

## THE PARENTHETIC PERFECTION EPISTLES – LOVE

### PHILIPPIANS

The Philippians Epistle is a Divine commentary on the later half of Ephesians, and similarly, it is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrines developed in the first half of the Ephesian Epistle. - This is the key to its contents. **It does not deal with doctrines but with deportment.**

This will illumine many a difficult passage in this letter, and this has been allowed to colour the wording of the version. As shown in the literary framework, the Epistle is a perfect, though complex reversion. Its controlling theme is Participation in the Evangel, not only by its public proclamation, but especially by a conduct consistent with its teachings.

Following the Introduction and preceding the Conclusion, the Philippians' fellowship with Paul by contributions and in sufferings is detailed, interspersed with Paul's own Evangel.

The main subject, the **Living Expression of the Evangel**, or, "Having on the Word of Life" (2:16), is illustrated by four examples.

Christ and Paul.

Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Four exhortations are introduced in this division. The entreaty to imitate Christ opens it, and at its close Paul places himself before them as a model.

So too, the service of Timothy is preceded by an exhortation, and the sufferings of Epaphroditus are followed by an appeal.

These two themes, **suffering** and **service**, pervade the whole Epistle, from the introduction, where Paul and Timothy style themselves as SLAVES, rather than Apostles, to the end, where the grace of LORD, or MASTER, rather than Christ is invoked.

The humility of Christ is presented, in harmony with the transcendent truth of this economy. It did not begin with His birth or result only in His exaltation over the earth. It commenced in glory before His incarnation, which was but a step in His downward path of obedience to God's will. It led from the highest place in the Universe to the lowest, under the curse of the cross. It will exalt Him to headship over all creation, which will bow to Him as its master, for the glory of God.

For the Word to become flesh (John 1:14) meant humiliation. Paul's physical connections were his boast. They pledged to him all the privileges and advantages that belonged alone to the Jew. Romans 3:1,2. Greek.

*"What, then, of the Jews prerogative, or what is the benefit of circumcision? Much in every manner. For first, indeed, that to them were entrusted the oracles of God"*

But all these are flung away once he knows Christ after the Spirit, and his Heavenly exaltation. Philippians 3:4-16.

*"But what things were gain to me, but these have I deemed a forfeit because of Christ. But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit, because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and deeming it to be refuse, that I may be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ...."*