

Philippians 2026 Series -Lesson 13
“Motivation and Attitude for Living the Christian Life”
Spheres of Grace Ministries International, Inc.

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Text: Philippians 2:3-4

[Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Introduction:

We concluded our study of Philippians 2:1-2 by identifying five basic resources available to the believer in conducting himself in a way that is fitting a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven: (1). Consolation in Christ– the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (2). Comfort of Love- encouragement generated by God’s self-sacrificial love (3). Fellowship of the Spirit- common communion of fellowship with God and other believers (4). Bowels- passionate affections generated by deep-seated gut-wrenching feeling of compassion (5). Mercies- compassion as a response to one’s circumstances.

Each of us has a designed ministry we are to perform as a result of being a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. Using those resources we saw that we are to: (1). All be likeminded- have the same doctrines (2). Have the same love- maintaining self-sacrificial love (3) Be of one accord- being of one soul (functioning as one in the body of Christ) (4). Be of one mind- think the same way.

Now in Philippians 2:3-4 we look at the motivation and attitude we are to maintain as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven in living the Christian Life enabling us to experience the joy God has designed for us as we live out our designed ministry.

I. Instructions Concerning the Motivation and Attitude of Service:

Our text is Philippians 2:3-4

[Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

1. We Are Not to Be Motivated by A Spirit of Self-Seeking Ambition:

[Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory

“Let” This word is not in the original Greek Text.

“nothing” (maeiden) **Not One Thing**

This word is in the emphatic position of the sentence hence my adding the emphasis of the capital letters and the exclamation mark, **Not One Thing!**

“be done” This verbal phrase is also not in The Greek Text (Now bear with me... We are dealing with a letter written in Koine Greek and although it is easy to understand by the person who knows Koine Greek, it requires a few additional words for us to understand it in English, even the Old King James... so bear with me,)

There are two things to note here. If the verb is omitted by the writer it adds the emphasis which punctuation would otherwise provide. So, in this statement two verbs are omitted by the writer, “LET” which means to allow and “BE DONE” which expresses action or behavior.

The second thing noted here is the placement of the word “maeiden” which means “not one thing.” The sentence begins with this word in the emphatic position, thus the use of the capital letters and the exclamation mark to express that properly in English. So the translation in our King James text expresses what Paul was saying, *“...let nothing be done through strive...”* but misses the emphatic emphasis Paul places upon it **“NOTHING, THROUGH STRIFE!”**

“through” (kata) **according to the norms and standards of....**
Preposition of norms and standards

“strife” (eri-theian) **self seeking ambition....**

Thus, we are not to be motivated by self-seeking ambition in the performance of our living out our designed ministries.

2. Our Ministry Is Not to Be Motivated By Empty Pride:

“...or vainglory....” (keno-doxian) **or empty glory,**

This is an interesting Greek word that identifies the reality of the long-term emptiness resulting from pride. It is a compound word formed with the word for **“empty”** and the word for **“glory”**, *doxa* is the Greek word and is used here to express honor resulting from a good opinion based on character. So, this word emphasizes that character is lacking- it is empty

glory and corresponds in meaning to our word pride or a self-inflated ego. Self-inflated ego is not to be the motivation for our living out our personal ministry.

3. Ministry Is to Be Preformed on the Basis of Our Considering the Needs of Other Believers as Surpassing Our Needs:

“...but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves....”

Understand that this is not talking about our considering other people to be of greater value than we are but is talking about our considering their needs as being superior to our needs. Notice, the word is needs- what they need, not desire.

Now, before we balk at this and start comparing their needs with our own, let me remind you of this promise:

Philippians 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

See, God has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. Here, we are talking about stewardship and the responsibility that we have for the consideration of the needs of others above our own.

I know, I know! If they are believers, they have the same promise that God will supply all their needs. It could be that God wants to do that through you. Remember! We are talking about our attitude and motivation in ministering.

Look at the text...

“but” (alla) **BUT**

This is the Strongest Conjunction of Contrast in the Greek language.

“in lowliness of mind” (ta-peino-phro-su-nae) = **in humbleness of mind...**

This is an emphasis upon the way we think- thinking with humility which is the proper application of grace orientation.

“let each esteem” (hae-gou-menoi) **each of you is to make it a principle to participate in constantly considering...**

Participle - introduces a principle

Present Tense - continuous action

Middle Voice - Subject participates in this action

Ah! You see the middle voice? You have help maintaining this principle - the Holy Spirit participates with all of us as we maintain this attitude toward each other.

“other” (al-lae-lous) **the needs of others of the same kind....**

This word means others of the same kind- other believers. This is a responsibility we have toward other believers.

“better” (huper-echon-tas) **held above as a matter of principle**

The use of this word indicates an attitude that prompts us to maintain a principle that the needs of others are held above ours in the sense of priority.

“than themselves” (heau-tohn) **their own....**

We are simply to maintain a principle that values the needs of others above our own.

4. We Are Not Just To Evaluate Our Own Needs But We Are To Evaluate The Needs of Others Also:

Look not every man on his own things, but every man Look on the things of others.

The Greek Text reads this way,

Not the things of themselves each looking at, but also at the things of others, each looking at.

“Looking” (sko-poun-tes) **watching and evaluating mentally...**

This Greek word means to evaluate or survey mentally.

Thus the believer is to evaluate or survey the needs of other believers along with his own.

You will observe the use of the word **“also”** in the text. So, we have the right to survey our own needs, but not to the exclusion of the priority of other believers

“others” (he-te-rohn) **others different from ours**

This word means those whose needs are different from ours. In verse three the word for **others** was **al-lae-lous** meaning others of the same kind- other believers. Here the word **others** is **he-te-rohn** meaning others of a different kind- they are believers, but their needs are different than ours.

II. Expanded Translation of verses 2-4:

Verse 2

You! Make my joy complete in order that you might continuously think the same thing, keep on having (as a matter of principle) the same self sacrificial love, one in

soul, thinking in the sphere of oneness.

Verse 3

Do not do one thing according to the norms and standards of self seeking ambition or empty pride, but in humbleness each is to make it a principle to constantly consider the needs of others of the same kind as being above their own in priority.

Verse 4

Each man is to not make it a principle to keep on watching and evaluating just his own needs but the needs of others whose needs are different than his own.

Summary:

When these instructions are followed it forms the basis for the fullness of joy for believers. As we minister with them and to them the joy of each of us is made complete.

Let us summarize the instructions we have studied here:

1. Think The Way Paul Thought
2. Maintain Self-Sacrificial love
3. Maintain Unity With Other Believers
4. Think In The Sphere Of Oneness With Each Other
5. Service Is Not To Be Motivated By Self Seeking Ambition
6. Service Is Not To Be Motivated By Empty Pride
7. Evaluate and Consider The Needs Of Others Which Are Different From You.

When these instructions identified in verses 2-4 are followed, the basis is formed for the fullness of joy with other believers. As we minister with them, and to them, the joy of both is made complete.

“The Doctrine of The Fullness of Joy”

by

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1. **Through Grace God Has Provided For Every Believer To Have Joy and To Be A Source of Joy to Other Believers.**

Philippians 2:2

You! Make my joy complete in order that you might continuously think the same thing, keep on having (as a matter of principle) the same self sacrificial love, (being) one in soul, thinking in the sphere of oneness. (Expanded Translation From The Greek Text)

A. Grace for living the Christian life is defined by forming an acrostic:

God's
Resources
At
Christ's
Expense

B. Grace is appropriated by faith:

Following
Applying
In
Trusting
Him

2. God Has Made These Resources Available to Us Through Our Union With Jesus Christ:

Titus 2:14

(Christ)Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

“Peculiar” (periousion) **A dot encompassed by a circle showing permanent ownership or possession.** This word describes the eternal position of the believer “in Christ.”

3. Our Union With Christ Results In:

(1). Our having the Holy Spirit to call to our side in times of need

Philippians 2:1a“...in Christ (we have) one to call to our side for comfort, encouragement, direction,....”

(2). The Holy Spirit exercises a gentle cheering and encouragement from the source of self-sacrificial love that continues to love regardless of the response.

Philippians 2:1b “...(in Christ we have) cheering and encouragement originating from self-sacrificial love...”

(3). Our having the resource of fellowship or partnership - the possession of the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 2:1c “...(in Christ we have) common communion of fellowship from the source of the Spirit...”

- (4). Our having passionate affections generated by deep-seated feelings extended to us to relieve sorrow and needs.

Philippians 2:1d *“...(in Christ we have) passionate affections generated by deep-seated feelings for others (believers).....”*

- (5). Our having the capacity for compassion toward other believers and their circumstances

Philippians 2:1e *“...(in Christ we have) compassion for others as a result of their circumstances*

4. We Are to Continue to Develop a Greater Degree of Fellowship with Other Believers In the Sphere of the Gospel.

Philippians 2:2

You! Make my joy complete in order that you might continuously think the same thing, keep on having (as a matter of principle) the same self-sacrificial love, (being) one in soul, thinking in the sphere of oneness. (Expanded Translation From The Greek Text)

Philippians 1:4-5

“...Always in every prayer of mine making supplication for all of you with joy I am thanking my God constantly for your joint- participation (with me) in the furtherance of the gospel from the first day until this particular moment....”

5. This Will Result In:

- (1). Our having the same attitude toward other believers that God has toward us.

Philippians 2:2b *“...that you might continuously think the same thing....”*

- (2). Or having the same sacrificial love for other believers that God has for us.

Philippians 2:2c *“...keep on having (as a matter of principle) the same self-sacrificial love....”*

- (3). Our becoming one soul with other believers.

Philippians 2:2d *“...(being) one in soul....”*

- (4). Our Thinking the same thing other believers think.

Philippians 2:2e *“...thinking in the sphere of oneness....”*

6. **We Are Not To Seek Followers of Our Selves or Try to Get Approbation for Ourselves; But In Humility We Are to Regard Other Believer's Needs As Being Above Our Own in Priority.**

Philippians 2:3

Do not do one thing according to the norms and standards of self-seeking ambition or empty pride, but in humbleness each is to make it a principle to constantly consider the needs of others of the same kind (believers) above your own. (Expanded Translation From The Greek Text)

7. **While We Have a Right to Consider Our Own Interests, We Are to Consider Those whose Needs are Different Than Ours.**

Philippians 2:4

Each man is to make it a principle not to just keep on watching and evaluating his own needs but those whose needs are different from him, also. (Expanded Translation From The Greek Text)

Conclusion:

When we incorporate these seven principles into our daily lives, our motivation and attitude will be right, we will experience the fullness of joy, and we will bring joy to others.

One hymn writer wrote it this way,

Others, Lord, Yes, Others, Let this my motto be, Help me to live for others, That I may live like Thee!

But It All Begins at Salvation

*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
With the heart man believes unto righteousness...
But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!*

“And your joy no man taketh from you...”

(Luke 16:22)