

Name:

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NT 637/737--Philippians

Date:

Exegesis Research Paper

I. **Text/Passage:** Book CC:VV-VV

[Phl 1:27-30 NIV] 27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the **one Spirit**, striving together as **one for the faith** of the gospel 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved--and that by God. 29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, 30 since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

[Phl 2:1-11 NIV] 1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being **united** with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being **one in spirit** and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in **humility** value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with **one another**, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he **humbled** himself by becoming obedient to death--even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to

the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

II. **Observations: (Leave ALL of these questions in your final paper. If you do not believe that the question applies to this passage, enter "Not Applicable." Delete this information within the parentheses.)**

A. Who is mentioned in this passage? Are they referred to by name, by relationship, or in some other way? Is there any description given for each one? If so, what words are used to describe them?

No one in particular. In the letter the church, overseers, and deacons are mentioned.

B. If there are multiple participants, is there any dialogue between the participants? Can one of the speakers be identified as the main speaker in the passage? If so, who is the main speaker?

The speaker or author is the apostle, Paul.

C. Were you able to tell when and where the events and/or discussions in this passage occurred? If so, when, and where did these things occur? What places, if any, are mentioned in the passage?

According to Silva Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians from a Roman prison in the late 50s or early 60s but states that in modern times strong arguments have been set forth in favor of Caesarea and Ephesus.

D. What is happening, or what is being described in the passage? What is being presented or argued for (or against)? What does the writer want the readers/hearers to know, believe, feel, and/or do as a result of what he is saying?

Paul is encouraging this church to be unified in spirit and mind because they are going to experience persecution.

E. What things are being discussed? Are there any commands, promises, warnings, words of encouragement, instructions, etc.? If so, what are they?

Unity, opposition, and conflict. He says their unity of mind and spirit will bring him (Paul) joy and that they would have the same mindset as Christ.

- F. Are there any other documents or resources quoted, cited, or referred to? If so, which ones and why?

N/A

- G. Are there any Scriptures quoted, cited, or referred to? Are they from the New Testament or Old Testament? If so, which ones and why?

N/A

- H. Is there anything else that was unfamiliar to you or that you needed to look up, such as a particular name, the definition of one of the words used, etc.?

N/A

- I. Is there anything that is repeated, that is emphasized, or that stood out to you as being unusual?

In these sixteen verses, the word one or unity is mentioned at least six times

III. Interpretation:

- A. Social Context: (What is the social context of the people in the passage? What did they believe about God, themselves, and each other? How did they interact with each of these mentioned? What did they think about and how did they interact with their families, villages/cities, neighbors, etc.?)

According to Powell, the culture in Philippi was concerned with honor and prominence. This may have been the reason why Paul mentions the overseers and deacons which he almost never does in his other letters. The theme of unity is throughout this letter and it seems that selfishness and conceit are one of the problems this church is facing. Paul gives the quintessential example of Christ when it comes to humility. This is how Paul wanted them to respond not only to the church but also to the world.

- B. Literary Context:

1. Where does this passage occur in the book? The beginning, middle, the end?

Middle of the letter

2. What has come before it? What comes after it? Insert an outline of the book, and/or a brief summary of what is mentioned before this passage and what is mentioned after it.

Before he talks about unity Paul expresses his desire to preach the gospel. Whether his imprisoned, whether criticized even if it means death. His whole life is summed up in this

phrase “for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” The verses after talk about how Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus have been examples of humility by putting others before themselves.

3. Also, how does what we find in this passage relate to what has come before and what comes after?

It all relates to the theme of unity.

4. How does this passage fit into the overall presentation or argument of the author? What would be lost if it were removed?

It’s part of the *koinōnia* that Hawthorne and Martin talk about when it comes to the Philippian church and Paul. Paul was writing this letter to find out how this church was dealing with persecution. This is also the church that supported Paul in his missionary efforts. So, there was a mutual love and concern for one another.

- C. Genre: (What type of literature is this, such as a psalm, a proverb, a law text, a narrative, etc.? Does it contain other forms of literature, such as a narrative, a dialogue, a prayer, poetry, a parable, etc.?)

Letter or epistle.

- D. Language: (Is there a special meaning to the original Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic? Compare various translations at this point. Is there a particular word which may have a special meaning?)

N/A

- E. Text Criticism: (Is there a debate in the manuscript tradition about this passage? Footnotes in study Bibles and most academic commentaries will pick this up. Does the text variant alter the meaning or interpretation of the passage? If so, how?)

N/A

- F. History of Redemption: (How does this passage relate to the rest of the Bible? Is it part of the story of Israel prior to the coming of Christ? Does it occur during Christ’s time in the world between his birth and death? Does it occur after the resurrection of Christ and giving of the Holy Spirit? Is it a result of the fall, or part of the fulfillment of the Christ-event?)

This passage occurs after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the advent of the Holy Spirit. Paul encourages these believers to live out the same mindset of Jesus’ humility in their local church.

G. Commentaries:

1. What are some of the main issues discussed by the commentators concerning this passage?

Some of the main issues discussed in these verses are the *incarnation of Jesus Christ*. These verses could be used to refute false teaching about Jesus Christ coming in the flesh which Gnostics espoused. Also, Hellerman talked about what it meant when Christ *emptied himself*. Also the use of this church hymn, given the problems at Philippi was to the church's obedience to its call of unity and humility.

2. What verse or verses, if any, do they seem to focus on more than others?

The focus seems to be on verses 2:6-11.

3. How do they see what is said here impacting what happens elsewhere in the Old Testament and/or the New Testament?

Eschatologically it was a call to obedience to the risen Christ. According to Hawthorne and Martin, " This is why the Philippians, sorely racked by pride and self-seeking, needed to conform their church life in obedience to the obedient Lord and live under his Lordship

Application(s):

- H. Summary: Summarize in one concise statement or sentence what the passage is teaching. What is the main point of this passage? What is the main message to the original audience in their context?

The main message to the original audience is the reign and obedience of Christ in one's life.

- I. Impact on/Importance to Believers, Unbelievers, and Me: (What is the importance/significance of these events to people today? What applications might we make to our own lives, such as what we believe, how we treat others, what we do, etc.? In other words, how should knowing what is in this passage then change us now?)

1. Believers: (What does this passage teach a new Christian, a mature believer, etc. about who God is, what He has done, what He is going to do, etc.? Is there a

promise to be relied upon, a truth to be known and trusted, a command to be obeyed, etc.?)

This passage teaches the believer that to be great in the kingdom of God one must be a servant. In order to win God's favor, one must serve others' interests and not their own. Those who humble themselves will be exalted by God.

2. Unbelievers: (What does this passage teach someone who has not yet trusted Christ?)

That serving the needs of others creates harmony and goodwill toward one another.

3. Me: (What does this passage teach me about God, His ways, and His actions in the past, present, and future? How does this instruct and/or challenge me?)

It teaches me that God is concerned about the neglected and needy. It challenges me to put other people's needs before my own. And when that is done God is honored. Matthew 5 reminds me that when my good works are seen it will glorify my Father in heaven.

J. Preaching/Teaching:

1. What essential elements would you want to include when preaching/teaching this text in your faith community/ministry context?

Unity. Looking out for the needs of others is a great evangelistic message. Humility is also a magnet that attracts God's favor and presence. Isaiah says, "These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word" (Isaiah. 66:2b).

2. Are there any parts of it that might require a special explanation to help your ideal/target audience understand?

No. A person who really cares for others is very winsome.

3. Are there any parts of it that might be especially challenging or disturbing to some in your ideal/target audience?

No.

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