

Philippians 1:29 – 2:11

New American Standard Version

²⁹ For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, ³⁰ experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me. ^{2:1} Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. ³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, **although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.** ⁸ **Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** ⁹ **For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

This entire passage is included for context, and certain parts are highlighted for your attention.

This passage is probably quite familiar. As best as you can, look at it with fresh eyes. What new understanding might you discover?

***"I believe in ...
...Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord..."***

Observation (What does it say?):
What do you notice in this passage?

- *Repeated words or ideas?*
- *Comparisons or contrasts?*
- *Purpose or explanation?*
- *Unusual or symbolic language?*
- *Other observations?*

Interpretation (What does it mean?):
After observing the passage:

- *What questions come to mind as you read?*
- *What questions might someone have who is reading the passage for the first time?*
- *Pick five words that stand out to you in the passage. What words would summarize the main ideas of the passage?*

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- *What in this passage do you associate with each part of the phrase in the Creed:
Jesus,
Christ,
His only Son,
our Lord?*
- *What application do you think Paul had in mind as he wrote this passage (considering the context)?*

Additional questions for thought and discussion:

- What “conflict” is Paul writing about in *Philippians 1:29*? The extended context before this passage might help.
- How do you understand the terms “form,” “likeness,” and “appearance” in this passage? How might those terms be misunderstood?
- How do you understand the term “emptied Himself” in this passage? How might that term be misunderstood?
- How does the line in the Creed relate to the Christian idea that Jesus is “fully God and fully man”?
- Consider the additions made by the Nicene Creed (about 150 years later). What would have prompted such extensive expansions? (the only-begotten; begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God; Light of Light; very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; Through Him all things were made)

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

Interpretation
(What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer’s thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Observation
(What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer’s thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?

Application
(What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Benjel (1687-1752)