

Philippians

Other Examples of Faith [2:19-30]

• Timothy [2:19-24]

- But I confidently expect in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you very soon,
Ἐλπίζω δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Τιμόθεον ταχέως πέμψαι ὑμῖν,
 - The word “hope” is ἐλπίζω (elpizō) which means “hope”, “hope for” or “expect”.
 - This word describes confidence that something is going to come to pass.
 - The phrase “in the Lord Jesus” shows that Paul’s confident expectation is based upon his faith in the Lord to bring this about – if it is His will [1 Cor 4:19; 16:7].
 - The word “shortly” is ταχέως (tacheōs) which means “quickly”, “hastily” or “soon”.
 - Here this is not talking about the speed of activity, but the briefness of the time interval.
- so that I also may be encouraged when I learn about how you are doing.
ἵνα καγὼ εὐψυχῶ γνοῦς τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν.
 - The word “encouraged” is from εὐψυχεῖν (eupsucheō) which means “be heartened”.
 - The word literally means “have a good soul” with the meaning “be glad” or “be of good courage”.
 - Paul typically uses παρακαλέω (parakaleō) for the verb “to encourage” [Col 2:2; 4:8; 1 Thess 3:2].
 - He uses this word here with the implication of being released from his concern for them.
 - The phrase “learn of your condition” is literally “come to know the things about you”.
 - Paul already knows *about* the Philippians, so this is clearly a reference to how they are doing.
- For I have no one *else* with me of like mind who will genuinely care about how you are doing.
οὐδένα γὰρ ἔχω ἰσόψυχον, ὅστις γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μεριμνήσει.
 - The phrase “I have” is ἔχω (echō).
 - This literally means “I have”, but Paul is talking about the people who were with him at the time.
 - The phrase “of kindred spirit” is from ἰσόψυχος (isopsuchos) which means “of like mind (soul)”.
 - The phrase “be concerned for” is from μεριμνάω (merimnaō) which means “care about”.
 - The phrase “your welfare” is the same expression we saw before which means “the things about you” and is again a reference to how they are doing.
- For all the others seek after their own interests, not the interests of Christ Jesus.
οἱ πάντες γὰρ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
 - The phrase “they all” refers to all the other people with Paul excluding Timothy.
 - The phrase “their own interests” is literally “the things of themselves”.
 - As we saw before, this is idiomatic and refers to their own personal concerns.
 - We see a similar phrase in “those of Christ Jesus”.
 - This is again idiomatic and refers to things that are important to the Lord Jesus Christ.

- But you know of his proven character,
τὴν δὲ δοκιμὴν αὐτοῦ γινώσκετε,
 - The phrase “proven worth” is from δοκιμή (dokimē) which means “standing a test” or “tried character”.
 - This is a cognate of the verb δοκιμάζω (dokimazō) which means “put to the test for approval”.
 - Timothy’s proven character is in view [Rom 5:4].
- that he served with me in the ministry of the gospel like a child *serv*ing with his father.
ὅτι ὡς πατρὶ τέκνον σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.
 - The word “served” is from δουλεύω (douleuō) which means “serve” or “obey”.
 - This word carries the sense of someone performing the duties of a bondservant.
 - The phrase “in the furtherance of the gospel” is literally “in the gospel”.
 - The meaning of “serving ... in the gospel” is serving in the ministry of the gospel.
 - The phrase “like a child *serv*ing his father” is literally “like a child with a father”.
 - The meaning is not a child serving his father, but working with his father.
- Therefore I confidently expect to send him immediately, as soon as I determine how things unfold for me;
τοῦτον μὲν οὖν ἐλπίζω πέμψαι ὡς ἂν ἀφίδω τὰ περὶ ἐμὲ ἐξαυτῆς·
 - The word “hope” is again ἐλπίζω (elpizō) which means “confidently expect”.
 - The word “see” is from ἀφοράω (aphoraō) which means “determine”.
 - The phrase “how things *go* with me” is literally “the things about me”.
 - This is a reference to what Paul’s circumstances will be moving forward.
- and I am confident in the Lord that I myself also will be coming very soon.
πέποιθα δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ταχέως ἐλεύσομαι.
 - The word “trust” is from πείθω (peithō) which means “persuade” or “convince”.
 - Here it means to become so convinced as to put confidence in someone.
 - As before, the phrase “in the Lord” shows that Paul’s confidence is based upon his faith in the Lord to bring this about.
 - As before, the word “shortly” is ταχέως (tacheōs) which means “very soon” here.

- Principles of Philippians 2:19-24
 - Paul loved the Philippians and wanted to know that they were doing well.
 - Because of his incarceration he was unable to come to them right away, so he was going to send someone who would bring back a report.
 - The only person who was with him at the time that deeply cared about the Philippians was Timothy.
 - Paul trusted in God and believed that he would be released from prison, but if his release did not happen immediately he would send Timothy.
 - Making such a backup plan is not the product of doubting, but shows an orientation to God's sovereignty and our need to make plans within the limited scope of our understanding.
 - Paul taught Timothy [2 Tim 2:2] and trusted him to be his representative [1 Cor 4:17; 1 Thess 3:1-2].
 - However, asking Timothy to travel to Philippi as his representative was no small thing...
 - the trip to/from Philippi was about 2,000 miles.
 - the highways were not safe (bandits, etc.).
 - the ships were not always seaworthy.
 - Timothy was a young man, but was willing to make such a difficult trip because he was interested in pursuing God's will rather than his own interests.
 - Timothy was well spoken of even in his youth [Acts 16:2] and had proven his character while serving with Paul [1 Cor 16:10; 2 Tim 3:10-11] as his true spiritual child [1 Tim 1:2].
 - Paul was released from prison, but the Bible does not record his release.
 - Paul was later imprisoned again in Rome where he wrote his last epistle – 2nd Timothy.
 - There is no record of Paul revisiting Philippi, but he certainly could have during his time of freedom from jail.

• **Erastus [2:25-30]**

- But I concluded that it was necessary to send to you Erastus,
Ἀναγκαῖον δὲ ἡγήσάμην Ἐραστρόδιτον ... πέμψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς,
 - The word “thought” is from ἡγέομαι (hēgeomai) which we have seen to be a thinking word.
 - This word means to give a matter consideration and come to a proper conclusion.
 - The word “necessary” is from ἀναγκαῖος (anankaios) which does mean “necessary”.
 - This word emphasizes that something or someone will meet the needs of others [Titus 3:14].
- my brother in Christ and fellow worker and fellow soldier,
τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου,
 - The phrase “my brother” is a reference to Erastus being Paul’s brother in Christ.
 - The phrases “fellow worker” and “fellow soldier” refer to Erastus having shared in Paul’s labors and dangers in ministry.
- who is also your messenger and attendant to my need;
ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου,
 - The word “messenger” is from ἀπόστολος (apostolos) which literally means “sent one”.
 - This word is used to describe a “delegate”, “messenger”, “envoy” or “apostle”.
 - The word “minister” is from λειτουργός (leitourgos) which means “minister” or “assistant”.
 - This word is a cognate of λειτουργία (leitourgia) which we saw in v. 17 meaning “service”.
 - In Greek society a λειτουργός (leitourgos) was someone who undertook civic duties such as defraying the cost of an embassy, financing the training of athletes, supporting the arts, etc.
 - These men were to be greatly honored.
 - In the N.T. λειτουργός (leitourgos) is used of priestly service [Rom 15:15-16; Heb 8:1-2].
 - Here the priestly service of Erastus was to tend to Paul’s needs.
- because he was longing for you all
ἐπειδὴ ἐπιποθῶν ἦν πάντας ὑμᾶς
 - The word “because” is ἐπειδὴ (epeidē) which is a marker of cause meaning “because” or “since”.
 - This word introduces the explanation of why Paul concluded that it was necessary to send Erastus to Philippi.
 - The phrase “longing for” is from ἐπιποθέω (epipothēō) which means “long for” or “desire”.
 - One early manuscript includes the verb “to see” here which makes this “longing to see you all”.
 - As with almost all manuscript questions, the meaning is the same either way here.
- and was distressed in view of the fact that you had heard that he was physically ill.
καὶ ἀδημονῶν, διότι ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἠσθένησεν.
 - The word “distressed” is from ἀδημονέω (adēmoneō) which means “distressed/troubled”.
 - This word was used of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, so it is not descriptive of sinful worry [Matt 26:36-37; Mark 14:32-33].
 - The word “because” is διότι (dioti) which means “because of this” or “in view of the fact that”.
 - This word introduces the explanation of why Erastus was distressed.
 - The word “sick” is from ἀσθενέω (astheneō) which means “weak” or “sick”.
 - This word can refer to spiritual weakness [Jas 5:14-16], but describes physical illness here.

- For indeed he was so physically ill that he almost died, but God showed him mercy,
καὶ γὰρ ἠσθένησεν παραπλήσιον θανάτῳ· ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἠλέησεν αὐτόν,
 - Again, the word “sick” is from ἀσθενέω (astheneō) which describes physical illness here.
 - It is quite possible that Epaphroditus suffered from “Roman fever” which sometimes swept the city.
 - The phrase “to the point of” is from παραπλήσιος (paraplēsios) which means “nearing”.
 - The meaning is that Epaphroditus was so ill that he almost died.
 - The word “mercy” is from ἐλεέω (eleeō) which means “compassion” or “mercy”.
 - This word means to demonstrate great concern for someone in need [Rom 11:25-32].
- and not him only but also me, so that I would not have excessive grief.
οὐκ αὐτὸν δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐμέ, ἵνα μὴ λύπην ἐπὶ λύπην σχῶ.
 - The translations “on him” and “on me” are based upon the previous verse being translated “had mercy on”.
 - The words “sorrow” are from λύπη (lupē) which means “grief” or “sorrow”.
 - The word “upon” is ἐπὶ (epi) which means “upon” or “on top of”.
 - The phrase λύπην ἐπὶ λύπην is literally “grief on top of grief” and is idiomatic meaning “excessive grief”.
- Therefore I have eagerly sent him
σπουδαιότερως οὖν ἔπεμψα αὐτόν,
 - The phrase “I have sent” is an aorist (past tense) of πέμπω (pempō) which means “send”.
 - Some say that this should be viewed as in the past relative to when the letter is received, but I believe this means relative to the writing of this letter.
 - This means that Epaphroditus had already been sent by Paul to Philippi and was not the courier of this letter.
 - This also means the he was not one of the ones “with Paul” [vv. 20-21] who were so self-involved.
 - The phrase “all the more eagerly” is from σπουδαίως (spoudaiōs) which means “hastily”.
 - This word can also mean “earnestly”, “eagerly” or “diligently” [Luke 7:4; 2 Tim 1:17; Titus 3:13].
- so that when you see him again you may rejoice
ἵνα ἰδόντες αὐτὸν πάλιν χαρῆτε
 - The phrase “you may rejoice” is a subjunctive of χαίρω (chairō) which means “rejoice”.
 - The subjunctive means that Paul desires for them to rejoice, but does not know for sure that they will.
- and I may be less concerned *about you*.
καὶ γὰρ ἀλυπότερος ᾶ.
 - The phrase “I may be” is a subjunctive of εἰμί (eimi) which means “to be”.
 - The subjunctive here means that Paul’s concerns being alleviated is contingent upon the Philippians rejoicing over seeing that Epaphroditus is well.
 - The phrase “less concerned” is from ἄλυπος (alupos) which means “free from concern”.
 - This speaks of Paul’s deep concern for the Philippians and his desire to be released from that burden [vv. 19-20].

- Welcome him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; προσδέχεσθε οὖν αὐτὸν ἐν κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε,
 - The word “Receive” is from προσδέχομαι (prosdechomai) which means “receive (from)”.
 - This word emphasizes receiving in a friendly manner as in “welcome”.
 - The phrase “in the Lord” means that Epaphroditus should be welcomed as a servant of Christ.
 - He had served Paul well and was being sent home for their blessing, not because he had failed.
 - The phrase “in high regard” is from ἐντιμος (entimos) which means “in honor”.
 - This word can mean “precious” or “highly regarded” [Luke 7:2; 1 Pet 2:4-6].
- given that he came close to death because of his devotion to the work of Christ, ὅτι διὰ τὸ ἔργον Χριστοῦ μέχρι θανάτου ἠγγισεν
 - The word “because” is ὅτι (hoti) which means “that” or “because”.
 - In this context it would be better translated “given that”.
 - The word “for” is the preposition διὰ (dia).
 - When followed by the accusative as it is here, this word means “because of”.
 - Paul was not saying that Christ was working to bring about Epaphroditus’ death.
 - He was saying that Epaphroditus was devoted to the work of Christ and it almost led to his death.
- risking his life to supply what was lacking in your service to me. παραβολευσάμενος τῇ ψυχῇ, ἵνα ἀναπληρώσῃ τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα τῆς πρὸς με λειτουργίας.
 - The phrase “risking his life” is from παραβολεύομαι (paraboleuomai) which means “expose to danger”.
 - This tells us that Epaphroditus served the Lord without regard for his own life.
 - The word “complete” is from ἀναπληρῶ (anaplēroō) which means “fill up” or “fill a gap”.
 - This word means to supply whatever is missing.
 - Paul uses ἀναπληρῶ (anaplēroō) combined with ὑστέρημα (husterēma) in 1 Cor 16:17 where it is translated “supplied what was lacking”.
 - The word “service” is from λειτουργία (leitourgia) which we saw in verse 17 to describe priestly service and is a reference to their sacrificial support for his ministry.

- Principles of Philippians 2:25-30
 - The Philippians had sent Epaphroditus to Paul to bring a gift [Phil 4:18] and to stay and assist him.
 - While staying in Rome with Paul, Epaphroditus became physically ill and almost died.
 - The news of his illness had made its way back to Philippi and he was distressed knowing that the believers there were quite concerned about him.
 - God had shown Epaphroditus mercy in restoring his health and His act of mercy blessed Paul who was grieved about Epaphroditus being ill and the effect that news must have had on the Philippians.
 - Paul knew that Epaphroditus longed to see the Philippians, so he sent him to Philippi so that they might rejoice in seeing that he was doing well.
 - Paul was concerned that the Philippians might perceive Epaphroditus' return as an indication of some sort of failure, so he made sure they knew how highly he regarded him.
 - Paul knew what kind of risks Epaphroditus had taken on when he agreed to be the courier for the Philippians.
 - Paul also knew that Epaphroditus was devoted to the Lord and that the work he was doing for Christ nearly cost him his life.
 - Paul had sent Epaphroditus back to Philippi before writing this letter, but hoped that when they received this letter they would realize that they should rejoice in his return.
 - We do not know the timing of when the letter was delivered versus when Epaphroditus arrived in Philippi, but Paul's message to the Philippians was pertinent either way.
 - In either case, Paul loved Epaphroditus and the Philippians and wanted his return to bring them all much joy.