 23:6](#)). Cf. [2Co 11:22](#).

**3:6 As touching zeal** [*kata zēlos*]. So the old MSS. treating [*zēlos*] as neuter, not masculine. He was a zealot against Christianity, “persecuting the church” [*diōkōn tēn ekklēsian*]. He was the ringleader in the persecution from the death of Stephen till his own conversion ([Ac 8:1-9:9](#)). **Found blameless** [*genomenos amemptos*]. “Having become blameless” ([Ga 1:14](#)). He knew and practised all the rules of the rabbis. A marvellous record, scoring a hundred in Judaism.

**3:7 Were gain to me** [*en moi kerdē*]. “Were gains (plural, see on [1:21](#)) to me (ethical dative).” Paul had natural pride in his Jewish attainments. He was the star of hope for Gamaliel and the Sanhedrin. **Have I counted** [*hēgēmai*]. Perfect middle indicative, state of completion and still true. **Loss** [*zēmian*]. Old word for damage, loss. In N.T. only in Phil. and [Ac 27:10,21](#). Debit side of the ledger, not credit.

**3:8 Yea, verily, and** [*alla men oun ge kai*]. Five particles before Paul proceeds (yea, indeed, therefore, at least, even), showing the force and passion of his conviction. He repeats his affirmation with the present middle indicative [*hēgoumai*], “I still count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge [*to huperechon*], the surpassingness, neuter articular participle of [*huperechō*], [Php 2:3](#) of Christ Jesus my Lord.” **Dung** [*skubala*]. Late word of uncertain etymology, either connected with [*skōr*] (dung) or from [*es kunas ballō*], to fling to the dogs and so refuse of any kind. It occurs in the papyri. Here only in the N.T. **That I may gain Christ** [*hina Christon kerdēsō*]. First aorist active subjunctive of [*kerdaō*], Ionic form for [*kerdainō*] with [*hina*] in purpose clause. Paul was never satisfied with his knowledge of Christ and always craved more fellowship with him.

**3:9 Be found in him** [*heurethō en autōi*]. First aorist (effective) passive subjunctive with [*hina*] of [*heuriskō*]. At death ([2Co 5:3](#)) or when Christ comes. Cf. [2:8](#); [Ga 2:17](#). **Through faith in Christ** [*dia pisteōs Christou*]. The objective genitive [*Christou*], not subjective, as

in [Ga 2:16,20](#); [Ro 3:22](#). Explained further by [*epi tēi pistei*] (on the basis of faith) as in [Ac 3:16](#).

3:10 **That I may know him** [*tou gnōnai auton*]. Genitive of the articular second aorist (ingressive) active infinitive (purpose) of [*ginōskō*], to have personal acquaintance or experience with. This is Paul's major passion, to get more knowledge of Christ by experience. **The power of his resurrection** [*tēn dunamin tēs anastaseōs autou*]. Power (Lightfoot) in the sense of assurance to believers in immortality ([1Co 15:14f](#); [Ro 8:11](#)), in the triumph over sin ([Ro 4:24f](#)), in the dignity of the body ([1Co 6:13ff](#); [Php 3:21](#)), in stimulating the moral and spiritual life ([Ga 2:20](#); [Ro 6:4f](#); [Col 2:12](#); [Eph 2:5](#)). See Westcott's *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, ii, 31. **The fellowship of his sufferings** [*tēn koinōnian tōn pathēmatōn autou*]. Partnership in (objective genitive) his sufferings, an honour prized by Paul ([Co 1:24](#)). **Becoming conformed to his death** [*summorphizomenos tōi thanatōi autou*]. Present passive participle of [*summorphizō*], late verb from [*summorphos*], found only here and ecclesiastical writers quoting it. The Latin Vulgate uses *configuro*. See [Ro 6:4](#) for [*sumphutoi*] in like sense and [2Co 4:10](#). "The agony of Gethsemane, not less than the agony of Calvary, will be reproduced however faintly in the faithful servant of Christ" (Lightfoot). "In this passage we have the deepest secrets of the Apostle's Christian experience unveiled" (Kennedy).

3:11 **If by any means I may attain** [*ei pōs katantēsō*]. Not an expression of doubt, but of humility (Vincent), a modest hope (Lightfoot). For [*ei pōs*], see [Ro 1:10](#); [11:14](#) where [*parazēlōsō*] can be either future indicative or aorist subjunctive like [*katantēsō*] here (see subjunctive [*katalabō*] in verse 12), late compound verb [*katantaō*]. **Resurrection** [*exanastasin*]. Late word, not in LXX, but in Polybius and one papyrus example. Apparently Paul is thinking here only of the resurrection of believers out from the dead and so double [*ex*] [*ten exanastasin tēn ek nekrōn*]. Paul is not denying a general resurrection by this language, but emphasizing that of believers.

3:12 **Not that** [*ouch hoti*]. To guard against a misunderstanding as in [Joh 6:26](#); [12:6](#); [2Co 1:24](#); [Php 4:11, 17](#). **I have already obtained** [*ēdē elabon*]. Rather, "I did already obtain," constative second aorist active indicative of [*lambanō*], summing up all his previous experiences as a single event. **Or am already made perfect** [*ē ēdē teteleiōmai*]. Perfect passive indicative (state of completion) of [*teleiōō*], old verb from [*teleios*] and that from [*telos*] (end). Paul pointedly denies that he has reached a spiritual impasse of non-development. Certainly he knew nothing of so-called sudden absolute perfection by any single experience. Paul has made great progress in Christlikeness, but the goal is still before him, not behind him. **But I press on** [*diōkō de*]. He is not discouraged, but encouraged. He keeps up the chase (real idea in [*diōkō*], as in [1Co 14:1](#); [Ro 9:30](#); [1Ti 6:11](#)). **If so be that** [*ei kai*]. "I follow after." The condition (third class, [*ei katalabō*], second aorist active subjunctive of [*katalambanō*] is

really a sort of purpose clause or aim. There are plenty of examples in the *Koinē* of the use of [ei] and the subjunctive as here (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1017), “if I also may lay hold of that for which [eph’ hōi], purpose expressed by [epi] I was laid hold of [katelēmphthēn], first aorist passive of the same verb [katalambanō] by Christ Jesus.” His conversion was the beginning, not the end of the chase.

3:13 **Not yet** [oupō]. But some MSS. read [ou] (not). **To have apprehended** [kateilēphenai]. Perfect active infinitive of same verb [katalambanō] (perfective use of [kata], to grasp completely). Surely denial enough. **But one thing** [hen de]. No verb in the Greek. We can supply [poiō] (I do) or [diōkō] (I keep on in the chase), but no verb is really needed. “When all is said, the greatest art is to limit and isolate oneself” (Goethe), concentration. **Forgetting the things which are behind** [ta men opisō epilanthanomenos]. Common verb, usually with the genitive, but the accusative in the *Koinē* is greatly revived with verbs. Paul can mean either his old pre-Christian life, his previous progress as a Christian, or both (all of it). **Stretching forward** [epekteinomenos]. Present direct middle participle of the old double compound [epekteinō] (stretching myself out towards). Metaphor of a runner leaning forward as he runs.

3:14 **Toward the goal** [kata skopon]. “Down upon the goal,” who is Jesus himself to whom we must continually look as we run (Heb 12:2). The word means a watchman, then the goal or mark. Only here in N.T. **Unto the prize** [eis to brabeion]. Late word (Menander and inscriptions) from [brabeus] (umpire who awards the prize). In N.T. only here and 1Co 9:24. **Of the high calling** [tēs anō klēseōs]. Literally, “of the upward calling.” The goal continually moves forward as we press on, but yet never out of sight.

3:15 **As many as be perfect** [hosoi teleioi]. Here the term [teleioi] means relative perfection, not the absolute perfection so pointedly denied in verse 12. Paul here includes himself in the group of spiritual adults (see He 5:13). **Let us be thus minded** [touto phronōmen]. Present active volitive subjunctive of [phroneō]. “Let us keep on thinking this,” viz. that we have not yet attained absolute perfection. **If ye are otherwise minded** [ei ti heterōs phroneite]. Condition of first class, assumed as true. That is, if ye think that ye are absolutely perfect. **Shall God reveal unto you** [ho theos humin apokalupsei]. He turns such cases over to God. What else can he do with them? **Whereunto we have already come** [eis ho ephthasamen]. First aorist active indicative of [phthanō], originally to come before as in 1Th 4:15, but usually in the *Koinē* simply to arrive, attain to, as here.

3:16 **By that same rule let us walk** [tōi autōi stoichein] Aleph A B do not have [kanoni] (rule). Besides [stoichein] is the absolute present active infinitive which sometimes occurs instead of the principal verb as in Ro 12:15. Paul means simply this that, having come thus far, the thing to do is to go “in the same path” [tōi autōi] in which we have been travelling

so far. A needed lesson for Christians weary with the monotony of routine in religious life and work.

3:17 **Imitators together of me** [*sunmimētai mou*]. Found only here so far, though Plato uses [*summimeisthai*]. “Vie with each other in imitating me” (Lightfoot). **Mark** [*skopeite*]. Old verb from [*skopos*] (verse 14). “Keep your eyes on me as goal.” Mark and follow, not avoid as in [Ro 16:17](#). **An ensample** [*tupon*]. Originally the impression left by a stroke ([Joh 20:25](#)), then a pattern (mould) as here (cf. [1Th 1:7](#); [1Co 10:6,11](#); [Ro 5:14](#); [6:17](#)).

3:18 **I told you often** [*pollakis elegon*]. Imperfect active, repetition in Paul’s warnings to them. **Even weeping** [*kai klaiōn*]. Deep emotion as he dictated the letter and recalled these recreant followers of Christ (cf. [2Co 2:4](#)). **The enemies of the cross of Christ** [*tous echthrous tou staurou tou Christou*]. Either the Judaizers who denied the value of the cross of Christ ([Ga 5:11](#); [6:12,14](#)) or Epicurean antinomians whose loose living gave the lie to the cross of Christ ([1Jo 2:4](#)).

3:19 **Whose god is the belly** [*hou to theos hē koilia*]. The comic poet Eupolis uses the rare word [*Koiliodaimōn*] for one who makes a god of his belly and Seneca speaks of one who *abdomini servit*. Sensuality in food, drink, sex then as now mastered some men. These men posed as Christians and gloried in their shame. **Who mind earthly things** [*hoi ta epigeia phronountes*]. Anacoluthon. The nominative does not refer to [*polloi*] at the beginning, but with the accusative [*tous echthrous*] in between. See [Mr 12:40](#).

3:20 **Our citizenship** [*hēmōn to politeuma*]. Old word from [*piliteuō*] ([Php 1:27](#)), but only here in N.T. The inscriptions use it either for citizenship or for commonwealth. Paul was proud of his Roman citizenship and found it a protection. The Philippians were also proud of their Roman citizenship. But Christians are citizens of a kingdom not of this world ([Joh 18:36](#)). Milligan (*Vocabulary*) doubts if commentators are entitled to translate it here: “We are a colony of heaven,” because such a translation reverses the relation between the colony and the mother city. But certainly here Paul’s heart is in heaven. **We wait for** [*apekdechometha*]. Rare and late double compound (perfective use of prepositions like wait out) which vividly pictures Paul’s eagerness for the second coming of Christ as the normal attitude of the Christian colonist whose home is heaven.

3:21 **Shall fashion anew** [*metaschēmatisei*]. Future active indicative of [*metaschēmatizō*] for which see [1Co 4:6](#); [2Co 11:13ff](#). **Conformed to** [*summorphon*]. For which [*sun, morphē*] see [Ro 8:29](#), only N.T. examples. With associative instrumental case. The body of our state of humiliation will be made suitable to associate with the body of Christ’s glory ([1Co 15:54f](#)). **According to the working** [*kata tēn energeian*]. “According to the energy.” If any one doubts

the power of Christ to do this transformation, Paul replies that he has power “even to subject all things unto himself.”

## Chapter 4

4:1 **Longed for** [*epipothētoi*]. Late and rare verbal adjective (here alone in N.T.) from [*epipotheō*]. **So stand fast** [*houto stēkete*]. Present active imperative of [*stēkō*] (late present from perfect [*hestēka*] from [*histēmi*]). See 1:27. They were tempted to defection. Standing firm is difficult when a panic starts.

4:2 **Euodia** [*Euodian*]. This name means literally “prosperous journey” [*eu, hodos*]. It occurs in the inscriptions. **Syntyche** [*Suntuchēn*]. From [*suntugchanō*], to meet with and so “pleasant acquaintance” or “good-luck.” Occurs in the inscriptions and identified with Lydia by some. Klopper suggests that each of these rival women had church assemblies in their homes, one a Jewish-Christian church, the other a Gentile-Christian church. Vincent doubts the great influence of women in Macedonia held by Lightfoot who also suggests that these two were ladies of rank or perhaps deaconesses of the church in Philippi. Schinz suggests that in such a pure church even slight bickerings would make a real disturbance. “It may have been accidental friction between two energetic Christian women” (Kennedy).

4:3 **True yokefellow** [*gnēsie sunzuge*]. All sorts of suggestions have been made here, one that it was Lydia who is termed Paul’s wife by the word [*sunzuge*]. Unfortunately for that view [*gnēsie*] is masculine vocative singular. Some have suggested it as a proper name though it is not found in the inscriptions, but the word does occur as an appellative in one. Lightfoot even proposes Epaphroditus, the bearer of the Epistle, certainly a curious turn to take to address him. After all it matters little that we do not know who the peacemaker was. **Help these women** [*sunlambanou autais*]. Present middle imperative of [*sunlambanō*], to seize (Mt 26:55), to conceive (Lu 1:24), then to take hold together with one (associative instrumental case), to help as here (Lu 5:7). “Take hold with them.” **They laboured with me** [*sunēthlēsan moi*]. First aorist active indicative of [*sunathleō*] (for which see 1:27) with associative instrumental case [*moi*]. **With Clement also** [*meta kai Klēmentos*]. There is no evidence that he was Clement of Rome as the name is common. **In the book of life** [*en biblōi zōēs*]. The only instance of this expression in the N.T. outside of the Apocalypse (3:5; 13:8; 17:8, etc.). Hence real Christians in spite of their bickerings.

4:4 **Again I will say** [*palin erō*]. Future active indicative of defective verb [*eipon*]. **Rejoice** [*chairete*]. Present active imperative as in 3:1, repeated for emphasis in spite of discouragements. Not in the sense of “Farewell” here.

4:5 **Your forbearance** [*to epieikes humōn*]. “Your gentleness,” “your sweet reasonableness” (Matthew Arnold), “your moderation.” Old adjective [*epi, eikos*] as in Jas 3:17; 1Ti 3:3. Article and neuter singular here= [*hē epieikeia*] (Ac 24:4; 2Co 10:1) like to [*chrēston*] in Ro 2:4. **The Lord is at hand** [*ho kurios eggus*]. “The Apostle’s watchword” (Lightfoot), as in

1Co 16:22 [*Maran atha*], Aramaic equivalent, Our Lord cometh). Unless, indeed, [*eggus*] here means near in space instead of **nigh** in time.

4:6 **In nothing be anxious** [*mēden merimnāte*]. Present imperative in prohibition, “stop being anxious.” See [*mē merimnāte*] in Mt 6:31. **With thanksgiving** [*meta eucharistias*]. In all the forms of prayer here named thanksgiving should appear.

4:7 **The peace of God** [*hē eirēnē tou theou*]. See in 2Th 3:16 “the Lord of peace” [*ho Kurios tēs eirēnēs*] and verse 9 for “the God of peace” [*ho theos tēs eirēnēs*]. **Shall guard** [*phroureō*]. “Shall garrison,” future active indicative of [*phroureō*], old verb from [*phrouros*] [*pro-horos, prooraō*], to see before, to look out). See Ac 9:24; 2Co 11:32. God’s peace as a sentinel mounts guard over our lives as Tennyson so beautifully pictures Love as doing.

4:8 **Finally** [*to loipon*]. See on 3:1. **Whatever** [*hosa*]. Thus he introduces six adjectives picturing Christian ideals, old-fashioned and familiar words not necessarily from any philosophic list of moral excellencies Stoic or otherwise. Without these no ideals can exist. They are pertinent now when so much filth is flaunted before the world in books, magazines and moving-pictures under the name of realism (the slime of the gutter and the cess-pool). **Honourable** [*semna*]. Old word from [*sebō*], to worship, revere. So revered, venerated (1Ti 3:8). **Pure** [*hagna*]. Old word for all sorts of purity. There are clean things, thoughts, words, deeds. **Lovely** [*prospilē*]. Old word, here only in N.T., from [*pros*] and [*phileō*], pleasing, winsome. **Of good report** [*euphēma*]. Old word, only here in N.T., from [*eu*] and [*phēmē*], fair-speaking, attractive. **If there be any** [*ei tis*]. Paul changes the construction from [*hosa*] (whatever) to a condition of the first class, as in 2:1, with two substantives. **Virtue** [*aretē*]. Old word, possibly from [*areskō*], to please, used very often in a variety of senses by the ancients for any mental excellence or moral quality or physical power. Its very vagueness perhaps explains its rarity in the N.T., only four times (Php 4:8; 1Pe 2:9; 2Pe 1:3,5). It is common in the papyri, but probably Paul is using it in the sense found in the LXX (Isa 42:12; 43:21) of God’s splendour and might (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 95) in connection with “praise” [*epainos*] as here or even meaning praise. **Think on these things** [*tauta logizesthe*]. Present middle imperative for habit of thought. We are responsible for our thoughts and can hold them to high and holy ideals.

4:9 **In me** [*en emoi*]. Paul dares to point to his life in Philippi as an illustration of this high thinking. The preacher is the interpreter of the spiritual life and should be an example of it. **These things do** [*tauta prassete*]. Practise as a habit [*prassō*], not [*poieō*].

4:10 **I rejoice** [*echarēn*]. Second aorist passive indicative of [*chairō*], a timeless aorist. I did rejoice, I do rejoice. **Greatly** [*megalōs*]. Old adverb, only here in N.T., from [*megas*] (great). **Now at length** [*ēdē pote*]. In N.T. only here and Ro 1:10. [*Pote*] is indefinite past (interval),

[*ēdē*] immediate present. **Ye have revived** [*anethalete*]. Second aorist active indicative of old poetic word (Homer), [*anathallō*], to sprout again, to shoot up, to blossom again. So in the LXX five times, though rare and literary word. **Your thought for me** [*to huper emou phronein*]. Accusative case of the articular present active infinitive the object of [*anethalete*] used transitively. “You caused your thinking of me to bloom afresh.” **Wherein** [*eph’ hōi*]. “In which,” “upon which” (locative case). A loose reference to Paul’s interests as involved in their thinking of him. **Ye did indeed take thought** [*kai ephroneite*]. Imperfect active, “ye were also (or had been also) thinking.” **Ye lacked opportunity** [*ēkaireisthe*]. Imperfect middle of [*akaireomai*], late and rare word, here only in N.T., from [*akairos*] [*a*] privative, [*kairos*], not to have a chance, the opposite of [*eukaireō*] (Mr 6:31).

4:11 **In respect of want** [*kath’ husterēsin*]. Late and rare word from [*hustereō*], to be behind or too late, only here and Mr 12:44 in N.T. **I have learned** [*emathon*]. Simply, “I did learn” (constative second aorist active indicative of [*manthanō*], to learn, looking at his long experience as a unit). **In whatsoever state I am** [*en hois eimi*]. “In what things (circumstances) I am.” **To be content** [*autarkēs einai*]. Predicate nominative with the infinitive of the old adjective [*autarkēs*] (from [*autos*] and [*arkeō*], to be self-sufficient), self-sufficing. Favourite word with the Stoics, only here in N.T., though [*autarkeia*] occurs in 2Co 9:8; 1Ti 6:6. Paul is contented with his lot and he learned that lesson long ago. Socrates said as to who is wealthiest: “He that is content with least, for [*autarkeia*] is nature’s wealth.”

4:12 **I know how** [*oida*]. Followed by the infinitive [*oida*] has this sense. So here twice, with [*tapeinousthai*], to be humbled, from [*tapeinos*], and with [*perisseuein*], to overflow. **Have I learned the secret** [*memuēmai*]. Perfect passive indicative of [*mueō*], old and common word from [*muō*], to close (Latin *mutus*), and so to initiate with secret rites, here only in N.T. The common word [*mustērion*] (mystery) is from [*mustēs*] (one initiated) and this from [*mueō*], to initiate, to instruct in secrets. Paul draws this metaphor from the initiatory rites of the pagan mystery-religions. **To be filled** [*chortazesthai*]. Old verb from [*chortos*] (grass, hay) and so to fatten like an animal. **To be hungry** [*peināin*]. Old verb from [*peina*] (hunger) and kin to [*penēs*], poor man who has to work for his living [*penomai*].

4:13 **I can do all things** [*panta ischuō*]. Old verb to have strength [*ischus*]. **In him that strengtheneth me** [*en tōi endunamounti me*]. Late and rare verb (in LXX) from adjective [*endunamos*] [*en, dunamis*]. Causative verb to empower, to pour power into one. See same phrase in 1Ti 1:12 [*tōi endunamōsanti me*] (aorist tense here). Paul has such strength so long as Jesus keeps on putting power [*dunamis*] into him.

4:14 **That ye had fellowship** [*sunkoinōnēsantes*]. First aorist active participle (simultaneous action with the principal verb [*kalōs epoiēsate*]). “Ye did well contributing for my affliction.”

4:15 **In the beginning of the gospel** [*en archēi tou euaggeliou*]. After he had wrought in Philippi (2Th 2:13). **Had fellowship** [*ekoinōnēsen*]. “Had partnership” (first aorist active indicative). **In the matter** [*eis logon*]. “As to an account.” No other church opened an account with Paul. **Of giving and receiving** [*doseōs kai lēmpseōs*]. Credit and debit. A mercantile metaphor repeated in verse 17 by [*eis logon humōn*] (to your account). Paul had to keep books then with no other church, though later Thessalonica and Berea joined Philippi in support of Paul’s work in Corinth (2Co 11:8f.). **But ye only** [*ei mē humeis monoī*]. Not even Antioch contributed anything but good wishes and prayers for Paul’s work (Ac 13:1-3).

4:16 **Once and again** [*kai hapax kai dis*]. “Both once and twice” they did it “even in Thessalonica” and so before Paul went to Corinth.” See the same Greek idiom in 1Th 2:18.

4:17 **I seek for** [*epizētō*]. Old verb, in N.T. only here and Ro 11:7 (linear present, I am seeking for). Lightfoot calls it “the Apostle’s nervous anxiety to clear himself” of wanting more gifts. Why not say his delicate courtesy?

4:18 **I have all things** [*apechō panta*]. As a receipt in full in appreciation of their kindness. [*Apechō*] is common in the papyri and the ostraca for “receipt in full” (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 110). See Mt 6:2, 5, 16. **I am filled** [*peplērōmai*]. Perfect passive indicative of [*plēroō*]. “Classical Greek would hardly use the word in this personal sense” (Kennedy). **An odour of a sweet smell** [*osmēn euōdias*]. [*Osmē*], old word from [*ozō*], to smell. [*Euōdia*], old word from [*eu*] and [*ozō*]. In Eph 5:2 both words come together as here and in 2Co 2:15 we have [*euōdia*] (only other N.T. example) and in verse 2Co 2:16 [*osmē*] twice. [*Euōdias*] here is genitive of quality. **Sacrifice** [*thusian*]. Not the act, but the offering as in Ro 12:1. **Well-pleasing** [*euareston*]. As in Ro 12:1.

4:19 **According to his riches in glory** [*kata to ploutos autou en doxēi*]. God has an abundant treasure in glory and will repay the Philippians for what they have done for Paul. The spiritual reward is what spurs men into the ministry and holds them to it.

4:20 **The glory** [*hē doxa*]. “The doxology flows out of the joy of the whole epistle” (Bengel).

4:21 **They that are of Caesar’s household** [*hoi ek tēs Kaisaros oikias*]. Not members of the imperial family, but some connected with the imperial establishment. The term can apply to slaves and freedmen and even to the highest functionaries. Christianity has begun to undermine the throne of the Caesars. Some day a Christian will sit on this throne. The gospel works upward from the lower classes. It was so at Corinth and in Rome. It is true today. It is doubtful if Nero had yet heard of Paul for his case may have been dismissed by lapse of time. But this obscure prisoner who has planted the gospel in Caesar’s household has won more eternal fame and power than all the Caesars combined. Nero will commit

suicide shortly after Paul has been executed. Nero's star went down and Paul's rose and rises still.

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