

Philippians 2:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

Analysis

For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick (ἐπειδὴ ἐπιποθῶν ἦν πάντας ὑμᾶς καὶ ἀδημονῶν, διότι ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἠσθένησεν, epeidē epipothōn ēn pantas hymas kai adēmonōn, dioti ēkousate hoti ēsthenēsen)—Epipothōn ēn ("he was longing") uses the same verb as 1:8 (Paul's longing for Philippians). Pantas hymas ("all of you") shows comprehensive affection. Adēmonōn ("being distressed, full of heaviness") is intense emotional anguish—used of Jesus in Gethsemane (Matt 26:37; Mark 14:33).

The cause: dioti ēkousate hoti ēsthenēsen ("because you heard that he was sick"). Epaphroditus's distress wasn't over his own suffering but over their worry about him! This reverses expected concern: he suffered, but grieved that they grieved. This Christlike other-centeredness exemplifies 2:3-4 (looking to others' things, not your own). Epaphroditus worried more about their anxiety than his illness—radical self-forgetfulness.

Historical Context

Ancient communication was slow—news of Epaphroditus's illness reached Philippi (taking weeks), and their concern somehow reached back to Rome (weeks more). His distress over causing them worry shows extraordinary character. Ancient culture valued honor and avoiding shame; Epaphroditus's concern was pastoral,

not self-regarding. This vignette illustrates the Christ-pattern (2:5-11) in a contemporary believer.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Do you feel greater distress over your own suffering or others' worry about you, like Epaphroditus?
2. How does Epaphroditus's other-centeredness challenge your natural self-focus in hardship?
3. Who in your life demonstrates this kind of 'full of heaviness' (adēmonōn) concern for others?

Interlinear Text

ἐπειδὴ	ἐπιποθῶν	ἦν	πάντας	ὑμᾶς	καὶ	ἀδημονῶν
For	longed after	he	all	you	and	was full of heaviness
G1894	G1971	G2258	G3956	G5209	G2532	G85

διότι	ἠκούσατε	ὅτι	ἠσθένησεν
because	that ye had heard	that	he had been sick
G1360	G191	G3754	G770

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 61:3 (Parallel theme): To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for

the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Proverbs 12:25 (Parallel theme): Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.

Ephesians 3:13 (Parallel theme): Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Romans 12:15 (Parallel theme): Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Philippians 1:8 (Parallel theme): For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 69:20 (Parallel theme): Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

Romans 9:2 (Parallel theme): That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

Matthew 11:28 (Parallel theme): Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 26:37 (Parallel theme): And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

2 Samuel 13:39 (Parallel theme): And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.