

A Luminaries in the world:

❖ A reflection of God (Philippians 2:12-13)

- After masterfully detailing the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus, Paul adds the expression “therefore.” That is, since Jesus humbled himself and was exalted so that “and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:11), the Philippian believers (and, by extension, all of us) must do something about it.
- Our first task is to work out our salvation “with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). If God is the one who saves us (Titus 2:11), why should we be concerned with it?
- Fear and trembling are expressions used as synonyms for serving God (Psalm 2:11). Hence, Paul emphasizes that it is God who produces in us the desire to do good, and gives us the strength to make it a reality (Philippians 2:13).

❖ A light in the world (Philippians 2:14-16)

- Paul proposes three aspects that will make believers shine in the world:
 - (1) Maintaining unity (Phil. 2:14): When working together, there should be no gossip, criticism, rivalries, or arguments among us.
 - (2) Conducting oneself blamelessly (Phil. 2:15): Obeying our Father with simplicity stands in stark contrast to the wickedness and dissipation that exists all around us.
 - (3) Being faithful to the Word of God (Phil. 2:16): Our conduct and our thinking must be in accordance with what the Bible teaches
- Where darkness is greatest, light shines brightest. In a world where God is systematically rejected, we Christians must shine with the light of Christ.

❖ A living sacrifice (Philippians 2:17-18)

- Although Paul hoped to be freed, there was a possibility that he would be condemned. He presents this possibility as being “poured out like a drink offering” (Phil. 2:17).
- The libation [drink offering] consisted of pouring a liquid over the sacrifice being offered (Ex. 29:39-40). In this case, the sacrifice in question was the Philippians.
- Were the Philippians going to die? Not at all. Their sacrifice consisted of “the service of your faith.” It was a living sacrifice, a sacrifice that we all must offer to God (Rom. 12:1).
- Paul did not mind dying because his testimony would give even more strength to the believers who were already being faithful witnesses of the Gospel, speaking of it with courage, and behaving as worthy children of God.

B Examples of light:

❖ Timothy (Philippians 2:19-24)

- Timothy was an active collaborator of Paul and co-author of six epistles (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Philemon). It was Paul himself who chose him as an evangelist (Acts 16:1-3). What did Paul see that was special about this young man?
- First, everyone “spoke well of him.” His suitability for ministry was confirmed by prophetic words (1 Tim. 1:18). As a young man, Paul regarded him as a son (1 Tim. 1:2; 4:12). For his part, Timothy treated Paul with the respect and affection a son has for his father (Phil. 2:22).
- Paul considered him as effective a worker as himself (1 Cor. 16:10). He entrusted him with the oversight of several churches, such as Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17); Philippi (Phil. 2:19); and Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:2). He also suffered imprisonment like Paul (Heb. 13:23).

❖ Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-30)

- When the Philippians learned that Paul was imprisoned in Rome, they decided to send him help to meet his needs (paying rent, food, clothing, etc.) Epaphroditus was in charge of bringing this help to the apostle (Phil. 4:18; 2:25).
- Epaphroditus did not just deliver aid, but accompanied Paul, helped him in his needs, and collaborated with him in spreading the gospel.
- In his zeal for the gospel, he risked his own life and fell seriously ill (Phil. 2:27, 30). When the Philippians heard this, they were concerned for him. This was the main reason Paul decided to send him to deliver the epistle to them (Phil. 2:26, 28).
- Paul asks that “and honor people like him” (Phil. 2:29 NIV). Epaphroditus was undoubtedly a faithful Christian.