

## **Chapter V The ethical exhortations in Phil 3:7-11, 3:12-14, 4:4-7 and 4:10-13**

### **5.1.Introduction**

From Phil 3 onward, Paul does not deal with Christology separately among the ethical exhortation sections, as he has done in Phil 1 and 2, with the ethical exhortation in 1:27-30, 2:1-5, 2:12-18 and Christology in 2:6-11. In Phil 3 Paul exhorts his readers as well as himself. Christology again motivates the ethical exhortation. In chapter 4 of this study Jesus was the supreme example to the believers on how to behave within the community, as well as on the outside. In the present chapter, Paul exhorts his readers to follow his example to stand firm in their faith against a variety of opposition to the gospel. He shows how he turned from opposition to the gospel and confidence in the flesh to the righteousness that comes from God by faith in Christ (3:4-11; Thielman 1994:147).

In 3:10-11 Paul discusses how suffering for the sake of Christ leads to complete salvation. He explicitly said this to his readers in Philippi in 1:27-30. Much of the rest of the letter emphasises this explicit message by examples of suffering and finding, or hope to find, salvation through it (Oakes 2001:118). First of all Paul refers to his own hope in Christ to exhort his readers to stand firm in the same faith in Christ Jesus, as he instructed them (3:7-11; 3:12-14). In 4:4-7, and 4:10-14 he exhorts his readers to rejoice in the Lord, to show their consideration to everyone as the Lord is near and assured them God's peace through Christ Jesus will guard them.

### **5.2 Paul's righteousness through faith in Christ (Phil 3:7-11: units 1-8)**

#### **5.2.1 Introduction**

According to 3:2-6, the exigence, which Paul seeks to counter in the letter, is the encounter with a rival gospel in the Philippian church (Snyman 1993:327). This gospel could be attributed to Jewish Christians supporting the observance of circumcision (3:2) and salvation based on good works (3:2-11; Snyman 1993:327). Their influence is increasing, creating confusion about faith and pride in the works of the law (Watson 1988:59). Vv 7-11 thus indicate a sharp shift of Paul's argument from his polemical portrayal of perfection *in flesh* (ἐν σαρκί; 3:2-6) to his real existence *in Christ* (ἐν Χριστῷ; units 5 to 9 vv 8c-11). Hurtado (2003:185) evidentially proclaimed, nobody can read 3:7-11 without sensing the depth of a religious feeling towards Christ, which seems to have characterised Paul's Christian life. In this passage, he unfavourably compares all of his pre-conversion religious

efforts and gains over against ‘the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus as his Lord’

Units 1 to 3 (vv 7-8b) indicate that Paul viewed his previous successes as spiritual failure (Silva 1992:178). On the other hand, units 4 to 9 (vv 8c-11) describe that Paul’s ultimate purpose is to know Christ entirely (v 10; O’ Brien 1991:383), *to know the power of his resurrection*. Holloway (2001:137) demonstrates that this section (3:7-11) is a development of his *boasting in Christ Jesus*.

Koperski (1996:134) states that this section depicts the example of Paul as almost as significant in this tapestry as the example of Christ in 2:6-11. The example of Paul, which was initially brought forward with the prominent purpose of countering a particular external opposition, turns out to be the way of resisting every opposition to the congregation’s existence in Christ, both inside and outside (Koperski 1996:1345). For Paul only one thing is absolute, to regard all things as loss and dung for the sake of the incomparable value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, who voluntarily emptied himself and became obedient up to death on a cross for the sake of them and whom they now confess as Lord (Koperski 199:134). Paul’s intention is here to make his readers confident in their faith in Christ Jesus by drawing their attention to himself. By comparing his previous status as a Jew with his present one as a Christian and an apostle to convince his readers that his instruction on salvation is the only true way to salvation, he exhorts them to stand firm in their faith in Christ Jesus without being shaken from their current status as believers by false instruction.

## **5.2.2 Paul considers everything as loss, because of Christ (units 1 to 3; vv 7-8b)**

### **5.2.2.1 Paul’s gain**

Unit 1 (v 7) [ἀλλά]<sup>59</sup> ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἤγημαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν, *but whatever things were gains to me, I regard these things as loss because of Christ*. The adversary conjunction *but* ([ἀλλά] v 7) marks a sharp shift from the descriptions about his previous identity when he put his confidence in the flesh and was proud before God as a Jew (vv 5-6), to his conversion to Christ with a new identity as a Christian (O’ Brien 1991:383). The relative clause *whatever things were gains to me* (ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη v 7) should be connected with the demonstrative pronoun *these things* (ταῦτα v 7), which is the direct object of the main verb *regard* (ἠγέομαι v 7). The relative pronoun *whatever things* (ἅτινα) points out that the previous things were illustrative rather than exhaustive. For Paul such things were regarded as advantages to him to achieve his goal for the righteousness by the law (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:48).

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<sup>59</sup> O’ Brien (1991:383) renders this conjunction as *nevertheless*. In this context *but* is the better rendering. See Hawthorne (1983:135) and Martin ([1959] 1987:148) render it.

The plural noun *gains* (κέρδη v 7) as the predicate of the relative clause *whatever things were* (ἅτινα ἦν) is in sharp contrast to the singular noun *loss* (ζημίαν v 7) as the predicative of I regard *these things* (ταῦτα ἤγημαι; Koperski 1996:141; O' Brien 1991:383). Paul regarded these gains (κέρδη v 7) as advantages to him, as the imperfect verb *was* (ἦν) describes the constant attitude of Paul in terms of his Jewish *advantages* before his conversion. He regarded it as useless as they were not able to provide him with real righteousness at all (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:48). Paul's use of an *inclusio* bound by the words *gains* ((κέρδη v 7) and *I may gain* (κερδήσω 8c) expresses how his *existence in Christ* (ἐν Χριστῷ) surpasses *his existence in the flesh* (ἐν σαρκί; Bloomquist 1993:134). In 1:21 Paul emphasises by means of a metaphor that *to die is to gain [Christ]*, which means that his previous gains are collectively a *loss*, because of his ultimate gain, Christ himself (Fee 1999:143).

The second clause *I regard these things as loss, because of Christ* (ταῦτα ἤγημαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν v 7), as the main clause in unit 1 should be understood in relation to the relative clause of unit 1. It is a balance-sheet, which shows gain and loss. All his advantages from birth and upbringing, were previously placed on the credit side as gain. Now Paul transferred them to the debit side as loss (Beare [1959] 1973:110). With the verb *regard* (ἠγέομαι) in the perfect tense, which denotes an action in the past which is effective in the present, Paul explains his current condition of mind since the crisis experience when he saw Christ, and remained unchanged ever since (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:53; Martin [1959] 1987:148). This revaluation of his fleshly values probably occurred at his conversion on the Damascus road although it is not explicitly mentioned (O' Brien 1991:384). The transformation of Paul's life did not happen gradually and unconsciously, but happened dramatically with abiding effects, as the verb *regard* or *think* (ἠγέομαι) describes the conscious and personal decision made in response to the grace of God and the call of Christ (Martin [1959] 1987:148).

The demonstrative pronoun *these things* (ταῦτα v 7), as the direct object of the verb *regard* (ἠγέομαι) and replaced by *everything* (πάντα) in v 8, is used to emphasize *gains* (κέρδος) in apposition with *whatever things* (ἅτινα) in the first clause. It speaks of the fulfillment of vv 5-6 (O' Brien 1991:384). All the natural and historical gains, which belong to the Jews by the divine stipulation and especially their ethical elegance and blamelessness, which might otherwise be tendentious to be *gains* (κέρδος), are currently considered as a *loss* (ζημία; Schlier 1965:673). In comparison with its preceding advantage Paul counts the natural and historical presuppositions of his life as *loss* (Stumpff 1964:888, 890). The repetition of the verb *regard* (ἠγέομαι) in vv 7-8 points not to the objective loss of the thing itself, but to the subjective loss of its value (Stumpff 1964:890). Paul treats his previous advantageous *gains* (κέρδος) as a single *loss* (ζημία; Hawthorne 1983:135). Paul's entire attitude, behaviour and values are now determined by Christ and none at all by the presuppositions (v 5) and attainments (v 6) of his own *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη) as valued by devout Jews (Stumpff 1964:890). Due to the fact that he came to know Christ, Paul sees his previous life, which trusted in, and appealed to his descent, the Law and achievement, is not only fruitless but completely harmful. His radical

reevaluation of values happens *because of Christ* (διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν v 7; Hawthorne 1983:136; Schlier 1965:673).

The phrase *because of Christ* (διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν v 7) indicates the motivation of Paul's actions (Koperski 1996:141; O' Brien 1991:385). Although the preposition (διὰ with the accusative) could be rendered as *for the sake of*, in this context it seems more plausible to give the reason why Paul regard everything as loss. Hawthorne (1983:137) convinces that it clearly describes the reason for Paul's decision. In view of the following statement *so that I might gain Christ* (ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω v 8), he regards everything as *loss, because of Christ* explained by the preposition διὰ (here and twice in v 8). Therefore, O' Brien (1991:385) is wrong to take it as *for the sake of*. He insists that for Paul, Christ had become the center of his life, and for the sake of Him he currently regards all his previous advantages as loss (1991:385). However, the reason for Paul's new life is Christ therefore *because of Christ*. Paul's encounter with the risen Jesus on the Damascus road convinced him that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah whom the Jewish people had longed for and worked for. Therefore, he enthusiastically rejected all his previous advantages, to gain this one person of supreme worth (Hawthorne 1983:136). As a result, we can describe Paul's main concern in v 7 is not primarily to write his autobiography, but to instruct his readers not to be concerned with the false instruction given by the false teacher (3:2-3) and to exhort them with it (Collange 1979:129).

### 5.2.2.2 The incomparable precious knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord

Unit 2 (v 8) ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἠγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, *more than that, I regard everything as loss because of the incomparable precious knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*. The unusual particles *more than that* (ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε v 8) introduce a sentence which extends to the end of v 11. They signal the shift in tense from the perfect tense, *I have regarded* (ἤγημαι v 7) to the present *I regard* (ἠγοῦμαι v 8). They introduce an extension to *everything of value which is independent of Christ*, move from the particular *whatever things* (ἅτινα v 7) to the universal *everything* (πάντα v 8; Collange 1979:129; Hawthorne 1983:136; O' Brien 1991:386). Lincoln (1981:91) indicates that the change of tense from ἤγημαι (v 7) to ἠγοῦμαι (v 8) denotes that there is a current aspect to the apostle's decision to depend on nothing except Christ. This emphatic introduction to a significant announcement indicates that Paul's thought is extended to reject not only the religious advantages described in the earlier verses, but *everything* conceivably reckoned as meritorious and claimed as acceptable to God by the 'religious' person (Martin [1959] 1987:148-149). A more entire condemnation of 'religion' with its attempt to appear in front of God in the foundation of its merit and privileges can hardly be imagined (Martin 1[1959] 1987:149). Paul expands his statement in v 7. The things he listed as *gains* (vv 5-6) are not the only things that he currently regards as *loss*. In stead of *these things* (ταῦτα = ἅτινα) which referred to the Jewish religious advantages of vv 5 and 6 he regards *everything* (πάντα v 8) as *loss* (ζημίαν v 8), whatever may compete with Christ, as for instance his faithfulness, or whatever might be thought of as

meritorious and claimed as acceptable to God by the ‘religious’ person (Hawthorne 1983:136-137). Paul even regards *everything* (πάντα v 8) on which he might place his fleshly confidence to be positively harmful (O’ Brien 1991:386-387). *Everything* (πάντα v 8) might contain his Roman citizenship, material possessions, or an assured position in the world – actually anything in which he was tempted to trust and which therefore stood over against the personal knowledge of Christ (O’ Brien 1991:387).

For unit 2 b *because of the incomparable precious knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord* (διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου v 8), according to Collange (1979:129), this expression is peculiar in Paul. The neuter singular participle *incomparable preciousness* (ὑπερέχον v 8) is stronger than an adjective. It is a substantive that highlights the worthy things for which Paul renounced everything else (Hawthorne 1983:137; Koperski 1996:157; O’ Brien 1991:387). The participle phrase *the incomparable preciousness* (τὸ ὑπερέχον v 8) is qualified by the three genitives: *of knowledge* (τῆς γνώσεως v 8), *of Christ Jesus* (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 8) and *of my Lord* (τοῦ κυρίου μου v 8). The first *of knowledge* (τῆς γνώσεως v 8) is a genitive of apposition, which implies that matchless worth *is* the knowledge of Christ (O’ Brien 1991:387). The second genitive *of Christ Jesus* (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 8) can either be a subjective genitive, meaning that for Paul *incomparable preciousness* is to be known by Christ Jesus (cf. 1 Cor 13:12), or an objective genitive, meaning that Christ Jesus is the one who is known (Hawthorne 1983:137). However, as O’ Brien (1991:387) and Hawthorne (1983:137) convince, in this context the genitive *of Christ Jesus* (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 8) is used as an objective genitive rather than a subjective genitive not only in that the incomparable preciousness Paul is considering is to know Christ as the ultimate object of his quest, but also because Christ Jesus is the one who is to be known, as confirmed by v 10, where the demonstrative pronoun *him* (αὐτόν) is the object of the infinitive *to know* (γινῶναι v 10). The third genitive *of my Lord* (τοῦ κυρίου μου v 8) is in apposition to the second genitive *of Christ Jesus* (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 8). It indicates the personal knowledge or intimate familiarity with Christ as *my Lord* that for him makes all other *values* appear useless (Hawthorne 1983:137).

In the pagan religions, the word *knowledge* (γνώσις) was one of the key words, which signified a kind of mystical knowledge of or communion with the god – ‘a revelation of the god in which the vision in the mystery cult brings the transformation of the beholder’ (Hawthorne 1983:138). The noun *knowledge* (γνώσις) meaning knowing, thought, judgement, opinion, acknowledges the obedience of the will of God in Old Testament sense (Bultmann 1976:706; Schmitz 1986:392). An obedient and grateful acknowledgment of the deeds and requests of God is combined with knowledge of God and what he has done and requested (Bultmann 1976:707). Paul quite often uses the word *knowledge* (γνώσις) to communicate information he wants his readers to apprehend (Gal 3:7; Eph 5:5; 6:22; Phil 1:12; Robeck, Jr. 1993:527). As v 10 clarifies, the *to know him* (γινῶναι αὐτόν v 10) does not signify to have knowledge about Christ, but to *know him* personally and relationally (Fee 1995:318). That is why Paul has taken over the Old Testament sense of *knowing God* and applied it to Christ, which means that ‘to know him as

children and parents know each other, or wives and husbands – knowledge that has to do with personal experience and intimate relationship’ (Fee 1995:318).

In Jer 9:23-24 to *understand and know me*, means to know God’s ‘kindness, justice and righteousness’. It is this sort of knowledge of Christ that Paul will spell out in vv 10-22, which echoes the Christ event of 2:6-11 (Fee 1999:144). The object of *knowledge* is *Christ Jesus* as *my Lord* (τοῦ κυρίου μου v 8) indicating both intimacy and devotion (Fee 1999:144). In using the singular pronoun *my* (μου v 8) rather than plural *our*, Paul does not suggest that his relationship with Christ Jesus is an exclusive one. On the contrary, the wonder of the knowledge of Christ Jesus as the Lord is so great and the relationship is so intensely personal that he focuses upon it in his preaching (O’ Brien 1991:389).

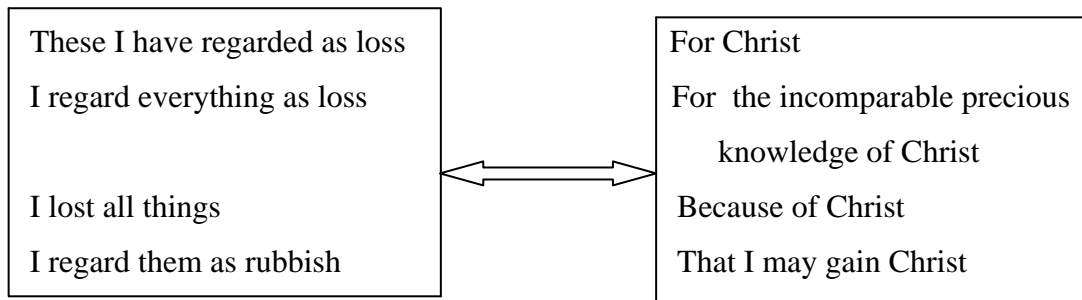
### 5.2.2.3 For gaining Christ

In unit 3 (v 8) δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω, *because of him I lost everything, and I regard it as rubbish, so that I may gain Christ*, Paul uses the aorist passive form of the verb *lose* or *forfeit* (ἐζημιώθην v 8) with the noun *loss* (ζημία vv 7-8). The verb (ζημιόω v 8) means *lose* or *forfeit* something, to see the value of an advantage reduced to zero (cf. 1 Cor 3:15; Bockmuehl 1997:207). Because of Christ, Paul willingly did not hesitate to suffer the loss of *all things* (τὰ πάντα v 8) about which he spoke, and regarded it as *rubbish* (σκύβαλα v 8; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). His loss was surely a real loss and Paul’s claim to regard everything as *loss* was thus no empty boast nor a purely academic exercise (Hawthorne 1983:139).

The noun *loss* (ζημία) in vv 7, 8 and the verb *lose* (ζημιόω) in v 8 are reinforced by the word *rubbish* (σκύβαλον). The word *rubbish* (σκύβαλον) was originally used to indicate the pitiful and horrible remains of persons and things, a corpse half-eaten by fishes as the remnant of a much-bewailed sea voyage (Lang 1971:445). Paul uses this word to emphasise the word *loss* (ζημία; Lang 1971:446). The purpose clause *so that I may gain Christ* (ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω v 8) as parallel to unit 9 (v 9) and unit 6 *to know him* (γινῶναι αὐτὸν v 10) indicates that Paul’s incomparable gain of a relationship with Jesus Christ replaced all his advantages (Bockmuehl 1997:208). The aorist subjunctive verb *I may gain* (κερδήσω v 8) corresponds with *gain* (κέρδος v 7) and is an antonym to *loss* (ζημία vv 7, 8) and the verb *loss* or *forfeit* (ζημιόομαι v 8). The grammatical construction *so that* (ἵνα) with the the aorist subjunctive *I may gain* (κερδήσω v 8) have a future aspect, which includes the eschatological *day of Christ* in the sense that Paul has already gained Christ and is *yet* to gain Christ (Hawthorne 1983:140; Koperski 1996:163; O’ Brien 1991:391). Christ, who has already given himself in a variety of ways is still to be *gained* (Collange 1979:130). Paul’s real desire is to gain Christ entirely, a goal that will be completely realised only at the end (O’ Brien 1991:391). Silva (1992:179) contrasts the old life and the new life of Paul in the following way:

The old life

The new life



From this sharp contrast between Paul’s old and new life it is clear that Paul’s transformation has been based on Christ. He regards his former Jewish identity in the law as absolute ‘rubbish’ due to the superior value of knowing Christ (Cosgrove 2006:289). Without Christ, we cannot imagine Paul’s new life. Therefore, Paul’s encounter with Christ is not only the event of his salvation from death, but also led to his new life style. Therefore, Christ’s redemptive work should also be seen as the turning point from the old life to the new life style.

### 5.2.3 The life in Christ (units 4 to 8)

Units 1-3 described the sharp breakdown of Paul’s previous lifestyle, because of Christ. From unit 4 onwards he explains his new status as believer, as well as apostle of Christ

#### 5.2.3.1 His desire to be found in Christ

For Paul this unit 4 (v 9) καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, *that I may be found in him*, is the continuation of his purpose to explain what he gains and what Christ means to him (O’ Brien 1991:392). The aorist of the intransitive verb *find* (εὐρίσκω) regularly means *turn out to be, prove to be, find oneself, or even be present* (Caird 1976:137). Even though the passive verb *to be found* (εὐρίσκω) is used in the Old Testament to indicate persons *found* by God to be such and such, to *be found in Christ* really describes to *be in him* (cf. 2:7; O’ Brien 1991:393). The aorist passive verb *be found* (εὑρεθῶ v 9) can be understood as referring to the day of Christ. He desires to *be found in him* on that the great day. It can only be achieved by living continuously and progressively in union with him while he exists in the world and to this end Paul eagerly jettisons all things, which include his previous prized *righteousness that comes from the Law* (Bruce 1989:14-115). That is why Paul is so willing to share both Christ’s suffering and his resurrection, in order to *be found* in union with Christ (cf. v 10; Bockmuehl 1997a:208).

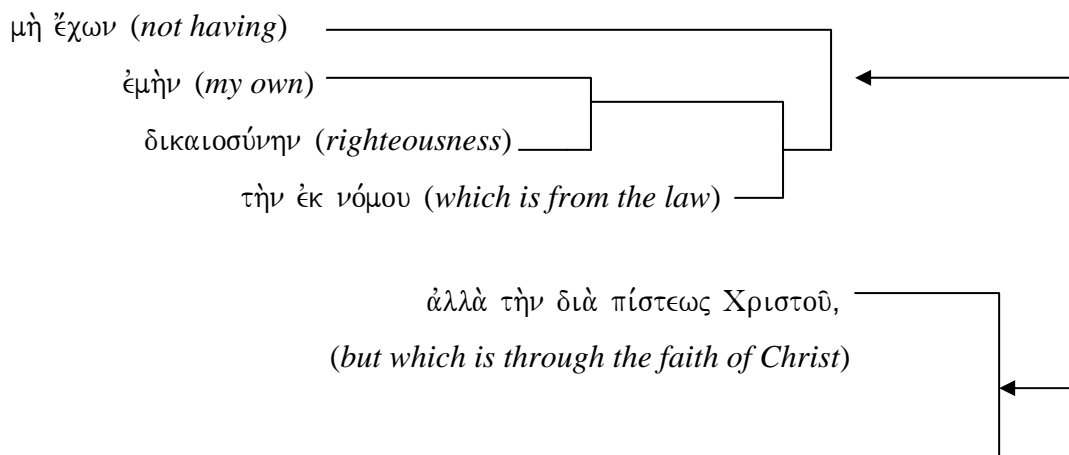
Bockmuehl (1997a:208) states that although it is true that all believers are already *in Christ*, the current phrase *in him* (ἐν αὐτῷ v 9) carries the purpose clause with its future orientation towards the day of Christ. Therefore, the phrase *in him* (ἐν αὐτῷ v

9) is to mean the entire weight of the Pauline *in Christ*, e.g. incorporated into union with Christ (cf. 2:5; Caird 1976:137). Paul's great desire is to *be united entirely with his Lord*, an expression that speaks of *complete participation in Christ* (O' Brien 1991:392). Paul's language is intensely personal, concerned not with theological truth generally but with whether he himself will be *found in Christ*, completely united to him (Bockmuehl 1997a:208). Paul states his great desire to be incorporated entirely into Christ by means of the following long participial construction, which contrasts two kinds of righteousness (O' Brien 1991:393).

### 5.2.3.2 His righteousness not based on the law, but from faith in Christ and God

The participial construction in unit 5 states a typical contrast *not/but*; the *not* clause, harking back to Paul's faultless *Torah observant righteousness* in 3:6, the *but* clause giving a description of the new righteousness, *through faith in Christ Jesus* (Fee 1995:321). The two important themes, *be found in Christ* and *righteousness* should not be isolated, but rather be considered in close relationship (O' Brien 1991:393). O' Brien (1991:393) observes that even though it is possible to consider the rest of the long sentence, units 5 to 8 (vv 9b-11), as enlarging the meaning of the second purpose clause *so that I may be found in him* (καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ v 9) it is better to consider only the participial construction of v 9, *not having ... on faith* (μὴ ἔχων ... ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9), as functioning in this way (O' Brien 1991:393). Likewise, the three descriptions *that I may gain Christ* (ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω v 8), *that I may be found in him* (καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ v 9), and *to know him* (τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν v 10) could be considered as parallel and overlapping descriptions of Paul's surpassing goals (O' Brien 1991:393).

In unit 5 (v 9) μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, *not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but the (righteousness) from Christ through faith, the righteousness from God on faith*, the first participial construction *not having my own righteousness, which is from the law* (μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου v 9) is the sharp antithesis to the second participial construction *but the (righteousness) from Christ through faith, the righteousness from God on faith* (ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9), as the syntactical structure indicates:





τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ (*which is from God*) —  
 δικαιοσύνην (*righteousness*) —  
 ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει (*on faith*) —

O' Brien (1991:394) explains this structure in the following way:

[T]he first *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνην) is qualified in two ways: first, by means of the possessive adjective *my own* (ἐμὴν) and secondly, through the prepositional expression *which is from the law* (τὴν ἐκ νόμου), which further defines *my own righteousness* (δικαιοσύνην). By contrast *but* (ἀλλά), the righteousness that the apostle has now (and will continue to have until the time when he is perfectly united with Christ) is qualified by three prepositional expressions, that is, as to its basis or ground, *through faith in Christ* (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ), its origin, *righteousness is from God* (δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ) and the means by which it is received, *on the faith* (ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει). Paul's language is highly condensed, and he does not expound the teaching in any detail as he does, for example, in Galatians and Romans. Probably he had already instructed the Philippians thoroughly as to what he meant by being righteous before God.

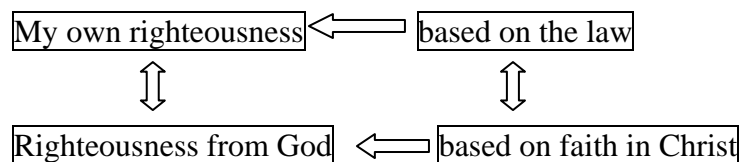
In the first participial construction, *not having my own righteousness which is from the law* (μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου v 9), the participle ἔχων as expressing the mode rather than the condition of being in Christ certainly means *having* rather than *holding fast*, and even though the entire clause could point to the righteousness Paul longs to possess (as well as that which he roundly rejects) as he stands in front of God's tribunal, that is, when he is completely united with Christ. It is best to regard it as speaking of that righteousness which he has as a believer (as well as what he has *not*) in the here and now as well as on the last day (O' Brien 1991:393; Vincent 1979:102). Vincent (1979:102) argues that the phrase ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην (v 9) should be rendered *a righteousness of my own* rather than *my own righteousness*, since the latter would be τὴν ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην. O' Brien (1991:394) states that although the possessive adjective *my own* (ἐμὴν) usually does not have the definite article τὴν, its absence functions to focus attention completely on the quality of the righteousness, that is to say, it certainly is Paul's own, which is not simply the righteousness that he possesses, but that which he has obtained.

For Plato the term *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη) is the base of the structure of the state (*Rep. 1-4*) and of the human soul (*Rep. 4*, 443c ff.). For Aristotle (who devoted *Eth. Nic. 5* to the subject) it is the chief of human virtues (5, 3, p. 1129b, 27). The *righteous man* was originally one whose behaviour fitted into the structure of his society and who completed his rightful duty towards the gods and his fellow-men (Homer, *Od. 13*, 209), whose observance of such duties distinguished him from the unrighteous (Aesch. *Sept 598*; Seebass 1986:353). According to Seebass (1986:353),

the noun *righteousness* in its later formation signifies the quality of the righteous man according to the law, while it is in itself the standard which a judge is requested to uphold, and which it must be his goal constantly to restore. In the Old Testament the concept *righteousness* expresses the relation between God and human beings in the context of the covenant (Onesti and Brauch 1993:828). Therefore, the righteousness of God appears in his dealings with his people, e.g. in redemption and salvation (Isa 45:21; 51:5; 56:1; 62:1; Seebass 1986:355). Before the exile, the main concern with righteousness remained within the national rather than individual righteousness (Seebass 1986:355).

However, the turning point in the history of ideas appeared in the period of the exile and thereafter. The Old Testament does not hesitate to refer to the pious individual's righteousness before God (Seebass 1986:355). In the apocryphal writings the term δικαιοσύνη is the *righteousness* or the *righteous behaviour* which makes a man acceptable to God (Tob 12:9; 14:11; Wis 1:15). It signifies God's righteousness, which discerns good and evil, saves the good and punishes the evil among men (Wis 5:18; 12:16). According to Wis 15:3, the knowledge of God constitutes righteousness (Brown 1986:358). In the Greco-Roman world, the term *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη) was not understood in the Old Testament sense within a covenant relationship, but primarily as the base of a courtroom scene in which people would be *declared innocent* (Nida 1984:116).

Paul the Jew understood the term *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη) as *legal righteousness*. Therefore, he thought of the phrase *righteousness from the law* (δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου v 9) as the condition of life (Schrenk 1964:202). On the foundation of the law, blameless behaviour is regarded as an achievement of what is written (3:6). However, Paul's new found knowledge is that real righteousness is not from keeping the law, but from faith in God. He considers all righteousness from the law, that is, self-attained, as *loss* (ζημία) and *rubbish* (σκύβαλον) in comparison to Christ (Schrenk 1964:202). Therefore, the righteousness, which is not from fulfilling the law, but from faith in Christ, could be called new righteousness to distinguish it from the former. Paul prominently accounts for it by this contrast with its two elements:



Marshall (1991:90) states that it seems difficult to escape the impression that Paul in this context thinks of the way in which people might claim to build up their own status in relation to God by keeping the law. With this contrast Paul illustrates that the new relationship with Christ brings righteousness as a gift from God. Watson (1986:78) disagrees and explains that this contrast is not between two abstract elements (achievement and submission to grace), but between two different ways of life in two different communities: the Jewish community with regard to their

allegiance to the law, as well as to Paul's message. What Paul regarded as loss in 3:7 is his entire covenant-status as a Jew, including dependence on the divine grace bestowed uniquely on Israel as well as the confirmation of those graces by his own obedience (Watson 1986:78). Sanders (1983:44) likewise describes that what Paul criticised in his previous life, is not because of being guilty of the attitudinal sin of self-righteousness, but because of the fact that he was confident in something other than faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul's self-righteousness is the righteousness which comes through the law, which is the peculiar result of being an observant Jew, which is *in and of itself a good thing* (*zeal*, Rom 10:2; *gain*, Phil 3:7), but which is shown to be 'wrong' (*loss*, phil 3:7) by the revelation of 'God's righteousness', which comes through faith in Christ' (Sanders 1983:44-45). Räisänen (1987:410) also evinces that what Paul effectively gives up in this passage is not human achievement, but the biblical covenant. I cannot agree with these three scholars that what Paul renounces is not his self-achievement, but his privilege as a Jew. Furnish (1968:137), Gundry (1985:14) and O' Brien (1991:394-396) state that Paul's righteousness as his own moral achievement is self-achievement by keeping the law. Zeal for the law was necessary, but not the self-righteousness that resulted. Such a righteousness was wrong both in itself and in its being an obstacle to obtain God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ (Gundry 1985:14). Hendriksen (1962:166) also states that Paul's intention here is to designate that the righteousness that counts before God cannot be considered as based on my own achievement in correspondence with Old Testament law (ἐκ νόμου v 9). Rather, it should absolutely be dependent on God only through faith in Christ. Silva (1992:186) agrees that uniquely God, the righteous and impartial judge, can grant a righteousness that is obtained *through faith in Christ* (τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9), or *on faith* (ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9).

In the second participial construction *but the (righteousness) from Christ through faith, the righteousness from God on faith* (ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9), the sharp contrast *but* (ἀλλά v 9) decisively indicates the righteousness that has its origin not in a human being but in God who has sent Jesus Christ, the *Righteous One* is to be attained through faith in Christ (Acts 3:14; 1 Jn 2:1; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). For Paul this righteousness is completely different in terms of its origin (*from God*, ἐκ θεοῦ v 9), its foundation (*through faith in Christ*, τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9), and the means by which it is obtained (*on faith*, ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9), since his former righteousness was completely based on *from the law* (ἐκ νόμου v 9; O' Brien 1991:396).

Ziesler (1972:151) thinks the term *righteousness* (τὴν δικαιοσύνην v 9) to be totally ethical in both of its uses in v 9. The right relationship with God through the faith in Christ may imply the quality of a new life style different from that of pagan gentile people, but O' Brien (1991:396) rightly distinguishes the difference between the terms used twice in v 9 in the following way:

[P]aul is using the term *righteousness* (τὴν δικαιοσύνην v 9) in two different senses here in this one verse. The earlier reference

to the term *righteousness* (τὴν δικαιοσύνην v 9) described Paul's own moral achievement, gained by obeying the law and intended to establish a claim upon God, especially in relation to the final judgement; it clearly had ethical connotations. The second kind of the term *righteousness* (τὴν δικαιοσύνην v 9), that which comes from God, is not some higher kind of moral achievement but is a relational term, denoting basically a right relationship with God. It has to do with 'the status of being in the right' and thus of being acceptable to him. The righteousness that comes from God is God's way of putting people right with himself (cf. Rom 3:21).

Therefore, what Paul in this context primarily is concerned with is *righteousness* (τὴν δικαιοσύνην v 9) that has its origin in God (ἐκ θεοῦ v 9) and that is humbly appropriated by believers *through faith in Christ* (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9), which reflects his own right relationship with God (Fee 1995:324).

Fee (1995:324) and Hawthorne (1983:142) correctly point out that it is wrong to interpret the phrase, *through faith in Christ* (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9), as *through the faithfulness of Christ*, as O' Brien (1991:398-399) and Witherington (1994a:93) render it, since this kind of interpretation *through the faithfulness of Christ* encounters the insuperable linguistic objection that Paul never mentions Jesus as faithful or believing. On the contrary, he surely mentions individual faith in Christ (Silva 1992:187). The word *faith* (πίστις) with the preposition *through* (διὰ) functions as agent, which is the medium to accept righteousness (Vincent 1979:102). Therefore, I cannot agree with O' Brien (1991:398) that the genitive *of Christ* (Χριστοῦ) should be understood as *subjective* rather than *objective*. The righteousness, describing the right relationship with God, can be obtained *through faith in Christ* (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9). The phrase is shorthand for *by grace through faith*, where Christ's death is the way in which God has graciously expressed his love for us. It is realised by those, who completely trust him to have so loved and accepted them – warts and all (Fee 1995:324).

The phrase *from God* (ἐκ θεοῦ v 9) indicates that the unique source of *righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη v 9) is God himself. It stands in sharp contrast to *from the law* (ἐκ νόμου v 9) as source (O' Brien 1991:397). The repetition of the faith-appropriation is emphatic that righteousness is provided by God and avails before God (Rom 3:24, 25; 8:3; 2 Cor 5:19; Hendriksen 1962:166). Paul understood *faith* (πίστις) as the opposite of *seeking one's own righteousness*; in that sense, works and faith are really incompatible (Silva 1992:187). Righteousness dwells in the believers who were newly created in Christ (2 Cor 5:17-21; 2 Pet 3:13). Those who belong to Christ had died with him to sin, and death, and now live to God and to righteousness (Rom 6:17-18; Seifrid 2000:743). Its possession and enjoyment depend on faith possessed and practiced by believers (Jn 3:16). Believers are completely responsible for their righteousness, but it is given, nurtured and rewarded by God (Eph 2:8; Hendriksen 1969:166).

The phrase *on faith* (ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει v 9) accounts for the opposite of merit, an admission that one cannot deserve God's approval, but can only receive his free offer of forgiveness, grace, and love (Caird 1976:138). To become a member of God's family can only be obtained by renouncing one's own efforts and exercising *faith* (πίστις v 9), and not by exercising circumcision and observing *the law* (νόμος; Tellbe 1994:102). Paul contrasts his former confidence in the flesh with his current hope as an apostle and believer based on faith in Christ (Garland 1985:167). Paul's confidence in the flesh is a Jewish confidence, but he says that he emptied himself of it in order to gain Christ. The initiative belongs to God who grants saving righteousness *through faith in Christ* (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ v 9). *Faith* (πίστις v 9) is the believers' grateful acknowledgment of this preparation by God and is their acceptance of it (Martin [1959] 1987:152).

### 5.2.3.3 His eager mind to know Christ better

In unit 6 (v 10) τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, *to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings*, the infinitive phrase *to know him* (γινῶναι αὐτὸν v 10) expresses the final goal. It is constructed differently from the previous two phrases (vv 8, 9), which were introduced by *that* (ὅνα) followed by a subjunctive – *that I may gain Christ* (ὅνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω v 8) and *that I may be found in him* (καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ v 9; Hawthorne 1983:142). The genitive article with infinitive *to know* (τοῦ γινῶναι v 10) should grammatically be understood as a second purpose clause and governs three objects: *him* (αὐτὸν), *power* (τὴν δύναμιν), *fellowship* (κοινωνίαν; Silva 1992:189).

A literal interpretation proposes three distinct purposes: (a) Christ himself, *and* (b) the power of his resurrection *and* (c) the fellowship in his sufferings (Silva 1992:189). Silva (1992:189) describes that 'but the first *and* (καί) can plausibly be understood as exegetical: to know Christ *means* to experience his resurrection and to share in his sufferings'. The aorist *to know* (γινῶναι) emphasises the final purpose, but the amplification of *him* (αὐτὸν) in *the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings* (καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ) signifies a constant participation in Christ (O' Brien 1991:402). More specifically, the aorist *to know* (γινῶναι) indicates that *knowing Christ* is a continuous experience deepening and maturing like the experience of coming to know any other person (Marshall 1991:91). Therefore, the knowing of Christ is a certain way of expressing the personal faith-union set up between the believer and his Lord (Martin [1959] 1987:152). To 'know Christ', implies to be engaged in an intimate relationship with him, to evidentially experience the power of his resurrection, as well as to participate in his sufferings, through the grace God will provide. These two positional phrases represent two aspects of knowing Christ and not two different modes (i.e. suffering and exaltation) separated from Christ (cf. 2 Cor 4:7-11; 12:9-10; Gräbe 2000:218). To show how to know Christ Paul carries on: *and the power of his resurrection* (καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10). As

Becker (1993:) well surmises that to *know* Christ signifies to experience *the power of his resurrection* and the fellowship of *his sufferings*, to become like *him in his death*, and even, like him, to get *the resurrection from the dead* (vv 10-11).

The phrase *the power of his resurrection* (καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10) expresses Paul's desire to experience *the power of Christ's resurrection* (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). It means that Paul thinks of the divine power that raised Christ from the dead as the power of the resurrected Christ, which is now working in the believers' life (Gräbe 2000:218-219; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). Martin ([1959] 1987:152) more specifically describes that the power of his resurrection should be understood as the *power* (δύναμις) of Christ set free by his victory over death and at work in the life of the believers, raising from the death of sin into the new life in Christ (Rom 6:4; Eph 1:19; 2:5). This power certainly leads the believers to *live a new life* (Rom 6:4) because of the fact that they have been *raised with Christ* (Col 3:1; Eph 2:5,6; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). By drawing attention to *the power of Christ's resurrection* (τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10), Paul wants to strengthen and motivate his readers under undeserved suffering. According to Koperski (1996:108), Paul refers to *the power of Christ's resurrection* (τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10) to remind the believers of their glorious future to give them hope in their suffering. The Philippian believers should identify with Christ and confront the unavoidable sufferings as true disciples of Christ (Tellbe 1994:119-120).

Paul obtained the new spiritual life through his conversion when he encountered the risen Christ on the Damascus road which is described in this phrase of 3:10 *to know the power of his resurrection* (καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10; Ahern 1960:1). Paul affirms that his aim is also to know *the fellowship of his sufferings* (καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ v 10). The phrase *and the fellowship of his sufferings* (καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ v 10) is the last object of the infinitive verb *to know* (γινῶναι v 10) and should be taken closely with the first phrase *the power of his resurrection* (τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ v 10), not only since it is connected with the conjunction *and* (καί), but specifically since the noun *fellowship* ([τὴν] κοινωνίαν) shares the same definite article with the noun *power* (δύναμις): *power and fellowship* (δύναμις καὶ κοινωνία; Hawthorne 1983:144). Ahern (1960:1) points out that this important addition concurs with the polarity of Pauline thought which combines death and resurrection as two inseparable aspects of the same salvific mystery, whether in the life of Christ (1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Cor 5:15; Rom 4:25) or in the lives of the believers (Rom 6:4, 8, 11; 8:13; Gal 2:19; Col 3:3).

The phrase *the fellowship of his sufferings* ([τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ v 10) signifies more than the mystical self-identification with Christ's suffering. The sufferings endured by the apostle Paul himself, as the representative type of all believers, are part and parcel of the sufferings which Christ had to bear patiently (Beare [1959] 1973:123). However, the believers' sufferings as well as Paul's sufferings should not be confused with Christ's expiatory sufferings, since those

were Christ's alone. Rather, the individual believer, by associating himself with Christ, incurs a measure of Christ's sufferings (Col 1:24; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). The noun *fellowship* (κοινωνία) could be best regarded in its active sense of *participation*. The genitive *of sufferings* ([τῶν] παθημάτων) signify that in which one participates, that is, the *share in his sufferings* (O' Brien 1991:405). The antecedent *his* (αὐτοῦ) is *Christ* (Χριστός v 9). The participation in the sufferings of Christ is expressed by the infinitive verb *to know* (γινῶναι v 10). It points to experimental knowledge, a participation in his glory, but also in his sufferings (Forestell 1956:125-126).

The *fellowship of his sufferings* ([τῆν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ v 10) is a reality in the lives of all believers (Ahern 1960:32). The believers' love for God takes place through new obedience and freedom from the lordship of sin (cf. *being conformed to his death* (συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ v 10; Rom 6:3) the fellowship with the sufferings of Christ and in arduous service in the power of Christ's resurrection, while one presses on to the promised resurrection from the dead (3:10; Schmitz 1986:403). The power of Christ's resurrection enables Paul to suffer for the sake of Christ (Tellbe 1994:119). These may be of various kinds and degrees, both inward and outward, as believers find themselves in a world that is hostile, because of their faithfulness to Christ. Paul has already described this thought to the believers in Philippi (1:29), where he considered suffering in some sense as unavoidable for the sake of Christ (cf. Mtt 16:24; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49). Paul's purpose with the theme of *resurrection* and *suffering* is to encourage his readers to stand firm in faith. Their suffering is a clear sign of salvation, since it is a gift of God, like faith itself (Ahern 1960:30). Paul eagerly desires to share in the sufferings of Christ as part of his longing and striving for holiness, as is clear from the following words: *being conformed to his death* (συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ v 10; Hendriksen 1962:168).

#### 5.2.3.4 His conformation to Christ's death

Unit 7 (v 10) συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, *being conformed to his death* indicates the participation with Christ's sufferings as unfolding to its last point – even to his death (Vincent 1979:105). The present participle *being conformed* (συμμορφιζόμενος v 10) indicates development. It points to an ongoing striving for unity with Christ in his death, the daily mortification of all things in him that is not Christ (Beare [1959] 1973:124; Vincent 1979:105). Paul does not refer to his martyrdom, but to the life of the believer following the example of Jesus Christ's attitude to his death (Marshall 1991:93). In his current sufferings Paul is daily renewed into the image of his Lord, and this implies the conformity with his death, which is a continual process that will be fulfilled only on the final day (O' Brien 1991:408).

The phrase *to his death* (τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ v 10) with the present participle *being conformed* (συμμορφιζόμενος v 10) indicates the symbolic participation of Paul in

Christ's death. Even though it is typically identified with baptism (e.g. Rom 6:4-6; Col 2:20; Gal 2:19), Paul could equally exhort his readers who were already baptized to *put to death* the old humanity (e.g. Rom 8:13; Col 3:5; Bockmuehl 1997:216). Moule (1977:124) well describes that the phrase *to his death* (τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ v 10) means *to share its form* (Phil 3:10), *to become fused or united with it* (Rom 6:5), *to die with him* (2 Tim 2:11), *to be buried with him* (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12), *to suffer with him* (Rom 8:17), *to be crucified with him* (Rom 6:6; Gal 2:1). Paul's statement on Christ's death as a present reality was clarified earlier in Phil 3 when he referred to his continuing to count all things as loss for the sake of knowing Christ Jesus his Lord (vv 7, 8; cf. 2 Cor 4:7-10, esp. v 10; O' Brien 1991:410).

According to Bockmuehl (1997a:216), the current reality of the death of Christ is existentially part of Paul's daily experience (2 Cor 4:10; cf. 1 Cor 15:31). The life of believers takes its origin from a death, the death of Christ, which renders itself for all believers into a death to sin and to self (Collange 1979:132). Paul deliberately uses the *form of Christ's death* to point out that his own former motivation by pride gave way to one of Christlike humility (Bockmuehl 1997a:216). This reading also permits Paul to present himself as a meaningful model to all believers (3:15-17) rather than only or primarily to his martyrdom (Bockmuehl 1997a:216-217). Oakes (2001:118) points out that Paul's example of *being conformed to Christ's suffering and death* emphasises Phil 2:5 in its call to be conformed to the patterns of Christ's sufferings and exaltation in 2:6-11. Therefore, the believers who died with Christ and were raised with him (Col 2:20; 3:1-3) express this truth as the separation from their old life and an ongoing incorporation in Christ, the power supplied by the life of the resurrected Christ (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:49).

### 5.2.3.5 His desire to attain resurrection from the dead

Paul referred to his conforming to Christ's death, in the present tense, to indicate his present participation in Christ and his emulation of the *attitude of Christ* (Bockmuehl 1997a:217). In the following units he switches to the future tense to refer to his resurrection from the dead in the future (O' Brien 1991:411).

In unit 8 (v 11) εἴ πως καταστήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν. *if, in some way, I may attain the resurrection from the dead*, Paul starts with the conditional clause *if, in some way, I may attain* (εἴ πως καταστήσω; Hawthorne 1983:146). O' Brien (1991:412) says that the Greek construction *if, in some way*, (εἴ πως v 11), which starts this conditional clause, seems to convey the element of doubt or uncertainty. On the contrary, Vincent (1979:106) states that Paul's expression *in some way* (εἴ πως) is that of humility and self-distrust rather than doubt. However, as he cites Weiss, he rather wants to distinguish between the human and the divine sides. On the human side, the attainment of the goal may be considered as doubtful, or at least conditioned upon his humble self-estimate; on the side of the working of divine grace, it appears to be certain (Vincent 1979:106). Hawthorne (1988:146) elucidates the meaning of the doubt in the following:



[I]f there is any doubt in Paul's mind it is not about the realness of the resurrection to come (cf. 2 Cor 5:1-8; Phil 3:20-21), nor about the trustworthiness of God (Rom 8:38-39), nor about the way in which he will attain the resurrection, i.e. by martyrdom or by some other way, nor about himself as to whether he might be rejected for his own defects (1 Cor 9:27; but see Phil 3:9; Rm 5:17, 18, 21). Rather, it would appear that Paul uses such an unexpected hypothetical construction simply because of humility on his part, a humility that recognises that salvation is the gift of God from start to finish and that as a consequence he dare not presume on this divine mercy.

The verb *attain* (καταντάω), which appears thirteen times in the New Testament (only in Acts and in Paul), is attested in secular Greek from the second century B.C. (Polybius) onwards; it fundamentally signifies *to come to*, and points to a literal movement towards a goal, such as a place or a town. In a metaphorical sense it means the attainment of an objective, or conversely something, which comes to people (Mundle 1986:324). The four occurrences in the Pauline corpus are used in a metaphorical sense (cf. Acts 26:7): except for Phil 3:11, Eph 4:13 refers to all believers, who attained (καταντήσωμεν) to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God, while the rest of the references has to do with the movement of God to man (1 Cor 10:11; 1 Cor 14:36; O' Brien (1991:414). The verb *attain* (καταντήσω v 11) is in the aorist subjunctive. It indicates that the ultimate goal of the lives of the believers is to attain the resurrection from the dead (Mundle 1986:324-325).

The phrase *the resurrection from the dead* (εἰς τὴν ἔξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν v 11) as an unusual New Testament expression, is itself a rare emphatic reference to the faith in a future resurrection which has not already happened (Bockmuehl 1997a:218). Kent Jr. *et al.* (1996:50) is convinced that the twice repeated preposition *out of* (ἐκ) in the expression strongly suggests a partial resurrection *out of* the dead. Therefore, Kent Jr. *et al.* (1996:50) and Vincent (1979:107) state that the object noun *resurrection* (τὴν ἔξανάστασιν) as found only here, clearly speaks of the resurrection of believers, rather than of a general resurrection. However, Koperski (1996:284) clearly rejects it in the light of the fact that the immediate context of v 11 does not give any ground to discriminate between a resurrection of believers and a more general resurrection. Hawthorne (1983:146-147), Caird (1976:140) and O' Brien (1991:415) demonstrate that the repetition of the preposition *out of* (ἐκ) – ἐκ + ἀνάστασιν and ἐκ νεκρῶν emphasises the significance of the end-time's bodily resurrection of the just, which Paul expected to take place at the return of Christ (1 Cor 15:42-44).

According to Caird (1976:140), the resurrection from the dead alluded to the inner transformation of the spiritual life. However, Koperski (1996:283) explains that the reason for the addition of the phrase *out of the dead* (ἐκ νεκρῶν) in this context probably differentiates it from that in 1 Cor, where Paul speaks of bodily resurrection which involves transformation. This does not seem to be an immediate concern in v 11, even though it is brought up in vv 20-21 (Koperski 1996:283). In

the immediate context, the phrase *out of the dead* (ἐκ νεκρῶν), like the Greek construction *if, in some way, I may attain* (εἴ πως καταντήσω) indicates that Paul's thought has returned to the object of his hope, which is not yet attained, as was described with the ἵνα clause (vv 8-9) with the infinitive of purpose (v 10; Koperski). Koperski (1996:285) surmises it in the following way:

[T]hat there is only one gain, and that is to be found in him, not having my own righteousness, that which is from law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith, to know him and the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming conformed to his death. It is only thus that the Christian attains the resurrection from the dead.

Therefore, what is doubtful is not to attain the goal, but to indicate our personal share in it. The divine goals constantly go beyond individuals, although they contain individual participation (Michel 1965:624).

## 5.2.4 Conclusion

As we have observed in this section, Paul presents himself as the example to his readers in the confusion of their faith on account of the false instruction of the false teachers. He encourages them to follow him as their model as his life is only centered on Christ.

In this section, Paul is the central figure, in pointing to the sharp break with his previous status as a sincere Jew, he is the model to exhort his readers not to be shaken from their faith in Christ. The above diagram indicates the contrast between Paul's previous life and his present life. As a leading Jew, his previous life was absolutely centered on the law (Phil 3:4-6). It describes how wonderful and perfect his life was in the light of the demands of the law. All things and everything he achieved by keeping the law were his profit.

After he met Christ on the Damascus road, he realised that he was not able to fulfil the demands of the law to become righteous. Confessed that his righteousness was from God alone through faith in Christ. His life was completely turned to center on Christ. He came to regard all things as loss and dung to gain Christ and the knowledge of Christ.

Paul's new understanding of righteousness is based on faith in Christ. He became eager to gain Christ and to be found in him, that is, *to know him, the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings*, to conform to his death, and to attain resurrection from the dead. After regarding everything as loss and consider it dung, his gain is to experience Christ even to participate in his suffering and death, to attain the power of his resurrection.

Paul contrasts his current status with the previous one to exhort his readers not to shrink from their faith in Christ. His aim is to let them imitate his desire to know Christ better even in his suffering and to stand firm in the power of the gospel when encountering false instruction.

### **5.3 The prize to which God called him in Jesus Christ (Phil 3:12-14: units 1-5)**

#### **5.3.1 Introduction**

In Phil 3:12-14 Paul uses the metaphor of a race to explain the goal for which he had been won by Christ (Caird 1976:141). The race of the believers is that of faith from beginning to end, and it does not permit room for any sense of fulfillment until it is finished (Caird 1976:141). The runner does not congratulate himself on the laps he has finished, but puts all his effort into those ahead, pressing on to the end, where the prize waits for him. The prize is God's calling to the life above, and pressing on is the mark of a mature believer (Caird 1976:141). Silva (1992:198) indicates the parallelism in vv12-14:

**A** (12 a) *I have not received* (ἔλαβον)

**B** (12 b) *I press on* (διώκω) *that I may seize* (καταλαμβάνω)

**A'** (13 a) *I do not think myself to have attained* (καταλαμβάνω)

**B'** (14 b) *I press on for the prize* (διώκω)

A-A' statements are negative. Paul indicates what he does not claim. These negative statements correct every false impression that may arise from vv 9-11 (Silva 1992:198-199). The B-B' statements indicate affirmation. Since he has not yet attained all his expectations, he presses on with confidence and determination (Silva 1992:199). The B-B' set contains the phrases *by Christ Jesus* (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ]) and *in Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), which has repeatedly been used by Paul to exhort his readers.

#### **5.3.2 Paul's frustration and expectation**

##### **5.3.2.1 Paul's frustration**

In unit 1 (v 12) Οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἢ ἤδη τετελείωμαι, *not that I already received, or have already been made perfect*, the *not that* (Οὐχ ὅτι) is a Greek idiom to introduce a disclaimer, which qualifies something previously said, so that the believers will not draw the wrong inference from it (Fee 1995:342; Peterlin 1995:84). However, it is a quite distinctive New Testament formula, which means *I do not say*

*that*, or *I do not claim that* (cf. Jn 6:46; 7:42; 2 Cor 1:24; 3:5; 2 Thess 3:9; Hawthorne 1983:50). The content of his disclaimer is *I have already received* (ἤδη ἔλαβον) a constative aorist v 12 (O' Brien 1991:420). Collange (1979:133) summarises the possibilities in the following way:

[T]he object of this verb is not in fact expressed. Should it be assumed to be moral and spiritual perfection (Vincent), knowledge (Michaelies), resurrection of the dead (W. Lütgert), righteousness (Klijn) or Christ himself (Dibelius; Pfitzner)? Two other possibilities actually seem more likely: either the apostle already has in mind the metaphor of the race-track and the implicit object is the prize (v 14) awarded there (Beare, Bonnard), or the object is deliberately unexpressed, because the apostle simply wanted to suggest something incomplete.

Silva (1992:200) points out that 'commentators appear to forget that the omission of a direct object (especially if that object could be expressed with a pronoun) is rather normal in Greek, though almost never permissible in English'. He mentions the fanciful view that Paul took the omission of the object deliberately as a polemic against the perfectionists' claim that they had received *everything* (Silva 1992:200). He concludes that the object is *the resurrection*, which is not an isolated event, but the culmination of the believers' hope (Silva 1992:200).

Greenlee (1990:53) also states that the most probable choice is the preceding phrase *the resurrection from the dead*, since as no predicate is mentioned, the predicate must be derived from the preceding context. Collange suggests that his last two proposals would be more likely. O' Brien (1991:421-422) states that the more probable meaning is Paul's overwhelming goal or purpose, expressed in a variety of ways in vv 8-11 as *gaining Christ, being perfectly found in him*, and *knowing him*, since this verse (v 12) should be considered in the light of what has immediately preceded, and in these verses it has been stated at length that the supreme and absolute gaining of Christ is Paul's absolute desire. Hawthorne (1983:151) likewise states that 'Paul's encounter with the resurrected and living Christ not only created within him a consuming desire to know Christ intimately and fully, but also an awareness that this is something that cannot be achieved in a moment'.

Hawthorne (1983:151) explains the aorist *receive* (ἔλαβον) as *spiritual comprehension*. Fee (1995:343) objects that Hawthorne seems to miss the eschatological thrust of the passage. What Paul has not yet *received* is the eschatological realization of the goal described in vv 10-11, the kind of knowing Christ only after *the resurrection from the dead* – or its equivalent, as vv 20-22 make clear. Fee tends to limit Paul's eagerness to know Christ in vv 10-11. O' Brien (1991:422) points out that as Paul's personal relationship with his risen and glorified Lord became enriched – and this happened during his engagement in the ministry as an apostle with its joy and sufferings – so he came closer to his supreme goal, that of being found completely in him or of knowing him completely. Bruce (1989:120) supports O' Brien by saying that Paul's growing knowledge of Christ, his

participation here and now both in his suffering and in the power of his risen life, has taken him closer to the goal, but as far as he is in the body, that goal still lies ahead. That is why Paul's entire life is absolutely to press on to a future goal (Martin [1959] 1987:154).

The perfect *I was already made perfect* (ἡ ἤδη τετελείωμαι) explains the previous aorist *received* (ἔλαβον) more clearly by making explicit the implicit (Osburn 1981:97). Paul strangely uses different tenses of the two verbs. Vincent (1979:107) explains that the aorist *received* (ἔλαβον) considers the entire part as a completed act, while the perfect *or already made perfect* (ἡ ἤδη τετελείωμαι) points to the whole past gathered up with the present, as the conjunction *or* (ἢ) obviously combines two similar, not the contrastive, events (Loh and Nida 1977:109). The perfect verb *I was made perfect* (τετελείωμαι), which is likely related to the noun τέλος and the adjective τέλειος (v 15) bears the twofold and somewhat distinctive meanings of end or goal, and completion or fulfilment (Osiek 2000:96). While the verb *make perfect* (τελειόω) here is uniquely employed with the negative clause *not that* (οὐχ ὅτι) to point to him, not thinking that he has already been made perfect, the adjective *perfect* (τέλειος v 15) is used to correct the false views of the opponents (O' Brien 1991:423). Koester (1961-1962:322) points out that the word designates 'the possession of the qualities of salvation in their entirety, the arrival of heaven itself'.

According to Lincoln (1981:93), Paul's use of the verb *make perfect* (τελειόω) with the ironic reference to the plural adjective *perfect* (τέλειοι v 15) probably refers to be a favourite term of the opponents. To the opponents in Phil 3, the complete possession of the qualities of salvation is in particular manifested in a religious and moral perfection fulfilled on the basis of the Law (Koester 1961-1962:322). However, as the preceding verse suggests, what Paul intends is that *perfection* is not from keeping the law, but from resurrection from death to life (Loh and Nida 1977:109). That is why Paul himself strongly denies that he has been made perfect in terms of keeping the law. Rather he claims that he has not achieved a complete knowledge of Christ (v 12). Those who think themselves to be mature or perfect should realise that neither Paul, nor they (nor anyone) have achieved it, but are constantly striving for it (Peterlin 1995:83).

The perfect verb *make perfect* (τελειόω) clarifies the aorist verb *receive* (ἔλαβον). It bears the sense of having been *made perfect*, by having reached to the final goal in terms of his knowing Christ (Fee 1995:344-345). Therefore, these two disclaimers together reinforce that the future has not yet been completely realised, although Paul regards it as certain (Fee 1995:345). Paul affirms two things: that 'he has not yet come to know Christ in the way that only the eschaton will bring, and therefore that even though he knows Christ now, including the power of his resurrection, such knowledge does not mean either that his is now *completed* or that he has reached the final goal' (Fee 1995:345). Although Jewish people offered a way to perfection on earth, for Paul it comes sometime in the future at Christ's coming (Klijn 1964-1965:284). That is why Paul rather draws his readers' attention to how to strive for perfection in the next unit.

### 5.3.2.2 Paul's eager mind

In unit 2 (v 12) διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ]. *but I press on if indeed I may seize, because I was seized by Christ Jesus*, the conjunction *but* (δὲ) is used as adversative to unit 1 to stress Paul's final goal to know Christ. O' Brien (1991:423) evinces that it is used to indicate the contrast to unit 1. The present verb *press on* (διώκω v 12) is better rendered *pursue*. It is used in 3:6 for *persecute* and signifies the constant pursuit of the goal by a hunter rather than by an athlete (Hawthorn 1983:152; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:54; Osburn 1971:97). It is often described figuratively for the zealous pursuit of godly objectives, a usage found earlier in the LXX where a striving after righteousness, peace and the knowledge of God was encouraged (Deut 16:20; Ps 34[33]:14; Prov 15:9; Isa 51:1; Hos 6:3 [4]; O' Brien 1991:423-424).

In the New Testament letters *seek* (ζητέω) is used metaphorically to pursue hospitality (Rom 12:13), mutual peace (Rom 14:19; 1 Pet 3:11; Heb 12:14), holiness, love (1 Cor 14:1), doing good (1 Thess 5:15) and righteousness (1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22; Ebel 1986:806-807). It has often been suggested that the verb *pursue* (διώκω) in 3:12 is part of the athletic metaphor of v 14 (where the verb appears with *prize* (βραβεῖον) and *according to goal* (κατὰ σκοπόν). It seems better though, to see it as pursuing the supreme objective of being found perfect in Christ, which has dominated Paul's thought in the preceding verses, especially vv 8-11 (O' Brien 1991:424). Ebel (1986:807) describes that its goal is to attain the resurrection from the dead. Osiek (2000:97) claims that 'it is the fashion similar to the way he once pursued believers, believing that he was doing the will of God and following the law'. After Paul's conversion, he exhorts believers to know Christ. That is why Paul keeps stressing it by comparing it to the runner set on seizing the victor's prize (Phil 3:12). The compound verb *seize* (καταλαμβάνω) denotes the strenuous attempt to reach the goal which is not yet within one's grasp (Ebel 1986:807; Loh and Nida 1977:109).

The *if* clause *if indeed I may seize* (εἰ καὶ καταλάβω v 12) follows on the main verb *press on* (διώκω v 12). It indicates the progressive steps of Paul's *pressing on*. Hawthorne (1983:152) demonstrates that *if* (εἰ) is to be rendered *whether*, since the main verb *press on* (διώκω v 12) is followed by the current clause *if I may seize* (εἰ καταλάβω v 12) is an example of the subjunctive selected in a dependant construction to point to a deliberate question. Collange (1979:134) also states that as it is not merely to suggest the goal, it carries a hint of doubt about its realization. However, Loh and Nida (1977:109) and O' Brien (1991:424) state that it introduces a conditional clause of expectation rather than of doubt. As Bruce (1989:123) observes, it seems almost equivalent to a purpose clause, meaning *in hope of, hoping to*. The aorist subjunctive verb *seize* (καταλάβω v 12) is the first of three uses of the verb *receive* (καταλαμβάνω) in vv 12-13, which are used in the athletic imagery of a race. It is related to Rom 9:30-31 (cf. v 32), where Israel stumbles while pressing on (διώκω) to attain righteousness before God *as if it was based on works*, while Gentiles actually seized it (καταλαμβάνω; Bockmuehl 1997:221).

Hawthorne (1983:152) describes two possible renderings of the verb *seize* (καταλάβω): it may mean to *seize, attain, win*, as a runner in a race might run to attain the prize (1 Cor 9:24), or it can mean, even in its active form, to *grasp an idea with one's mind*, thus, to *understand*. He prefers the latter to the former because of the fact that Paul's one hope is to know Christ (1983:152). However, according to him (1983:152), he is aware that he has not yet obtained (οὐκ ἔλαβον) the full import of the significance of Christ. He further states that as a result, he sets out, very much like a runner, to see whether he might finally be able to understand him completely (1983:152). Contra Hawthorne, Hendriksen (1962:171) and Marshall (1991:95) state that Paul rather *pursues* with the purpose of *seizing* in this context. Therefore, the verb (καταλάβανω v 12) could be best understood as having no express object and, in conjunction with *press on* (διώκω), asserts that the apostle not only vigorously presses on with his supreme desire, but also purposes to *seize* (O' Brien 1991:425).

The clause, *because I was also seized by Christ Jesus* (ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] v 12), motivates Paul to press on to seize. The phrase (ἐφ' ᾧ v 12) is a difficult connector, which can mean *because* or *inasmuch as* or *for which*, or several other meanings in different contexts (Osiek 2000:97). Michael (1928:159) and Osieke (2000:97-98) demonstrate that it is best understood to render it as a reason *because*. However, Caird (1976:142) evinces that the prepositional phrase ἐφ' ᾧ can be taken three ways: '(1) we can supply an antecedent: '... in hope of winning that for which I was won by Christ', (2) the antecedent may be contained in the preceding verb: '... in hope of winning the race, since for this purpose I was won by Christ', and (3) ἐφ' ᾧ may mean simply *because*'. He claims that although Pauline usage supports the third meaning, it does not in the current context give as good an explanation as the second meaning (1976:142). As Boice (1971:222) and Loh and Nida (1977:110) likewise argue, it seems quite reasonable to accept Caird. However, although we cannot ignore both options as possible, as O' Brien (1991:425) rightly convinces, in the light of Pauline usage the former is more probable in this context. That is, there is a certain reason or motivation of why Paul is so eager to press on to seize the prize, as the second aorist passive verb *seize* or *win* (κατελήμφθην v 12) is clearly defined by the phrase *by Christ Jesus* (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] v 12).

The second of the three uses of the verb *seize* or *win* in vv 12-13 (κατελήμφθην v 12) is an aorist passive and points to the motive of the driving force within Paul himself. It was because he himself had been grasped by Christ Jesus (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] v 12; Hawthorne 1983:152). The aorist points to the time of Paul's conversion (Vincent 1979:108), and indicates that he was irresistibly seized by Christ (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] v 12). Literally and figuratively Christ Jesus has made him his own (Den Heyer 2000:215; Wilson 1983:79). Osburn (1981:97) claims that it may speak of his initial salvation experience or of his ministry. However, the preceding verses (3:7-11) describe that Paul's whole life is to know Christ and to attain the power of his resurrection through his sharing in his suffering. Therefore, without Christ Jesus there is no sense in Paul's apostleship. Fowl (1999:350) says that Paul notes that his transformed perspective, his new *end* (τέλος), is the result of Christ's

prior work. Paul can only make this perspective his own (καταλάβω), since Christ first seized Paul to be his own (κατελήμφθην).

### 5.3.3 Paul's eager hope (units 3-5; vv 13-14)

#### 5.3.3.1 Not thinking of having attained it

In unit 3 (v 13) ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ ἑμαυτὸν οὐ λογίζομαι κατεληφέναι· *brothers, I do not think myself to have attained*, the vocative *brothers* (ἀδελφοί) introduces the renewed appeal with this endearing title (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:50). According to Marshall (1991:95-96), Paul uses it to stress the point which he now states yet again, and to ensure that they see that it applies to them. The emphatic phrase *I ... myself* (ἐγὼ ἑμαυτὸν v 13) points to the contrast with those who thought themselves *perfect* (τέλειοι v 15). Paul is reacting against the false security, the antinomian recklessness, which others deduced from the doctrine of faith (Lightfoot 1953:152; Wilson 1983:80). More specifically, while the personal pronoun *I* (ἐγὼ) usually emphasises the subject of the verb *think* (λογίζομαι), the reflexive pronoun *myself* (ἑμαυτὸν) emphasises that Paul himself has as yet not seized his *goal*, in contrast with those who think them *perfect* (τέλειοι v 15).

The present verb *think* (λογίζομαι v 13) frequently happens in a commercial context, which means essentially *reckoning* (Heidland 1967:284). For Paul it is a favourite term frequently used in the sense of carefully weighing the point under consideration, which can thus mean *reckon* or *think* in terms of the process of reasoning (Loh and Nida 1977:111; Osburn 1981:98). After Paul carefully weighed the evidence (λογίζομαι to *calculate precisely*), by means of using the perfect tense *seize* (κατεληφέναι) he reaffirms his former conclusion that he has not entirely seized the full significance of Christ, which means *I do not think myself to have seized* (οὐ ... κατεληφέναι; Hawthorne 1983:153; Walvoord 1971:91).

The compound verb *seize* (κατεληφέναι) is used here for the third time. It stands without an object. According to Loh and Nida (1977:111), the object *it* supplied translationally, clearly speaks of *the prize*, and can be rendered as *I have already seized it*. As the compound verb is reiterated three times, it seems reasonable to infer that Paul is correcting their false teaching that they were *perfect* (v 15). Walvoord (1971:92) claims that Paul clearly denies sinless perfection or having achieved complete holiness. Although some may have taught that the performance of Jewish rites could bring such perfection, Paul strongly rejects it (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:50). Paul did not consider himself as having seized the ultimate knowledge of Christ and the fullest conformity to him (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:50). If this is true for Paul, it is equally true for all others. Having come to know Christ partially, one must press on to know Christ perfectly (Hawthorne 1983:152-153).



### 5.3.3.2 Just one thing

In unit 4 (v 13) ἔν δέ, τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος, *just one thing, forgetting the things which are behind, but stretching out to the things which are ahead*, before taking the verb *press on* (διώκω in v 14), Paul recalls his singular passion to know Christ from v 8 (cf. 1:21) in terms of *but one thing* (ἔν δέ; Fee 1999:155). However, it seems difficult to say whether ἔν is a nominative or an accusative (Lightfoot 1953:152). By comparing it with 2 Cor 6:13, however it could possibly be the latter (Lightfoot 1953:152). The phrase, *but one thing* (ἔν δέ), as a forceful statement speaks of what follows in terms of the matter of doing, not of reckoning (Osburn 1981:98; Vincent 1979:109). Loh and Nida (1977:111) state that the force and sense of this expression is possibly best interpreted as *but one thing I do*, or more forcefully, *the one thing I do, however*. After he was seized by Christ (v 12), his final goal or perfection has yet not been seized. *Just one thing* (ἔν δέ), suggests a *singleness of purpose and concentration of effort* (O' Brien 1991:427-428).

There is no way to divert him from his course, as his goal is specific and prominently defined (O' Brien 1991:428). The expression gives strong attention to the subsequent clauses (τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ... ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ vv 13-14) and stands in a parallel position to *but I press on* (διώκω δέ v 12), which, after preceding negation of v 12, had concentrated on Paul's ongoing determination to achieve his final goal (O' Brien 1991:428). Paul's expression of his idea is clearly based on a highly rhetorical, emotional-filled, passionate manner (Hawthorne 1983:153). In a carefully structured sentence, which manifests the *one thing* (ἔν δέ) and comprises two clauses in antithetic parallelism, Paul demonstrates the way of his running (O' Brien 1991:428):

τὰ	μὲν	ὀπίσω	ἐπιλανθανόμενος
τοῖς	δὲ	ἔμπροσθεν	ἐπεκτεινόμενος

<i>On the one hand, the things behind</i>	<i>forgetting</i>
<i>On the other hand, to the things which are ahead</i>	<i>stretching out</i>

These two antithetic parallelisms picture the image of a race to evince the single-mindedness of Paul's ultimate goal (Loh and Nida 1977:111). The *on the one hand* (μὲν) in the first clause is replied by the *on the other hand* (δὲ) in the second, the article and the adverb *the things behind* (τὰ ὀπίσω) in the one, by the article and the adverb *the things in front* (τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν) in the other and *forgetting* (ἐπιλανθανόμενος) by *stretching out* (ἐπεκτεινόμενος; Hawthorne 1983:153). Paul wants to describe his way of pressing on in terms of two antithetic participial expressions: *by forgetting the things behind* and *stretching out to the things in front* (Michael 1928:161).

The verb *forget* (ἐπιλανθάνομαι) appears occasionally in the Classics, but rarely in the meaning of *forgetting wilfully* (Hdt. iii. 147, iv. 43; Vincent 1979:109). The present participle *forgetting* (ἐπιλανθανόμενος v 13) is used nowhere else in Paul. It can imply that his forgetting is continuous and ceaseless while he runs, that is, *keep forgetting* (Loh and Nida 1977:111; Michael 1928:161-162). It can be best understood though, as the *manner* of how Paul is *stretching out* (ἐπεκτεινόμενος) as a race that is run. As Loh and Nida (1977:111) and Kent. Jr *et al.* (1996:50) argue, it may be preferable to translate *to forget* as *to pay no attention to* or *to refuse to be concerned about*, since Paul was really not trying to forget. He simply refused to be concerned about what was behind him. According to 3:5-7 and 9-11, we can see that Paul neither allows his Jewish heritage (vv 5-7) nor his previous Christian attainment (vv 9-11) to disturb his running of the race (Kent. Jr *et al.* 1996:50-51). Any current gain could not lull him into thinking that he already possessed all Christ desired for him (Kent. Jr *et al.* 1996:50-51). In a word, Paul himself does not regard anything, but Christ as having any bearing or influence upon his current spiritual outlook or conduct (Martin [1959] 1987:156).

Michael (1928:161) describes three possible ways of rendering the phrase *the things behind* (τὰ ὀπίσω: the neuter plural definite article + adverb of *place*):

[S]ome maintain that he means his old Jewish life, in particular the prerogative enumerated in vv 5 and 6 of this chapter; others hold that the reference is to his new life in Christ, the part of his Christian course already covered; while others still would include in the phrase the whole of the Apostle's past life both before and after his conversion

According to Caird (1976:143), Lightfoot (1953:152), Michael (1928:161) and Vincent (1979:109), it is not the Jewish advantage demonstrated above, but rather that part of the Christian race so far completed. Others, like Hawthorne (1983:153) and Martin ([1959] 1987:156) contend that it could refer to his Jewish privileges enumerated in vv 5-6, as detected in v 8 that the tendency to revert to 'confidence in the flesh' would only disturb his progress. It possibly speaks of vv 4-6, but it would also entail all other matters that might interfere in his singular pursuit of Christ (Fee 1999:155).

Bockmuehl (1997:222) contends that even though it is true that the phrase *the things behind* (τὰ ὀπίσω) may entail the things written off as loss (vv 5-7), the present tense *forgetting* (ἐπιλανθανόμενος v 13) refers to 'an ongoing concern, to be unencumbered both by what may have been abandoned in the past and what has already been achieved, the part of the course he has already covered'. His goal is not the *the things behind* (τὰ ὀπίσω) at all, but entirely *the things which are ahead* (τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν v 13). The second participle, *stretching out* (ἐπεκτεινόμενος v 13), actively captures the image of the athletic runner who strains and leans forward into the race, reaching for the goal with every ounce of his being (Bockmuehl 1997a:222).

The participle *but stretching out* (δὲ ἐπεκτεινόμενος v 13) is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, using the athletic runner racing toward the end line metaphorically (Osburn 1981:98). Lightfoot (1953:152) suggests that the metaphor may be derived from the chariot races in the circus, as the epistle was written from Rome. With Bruce (1989:121), Fee (1995:348), Hawthorne (1983:153), Loh and Nida (1977:111), O' Brien (1991:429), and Vincent (1979:111), it seems more likely that the metaphor derives from the athletic runner racing. While the first phrase *forgetting the things behind* (τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος v 13) elucidates the *manner* of the runner not looking back over his shoulder, the second phrase, *but stretching out to the things which are ahead* (τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος v 13), pictures him with his eyes fixed on the goal, his hand stretching out to it, and his body bent toward it with all his power towards the finish line (Loh and Nida 1977:111; O' Brien 1991:429). It is a graphic demonstration of the runner's intense desire and ultimate effort to get to the goal (Loh and Nida 1977:111).

Applied to our Christian lives, it strongly evinces the need for concentration and effort in the Christian life if one is to advance in the knowledge of Christ (Hawthorne 1983:153). Furthermore, it draws a picture of the constant personal striving, the intensity of the hope of Christian participation in the contest if he is to fulfill the hoped for goal, that is, the full and entire understanding of the Saviour (Hawthorne 1983:153). As Collange (1979:134) remarks, in order to achieve it, it is absolutely necessary that one must press on ahead and not depend on the laurels of a dead past (ἐπιλανθανόμενος), whether as Jew or even as Christian, but unceasingly stretch out (ἐπεκτεινόμενος) towards something other than oneself. Paul's goal is to press on *to the things which are ahead* (τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν), the remainder of the race, confident that there he will meet the same grace that has marked the track behind him (Caird 1976:143). However, as Loh and Nida (1977:111) remark, it is difficult to pinpoint what, *to the things which are ahead* (τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν), refer to.

### 5.3.3.3 Pressing on to receive the prize

In unit 5 (v 14) κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. *I press on towards the mark for the prize of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus.* The preposition κατὰ (with accusative case) is used in the sense of *direction towards*. It points to the fact that Paul is pressing on, not aimless but purposeful (O' Brien 1991:430). The noun *goal* (σκοπὸν) is used in two senses in classical Greek. It signifies a watchful glance on something, e.g., as an overseer (Hom. II. 23, 359; Od. 22, 396), and a *mark*, e.g. of shooting (Hom. Od. 22, 6) which one may hit (τυχεῖν Pind. Nem. 6, 27) or miss (ἀμαρτάνειν, Plat.Theat. 194a; Fuchs 1971:413). It also implies a moral or intellectual end (Plat. *Gorg.* 507 D; *Phileb.* 60 A; Vincent 1979:110). In the LXX (Job 16:12; Lam 3:12) man is described as the mark or target which God has set in his wrath, which is thus not used in the technical sense appliance of the race course (Fuchs 1971:414; Vincent 1979:110).

In the New Testament the word *goal* (σκοπός) appears only here. The cognate verb σκοπέω appears six times in all, containing two instances in Phil 2:4; 3:17 (O' Brien

1991:429-430; Osburn 1981:99). It denotes a mark to look or aim at, rather than the semi-technical concept for the end of a race. But it can point to the goal-marker, which is that post at the end of the race upon which the runner fixes his attention (Hawthorne 1983:154). Hawthorne (1983:154) points out that Paul does not define what this *goal-maker* corresponds to in his or the Christian's life. However, because it is initially intended to direct the runner and to give incentive to his flagging energies, one may imagine that by the word *goal* (σκοπός) Paul meant anything or anyone that kept the believer from straying from the course of the Christian life, or from slackening in his ethical effort (Hawthorne 1983:154). Therefore, the main focus on the phrase *toward the goal* (κατὰ σκοπὸν v 14) is to highlight, not the Christian effort, but the fact that the Christian's course has a mark or goal, as the preposition *according to* or *toward* (κατά) gives it direction toward a mark or goal (Collange 1979:134; Fuchs 1971:414).

With the phrase *towards the goal* (κατὰ σκοπὸν v 14) Paul expresses his aim of *pressing on* to compete *for the prize* (εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον v 14). Like a good runner Paul fixes his eyes on the prize (Witherington 1994; Hawthorne 1983:154). It is also not clear why some commentators see the phrase *of the heavenly calling of God* (τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ v 14) as appositional to the phrase *for the prize* (εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον v 14; Caird 1976:143; Collange 1979:134; Loh and Nida 1979:112). Others deem the phrase *of God* (τοῦ θεοῦ) to be 'subjective' to the phrase *of the upward calling* (τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως; Bockmuehl 1977:222-223; Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:51; O' Brien 1991:430-433; Silva 1992:202; Vincent 1979:110-111). The phrase *of the heavenly calling* (τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως) probably relates to the the phrase *towards the goal* (κατὰ σκοπὸν v 14) to clarify the word *goal* (σκοπός v 14). Prof. G Swart (of the department of classical languages of the university of Pretoria) points out that the phrase, *of the heavenly calling of God through Christ Jesus* (τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 14), relates stylistically to the word *goal* (σκοπός v 14) to define Paul's *goal*, although the textual element informs that the genitive case defines the immediate word. The word *goal* (σκοπός v 14) is then defined as, *the goal of the heavenly calling of God through Christ Jesus* (σκοπὸν τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ v 14).

In the phrase *of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus* (τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), the adverb *heavenly* (ἄνω) appears before the genitive *of the calling* (τῆς κλήσεως). It points to a spatial relation not necessarily a physical location, but encompassing the *sphere* in which some participant exists or in which a process takes place (Reed 1997:319). Lincoln (1981:93) sees it as a term used for the heavenly dimension (also see Gal 4:26 and Col 3:1 f.). The adverb *heavenly* (ἄνω) thus certainly modifies the sphere of the genitive noun *calling* (τῆς κλήσεως) as *heavenly calling*. With regard to the phrase *of the heavenly calling* (τῆς κλήσεως), the word *calling* (κλήσις) signifies 'the act of inviting (Xen. *Symp.* 1, 7; Plut. *Pericles*, 7, 5) and more frequently an official calling by a recognized authority (e.g. military or the city gathering) and so signifies calling together, or calling to oneself (Homer, *Od.* 1, 90; 8, 43; Coenen 1986:271).

According to Coenen (1986:271), the word *calling* (κλήσις) is rarely used of a divine calling in classical Greek. Its particular use in the New Testament derives from the mystery religions (e.g. that of Isis), and from the influence of the LXX (Coenen 1986:271). For the Stoic the word *calling* (κλήσις) signifies that ‘he is set a difficult and critical task in which he must bear witness to the truth and power of his principles’ (Schmidt 1965:493). Coenen (1986) evinces that in Paul the word *calling* (κλήσις) is almost always used in the sense of divine calling. The *calling* as *God’s divine action* by means of *Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) qualifies Paul’s *goal* rather than modifying the *prize*.

The phrase, *through Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ v 14), forms an *inclusion* between v 12 and v 14<sup>60</sup>. O’ Brien (1991:433) and Vincent (1979:111) argue that the preposition *in* or *through* (ἐν) is used as ‘sphere’. Fee (1995:350) thinks that it is ‘locative’ rather than ‘instrumental’ to point to the sphere in which God’s calling happened; *it happened ‘in Christ Jesus’, meaning in his death and resurrection, and it has been effected for Paul as one who trusts in and therefore lives ‘in Christ Jesus’*. He concludes that Christ is both the means and the end of God’s call (Fee 1995:350). Collange (1979:134) and Loh and Nida (1977:112) say ‘God is the caller and Christ is the agent’. God calls Paul *through Christ Jesus* to realise that he has a certain goal. It indicates the *direction* in which he has to press on for *the prize* (τὸ βραβεῖον v 14).

The word *the prize* (βραβεῖον) is rarely used in secular Greek. It is used of the completion and the crown of life’s work (Vett. Val. VII, 5; Stauffer 1964:638). The LXX uses as the image of the word *competition*, but never of a *prize*, *reward* (Stauffer 1964:638). However, in the work of Philo, it is an alternative for the word *competition* in the *struggle* or *fight* (ἀγών) of the life from which the righteous emerges victorious (Praem. et Poen. 5 f.; Stauffer 1964:638). In the New Testament, this word *prize* or *reward* (βραβεῖον) appears twice, here and in 1 Cor 9:24. In 1 Cor 9:24 it is used to indicate a gift conferred as a reward or prize after having won a competition. In Phil 3:14 it indicates a spiritual advantage (Louw and Nida [1988] 1989:57.120).

In this context it points to the heavenly reward (Vincent 1979:110). Bockmuehl (1997a:222) sees no difficulty to apply the metaphor of the victor’s prize that waits for him to the *prize* or *reward* (βραβεῖον). Witherington (1994a:95) states that as a Pharisaic Jew Paul himself does not look over his shoulder to the past. As a leading Christian, like a good runner, he has his eyes fixed on the goal and the prize at the end. Just as a runner should not look back and sacrifice precious seconds, so Paul himself does not want to look back over the course of his life in Christ (Polhill 1980:367). Lincoln (1981:93-94) states that with this unusual use of the word *calling* (κλήσις) Paul corrects his haughty Jewish Christian opponents (or those influenced by them), who believed that a heavenly existence was attained in this life. Paul by contrast asserts that *the heavenly call* (ἡ ἄνω κλήσις) is the prize that lies at

<sup>60</sup> The phrase *by Christ Jesus* (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ]) in v 12 indicates the *instrument* with Christ as actor to hold Paul. The actor in v 14 is God, who called Paul *through Christ Jesus* (ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), as the *agent* of God to call Paul.

the end of the race (cf. 1:23; 3:21; Lincoln 1981:94). Bockmuehl (1997a:223) and Witherington (1994a:95) state that *the prize* (τὸ βραβεῖον) is God's *heavenly call*. But, O' Brien (1991:431) rightly points out that the purpose of Paul's continuous *pressing on* (διώκω) is not the calling itself, but *the prize* (τὸ βραβεῖον). That is, Paul's attitude of *pressing on for the prize* is directed by the *goal of God's calling through Christ Jesus*.

Therefore, God's *calling itself* cannot be the *prize*. According to Loh and Nida (1979:112), the *prize* (τὸ βραβεῖον) is 'the life above to which God calls me through Christ Jesus'. However, although we cannot reject the possibility of eternal life as the *prize*, the phrase *God's calling through Christ Jesus* modifies Paul's *goal* above. According to vv 7-11, Paul considered everything as *loss* and *rubbish*, because of Christ Jesus and he has an eager mind to *gain* Christ, to *be found* in him and to *know* him. In this context the purpose of *pressing on* to the *goal of God's calling through Christ* is clearly to *know him* (Fee 1995:351; O' Brien 1991:433). The readers should follow Paul as their model in his pursuit of this *prize*. The believers in Philippi are required to imitate Paul's selfless renunciation of all his advantage and privileges (3:10-17; Dahl 1995:13; Jewett 1970:368). As Paul follows Christ Jesus as the example for his life, he is holding up his own life as an example to the believers in Philippi (Black 1995:41). The Christology of this pericope motivates Paul and through his example his readers.

### **5.3. 4 Conclusion**

In 3:12-14 Paul uses the metaphor of the athletic runner to describe his complete devotion to Christ. Paul's frustration is that he has not yet obtained what he wants. Yet he is eager to attain that for which Christ took hold of him. He is eager to know Christ better. Forgetting what is behind, his perfection from the law, he strives to obtain just one thing. He strains towards what lies ahead, he presses on to win the heavenly prize to *know* Christ Jesus fully. Paul's goal in life is determined by God's calling through Christ Jesus. His perfection is not from the law, but from resurrection from death to life. His continuous pressing on is not the calling itself, but the prize, to reach the final goal of knowing Christ. Paul's new life is completely determined by Christ. He exhorts his readers to press on to the same goal. Christology motivates Paul's ethical exhortation. As Christ is Paul's example, Paul is an example to his readers.

## **5.4 Joy in the Lord (Phil 4:4-7: units 1-7)**

### **5.4.1 Introduction**

So far we met with three problems that troubled the Philippian church. According to 1:27-30, trouble is caused by outsiders. According to 2:1-5, there is conflict among church members. According to ch 3, they encountered false instruction based on

Jewish law. According to 4:2-3, another problem upsets the church. Euodia and Syntyche, two women members of the congregation, quarreled. In all these problems Paul refers to Christ to exhort his readers. Christology supports the exhortation in 4:4-7. Unit 1 (v 1) starts with the Lord and unit 7 ends with Christ Jesus (v 7). In chapters 1 and 2 the Christological section and the ethical exhortations alternate. In chapters 3 and 4, though, Christology is integrated in the ethical exhortation sections.

#### 5.4.2 The command to rejoice

Unit 1 (v 4) Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε, *rejoice in the Lord always*, indicates a shift from Paul's previous plea for unity among the church members to his exhortation to the congregation to maintain certain positive Christian virtues (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:59). Caird (1976:150) and Loh and Nida (1979:127) note that v 4 repeats the ethical exhortation of 3:1 with the addition of the adverb *always* (πάντοτε v 4). That Paul repeats a certain theme emphasises *its importance* and reminds his readers of his emphatic determination. The imperative enjoins them to *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4). Some commentators (Beare [1959] 1969:145; Caird (1976:131) claim that the imperative verb *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4), could point to the *farewell greeting* rather than to *joy*. According to Hawthorne (1988:181) the verb *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4) has been used as a formula of farewell. It is thus probable that at this juncture in the letter the imperative *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4) 'connects a parting benediction with an exhortation to cheerfulness. It is neither 'farewell' alone, nor 'rejoice' alone' (Hawthorne 1988:181). He states that whatever appeal there is here to rejoice, 'it is made with the realization that a Christian's faith 'in the Lord' (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4) is what makes such an appeal meaningful, especially when one is faced with situations which are conducive not to merriment but to sorrow and situations marked by difficulties, hurts and trials' (Hawthorne 1988:181-182).

Loh and Nida (1977:127) and Witherington (1994a:112) argue that *farewell* cannot be the meaning of the imperative *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4), since the addition of the adverb *always* (πάντοτε) and the repetition of the injunction makes it nearly improbable to translate it as 'farewell'. According to Alexander (1995:243), the place for the imperative *rejoice* (Χαίρετε) as a greeting is not at the end of a letter, but at the beginning where it could mean 'Greetings'. He is convinced that Paul does not say 'farewell', but repeats the exhortation to 'rejoice', which is so much a feature of this letter (Alexander 1995:243). Witherington (1994a:111) explains that Paul reminds his readers that joy does not arise from the circumstances, but rather from *being* in the Lord. The primary and abiding origin of 'joy' comes from the presence of Christ in their lives, *not* from their circumstances (Witherington 1996:111).

The adverb *always* (πάντοτε) implies that they should carry on 'rejoicing in the Lord, irrespective of what may come upon them (O' Brien 1991:485; cf. Vincent 1979:133). According to Beyreuther and Finkenrath (1986:359) the Pauline letters usually bear witness to the paradoxical way that believers' joy are found in the middle of sadness, suffering, and care. Real joy does not stem from some good feeling that comes and goes with our moods (Maloney 1993:339). It is rather

predicated by one's relationship with the Lord, and is thus an abiding, deeply spiritual quality of the believers' life, as 'rejoice' is an imperative, not an option (Fee 1999:173). Rejoicing *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4) points to their individual and corporate life in Philippi (Fee 1995:404-405).

The phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4) is an addition to the imperative verb *rejoice* (Χαίρετε v 4). It is the key to understand the imperative verb (Χαίρετε v 4). It harkens back to the same phrase in 4:1 (Guthrie 1995:47). *The Lord* in 4:4 is the same as the one in 2:6-11. The name *the Lord* indicates the high status of Christ Jesus. Christ's status as the Lord is the vindication of his death on the cross. To Paul Christ's vindication is his way to exhort his readers to continue to rejoice *in the Lord* even in the situation of opposition and suffering (Fee 1995:406). The phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4) here functions as the governing factor in Paul's exhortation. The Lord is either object of their rejoicing, or its ground, and the one in whom their joy thrives (cf. 3:1; Loh and Nida 1977:127; O' Brien 1991:486). That believers find their joy *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4), rather than in their environment, is again hardly surprising after all that this letter has said (Bockmuehl 1997a:244). Such joy is the fruit, not of environment, but of the spirit of the Lord (Gal 5:22): it stems from what he has done for them in the past, from his presence with them now and from their hope in the promise of his coming (1:6; Rom 12:12; Bockmuehl 1997:244). Therefore, they should always be glad and joyful (cf. 1 Thess 5:16), since the basis of their joy is to be *in the Lord* – the joy is that which derives both from recollecting what he has done for them and from their relationship to him (Marshall 1991:111). The continuous joy in the Lord is of great significance to Paul himself, as well as to his readers. That is why he emphatically repeats the injunction (O' Brien 1991:486).

### 5.4.3 Exhortation to be gentle

Unit 3 (v 5) τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, *let your gentleness be known to all people* is grammatically and thematically unconnected to the repeated exhortation to rejoice in units 1 and 2 (O' Brien 1991:487). Paul calls his readers' attention to their relationships with all people through the transition from inner concerns to outer concerns. O' Brien (1991:486) says that Paul, who exhorted them to rejoice in the Lord, now exhorts them to let their gentleness be known to all, that is, to fellow believers and outsiders alike.

Possibly the clause, *let your gentleness be known* (τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω v 5), follows on the relational conflict reflected in 4:1-3 (Guthrie 1995:47). In Soph. Oed. Col 1127, the adjective ἐπιεικῆς expresses moderation or kindness towards men and is a parallel to *godly* (εὐσεβής) towards the gods, which occurs with the adverb *gently* or *mildly* (πράως) in Plut. De Pyrrho, 23 (I, 389 c; Preisker 1964:590-591). In the LXX it is used to account for the God's gracious gentleness in his rule (1 Sam 12:22; Ps 86:5; Wis 12:18), as well as for the actions of a king (2 Macc 9:27), a prophet (2 Ki 6:3) and of the pious (Wis 2:19; Bauder 1986:257). According to O' Brien (1991:487), the last reference is significant for two reasons:



[F]irst, the adjective *gentle* (ἐπιεικής) is not applied to one with power and authority, and so it does not describe the indulgence of a ruler. Rather, at Wis 2:19 *the righteous* (ὁ δίκαιος), who seems to represent the poor, is delivered up to the whims of the rich and powerful ‘ungodly’. Secondly, the context of ill-treatment, torture, and even disgraceful death strongly suggests that *gentleness* (ἐπιείκεια) here signifies ‘a humble, patient steadfastness, which is able to submit to injustice, disgrace and maltreatment without hatred or malice, trusting God in spite of it all’.

Within the New Testament, it is a quality of gentleness that derives from the character of the Lord himself, as Paul uses the same cognate noun *gentleness* (ἐπιεικεία) in appealing to his readers ‘by the meekness and gentleness’ of Christ (2 Cor 10:1; cf. Mtt 11:29; Bockmuehl 1997a:245; Hawthorne 1988:182; O’ Bien 1991:487). In the current context, it could be the gentleness of Christ who did not insist on his rights (2:6), which the Philippian believers are to adopt (Bockmuehl 1997a:245). Therefore, this quality of believers is so important in Philippi that Paul exhorts them that it may become evident among them to such a degree that it will be seen and made known (γνωσθήτω) by all people (πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις), not just to their fellow believers (cf. Jn 13:35; Hawthorne 1988:182).

The dative plural *to all people* (πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις v 5) is the indirect object of the aorist imperative *let be known* (γνωσθήτω) can include believers, non-believers, false teachers – anyone at all (Kent Jr. *et al.* 1996:59). As Kent Jr. *et al.* (1996:59) point out, it is to mean that ‘truth is not to be sacrificed, but the character of believers as *gentleness* (ἐπιεικής) will do much to disarm the adversary’. Furthermore, because of the fact that *the Lord is near* (κύριος ἐγγύς), as unit 4 indicates, and the final *glory* (δόξα) promised to believers will soon be a manifest reality, they could be *gentile* (ἐπιεικής) to all men in spite of every persecution (Preisker 1964:590). Holloway (2001:148) says that Paul exhorts his readers to apply this Christological perspective to their relations with the others.

#### 5.4.4 The Lord’s nearness

Unit 4 (v 5) ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς, *the Lord is near* is unique in the New Testament. It is inspired by the Aramaic *the Lord comes* (Μαρὰνα θα; 1 Cor 16:22) and can have an eschatological motivation (Holloway 2001:148). *The Lord* (ὁ κύριος) is the same Lord as in unit 1. In v 4 Paul makes the phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ v 4) more specific to his readers by way of exhortation. According to Martin ([1959] 1987:170) unit 4 can be interpreted either as a quotation from Ps 144:18 (LXX) or a variation of the early Christian catchword and invocation of the Lord’s coming, *the Lord comes* (Μαρὰνα θα; 1 Cor 16:22; cf. Rev 22:20). That is, the words may

signify nearness in place, as well as nearness in time<sup>61</sup> (Bruce 1989:142). Bruce (1989:142-143) and Caird (1976:150-151) prefer the former to the latter. Beare ([1959] 1969:146), Marshall (1991:112), Martin ([1959] 1987:170-171) and Michael (1928:196-197) prefer the latter to the former. However, it seems better to include both ideas of time and space rather than separating them, since the Lord who will soon return is the Lord who once came close to humanity to share the human lot and who, though absent in body, is still near at hand through his Spirit to guide, instruct, encourage, infuse with strength, assist, transform, renew (cf. Jn 14:12, 16-18, 26; 16:12-13; Rom 8:9-11; 2 Cor 3:17-18; Hawthorne 1988:182).

Bockmuehl (1997a:244-245), O'Brien (1991:488-450), Silva (1992:227) and Vincent (1979:133-134) also contend that this phrase could be interpreted in both ideas of time and space, since both renderings are theologically right, and it may be unnatural to choose between them. Therefore, in this context, it would be feasible to say that Paul intended to include both ideas of time and space with his use of the adverb *near* or *at hand* (ἐγγύς v 5; O'Brien 1991:489). Paul strongly exhorts his readers to continue their faithful life without anxiousness, based on their belief of both the spatial nearness and temporal nearness of the Lord. The Lord's coming will surely rescue them from earthly care (cf. 1 Cor 7:29-31; Vincent 1979:134). In that sense Paul's intention that *the Lord is near*, both spatially and temporally, is the guarantee that underlines the exhortation in 4:4-6 to joy and gentleness, to prayer and freedom from anxiousness (Bockmuehl 1997a:246).

#### 5.4.6 No anxiety!

Unit 5 (v 6) μηδὲν μεριμνᾶτε, *nor be anxious*, is the negative command based on the idea that anxiety betrays a lack of trust in God's care and is a kind of *unconscious blasphemy* against him (see Mtt 6:25-34; Lk 12:22 where the same verb is used; Martin [1959] 1987:171). The verb rendered here as *to be anxious* (μεριμνᾶτε v 6) is the same verb used in 2:20 where it had the positive meaning of *to be solicitously concerned for the welfare of others* (Hawthorne 1988:183). Here, 'it has a negative connotation of *anxious harassing care*, of attempting to carry the burden of the future oneself, of *unreasonable anxiety*, especially about things over which one has no control' (Hawthorne 1988:183). The verb *be anxious* (μεριμνᾶτε v 6), which occurs most often in the gospels, but here and 1 Cor (1 Cor 7:32) in Paul could imply either *to be full of anxiety* or *to ponder or brood over* (Vincent 1979:134). It may reflect a brooding or anxiety among the believers in Philippi, which arises out of the hostile circumstances caused by the non-believers (Osburn 191971:118).

<sup>61</sup> According to Witherington (1994a:112) there is a reason why he cannot accept the temporal nearness, since it is unlikely that Paul implies the Lord is temporally near, in that the adverb *near* or *at hand* (ἐγγύς), when it is used in the light of the temporal nearness, speaks not of a person, but of a thing or an event, being near. He thus comes to the conclusion that Paul believes some of his readers are aware of the larger allusion to the Psalms and reminds them that the Lord is near and hears the prayer of the believers. Furthermore, owing to this all believers should be anxious and should devote themselves to prayer (Witherington 1994a:112-113). On the other hand, Marshall (1991:112) argues that '*the Lord is near* (ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς) could then mean that, even though the path of meekness is difficult and may not appease hostile people, yet the Lord is near to uphold and vindicate His people'.

This can however never be limited only to non-believers. Bockmuehl (1997a:246) points out that the potential causes for anxiousness could have included such matters as external adversaries and internal conflicts. Without any doubt, Paul and his readers were under pressure. Paul was in prison and his readers were living in a hostile society with conflicts among the members, and the constant threat of persecution (cf. 1:28; Hawthorne 1988:183). Paul does not refer to imaginary troubles or unreal anxiety, but to serious threats and difficulties, to imminent and pressing dangers (Beare [1959] 1969:146). The negative μηδέν with the present imperative *to be anxious* (μεριμνᾶτε) supposes that the believers in Philippi had been anxious and they are now exhorted to stop being so (Loh and Nida 1977:129; O' Brien 1991:491; Osburn 1971:118). Unit 4 indicates that the believers could be free from anxiousness in any and all circumstances, because *the Lord is near* (Bockmuehl 1997a:246). In unit 5 Paul directs his readers negatively to stop worrying, in unit 6 positively to make their request known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving (O' Brien 1991:491-492).

#### 5.4.7 The exhortation to make requests to God

In Unit 6 (v 6) ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ δεήσει μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν γνωρίζεσθω πρὸς τὸν θεόν, *but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgivings let your requests be known to God*, the adversative conjunction *but* (ἀλλά contrasts unit 6 to the preceding, and just as the negative exhortation was all-embracing (μηδέν), the positive is also all-encompassing (ἐν παντὶ; O' Brien 1991:492). The phrase *in everything* (ἐν παντὶ) can possibly be rendered both in the sense of *always*, which signifies time, and from time to time, meaning *in every situation* or *in every circumstance of life* (Loh and Nida 1977:129). Beare ([1959] 1969:147) and Michael (1928:197) have a tendency to prefer *always* to *everything*.

In this context it means *in everything* or *in every situation*, that is, *in every circumstance*, rather than *always* (Fee 1995:409; Loh and Nida 1977:129; O' Brien 1991:492). According to Loh and Nida (1977:129), the phrase *in everything* (ἐν παντὶ) is connected to the two following nouns *in prayer* (τῇ προσευχῇ) and *in petition* (τῇ δεήσει). He links the two nouns to convey inclusiveness. The TEV reads *in all your prayers* in the conviction that the two words are frequently used interchangeably in the Pauline letters (Loh and Nida 1977:129).

The word *prayer* (προσευχή) in the secular Greek is frequently taken as an offering, the object of which is to make the gods favourably disposed (Schönweiss 1986:864). 'In the non-Pauline sections of the New Testament the word *petition* (δέησις) always means a single, concrete act, never prayer as a phenomenon of the religious life' (Greeven 1964:807). In the Old Testament, prayer is significant, because of that which both characterises and constitutes the nation of Israel, his relation to his God (Schönweiss 1986:864). The word *prayer* (προσευχή) implies calling on God in the distinction to the word *petition* (δέησις), which is not very clear to whom the request is directed when the word *petition* (δέησις) is used (Greeven 1964:807). However,

we cannot ignore that both *prayer* (προσευχή) and *petition* (δέησις) can signify *prayer* or *petitionary prayer* (Greeven 1964:807).

The distinction between them is not sought in the persistence or inwardness or similar characters of the prayer, but solely in the content (Greeven 1964:807). Therefore, we could distinguish that the word *prayer* (προσευχή) signifies prayer comprehensively whereas the word *petition* (δέησις) can also have the specific sense of petitionary prayer (Greeven 1964:807). In Paul, the word *prayer* (προσευχή) has particular reference to the *supplication* or *petition* the believers in Philippi offer in their circumstances that cause anxiety (O' Brien 1991:492). The word *petition* (δέησις) sometimes reinforces the sense of need, and is here used with *prayer* (προσευχή; O' Brien 1991:493). These two words appear together in Eph 6:18 and 1 Tim 2:1 and 5:5. To distinguish the word *prayer* (προσευχή) from the word *petition* (δέησις), as Osburn (1971:118) points out, is of less importance than the fact that their being connected suggests the most entire and complete prayer to God.

The plural *your requests* (τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν ν 6) as the subject of the imperative *be known* (γνωρίζεσθω; the only other New Testament usages in Lk 23:24 and 1 Jn 5:15) refers to the specific details of the supplication (Osburn 1971:119). The word *request* (αἴτημα) denotes the thing asked for, both by means of a request or desire and of a demand (Plut. *Demetr.* 3), as the verb *ask for* (αἰτέω) means both to ask and to demand (Schönweiss 1986:855). The transition from requests to men, to requests to God, is demonstrated in Jos. *Ant.* 8,24 and Herm. m. 9, 2, 4 and 5; s. 4, 6 (Stählin 1964:193). According to Stählin (1964:193), in distinction from the word *petition* (δέησις), the word *request* (αἴτημα) indicates the content of the request.

In Lk 23:24, the word *request* (αἴτημα) is not used as a religious concept (Schönweiss 1986:858). It also denotes any individual request viewed in relation to its content (1 Jn 5:15; Schönweiss 1986:858). The word *request* (αἴτημα) specifies the content of prayer as formulating definite and precise petitions (cf. Lk 23:24; 1 Jn 5:15; Martin [1959] 1987:172). As O' Brien (1991:493) claims, the present imperative *be made known* (γνωρίζεσθω) is an unusual expression, it can suggest that God is unaware of their petition or lacks information about them, while in Mtt 6:32 our Lord exhorts his disciples not to be anxious about anything 'since (γάρ) your heavenly father *knows* that you need them' (1991:493). O' Brien (1991:493) says it is not because he is unaware of either the petitions or their content.

However, by letting God know their *requests* (αἰτήματα), reflecting every possible cause of anxiety, they place all their problems in front of him, by taking all their cares to him (cf. 1 Pet 5:7; O' Brien 1991:493). Paul guides his readers to acknowledge their complete dependence upon God, and at the same time they are confident that he knows their requests (O' Brien 1991:493). That is why they are encouraged to approach God with their requests, as indicated by the prepositional phrase *to God* (πρὸς τὸν θεόν ν 6). Prayer can be described as presenting particular needs to God rather than merely a general expression of confidence in God (Marshall 1991:113). More specifically, 'prayer is a conversation with, a plea directed to, a

request made of, information given to a person, in this case the supreme Person of the universe (πρὸς τὸν θεόν v 6) who can hear, know, understand, care about and respond to the concerns that otherwise would sink them in despair' (Hawthorne 1988:183).

In unit 6 the addition, *with thanksgiving* (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας v 6) is striking – even though it is not surprising for Paul (Fee 1995:409). Paul could not think of a believer whose life was not a continual outpouring of gratitude to God (Fee 1995:409). According to Hawthorne (1988:183), what is really important in this context is not the fact that Paul exhorts his readers to pray, but the fact that he advises them to pray *with thanksgiving* (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας v 6). As the preposition *with* (μετὰ + genitive) could be interchangeably used with the preposition *with* (σύν), it could rather function in *an instrumental sense* to denote participation in the current context (Blass and Debrunner 1961:120; Porter [1992] 1994:165). This means Paul exhorts his readers to approach God with their requests accompanied by thanksgiving whenever praying in every circumstance, as Beare ([1959] 1969:147) places the phrase *with thanksgiving* (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας v 6) with the preceding part *by prayer and petition with thanksgiving* (τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ δεήσει μετὰ εὐχαριστίας).

However, Silva (1992:227) argues that it is to be rendered, not with the preceding part in the emphatic position. Within the Pauline letters the εὐχαριστέω word-group regularly implies gratitude that finds outward expression in thanksgiving; there is an emphasis in Paul on the public aspect of thanksgiving (O' Brien 1991:494). The word *thanksgiving* (εὐχαριστία) does not imply to say *thank you* in advance for gifts to be taken; rather it is the complete basic posture of the believer and the relevant context for *petitioning* God (Fee 1995:409-410). The word *thanksgiving* (εὐχαριστίας v 6) as a significant accompaniment of true prayer should include not only the element of gratitude, but of submission which takes away anxiety, since it acknowledges the sum of its desires in the will of God (Martin [1959] 1987:172; Osburn 1971:119; Vincent 1979:135).

To worry signifies that they themselves suffer, groan, and seek to see ahead. By *thanksgiving* (εὐχαριστίας) they give God the glory in everything, making room for him, taking their care to him, letting it be his care (Hawthorne 1988:183-184). Therefore, as Loh and Nida (1977:130) state that the main clause *let your requests be known to God with thanksgiving* (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν γνωρίζεσθω πρὸς τὸν θεόν v 6) *thanksgiving* is 'the accompanying attitude, which should go with every act of prayer, an attitude arising from the remembrance of God's goodness in the past and a realisation of his blessings in the present, as *thanksgiving* (εὐχαριστίας) is an important element in Paul's view'. This injunction is in harmony with the repeated exhortation to *joy* (χαρά), which it contains (Lightfoot 1953:161). By taking their petitions to God *with thanksgiving* (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας) they submit themselves to God's will in all circumstances (O' Brien 1991:495).

### 5.4.8 God's peace surpasses all understanding

Unit 7 (v 7) καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν καὶ τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ., *and the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus*, cannot surely be a concluding wish, but a promise with which Paul grounds the exhortation of v 6 (Schnelle 1998:137). According to Jewett (1971:325), Michaelis describes that the introductory conjunction *and* (καί) and the future indicative verb *guard* (φρουρήσει) indicate a promise of what will happen if the Philippians follow the exhortation which immediately precedes the blessing. Jewett (1971:325) however, argues that even though the conjunction *and* (καί) combines the blessing closely with the preceding exhortation, there is no condition whatever attached to the promise (Jewett 1971:325). He states that the future verb really points to an unconditional promise that the heart and its thoughts will be guarded (Jewett 1971:325).

However, O' Brien (1991:495) points out that the conjunction καί is consecutive. It introduces the result of what precedes; as a result of the believers in Philippi letting their requests be made known to God with thanksgiving, his peace will guard them. That is, it should be considered as a specific and certain promise about God's peace attached to the exhorting consolation of v 6 (O' Brien 1991:495). More precisely, 'the promise about God's peace guarding the believers in Philippi is offered whether their concrete *requests* are granted or not' (O' Brien 1991:495). God's peace will surely be at work in their lives as a result (καί) of their pouring out their hearts and thoughts with thanksgiving, not because they have made requests that are completely in line with the will of God (O' Brien 1991:495-496).

The phrase *the peace of God* (ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ v 7) is found nowhere else in the New Testament, even though the parallel indication *the peace of Christ* (ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ) occurs in Col 3:15 (Hawthorne 1988:184). Martin ([1959] 1987:172) contends that the genitive *of God* (τοῦ θεοῦ) signifies the source or origin (cf. 4:9). That is, according to Osburn (1971:120) and Vincent (1979:135), it is the peace of soul, which derives from God and is founded in the presence and the promise of God (Vincent 1979:135). Moreover, Osburn (1971:120) and Wilson (1983:94) evinces that 'this inward peace is bestowed on the basis of Christ's objective achievement, for peace *from* God is founded upon the work of reconciliation, which established peace *with* God (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14).

In this context though, the genitive *of God* (τοῦ θεοῦ) should not be rendered as *source* or *origin*. It seems better to take it as a descriptive genitive (cf. 4:9), with Hawthorne (1988:184). In the Greek society of time the word *the peace* (ἡ εἰρήνη) was the antithesis to war, *a state of rest* as well as *a state of law and order*, which causes the blessings of prosperity (Beck and Brown 1986:776; Foerster 1964:406). It also entails *the thought of well-being* or *salvation* in the sense of the Hebrew *peace* (Foerster 1964:406). According to Foerster (1964:407), the reader of the LXX is constantly given the impression that the word *peace* (εἰρήνη) has a positive content,

that it seldom denotes rest, that it signifies the *entire* state of man, which cannot be overthrown by any violence or misfortune.

The phrase *the peace of God* (ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ v 7) should be rendered in this context, where God's peace stands in contrast to the anxious care of v 6 and is demonstrated in the predicate, *which surpasses all understanding* (O' Brien 1991:496). Paul seems to speak of the tranquillity of God's own eternal being, the peace which God himself has, the calm serenity that describes his very nature (cf. 4:9) and which grateful, trusting believers are welcome to share (cf. Foerster 1964:411-417; Bruce 1989:144; Caird 1976:151; Hawthorne 1988:184). God himself is not overwhelmed by anxiousness (Beare [1959] 1969:147). As Bockmuehl (1997:247) and O' Brien (1991:496) contend, the phrase *the peace of God* (ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ) speaks not only of the peace which he bestows, but also of something which he *has* and *is* in himself. Therefore, it is relevant to the eschatological salvation, which is mentioned here as a powerful force. It has been effected in Christ Jesus, and the believers in Philippi have obtained it for themselves (cf. Rom 5:1; Jewett 1971:326; O' Brien 1991:496). As a result, Paul exhorts his readers not to be anxious in the face of the opposition, since together they will experience the guidance of God's *peace* in the middle of conflicts (Fee 1999:177). God's *peace* surely surpasses all understanding and exceeds all that human wisdom can plan, as the participial clause *which surpasses all understanding* (ἡ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν v 7) indicates (Bruce 1989:144).

The participial clause, *which surpasses all understanding* (ἡ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν v 7), is used as attributive to God's peace rather than predicative, as the the relative pronoun *which* (ἡ) is in apposition to the word *the peace* (ἡ εἰρήνη). The clause can have two possible meanings. It may denote that God's peace can produce an outcome above any human planning or that is far superior to any person's schemes for security, and is more effective for getting rid of anxiousness than any intellectual effort or power of reasoning (Hawthorne 1988:184). However, we need to find the best meaning in the current context. Lightfoot (1953:161) and Vincent (1979:136) prefer the latter to the former. Hawthorne (1988:184) and O' Brien (1991:497) prefer the former to the latter. According to Osburn (1971:120) it seems to be a desire of the interpreter to combine them. According to Beare ([1959] 1969:147-148), it could be possible to take the latter in the sense that God's peace is better than anything that we can devise for ourselves, better than anything that our minds can create for us. O' Brien (1991:497) says, although the latter could be harmonious with the context in that human reasoning results in continuous doubt and anxiousness, it does not solve the dilemma (cf. v 6).

On the contrary, God's peace is effective in taking away all anxiety. In this context, if Paul's intention is to account for the nature of God's peace, to emphasise its uniqueness rather than its relative superiority to human ingenuity, the former is definitely the correct rendering (O' Brien 1991:497). The word ὑπερέχω means to *surpass* in value. The noun phrase πάντα νοῦν is the object of the participle *surpass* (ὑπερέχουσα). The word νοῦς does not speak of the individual capacity for understanding, but rather of the specific understanding which one has. It means *all*

*understanding* rather than *all planning* or *all cleverness* (Bockmuehl 1997:248; Hawthorne 1988:184 and O' Brien 1991:497). Vincent (1979:136) agrees with the rendering of the Greek expositors saying that 'the peace of God is so great and wonderful that it transcends the power of the human mind to understand it'. This qualification of *peace* (εἰρήνη) has no ordinary or philosophical bearing as a limited and practical one: the *understanding* (νοῦς) which the believers in Philippi put into their dissensions should finally be subordinated to the peace which God bestows (Collange 1979:145).

In the verbal part *will guard your hearts and your thoughts* (φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν καὶ τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν v 7), the verb *guard* (φρουρέω) is a military term used metaphorically. It pictures a garrison or a military sentinel *keeping guard over* a city or a fort to maintain peace and protect it from attacks (Loh and Nida 1977:131; Vincent 1979:136). God's peace is like a garrison keeping guard over the believers' *hearts* (τὰς καρδίας) and *thoughts* (τὰ νοήματα), and protects them from all assaults (O' Brien 1991:498). In Paul's time Philippi was guarded by a Roman garrison. The metaphor would have been easily understood and appreciated by the believers in Philippi. God's peace, like a garrison of soldiers, will keep guard over their minds and their thoughts so that they will be safe against the assaults of worry and fear as in any fortress (Hawthorne 1988:185). The objects of this guarding activity are *your hearts* (τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν) and *your thoughts* (τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν), which often overlap in meaning but are here separated as each has the definite article and the repeated pronoun *your* (ὑμῶν; O' Brien 1991:498).

In the New Testament the word *heart* (καρδία) never signifies a physical organ pumping blood (Osburn 1971:122; Witherington 1994a:113). In Greek literature it was used in the literal and in a metaphorical sense. It signified the heart as an organ of the body and center of the physical life, especially in Aristotle. On the other hand, it was considered as the seat of the emotions and the source of spiritual life generally (Sorg 1986:180). In the Old Testament and LXX it is the seat of the rational functions and also the source and seat of moral and religious life (Behm 1965:606-609). The meaning of the heart as the inner life, the center of the personality and as the place in which God reveals himself to human beings is even more prominently indicated in the New Testament than the Old Testament (Sorg 1986:182).

Conversion of the human being happens in the heart and is thus a matter of the whole man (Sorg 1986:183). The heart is thus the center of a human being to which God turns, in which the religious life is rooted, and which determines the moral behaviour (Behm 1965:612). But here, placed next to the word *thought* (νόημα) it has its meaning narrowed to designate the seat of one's emotions or deepest feelings, or simply to the emotions and feelings themselves (Hawthorne 1988:185). Together they indicate *the center of the personality*, which includes both feeling and thought (Lightfoot 1953:161; Osiek 2000:116). In the Hellenistic Greek *thought* (νόημα) is the result of the activity of *understanding* or of *the mind* (νοῦς; Hom. Od 7:36; Behm 1967:960). In the New Testament it appears only in the plural or with a plural sense, and constantly (except in Phil 4:7) *in sensu malo* with reference to the center of thought, indicating corrupt human thoughts in 2 Cor 3:14; 4:4; 11:3 (Behm



1967:961; Osburn 1971:122). However, in Phil 4:7, with no adverse judgement, it denotes the thoughts which proceed from the heart of the believers (Behm 1967:96). Loh and Nida (1977:131) point out that God's peace guards *heart* (καρδία) rather than *thought* (νόημα), which are the products of the mind (2 Cor 3:14; 4:4; 11:3). However, the future verb *will guard* (φρουρήσει) clearly has two objects *heart* (καρδία) and *thought* (νόημα).

Therefore *God's peace* (ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ) *will guard* (φρουρήσει) both *hearts* (καρδία) and *thought* (νόημα). Osburn (1971:122) warns against considering to reduce the two words *heart* (καρδία) and *thought* (νόημα) to one concept without considering their possible shades of meaning. It is not likely that the two words are synonymous here. Most commentators (Hawthorne 1988:185; Jewett 1971:326; O' Brien 1991:498; Loh and Nida 1977:131) accept that these two words *heart* (καρδία) and *thought* (νόημα) speak of the whole inner life, consisting of the faculties of feeling, willing, and thinking, which is very vulnerable to attack from all kinds of pernicious influences, being wonderfully guarded by God's peace. Hawthorne (1988:185) rightly indicates that God's peace which will guard the hearts and the thoughts, is reserved for, or is available only to those people who are *in Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ν 7).

The final phrase *in Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ν 7) reflects on Christ (2:6-11) for the sake of exhorting the believers (Bloomquist 1993:183). According to some commentators (Collange 1979:145; O' Brien 1991:498; Osburn 1971:122; Vincent 1979:137), the preposition ἐν indicates the *sphere* within which God's protection will be exercised. Marshall (1991:113) thinks it more plausible to render the preposition as indicating *agent*, that is, through Christ Jesus, since God's peace like all his other blessings comes to the believers *through Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ν 7). For Paul, Christology has a definite function in the ethical exhortation of his readers. In this section he uses Christological terms three times. The current phrase *through Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ν 7) strongly functions as an ethical exhortation for the readers as well. Paul exhorts them to show their gentleness to everyone and not to worry, because *the Lord is near* (ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς ν 5). Likewise *through Christ Jesus* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ν 7), Paul is shown to be the channel of God's blessing and of God's peace. The believer as part of the congregation has dual citizenship, for in Christ they may, following his steps, both be humiliated and at some stage exalted (Popkes 2004:255). In this section he strongly exhorts them to rejoice, not to be anxious and to be guarded by the peace of God by means of Christology.

### 5.4.9 Conclusion

In this section we have seen that joy is a fruit of having faith in Jesus Christ. Paul confirmed his injunction to his readers, always to rejoice in the Lord. This joy does not proceed from or is not the result of the circumstances of human lives, but from the right relationship with the Lord. As a result, it is a strong power to cope in all

circumstances. Paul here connected the ethical exhortation in 4:4-7 to his Christology, which he presented in 2:6-11.

In 4:4-7, Paul reiterates the exhortation to his readers to rejoice, after his exhortation not to shrink from their current status as believers. Their joyful life in the presence of Christ derives from the deep spiritual quality of their life. It resulted by participating in the character of the Lord. Their joy is based on the Lord. As a result, they should conduct their lives differently from the outsiders by being gentle to all people.

Paul guides his readers on how to live in circumstances which could disturb their faith in Christ in two ways: negatively and positively. They should stop worrying in all situations. They are encouraged to pray and to make requests to God with thanksgiving. God will protect their hearts and thoughts in Jesus Christ. Like a garrison of soldiers, God's peace will guard them under all anxious circumstances.

## **5.5 The power of the Lord (4:10-13: units 1-9)**

### **5.5.1 Introduction**

Paul commences the new section with an expression of his *joy* over his readers in Philippi, because of their renewed concern for him, that is, their sending of a gift (Peterlin 1995:207). In 4:4-7, Paul exhorted them not to worry about anything, but to make their requests known to God (Berry 1996:123). In correspondence with it, Paul demonstrates an example of contentment and trust in God's power whatever the circumstances in vv 10-13 (Berry 1996:123). At the end of his letter Paul pays attention to matters of a more personal nature (Marshall 1991:118). The whole pericope (4:10-20) has often been described as Paul's thank you note and or receipt for the gift (cf. *friendship* Berry 1996:107-124, *Paul's attitude to the gift* Peterlin 1995:206-216, *thankless thanks* Peterman 1991:261-270). To substantiate my hypothesis that Christology functions in Paul's ethical exhortations, I treat vv 10-13 as a thematic unit with Bruce (1989:148) and Fee (1995:426), rather than vv 10-14 (Silva 1992:232) or vv 10-20 (Collange 1979:148; Hawthorne 1988:193; Bockmuehl 1997:255; Marshall 1991:118; O' Brien 1991:513; Witherington 1994a:122). This section (vv 10-13), which point to Paul's Christian life in relation to Christology differs from the previous section where he exhorted his readers to rejoice in the Lord, to show their gentleness to everyone and not to worry about anything, because of the Lord's nearness, and to assure them that God's peace through Christ Jesus protects them. The whole section (4:10-20) expresses Paul's thankfulness to the believers in Philippi. This pericope (vv 10-13) indicates that Paul's joy in the Lord is based on his readers' renewed concern for himself (units 1 and 2, v 10). Paul had not felt neglected in any sense, and his joy did not derive from the satisfaction of his material needs (units 3 and 4, v 12; O' Brien 1991:514). He describes that he is content with whatever he encounters, which is from God and related to Christ, who empowers him in a variety of circumstances (units 5-8, vv 12-13; O' Brien 1991:514).

### 5.5.2 Great joy in the Lord

Unit 1 (v 10) Ἐχάρην δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μεγάλως, *I rejoiced greatly in the Lord*. According to Hawthorne (1988:196), the particle δὲ is significant, although it is frequently ignored and passed over by the interpreters. It arrests a subject, which is in danger of escaping (Lightfoot 1953:163). It points out that something has just appeared to the writer which, if let go any longer, might be forgotten altogether (Hawthorne 1988:196). It is used for rhetorical effect. The particle δὲ can be rendered: *O yes, and I must not forget ...* (cf. 1 Cor 16:1; Gal 4:20; Hawthorne 1988:196). O' Brien (1991:516) picks up the problem of Hawthorne's modification 'for rhetorical effect', since it indicates the difficulty of sustaining such an interpretation. It simply points to a transition to a new subject and is left untranslated by most versions (O' Brien 1991:516). Osburn (1971:129) also says that the particle (δέ) only implies the change of thought to a different subject. As Paul begins a new section of this letter, in which he thanks his readers in Philippi for their recent gift sent through Epaphroditus (2:25-30), he strikes a key term *rejoice* (χαίρω; O' Brien 1991:516).

The aorist verb *rejoice* (ἐχάρην) may have two possible renderings: it may be rendered as an epistolary aorist to indicate that the joy was felt as the letter was being written, but it would have been past when the letter was read, or it may be viewed as evincing the feeling of Paul when he obtained the gift (Osburn 1971:129). Hawthorne (1988:196) and Loh and Nida (1977:138) support the former, which in English motivates and accounts for the present tense. However, Beare ([1959] 1969:150-151), Bockmuehl (1997:259), Caird (1976:152), Fee (1996:428), Kent. Jr. *et al.* (1996:62) and O' Brien (1991:516), Silva (1992:235) argue that in this context the latter would be more likely. As 1:18 uses the present tense of the same verb, it is not reasonable to make it an epistolary present tense here (Fee 1996:428). It is surely past tense viewed from the perspective of the recipients, which refer back to the time of seeing Epaphroditus, since it is further supported by the addition of the adverb *greatly* (μεγάλως), which appears only here in the New Testament and modifies Paul's own experience of joy in an emphatic position at the end of the clause (Fee 1996:428; O' Brien 1991:516; Peterman 1997:128; Silva 1992:235).

Paul's rejoicing over his readers has actually been a reiterated theme in this letter (1:4; 2:2; 4:1; Bockmuehl 1997:259). Great joy is the response of believers to the coming of Jesus (Lk 2:10; Lk 2:10), to his resurrection and ascension (Lk 24:52), to the mighty preaching of the gospel (Acts 8:8) and to the marvellous conversion of Gentiles (Acts 15:3; O' Brien 1991:516). Paul responded in the same way to his readers' continued eagerness to cooperate with him in the gospel' (cf. 1:3, 5) and to their gift: *I rejoiced ... greatly* (ἐχάρην ... μεγάλως). Watson (1997:413) demonstrated that Paul considered joy as significant as it is frequently found in the letter, in the introduction (1:4) and right through the letter (1:18, 25; 2:17-18, 28; 3:1; 4:1, 10). The verb *rejoice* (χαίρω) is thus used in 4:10 as an assertion by Paul that his readers' gift, and their remembering him (τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν) caused great joy to him (Peterman 1997:127). His joy was *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ).

The phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ) in unit 1 and the phrase in him in unit 8 forms an *inclusion*. It emphasises that his joy and his capacity stand in relation to the Lord. The phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ) as an expression which is already used twice in exhortations to rejoice (3:1; 4:4) denotes that the Lord (κύριος) is either the object of their rejoicing or its foundation and the one in whom their joy thrives (O' Brien 1991:516). The phrase probably signifies something of the character of this joy. It was free from any ingratitude or resentment that would be unworthy of his relation with *the Lord* (Loh and Nida 1977:138; O' Brien 1991:516; Osburn 1971:129). According to Vincent (1979:142) and Osburn (1971:129), the gift, its motive, and Paul's joy regarding it, were all within the sphere of life in Christ.

According to 3:1 and 4:4, Paul exhorts his readers to rejoice *in the Lord*. The present phrase *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ) denotes that Paul's joy was in keeping with his relation to the Lord. Constant rejoicing in the Lord, in prayer and thanksgiving could cope with the anxious concern for one's own advantage that is a cause of strife (Dahl 1995:8). As Paul's great joy is *in the Lord* (ἐν κυρίῳ), all believers's spiritual maturity and behaviour has its ground in Christ. For he who has begun this good work in them will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ (1:6). Paul's joy is in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ), since he ascribes the readers' demonstration of concern for him (τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν) to God (Peterman 1997:129, 269). Paul links his great joy in the Lord with what he felt upon receiving new evidence of their concern for him (Berry 1996:109).

### 5.5.2.1 The renewal of the readers's concern for Paul

In unit 2 (v 10) ὅτι ἤδη ποτὲ ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν, *because now at last you have renewed your concern for me*, the conjunction, *because* (ὅτι), indicates the reason for Paul's joy. He rejoiced because of his readers' expression of concern for him (Peterman 1997:130). For the temporal expression *now at last* (ἤδη ποτέ), Lightfoot (1953:163) states that two indications, *now at last* (ἤδη ποτέ) and the verb *renew* (ἀναθάλλω), might seem to convey a rebuke. Berry (1996:109) and Peterlin (1995:210) also elucidate that the phrase, *now at last* (ἤδη ποτέ), implies that Paul is gently rebuking his readers for ignoring him. But there is no intended rebuke in these words, as the following clause makes clear (Collange 1979:149-150; Loh and Nida 1977:138-139; O' Brien 1991:517).

The clause, *you have renewed your concern for me* (ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν), is surely an indication that 'the occasion of Paul's joy was his readers' gift, which he saw as a renewed expression of their concern for him' (Bockmuehl 1997:259). The verb *renew* (ἀναθάλλω) occurs only here in the New Testament. It is used elsewhere of a bush or tree bearing fresh shoots or flowers in the springtime (Loh and Nida 1977:139). Paul describes a picture of his readers' *concern for him* (τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν) blossoming afresh, and he rejoiced greatly in the Lord (O' Brien 1991:517). This botanical image of a newly blossoming plant is used metaphorically, either intransitively (e.g. LXX Ps 27:7 (28:7); Sir 46:12; 49:10) or transitively in the sense of, *cause to blossom* (Sir 1:18; 11:22; Bockmuehl 1997a:259).

In this context the verb is transitive ‘your concern for me’ (Osburn 1971:130; Silva 1992:235-236; Vincent 1979:142). Peterman (1997:130) indicates that the definite article τὸ must be taken as accusative. According to Vincent (1979:142), ‘the only objection against the transitive sense of the verb (ἀναθάλλω) is that it seems to make the revival of interest dependent on the will of the Philippians, and thus implies a reproach’. According to Malherbe (1996:131), ‘Paul’s use of the verb *renew* (ἀναθάλλω) is intended as a compliment of the spontaneity and good will with which the Philippians made the contribution, rather than as chiding them for finally having ceased their neglect of him’. Therefore, it is true to say that the current unit does not have the implication of reproach (Osburn 1971:130).

The believers in Philippi have always been *concerned*, *i.e.* had a thoughtful desire and intention to help Paul; but what they lacked was the *opportunity* as unit 3 indicates (Martin [1959] 1987:177). The proof of their concern for Paul is marked by the same verb *think* (φρονέω) the significance of which we have emphasised in 2:3 (Collange 1979:150). In 1:7, taking the same expression (φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ), Paul reverses the relationship and voices his concern for his readers (Collange 1979:150). The renewal of concern for him after a long interval understandably gave Paul great joy, as it gave an indication that they remembered him, and more importantly, the gospel that he had proclaimed among them (Berry 1996:110). Paul’s expression of a great joy focuses on their thoughtful concern for him without speaking explicitly of the material gift (Berry 1996:110-111).

However, as Peterman (1997:130) states, if the definite article (τὸ) in the phrase *the concern for me* (τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν) is taken as anaphoric, as Blass and Debrunner suggest, it is not a difficulty to say that Paul rejoiced greatly over this particular care of theirs, namely financial support (Peterman 1997:130). The concern (φρονέω) of the believers in Philippi is of special significance to Paul. It is their concern for him, which gives him the greatest joy (Peterman 1997:128). The infinitive *to think* (φρονεῖν) demonstrates the thoughtful concern of the believers in Philippi, taking an active interest in Paul’s affairs, for they are bound up with the progress of the gospel (O’ Brien 1991:518). We should also understand this joy as delight in the spiritual maturity of the believers in Philippi (Peterman 1997:128).

### 5.5.3 No opportunity

In unit 3 (v 10), ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε ἡκαίρεισθε δέ, *with regard also to which you have been concerned but you had no opportunity*, the clause *with regard to which you have been concerned* (ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε), makes it clear that there was no suggestion of blame in his earlier remark, as Paul adds this positive explanation (O’ Brien 1991:518). The phrase, *with regard to which* (ἐφ’ ᾧ), can either be taken as a causal preposition, which depends on the verb, *rejoice* (χαίρω v 10), to indicate a fresh reason for his great joy, or as a simple relative speaking of one of the ingredients of the preceding statement (Collange 1979:150). In this context the latter

seems more probable, according to Greek grammar to modify the immediate literary context.

O' Brien (1991:518), Osburn (1971:130) and Vincent (1979:142) state that it implies the matter of Paul's welfare, whereas the verb *think* or *concern* (φρονέω) in the imperfect tense, with the emphatic conjunction (καί), which takes away the possibility of an earlier blaming in this verse clarifies that the readers in Philippi had all along been taking careful thought for Paul's welfare. Peterman (1997:132) says that while the readers in Philippi had renewed their concern (φρονέω), i.e. their support, nonetheless they had been experiencing concern for Paul all along (φρονέω). The imperfect tense of the verb *think* or *concern* (ἐφρονεῖτε) thus emphasises the continuing nature of the concern even in absence of tangible expression (Osiek 2000:118; Peterman 1997:132).

However, what they lacked during this whole period was the opportunity to show their concern for Paul (O' Brien 1991:518). That is why Paul himself quickly asserts at the end of v 10 that they had no chance, no previous opportunity, to express their concern for him, as the main clause *but you had no opportunity* (ἡκαιρεῖσθε δέ) indicates (Osiek 2000:118). The verb *have no opportunity* (ἀκαιρέομαι) used only here speaks of the circumstances which has disturbed them, either lacking the means, or want of facilities for transmitting the gift (Osburn 1971:130; Vincent 1979:142). Paul does not state what the reason for this absence of favorable circumstances was (Martin [1959] 1987:177). Possible unfavourable circumstances could also be the lack of the right person to send on the long and hard journey, a lack of funds (cf. 2 Cor 8:2), a lack of relevant weather for the journey, whatever it may have been, that robbed the believers of doing for Paul what they wanted to do (Hawthorne 1988:197). In any case, as Bockmuehl (1997a:260) and Fee (1995:430) point out the imperfect tense of both verbs in the current unit expresses both continuing concern and continuing inability to express it. Therefore, whatever the significant nature of the circumstances, the believers in Philippi are not reproached for the lack of opportunity (O' Brien 1991:519).

Having qualified his opening indication of a great joy in order to avoid possible misunderstanding, Paul proceeds to modify the event itself still further (Berry 1996:111; Fee 1995:430). He on his part is made happy in his trouble (θλίψις) by the believers' concern for him (φρονέω; Peterman 1997:134). However, although he appreciates the gift from his readers in Philippi, Paul clarifies his attitude of independence and contentment (Loh and Nida 1977:140). It is true that he does not deny that he was in need. But the supply of his need is not his only motivation for his great joy, as his statement is introduced by an elliptical expression *not that ... I say* (οὐχ ὅτι ... λέγω; Loh and Nida 1977:140).

#### 5.5.4 Not because of want

In Unit 4 (v 11) οὐχ ὅτι καθ' ὑστέρησιν λέγω, *I do not say this because of need*, the use of elliptical expression *not that* (οὐχ ὅτι) is a distinctive expression in the New

Testament, which usually occurs without a verb of *saying* which must be supplied by the readers (cf. Jn 6:46; 7:22; 2 Cor 1:24; 3:5; 2 Thess 3:9), but Paul includes it here (λέγω; Hawthorne 1988:197-198). Paul's intention *not saying* (οὐχ ὄτι) is thus to guard against anyone's drawing wrong inferences from what he has just said, which would be that his joy is over their gift as such, as though joy had to do with finally being able to eat (Fee 1995:431). On the contrary, Paul himself says that *I do not say this because of the need*. This unit emphasises that his great joy is over their concern for him (Fee 1995:431). His intention is rather to clarify what the nature of true contentment is, by starting vv 11-13 while v 10 ended with *you* as subject (Levinsohn 1995:63; Silva 1992:234). Levinsohn (1995:64) says that is why it is relevant to mark the switch to *I*, as the ground is given for Paul's claim, *I do not say this because of the need* (the passage reverts back to *you* in v 14).

In the prepositional phrase, *because of the need* (καθ' ὑστέρησιν), the preposition *according to* (κατά with the accusative) frequently indicates the norm or standard, even though here it passes over to the related concept of cause or reason (O' Brien 1991:520). But, as Hawthorne (1988:198) describes, it merges the idea of standard with that of reason (cf. Rom 2:7; 8:28; 11:5; 16:26; Eph 1:11; 3:3; 1 Tim 1:1; 1 Tit 1:3). As a result, the whole phrase, καθ' ὑστέρησιν, implies *because of the need* (O' Brien 1991:520). The word, *want* or *need* (ὑστέρησις), is found only here and in Mk 12:44, while the word, *need* or *lack* (ὑστέρημα 2:30), points to *the absence* or *lacking* of the believers' service on behalf of Paul in Philippi. The word, *lack* or *need* (ὑστέρησις vv 11) and the verb, *being in need* (ὑστερεῖσθαι v 12), have to do with material *needs* (e.g. food; Reed 1999:58). Paul does not comment about his *real* financial circumstances; instead, he generally claims that he has not written *in language dictated by want* (Lightfoot 1953:163; O' Brien 1991:520). 'Paul does not deny want, but he does remove want as the motive and measure of his rejoicing' (Osburn 1971:131; Vincent 1979:143). Therefore, Paul did not intend to refer to his joy over his readers' renewed concern for him, because of some need or deficiency (καθ' ὑστέρησιν) which they could fill, since he has learned to be content (αὐτάρκης) whatever his circumstances (vv 11-12; Berry 1996:111).

### 5.5.5 Learning to be content in all circumstances

Unit 5 (v 11) ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμι αὐτάρκης εἶναι, *for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am*, definitely points out that Paul's great joy in the Lord is not dependant on his *needs* being met (Bockmuehl 1997a:260). The conjunction *for* (γὰρ) gives the reason of the statement in unit 4 (O' Brien 1991:520). The pronoun *I* (ἐγὼ) is here used emphatically with connection to the verb *learn* (ἔμαθον) in the first person, which could be rendered as *I have learned* (O' Brien 1991:520) rather than as *whether or not others have learned, I have* (Hawthorne 1988:198), since this context does not give us any possibility of comparative inference between Paul and the other. The aorist tense (ἔμαθον) for the perfect does not suppose a specific time (Hawthorne 1988:198; Loh and Nida 1977:140; Osburn 1971:131; O' Brien 1991:520; Vincent 1979:143). It rather signifies that Paul's complete experience up to the present has been a kind of schooling from which he

has not failed to master its lessons (Hawthorne 1988:198). The primary lesson he has learned from the school of experience (cf. 2 Cor 11:23-29), was to be content (αὐτάρκης εἶναι) in all the circumstances of the moment (ἐν οἷς εἰμι; Hawthorne 1988:198). The clause ἐν οἷς εἰμι can be rendered as *in the circumstances in which I am*, which means *in my present circumstances* (Loh and Nida 1977:140; Osburn 1971:131). But, Loh and Nida (1977:141) and Osburn (1971:131) argue that the context supports the sense of *in whatever circumstances I find myself*.

The infinitive phrase to *be self-sufficient* (αὐτάρκης εἶναι) may point out that Paul had learned to depend on himself and so to cut himself off from all his circumstances (Marshall 1991:119). The adjective *content* or *self-sufficient* (αὐτάρκης) appears only here in the New Testament, although the noun *sufficiency* (αὐτάρκεια) appears twice (2 Cor 9:8; 1 Tim 6:6). Both are central terms in the ethical discussion from the time of Socrates and was a well-worn concept in the ordinary tradition (Kittel 1964:466). It is a favourite term indicating an inward self-sufficiency, as opposed to the lack or the desire of outward things. Stoic and Cynic philosophy describe it as a state of the mind or attitude in which a man is completely independent of all things and of all people (Loh and Nida 1977:141; Vincent 1979:143). However, Berry (1996:112-113) contends that even though self-sufficiency was a widely promoted virtue in Greek and Roman philosophy, different schools or authors understood it differently in the following way:

[F]or Plato, self-sufficiency was impossible in the physical sphere (*Resp.* 2.369B) but was attainable for the virtuous person on the moral level. In the view of Aristotle, self-sufficiency was not possible on the practical level, since humans are social organisms. In fact, only the community can aim at self-sufficiency (*Eth. Nic.* 1.7.6-7). Self-sufficiency is possible for the individual only in a limited sense on the level of pure contemplation, but even then that person will not be self-sufficient in the physical sense (*Eth. Nic.* 10.7.4; 10.8.9).

Malherbe (1996:134) also describes the Cynic characters in the following way:

[T]he good man does not blame the circumstances in which he finds himself, nor does he attempt to change them, but prepares himself to adapt to them, just as sailors prepares themselves for the sea. They do not attempt to change the wind and sea, but prepare themselves to turn with them. In the same way, the good man uses what is at hand and so, is self-sufficient. This *self-sufficiency* (αὐτάρκεια), then, is not a withdrawing into oneself, but an acceptance of one's circumstances and a concern to discover value in them.

According to Seneca (*De Vita Beata* 6), 'the happy man is content with his present lot, no matter what it is, and is reconciled to his circumstances' (Witherington 1994a:128). As distinct from the rich philosophical usage, the New Testament



concept seems to have only the sense of a capacity for external self-sufficiency and lack (Kittel 1964:467). Kittel (1964:467) states that this almost banal virtue of *self-sufficiency* (αὐτάρκεια) is set in new light by becoming a constituent part of *piety* (εὐσέβεια 1 Tim 6:6), as made clear in Phil 4:11-13. According to Fitzgerald (1996:152), we should not understand Paul's reference to his *self-sufficiency* (αὐτάρκεια) primarily with regard to his inner freedom and disposition.

The context in which Paul speaks of his self-sufficiency is that of his friendship with his readers in Philippi, and his reference should be understood within that context (Fitzgerald 1996:152). Paul transformed it, for his comprehension of self-sufficiency is different: the word *self-sufficient* (αὐτάρκης) indicates his independence of external circumstances, but *only because* he was completely dependent on God. 'he was not so much self-sufficient as *God-sufficient*' (O' Brien 1991:521). His intention in this context is probably to exhort his readers to be content in the Lord, as he has been. Lambert (1899-1900:333) also contends that the word *self-sufficient* (αὐτάρκης) does not mention the capacity to do without, but signifies an inward power that makes a man superior to *all* outward circumstances (Lambert 1899-1900:333). Paul learnt this from patient discipline and concentrated endeavour: it broke upon him at his conversion, and his subsequent career and experience were but the manifestation of the intimacy with the living Lord, which commenced at that time (Martin [1959] 1987:178). His self-sufficiency comes from the experiential realities of 3:10 (Martin [1959] 1987:178). Therefore, 'he is independent of his circumstances by relying on God or Christ who strengthens him (v 13), whether those circumstances might be construed as positive or negative' (Holloway 2001:157; Osiek 2000:120).

Units 6-9 (vv 12-13) explain in detail what Paul implies when he says, *I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am* (Hawthorne 1988:199). Even though there are no conjunctions, which link units 6-8 (v 12) and unit 9 (v 13) to the preceding, it is obvious that the important elements in this clause, that is, *I have learned* (ἐμαθον), *contentment* (αὐτάρκης), and *in whatever circumstances I am* (ἐν οἷς εἰμι), have their counterparts in units 6-9 (vv 12 and 13; O' Brien 1991:522)<sup>62</sup>. According to Collange (1979:150), the statements of Friedrich, Gnilka and Lohmeyer that these units are in poetic form with two three-lined tropes in a rhythmic manner could be true. Collange (1979:150) denies it, since a verse structure is not prominent (Collange 1979:150). This passage can best be rendered

<sup>62</sup> O' Brien (1991:522) provides an example to prove his argument:

- (1) [T]hree additional finite verbs belonging to the same semantic range as *I have learned* (ἐμαθον) (i.e. *know* (οἶδα), *know* (οἶδα) and *learn* (μεμύημαι), describe the apostle's learning process; (2) the content of what is learnt, spoken of as *being self-sufficient* (αὐτάρκης εἶναι unit 5), is qualified in Unit 9 by *I am able to do everything* (πάντα ἰσχύω κτλ.); while (3) the sphere of the apostle's contentment, which is *in whatever circumstances I am* (ἐν οἷς εἰμι unit 5), is amplified by *in any and every situation* (ἐν παντι καὶ ἐν πᾶσι unit 8) and *everything* (πάντα unit 9).

by taking the first three finite verbs, *know* (οἶδα unit 6) ... *know* (οἶδα unit 7) ... *learn* (μεμύημαι unit 8) as parallel to each other to develop the idea already indicated by the aorist verb *I have learned* (ἔμαθον unit 5), and by taking the final verb *I am able* (ἰσχύω unit 9) as a summary statement, which qualifies what Paul signifies by his idea of contentment (Hawthorne 1998:199).

### 5.5.6 Knowing to be humbled

In unit 6 (v 12) οἶδα καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι, *I know also to be humbled*, the repeated verb *I know* (οἶδα units 6-7) with the repeated conjunction καὶ, as synonyms of *I have learned* (ἔμαθον) indicates emphatically the result of what Paul has learnt (unit 5). The verb *I know* (οἶδα) followed by the infinitive generally implies *to know how* or *to be able* (O' Brien 1991:523). The things Paul has learned to overcome are now indicated by infinitives, one, passive in voice, the other, active: *being humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι) and *to have plenty* (περισσεύειν) as an antithetical parallel (Hawthorne 1988:199). Paul accounts for that he knows *how* to live in a relevant manner under those contrastive circumstances: he knows how to be humbled by poverty or need and to have plenty, since he has the right attitude he has learned to overcome in a positive way (O' Brien 1991:523).

The infinitive *being humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι) as the passive voice literally means *to lower*, as one would lower the level of water behind a dam, or the height of a mountain or hill (cf. Lk 3:5; see BGD; Louw and Nida 1989:81.7). In this letter it is used of Christ's free and voluntary action to humble himself by becoming obedient unto death (2:8). Here it signifies that Paul knows *how to be humbled*, or *brought low* by poverty or need occasioned by outer-circumstances (O' Brien 1991:523). It could also apply to an inward attitude, as humiliation recalls Christ's humble action mentioned in 2:8 (Collange 1979:151). Peterman (1997:140) argues that the passive mood *humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι) indicates that Paul does not say that he humbles *himself* in a religious sense, but that he knows how to respond when *he is humbled* by circumstances beyond his control (Peterman 1997:140).

According to Grundmann (1972:18), the infinitive *to be in need* (ὑστερεῖσθαι unit 8) substitutes the infinitive *to be humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι). Then Paul was humbled by living *in poor circumstances*, *to live in want*, to be straitened. This ability arose from his initiation into Christ, which provided him with the needed strength (Grundmann 1972:18). Therefore it is correct to say that Paul uses Christology to motivate the ethical exhortation of himself, as well as of his readers. Hawthorne (1988:199) contends that we cannot ignore the possibility of a reflection of the self-humbling of Christ in the choice of the same verb *humble* (ταπεινοῦσθαι) already so poignantly demonstrated by Paul (2:8) and with which he proudly associates himself. Therefore, Paul's voluntary acceptance of bad circumstances, even poverty has been done, because of Christ, as the goal of his life is to know Christ completely (3:9-11; Martin [1959] 1987:178).

### 5.5.7 Knowing to have more than enough

In unit 7 (v 12) οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν· *I know also to have plenty*, the infinitive to *have plenty* (περισσεύειν) appears twice (in unit 7 and 8). It can literally signify *overflow*, which indicates *having more than enough* of the necessities of daily life (Loh and Nida 1977:141). According to Osburn (1971:133), the infinitive *have plenty* (περισσεύειν) usually is not the antithesis of the infinitive *being humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι unit 6), which is the antithetical term of *exalt* (ὑψοῦν). Here it is rather used to refer to the contrast between the need signified in the infinitive to *be humbled* (ταπεινοῦσθαι unit 6). However, O' Brien (1991:524) argues that particularly when the twin themes of humiliation and exaltation are viewed, the antithesis is rather provided by the infinitive *have plenty* (περισσεύειν) here used in terms of material abundance rather than being exalted by God. However, Martin ([1959] 1987:179) contends that it could be possible to signify a possession of spiritual wealth, as in Romans 15:3. For Paul to be humbled could signify to share in the humility of his Lord (cf. 2:8), while abundance is to share in the glorious riches of God in Christ (4:19; Bockmuehl 1997:261).

### 5.5.8 Learning the secret to face all circumstances (and yet be satisfied)

Unit 8 (v 12) ἐν παντι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν μεμύημαι, καὶ χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πεινᾶν καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι, *I have learned in any and every situation to be satisfied, to be hungry, to have plenty, and to be in need*, describes a more elaborate statement of Paul's contentment and his subsequent adaptability to varied situations (Michael 1928:215). The phrases *in everything* (ἐν παντι) and *in all things* (ἐν πᾶσιν) are adverbially used as repetition for the sake of emphasis (Reicke 1967:889). They demonstrate the inclusiveness and variety of spheres of Paul's *initiation* (O' Brien 1991:525). They can be described as having reference to particular instances and all situations in general, although the whole phrase is possibly nothing but a vague general expression, analogous to the English *every and all* (Michael 1928:216; Osburn 1971:133). These four infinitives are used as adverbs to the main verb *learn* (μεμύημαι) to describe Paul's attitude when encountering a variety of circumstances in his life as an apostle.

The verb *learn* (μύω) appears only here in the New Testament. In the pagan mystery cults it denotes the act of initiation into their religious secrets (Collange 1979:151). According to Holloway (2001:158), Paul uses the verb *learn* (μύω) by way of suggesting that his contentment is a sort of 'secret' (μυστήριον) that he has learned and not a discipline that he has obtained through *practice* (ἄσκησις). However, Osburn (1971:133) points out that no secret is mentioned to be learned. Michael (1928:216) and Osburn (1971:133) state that it can imply 'a difficult process that he has gone through', which could be described as an initiation. His 'initiation' is no ecstatic, secret affair. It rather denotes being willing to be a public spectacle (1 Cor 4:9) and to undergo all sorts of hardships (2 Cor 11:23) for the sake of Christ

(Martin [1959] 1987:179). The sort of life, which he experienced as an apostle is described in the four consecutive infinitives (Martin [1959] 1987:179). Two sets of contrasting infinitives *to be satisfied*, *to be hungry*, *to have plenty*, and *to be in need* (χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πεινᾶν // καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι), each of which is preceded by the conjunction καὶ, demonstrates those extreme circumstances (ἐν παντι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν), which he has learned to overcome in a positive way, because he is content (Hawthorne 1988:200; O' Brien 1991:525). These two sets are presented in a parallelism of contrasts.

*To be satisfied* (χορτάζεσθαι) A

*To be hungry* (πεινᾶν) B

*To have plenty* (περισσεύειν) A'

*To be in need* (ὑστερεῖσθαι) B'

The first of the infinitives *to be satisfied* (χορτάζεσθαι) is contrasted by the second infinitive *to be hungry* (πεινᾶν). In Greek literature the verb *feed* or *satisfy* (χορτάζω) is primarily used to feed animals to fatten them (Osburn 1971:133; Vincent 1979:144).

According to Lightfoot (1953:164), it is only applied to men as a depreciatory concept (Plat. *Resp.* ix, 586). In later Greek language it has however lost the sense of depreciation, and came to be a serious equivalent to the verb *fill* or *satisfy* (κορέννυμι), applied normally to people and directly opposed to the verb *hunger* (πεινάω; Lightfoot 1953:164). In the synoptics, the verb *feed* or *satisfy* (χορτάζω) is used in Mtt 15:33 of satisfying a large number of hungry people. In Mtt 5:6; Lk 6:21 it should be rendered figuratively, since it does not have a specific reference to being satisfied with the food (Louw and Nida 1989:23.16), but is used of satisfying spiritual hunger (Vincent 1979:144). The context is clear that here it simply means 'to have plenty or more than enough [food]' (Loh and Nida 1979:142; O' Brien 1991:525).

The second infinitive *to be hungry* (πεινᾶν) is the direct opposite to the first. Philo considered hunger as the 'most insupportable of all evils', as according to Plato (Plat. XI, 936 b c), 'begging should be forbidden by law, since only the honest man deserves sympathy if he is hungry' (Goppelt 1968:13). In the Old Testament, the verb *hunger* (πεινάω) signifies the effect of famine (Gen 41:55; 2 Kgs 7:12; Goppelt 1968:15). It can also denote exhaustion caused by a military campaign (Judg 8:4; 2 Sam 17:29) or a desert journey (Deut 25:18; Ps 107:4-9). It denotes *persistent hunger* in consequence of national or social distress (Goppelt 1968:15). However, Paul here uses it in the literal sense of picturing the absence of food and the hunger that results (cf. Mtt 4:2; 12:1; Hawthorne 1988:200). His intention is to describe it as one possibility of life in alternation with abundance or fullness (Goppelt 1968:21).

As O' Brien (1991:525) rightly states, Paul's hunger does result not in seeking his own life, but rather his ministry of the gospel (1 Cor 4:11; cf. 2 Cor 11:27). Goppelt (1968:21) points out that Paul is able to accept both poverty and fullness as related parts of the way of life to imitate Christ's suffering and exaltation, that is, crucifixion and resurrection.

The second set of infinitives, *to have plenty* (περισσεύειν) and *to be in need* (ὕστερεῖσθαι) have already been treated in unit 7 and unit 4 respectively. The infinitive *to be in need* (ὕστερεῖσθαι) could be regarded as referring to moral and spiritual lack (Rom 3:23) as well as to material deficiency (Lk 15:14; Jn 2:3) in the New Testament. In this context it has the meaning of material deficiency over against *to have plenty*. Vincent (1979:145) states that the verb could be *middle voice* rather than the *passive voice*. O' Brien (1991:526) and Perschbacher (1989:761) see it as passive. According to Loh and Nida (1979:142), it signifies falling behind in the needs of daily life. That is to say, it draws attention to the real need Paul experienced (O' Brien 1991:526).

More specifically, in these varied circumstances, ranging from one end of the spectrum to the other and where plenty and abundance, poverty and need have been experienced, Paul has learned to *be content* (αὐτάρκης). He does not deny that he has been in adverse circumstances, but asserts that he has learned to cope with such (vv 11-12; Berry 1996:115; O' Brien 1991:526). He has actually learned to live in circumstances at both extremes of the spectrum: in *abasement* (ταπεινοῦσθαι) and in *to have plenty* (περισσεύειν), *being satisfied* (χορτάζεσθαι) and *being hungry* (πεινᾶν), experiencing *plenty* (περισσεύειν) and *being in need* (ὕστερεῖσθαι; Berry 1996:115). Berry (1996:115) states that it is grounded not in the strength of his own inner resources, but in a power, which he derives from an agent beyond himself (ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί ν 13), God (or Christ), 'and it is in Paul's varied circumstances that this power becomes effective' (Berry 1996:115). By sharing the humiliation of Christ who humbled himself (ἐταπείνωσεν cf. 2:8) and sharing his sufferings, Paul also experiences the power (δύναμις) of his resurrection (3:10; Berry 1996:115).

### 5.5.9 Face all things through Christ

Unit 9 (v 13) πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με. *I can do all things through him, who strengthens me*, well describes how Paul has the strength to overcome either sort of circumstance in the person who gives him power (Marshall 1991:120). At the climax of his personal confession, Paul affirms with confidence and humility that he is able to be content all things on account of his relationship with Christ, who strengthens him (O' Brien 1991:526). The word *all things* (πάντα) could be either adverbial or accusative (Osburn 1971:134). Either way it does not affect the sense. The word πάντα literally signifies *all things*. Vincent (1979:145) says it is not only all things just referred to, but everything. However, Peterman (1997:142) contends that the word *all things* (πάντα), which Paul can do must certainly be limited by the context. It is therefore better to understand *all things* (πάντα) in the sense of *all those circumstances*, both *in need* and *in plenty* (Fee 1995:434; Loh and Nida 1977:143).

Paul insists that in every conceivable situation, *in any and every situation*, he finds his strength in union with Christ to maintain his apostolic work and for the fulfilment of his desire to hasten the progress of the gospel (Martin [1959] 1987:180). *All things* (πάντα) thus describes *all those situations* of fullness and hunger, abundance and lack which Paul has experienced (O' Brien 1991:526).

The verb ἰσχύω as the opposite to *be weak* (ἀσθενέω) could mean to *be healthy*, but also to *be able*, to *be competent*, to *have power* (Grundmann 1965:397). It can also denote to use force, to exercise power, particularly bodily, physical power (Braunmann 1986:712). This verb *be able* (ἰσχύω) is not a favourite of Paul, but is used by him twice out of the 28 times it occurs in the New Testament (here and Gal 5:6; Hawthorne 1988:201). Nevertheless, by using this word, Paul strongly reaffirms that he can handle or cope with all these things in various circumstances (O' Brien 1991:526). He expresses his attitude in the following way:

[I] have the power to face all conditions of life, humiliation or exaltation, plenty to eat or not enough, wealth or poverty, as well as all other external circumstances like these. I can endure all these things. I have the resources in myself to master them. I am strong to face them down. I can prevail over and be absolute master of all the vicissitudes of life. This indeed is the force of the active voice of the verb ἰσχύω (Hawthorne 1988:201).

The qualifying phrase, *through him who strengthens me* (ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με), makes it clear that his contentment does not derive from his own inherent or innate resources (O' Brien 1991:526-527). His contentment is completely the result of his dependence upon another, which is different from that of the Stoic (Hawthorne 1988:201; Michael 1928:216; O'Brien 1991:216). His self-sufficiency really derives from the one, who strengthens.

In the significant phrase, *through him strengthening me* (ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με), the preposition ἐν has *instrumental sense* (Betz 1986:606; Carson 1984:117; Collange 1979:151; Loh and Nida 1977:143; Silva 1992:232) rather than *an incorporative sense* (see Hawthorne 1988:201; O' Brien 1991:527; Vincent 1979:145). However, Martin ([1959] 1987:179) contends that he can do it all in union with his personal Lord, whose name is not recorded according to the best MSS (NIV renders thus: *through him who gives me strength*). The preposition *through* (ἐν) is actually more significant than the choice of noun or pronoun ([1959] 1987:179). The dative relative pronoun *the one* (τῷ) is qualified by the present participle *strengthening* (ἐνδυναμοῦντί) as its subject.

Walvoord (1971:113) says that 'the best text omit the word *Christ*, but of course this is the one to whom Paul referred'. Osiek (2000:120) contends that although 'it is not clear here in v 13 whether God or Christ is the one who strengthens, whereas the agent of God in v 19 might suggest that Christ is intended here, the reference to the power of Christ's resurrection in 3:10 suggests that Christ is the intended referent'. As Paul himself rejoices in the Lord (unit 1; v 10), it would be possible to say that

the relative pronoun indicates Christ Jesus by means of the *inclusion* between units 1-9. The source of all Paul's ability in face of the reality of human life is thus definitely Christ, as the verb *strengthen* (ἐνδυναμόω) is used elsewhere to signify the powerful activity of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Eph 6:10; 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 2:1; 4:17; Grundmann 1965:398; Hawthorne 1988:201). Hawthorne (1988:210) states that those later scribes who added the word *Christ* (Χριστός) at the end of the sentence relevantly understood Paul's intent. What we should not forget here is that Paul's contentment is completely different from any philosophical instructions, since it is from God through Christ Jesus (Holloway 2001:158).

Paul was absolutely capable of coping with tremendous hardships in his ministry: long journeys and fastings, beatings and exiles, imprisonments and shipwreck (Maloney 1993:338). He thus refers to a real strength that derives from God through the resurrected one to his all readers who meet their sufferings in prayer (Maloney 1993:338). Peterman (1997:141) contends that Paul's strength to encounter the vicissitudes of life does not come from his natural man but from his God through Christ. Paul exhorts his readers to live as he does, with joy grounded in the confidence that the divine power enables him, and presumably all believers, to cope with all those circumstances (Sampley 1996:127). Betz ([1976] 1986:606) describes God's work in the life of all believers as always opposite to human expectations. Paul in prison is capable of saying that he can do all things through the one who strengthens him. With his Christology Paul exhorts himself as well as his readers. As he rejoices greatly in the Lord, he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him.

### 5.5.10 Conclusion

Christology has a significant function for Paul's own ethical exhortation. In this section, the Christological term has been used inclusively both in the beginning and in the end (the word *Lord* (κύριος) in v 10 and the relative pronoun *the one*, which certainly indicates Christ as agent of God in v 13). That is why Paul himself not only rejoices in the Lord, but can also do all things through Christ. It is clear that Paul used his Christology for his own exhortation, as well as for his readers.

In this section, Pauls uses an *inclusion* concerning Christology to develop the ethical exhortation for himself, as well as for his readers. His great joy is absolutely grounded in the Lord as reflected in 2:6-11. His capacity of doing everything is also founded on Christ, who strengthens him. To him as well as his readers, Christology is important for progress in their life faithful to Christ, and to cope with their hostile circumstances. Therefore, he is glad to be able to stand in relation to the Lord. His readers have renewed their concern for him, of which they had no previous opportunity to show. His reference to it is not based on his need. He knows both need and plenty. He has learned to be self-sufficient in whatever circumstances (being satisfied, being hungry // having plenty and to be in need). By relying on God, Paul could apply his knowledge and his humble mind to both the outward circumstances and the inward attitudes. His humiliation recalls Christ's humble

action mentioned in 2:8. He thus describes that he could manage all those situations, with his strength in union with Christ, to maintain his work.

He used his Christology to exhort himself, as well as his readers, since he knows how Christ has been exalted by God to the highest status as the Lord.

## 5.6 Final Conclusion

Having examined all passages which cover the Christological theme in relation to the ethical exhortations discussed in chapter 5, we conclude that Paul chose Christology to motivate his ethical exhortations to himself, as well as to his readers.

In the first part (3:7-11), Paul applied Christology to himself, since he is convinced that his old life as a sincere Jew has been completely transformed by meeting Christ on the Damascus road. Paul describes his own life as a pattern of trust in the righteousness of Christ versus the righteousness of the law (vv 4-6). Like his saviour (2:5-8), Paul voluntarily gave up all his 'gains' – privilege, position, power, etc. – for the sake of something far better: to come to know Christ fully by conforming to his saviour's death and by daily taking up his cross (Black 1995:41). Therefore, rather than boasting of his status, his conversion on the Damascus road involves an 'emptying' analogous to that of Christ (Black 1995:41). Paul follows the same pattern depicted in terms of privilege-death-exaltation in 2:6-11 to exhort his readers in 3:7-11 by portraying himself as a certain example of apostolic excellence (Black 1995:41; Marshall 2001:371). As a result, Phil 3:7-11 should be interpreted in reflection on 2:6-11, since Paul's exhortation to his readers, as well as to himself is surely based on his Christology. Hooker (1975:156) says that Paul regarded all the advantages of his Jewish birth as worth nothing in comparison with the riches found in Christ. Paul is willing and eager to participate in Christ's death to attain his resurrection.

In the second part (3:12-14), he points to himself as example to his readers. Paul did not regard himself to be perfect in terms of his goal. He is still busy to take hold of that for which Christ took hold of him. By calling his readers 'brothers', he reminds them to keep their faith in Christ Jesus. From the moment of being taken hold by Christ, his life is to press on toward the goal of the call of God through Christ to get the prize. He uses the metaphor of an athletic contest to describe that his conformity to Christ is not complete until he receives the prize, which is to *know* Christ fully (Forestell 1956:126). As Koperski (1996:292-293) contends, the function of the Christology in 2:6-11 and of Paul's example in chapter 3, seems primarily to exhort the believers in Philippi to stand firm in one mind without being shaken from their faith in Christ by the instruction of the false teachers. It threatens to demoralise them and make them vulnerable to the false instructions of their adversaries about the gospel (Koperski 1996:292-293).

In the third part (4:4-7) Paul moves his exhortation to his readers. He exhorts them to behave as believers in the circumstances of suffering and conflict in 1:17-30, 2:1-5,



and 2:12-18 (Black 1995:41). Without joy, there is no possibility of keeping the believers in unity and co-operation to fulfil the will of God. He encourages them to rejoice in the Lord, and to exercise forbearance toward one another in 4:4-7. Christology is here used in an *inclusion*, at the beginning and at the end. Paul commences his exhortation to his readers to rejoice in the exalted Lord and finishes it with his Christology by reminding his readers of God's peace, which protects their hearts and minds through Christ. He reinforces his exhortation by means of Christology, that is, *in the Lord, the Lord is near, and the peace of God through Christ Jesus will guard the believers* (Black 1995:41).

In the last part (4:10-13), Paul describes the relationship between him and his readers. The renewal of their concern for him is a great joy to him in the Lord. Through a variety of circumstances, which were bad or good, he has learned to be self-sufficient, whether satisfied or hungry, in plenty or in need. He is able to face anything through Christ who gives him strength. This last section has the same structure of *inclusion* as the third section, with the Lord at the beginning and Christ at the end. For the believers the ground of all ethical obligations must surely be God himself, inclusive of his will for men. 'For the Jew, the fullest revelation is in the Torah; for the believers in Christ' (Styler 1973:185). They are in a personal, associative relationship with God through Christ Jesus, so radical that one can even talk of death and resurrection resulting in a new way of life in which ethical conduct is a product of this new relationship, not a precondition (Louw 1992:30).