Christology as Motivation for Ethical Exhortation in 1 Peter and Philippians

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Theology

University of Pretoria

Promoter: Prof. Dr. J. G. van der Watt

2007
Acknowledgements

First and foremost I thank God, who saved me, called me, sanctified me and equipped me for his ministry.

Thank you so much Professor Jan van der Watt for all you kindness and extreme patience in the process of providing me with true quality guidance through this adventure.

My great appreciation is also extended to Prof Gerhard Swart for his guidance on particular important issues of the Greek text.

Thank you indeed Prof Francois Malan for your kind assistance with the editing of the written material in English.

I would like to thank Dr Willem Harding for his precious spiritual input and support during my stay abroad.

My sincere gratitude also goes to the late honorary president of Kwang-Shin University in South Korea, Rev Prof Dr K O Jung, on behalf of his personal encouragement and financial support.

Thank you indeed to the current residing president of Kwang-Shin University in South Korea, Rev Prof Dr K N Jung, for his precious financial contribution and personal care.

I do indeed want to thank all of the Professors, Lecturers and Staff members at the Kwang-Shin University for their personal support during the time of my academic preparation.

My most sincere appreciation is extended to Rev Prof Dr K F Koh, as well as Rev Prof Dr B K Cho, for mentoring my study, as well as to elder H S Cho for his financial support and affection towards my study.

My sincerest appreciation is also extended the following spiritual leaders of the churches: Pastor W C Jung, Pastor Y K Bae, T R Han, K S Jang, N K Kim, W B, Im, J K, Shin, as well as Pastor K S Cho.

With my whole heart I would like to extend my personal and sincere appreciation towards the members in the following offices in my congregation, Sae-Sun Church in Mokpo City: The Elders, The Deacons, as well as all the precious spiritual brothers and sisters.

Thank you indeed to my parents and brothers and sister for their sustained love, proved to me by way of their continued prayers and support.

My sincere appreciation to my late father-in-law, Rev Dr K.J. Choi, as well as to my beloved mother-in-law, Mrs S.J. Han and brothers-in-law for their continued love, prayers and affection proved to me during many years.

My whole-hearted appreciation to the immediate family members in my household, my beloved wife: Kyoung-Hee, my two sons: Jong-Kug and Min-Kug for their continued love, support and patience whenever needed.
Summary and Key Words

Title: Christology as motivation for ethical exhortation in 1 Peter and Philippians  
Researcher: Seong-Su, Park  
Promoter: Prof. Dr. J G Van der Watt
Department: New Testament Studies
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

In 1 Peter and Philippians Christology motivates the ethical exhortation of their readers. 1 Peter uses Christology as motivation both for Soteriology and ethical exhortation, although Peter implements Christology in his Soteriology only to remind his reader of their new identity as members of the family of God through Christ’s death and resurrection (1 Pet 13-17; 2:1-3). It caused them to suffer from the same society with its social and religious norms in which they previously lived, and which turned hostile towards them after their conversion. As believers, though, their life should no longer conform to the society of their pagan neighbours. They have thus unexpectedly encountered verbal abuse and physical suffering from their circumstances. The readers of Peter and Paul suffered from opponents from outside the congregation (1 Pet 2:18-20; 3:13-17; Phil 1:27-30; 2:12-18), from conflicts within the community (Phil 2:1-5), as well as from false teaching directed against Paul’s gospel (Phil 3).

To resolve the matters within community and to exhort their readers to stand firm in their faith in Christ Jesus, both Peter and Paul applied Christology to guide their readers on how to conduct their life as believers in their society. Believers are called to follow in the footsteps of Christ, not merely to start the adventure of Christian living, but to persevere up to the end, to the glory of God (cf. Mtt 24:13 & Lk 21:19).

In 1 Peter, the imperative for ethical exhortative motivation are followed by the indicative of its Christology as motivation: ethical exhortation (vv 13-17) followed by Christology (1:18-21); ethical exhortation (vv 1-3) followed by Christology as example of suffering and exaltation, as well as the foundation of spiritual community of the believers(2:4-8); ethical exhortation of domestic servants (vv 18-21) followed by Christology (vv 22-25); ethical exhortation (vv 13-17) followed by Christology (vv 18-22).

In Philippians Christology stands in the center (Phil 2:6-11) as foundation of three ethical exhortations: to stand firm in their faith in Christ Jesus amidst hostile circumstances (1:27-30), to resolve conflicts among themselves (2:1-5), and to work out their salvation by trusting in God (2:12-18). In addition Paul exhorted his readers to imitated Christ, as well as himself, since his eager and absolute goal is to know Christ, the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, as stated in Phil 2:6-11, and to rejoice in the Lord.
Both Peter and Paul’s Christology have a soteriological perspective, but the Christology of both 1 Peter and Philippians focuses on the ethical motivation of their readers, to confirm their faith in Christ Jesus in their unstable circumstances.

**Key Words**

Christology  
Ethics  
Exaltation  
Example  
Exhortation  
Faith  
Joy  
Resurrection  
Salvation  
Suffering (death)  
Perseverance
In 1 Petrus en Filippense dien die Christologie tot etiese vermaning van hulle lesers. 1 Petrus gebruik Christologie as motivering vir beide soteriologie en etiese vermaning, hoewel Petrus slegs die Christologie in sy soteriologie gebruik om sy lesers te herinner aan hulle nuwe identiteit as lede van die huisgesin van God deur die dood en opstanding van Christus (1 Ptr 1:13-17; 2:1-3). Dit het hulle laat ly onder dieselfde gemeenskap met sy sosiale en godsdienstige norme waarin hulle eers gelewe het, en wat na hulle bekering vyandig teenoor hulle geword het. Maar as gelowiges moet hulle lewe nie meer aanpas by die samelewing van hulle heidense bure nie. Hulle is toe onverwags deur hulle omgewing oorval met skeltaal en fisiese verdurkking. Die lesers van 1 Petrus en Filippense het gely onder teenstanders van buite die gemeente (1 Ptr 2:18-20; 3:13-17; Flp 1:27-30), onder konflikte in die gemeente (Flp 2:1-5), en ook onder valse lering teen die evangelie wat Paulus verkondig (Flp 3).

Om die sake in die gemeentes op te los en om hulle lesers te vermaan om vas te staan in hulle geloof in Christus Jesus gebruik beide Petrus en Paulus juist die Christologie om aan hulle lesers leiding te gee oor hoe hulle as gelowiges in hulle gemeenskappe moet lewe. Gelowiges word opgeroep om Christus se voetstappe te volg, om nie slegs te begin op die Christelike lewe se avontuur nie, maar om tot die einde toe te volhard, tot eer van God (vgl. Mt 24:13 and Lk 21:19).

In 1 Petrus word die imperatiewe van die etiese vermaning gevolg deur die indikatiewe van die Christologie wat hulle motiveer: etiese vermaning (1:13-17) gevolg deur Christologie (1:18-21); etiese vermaning (2:1-3) gevolg deur Christologie as voorbeeld van lyding en verhoging, sowel as die fundering van die geestelike gemeenskap van gelowiges (2:4-8); etiese vermaning tot huisbediendes (2:18-21) gevolg deur Christologie (2:22-25); etiese vermaning (3:13-17) gevolg deur Christologie (3:18-22).

In Filippense staan Christologie sentraal (2:6-11) as fundering van drie etiese vermanings: om vas te staan in hulle geloof in Christus Jesus te midde van vyandige omstandighede (1:27-30), om konflikte onder hulle as gemeenteledie op te los (2:1-5), en om hulle daarop toe te lê om as verloste mense te lewe in vertroue op God (2:12-18). Daarby moedig Paulus sy lesers aan om Christus na te volg, sowel as vir hom, omdat sy enigste doel en begeerte is om Christus te ken, die krag van sy opstanding te ondervind en deel te hê aan sy lyding, soos in Fil 2:6-11 beskryf is, sowel as om hom in die Here te verlaat.
Die Christologie van beide 1 Petrus en Filippense het ’n soteriologiese perspektief, maar die Christologie van beide 1 Petrus en Filippense fokus eintlik op die etiese motivering van hulle lesers, om hulle geloof in Christus Jesus in hulle onbestendige omstandighede te bevestig.

**Sleutelwoorde**

Blydskap  
Christologic  
Etiek  
Geloof  
Lyding (dood)  
Optanding  
Verhoring  
Verlossing / Redding  
Vermaning  
Volharding  
Voorbeeld
Abbreviations

1. Abbreviations of books and series used:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABR</td>
<td>Australian Biblical Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSS</td>
<td>Andrew University Seminary Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bib</td>
<td>Biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSac</td>
<td>Biblica Sacra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>The Bible Translator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTB</td>
<td>Biblical Theology Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Cambridge Bible Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQR</td>
<td>Church Quarterly Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBI</td>
<td>Dictionary of Biblical Imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJG</td>
<td>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DLNTD</td>
<td>Dictionary of the Later New Testament &amp; its Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNTB</td>
<td>Dictionary of New Testament Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPL</td>
<td>Dictionary of Paul and his Letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTIB</td>
<td>Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>Evangelical Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERT</td>
<td>Evangelical Review of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExpTim</td>
<td>Expository Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>Filología Neotestamentaria</td>
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<td>Festschrift</td>
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<td>Greg</td>
<td>Gregorianum</td>
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<td>HeyJ</td>
<td>Heythrop Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Hartford Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IVPDNT</td>
<td>The IVP Dictionary of the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>JETS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRR</td>
<td>A Journal from the Radical Reformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LouV</td>
<td>Louvain Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>LXX</td>
<td>Septuagint</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDBT</td>
<td>New Dictionary of Biblical Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIDNTT</td>
<td>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</td>
</tr>
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<td>NovT</td>
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<td>NTS</td>
<td>New Testament Studies</td>
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<td>ResQ</td>
<td>Restoration Quarterly</td>
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<td>RevExp</td>
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<td>SJT</td>
<td>Scottisch Journal of Theology</td>
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<td>ST</td>
<td>Studia Theologica</td>
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2. Abbreviations of Books of the Bible referred to:

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<tr>
<td>Ex Exodus</td>
<td>Mk Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lev Leviticus</td>
<td>Lk Luke</td>
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<td>Num Numbers</td>
<td>Jn John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh Joshua</td>
<td>Rom Romans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judg Judges</td>
<td>1 Cor 1 Corinthians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruth Ruth</td>
<td>2 Cor 2 Corinthians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sam 1 Samuel</td>
<td>Gal Galatians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sam 2 Samuel</td>
<td>Eph Ephesians</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Kgs 1 Kings</td>
<td>Phil Philippians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kgs 2 Kings</td>
<td>Col Colossians</td>
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<td>1 Chr 1 Chronicles</td>
<td>1 Thess 1 Thessalonians</td>
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<td>2 Chr 2 Chronicles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ezra Ezra</td>
<td>1 Tim 1 Timothy</td>
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<td>2 Tim 2 Timothy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esth Esther</td>
<td>Tit Titus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Job</td>
<td>Philem Philemon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ps Psalms</td>
<td>Heb Hebrews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prov Proverbs</td>
<td>Jas James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eccl Ecclesiastes</td>
<td>1 Pet 1 Peter</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. of Sol Song of Solomon</td>
<td>2 Pet 2 Peter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isa Isaiah</td>
<td>1 Jn 1 John</td>
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<td>Jer Jeremiah</td>
<td>2 Jn 2 John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lam Lamentations</td>
<td>3 Jn 3 John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezek Ezekiel</td>
<td>Jude Jude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Daniel</td>
<td>Rev Revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hos Hosea</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Joel Joel</td>
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</table>
Am Amos
Obad Obadiah
Jonah Jonah
Mic Micha
Nah Nahum
Hab Habakkuk
Zeph Zephaniah
Hag Haggai
Zech Zechariah
Mal Malachi

3. Abbreviations of other sources referred to:

Barn Epistle of Barnabas
CD Cairo Damascus
Dial Dialogue
Did Didaché
DSS Dead Sea Scrolls
2 Esdr 2 Esdras
JB Jerusalem Bible
M Mishnah
2 Macc 2 Maccabees
4 Macc 4 Maccabees
MSS Manuscripts
NAB New American Bible
NEB New English Bible
NIV New International Version
RSV Revised Standard Version
Sir Sirach
TEV Today’s English Bible
Tg Targum
Tg Onq Targum Onqelos
Tob Tobit
Wisd Sol Wisdom of Solomon
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