

# Philippians 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

## Analysis

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**Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others** (μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες, ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστοι, mē ta heautōn hekastos skopountes, alla [kai] ta heterōn hekastoi)—Skopountes ("looking at, considering, being concerned for") suggests focused attention. The prohibition isn't absolute—Paul doesn't forbid self-care (the kai, "also," allows for legitimate self-interest). Rather, he forbids exclusive self-focus.

The call: also consider **the things of others** (τὰ ἑτέρων, ta heterōn). Heterōn ("of others") is genitive of interest—their concerns, needs, welfare. Verses 3-4 transition from wrong motivations (v. 3a) to right attitudes (v. 3b) to concrete behaviors (v. 4). This grounds the Christ-hymn (vv. 5-11), which models self-emptying for others' salvation. Christ is the supreme example of looking to others' things (our redemption).

## Historical Context

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Ancient Greco-Roman ethics (especially Stoicism) emphasized self-sufficiency and pursuing one's own good. Aristotle defined friendship as mutual advantage. Paul's ethic—prioritizing others' interests—was revolutionary. Only the incarnation and cross could ground such radical other-centeredness. This verse previews Christ's kenosis (self-emptying, v. 7) as the theological foundation for Christian ethics.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How do you balance legitimate self-care with the call to 'look to the things of others'?
2. What practical steps can you take this week to consider others' interests, not just your own?
3. How does Christ's example (vv. 5-11) transform 'looking to others' from duty to delight?

## Interlinear Text

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μὴ	τὰ	ἑαυτῶν	ἕκαστος	σκοπεῖτε,	ἀλλὰ	καὶ
<b>not</b>	<b>on the things</b>	<b>on his own things</b>	<b>every man</b>	<b>Look</b>	<b>but</b>	<b>also</b>
G3361	G3588	G1438	G1538	G4648	G235	G2532
	τὰ	ἐτέρων	ἕκαστος			
	<b>on the things</b>	<b>of others</b>	<b>every man</b>			
	G3588	G2087	G1538			

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 10:24** (Parallel theme): Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

**Romans 15:1** (Parallel theme): We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

**James 2:8** (Parallel theme): If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

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

**Matthew 18:6** (Parallel theme): But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

**2 Corinthians 11:29** (Parallel theme): Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

**2 Corinthians 6:3** (Parallel theme): Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: