

Greek Syntax Notes: Philippians & Colossians

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Philippians 1

- 3** ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνησίᾳ ὑμῶν = “every time I remember you” (NIV) (BDAG ἐπί 18b)
- 4** τὴν δέησιν ποιούμενος = “praying” (periphrasis for simple verbal idea; BDAG ποιέω 7a)
- 5** ἐπὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον = “because of your partnership in the gospel” (providing the reason for Paul’s thanksgiving and joyful prayers, vv 3-4) (BDAG ἐπί 6c)
- 7** καθὼς = “since” (BDAG 3; BDF §453(2)), connecting to vv 3-6 | ὑπὲρ + gen. = “about” (BDAG A3) | διὰ τὸ ἔχειν με ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμᾶς = “because I have you in my heart” (NASB, cp. ESV, NIV) (the accusative closest to the infinitive is normally the subject; Reed, *NovT* 33 (1991): 1-27) | ἐν τε τοῖς δεσμοῖς ... ὑμᾶς ὄντας = “since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of grace with me” (NASB)
- 10** εἰς could be translated “for” (ESV), “until” (NASB, NIV), or “on” (NRSV; cp. 2:16)
- 11** καρπὸν ... τὸν διὰ Ἰ. Χρ. = “the fruit ... which [comes] through Jesus Christ”
- 12** τὰ κατ’ ἐμέ = “my circumstances” (NASB)
- 13** ὥστε ... γενέσθαι = “as a result it has become clear that I am a prisoner because I am a Christian” (Hawthorne)
- 14** τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου = “because of my imprisonment” (dative of cause, BDF §196) | τολμᾶν – second infinitive continuing ὥστε result clause (v 13)
- 15** τινὲς μὲν ... τινὲς δέ = “some ... others” | διὰ + acc. = “because of”
- 16-17** οἱ μὲν ... οἱ δέ = “the latter ... the former”
- 17** ἐγείρω = “to bring into being, cause” (BDAG 5) | τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου = lit. “for my chains,” pregnant for “for me in my imprisonment”
- 18** τί γάρ; = “What difference does it make?” (BDF §299(3), cp. NIV) | πλὴν ὅτι = “in any case” (BDF §449(2), BDAG πλὴν 1c) | εἴτε ... εἴτε = “whether ... or” (cp. vv 21, 27) | ἀλλὰ καὶ = “[not only this] but also” (BDF §448(6); BDAG ἀλλά 3)
- 22** εἰ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκὶ τοῦτό μοι καρπὸς ἔργου = “But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me” (NASB)
- 25** τῆς πίστεως = “in the faith”

- 28** ἤτις ... σωτηρίας is difficult. Options: (1) “this is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved” (NIV), or (2) “although your loyalty to the faith is proof to them that you will perish, it is in fact proof that you will be saved” (Hawthorne) | και τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ (cp. Eph 2:8) – could refer to entire preceding thought, which fits best with option (1), or to σωτηρία which works with either option
- 29** τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ – adverbial acc. (BDF §160) | τὸ πιστεῦειν, τὸ πάσχειν – articular infinitives, “the privilege of believing/suffering”

Philippians 2

- 2** μου τὴν χαρὰν = τὴν χαρὰν μου | ἵνα of content (Moule, p. 145 n. 3) or imperatival ἵνα
- 2-4** Four imperatival participles
- 3** μηδὲν ... κενοδοξίαν – must supply a participle, e.g., ποιοῦντες | ἑαυτῶν – gen. of comparison
- 5** τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ και ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ – either (1) supply τὸ φρόνημα after τοῦτο and ἐφρονεῖτο in second half of comparison (brachylogy, cp. Eph 5:24), “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (NASB), or (2) supply ἐστὶν ὑμῶν and take ἐν Χρ. in strict sense, “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (ESV).
- 6** ἀρπαγμός (harpax) – see BDAG, commentaries
- 10** ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ = “when the name of Jesus is spoken, at the name” (Moule, p. 78)
- 13** και ... και = “both ... and” | ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας = “for [God’s] good will/pleasure”
- 16** ἐπέχοντες = (1) “holding fast,” or (2) “holding forth” (imperative participle) | εἰς κἀύχημα ... ὅτι = “in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that”
- 17** ἀλλὰ εἰ και = “but even if”
- 18** τὸ δὲ αὐτό = “in the same way” (adverbial acc.; Moule, p. 34; BDF §154)
- 19** γινούς + acc. = “when I learn of” | τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν (cp. vv 20, 23) = “your circumstances, situation, condition” (BDAG περὶ li)
- 20** ὅστις = “such that” (qualitative-consecutive relative clause, BDF §379)
- 22** ὡς πατρὶ τέκνον = “like a child [serving with] his father” (brachylogy)
- 23** ὡς ἂν ἀφίδω τὰ περὶ ἐμὲ ἐξαυτῆς = “as soon as I see how things go with me” (NASB)

- 8** εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο = “for this very purpose” (ESV)
- 9** πάντα τὰ ὄδε = “everything that is happening here” (NIV)
- 13** ἔχει πολὺν πόνον = “he is working hard” (NIV)
- 15** ἡ κατ’ οἶκον αὐτῆς ἐκκλησία = “the church that meets in her house” (BDAG κατὰ B1c)
- 16** παρ’ ὑμῖν = “among you” (ESV) (BDAG παρά B1bβ) | ποιέω + ἵνα functioning as infinitive = “to cause or bring it about that” (BDAG ποιέω 2ha)
- 18** μνημονεύω takes gen. | μου τῶν δεσμῶν = τῶν δεσμῶν μου

BDAG; main options: (1) “going into great detail about what he has seen” (NIV, cp. ESV), (2) “taking his stand on visions he has seen” (NASB), (3) “which he has seen upon entering” (technical term used when initiates enter sanctuary – see commentaries) | εικῆ φυσιοῦμενος = “puffed up without cause”

- 19 αὔξει τὴν αὔξησιν – cognate acc., serves purpose only when qualifying word or phrase is added (τοῦ θεοῦ) (BDF §153)
- 20 Paul normally uses the dative with ἀποθνήσκω (“to die to,” e.g., Rom 6:2, 10), but here he uses ἀπό in a pregnant construction; by death one is freed from the control of the στοιχεῖα (BDAG ἀπό 1e) | τί δογματίζεσθε = “why do you permit yourselves to be put under rules and regulations?” (BDAG) | ὡς = “as if”
- 22 ἃ ἔστιν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει – parenthesis: “(referring to things that all perish as they are used)” (ESV, cp. NASB)
- 23 ἅτινά ἐστιν ... οὐκ ἐν τιμῇ τινὶ πρὸς = “which are of no value against” (BDAG τιμή 1; πρὸς 3δα) | λόγον μὲν ἔχοντα σοφίας = “although having an appearance of wisdom” (BDAG λόγος 1αβ or 2f)

Colossians 3

- 6 δι’ ἃ = “because of which things” (διά + acc.)
- 7 ἐζήτε – 2p imperfect of ζάω
- 12 ἠγαπημένοι – perfect passive participle of ἀγαπάω
- 13 ἀνεχόμενοι, χαριζόμενοι – imperatival participles (cp. vv 16-17) | ἐάν τις πρὸς τινα ἔχη μομφήν = “if one has a complaint against another” (ESV)
- 14 ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τούτοις τὴν ἀγάπην = “in addition to all these things [put on] love” (BDAG ἐπί 7)
- 17 πᾶν ὃ τι ἐὰν ποιῆτε = “everything whatsoever that you do”
- 20 κατὰ πάντα = “in all respects” (BDAG B6) (cp. v 22)
- 23 ὃ ἐὰν ποιῆτε = “whatever you do”
- 25 ὁ ἀδικῶν κομίζεται ὁ ἠδίκησεν [aorist] = “the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done” (ESV)

Colossians 4

- 2-5 γρηγοροῦντες, προσευχόμενοι, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι – imperative participles
- 3 ἅμα καί = “at the same time” | δι’ ὃ = “because of which” (cp. 3:6)
- 4 ὡς δεῖ με λαλῆσαι = “as I ought to speak” (acc. as subject of infinitive δεῖ, cp. v 6)
- 7 τὰ κατ’ ἐμὲ πάντα = “all the news about me” (NIV)

- 27 ἵνα μὴ λύπην ἐπὶ λύπην σχῶ = “to spare me sorrow upon sorrow” (NIV)
- 28 ἵνα + two subjunctives: χαρῆτε (2p aorist passive of χαίρω) and ὃ (1s present active of εἰμί)
- 29 τοὺς τοιοῦτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε = “hold men like him in high regard” (NASB)
- 30 τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα τῆς πρὸς με λειτουργίας = “what was lacking in your service to me”

Philippians 3

- 1 τὸ λοιπὸν = “finally” (cp. 4:8)
- 2-3 κατατομή – play on words with περιτομή (paronomasia, BDF §488(1b))
- 5 περιτομῆ ὀκταήμερος = “a person of eight days relative to circumcision” (BDAG) (dative of respect, BDF §197)
- 7 ἅτινα – neuter pl. (of ὅστις) with sg. verb
- 8 ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καί – strengthened form of ἀλλὰ καί (cp. 1:18) = “more than that” (BDAG, NASB), “what is more” (NIV)
- 9 εὕρισκω has eschatological connotation, “to be found [at the last day]” (cp. Matt 24:46; Mk 13:36; Lk 18:8; 1 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 5:3; 2 Tim 1:18; 1 Pet 1:7; 2 Pet 3:10, 14; Rev 14:5; 16:20; 18:14, 21, 22, 24; 20:11, 15)
- 10 τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτόν = “so as to know him” (articular infinitive; could be final, consecutive, or exegetical; Moule, pp. 128-29)
- 12 καταλάβω ἐφ’ ᾧ – either (1) taking καταλαμβάνω absolutely (cp. 1 Cor 9:24) and ἐφ’ ᾧ as “because” (ESV), (2) or taking ἐφ’ ᾧ as direct object of καταλαμβάνω, “so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of” (NASB)
- 13 ἐν δέ – must supply a verb, e.g., “but one thing [I do]”
- 14 κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω = “I press on toward the goal”
- 16 στοιχεῖν – imperatival infinitive (Moule, p. 126; BDF §389)
- 17 οὕτω ... καθὼς | ἔχετε τύπον ἡμᾶς = “you have us as an example” (τύπον as predicate acc., BDF §157(1))
- 21 τοῦ δύνασθαι – articular infinitive, exegetical of ἐνέργειαν (Moule, p. 129) | καὶ ὑποτάξαι = “even to subject” (complement of δύνασθαι) | “by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself” (ESV)

Philippians 4

- 1 Ὡστε = “therefore, so” | οὕτως = “in the manner [just described]”
- 3 γνήσιε σύζυγε – vocative

- 5** τὸ ἐπιεικὲς – substantived adjective (BDF §263)
- 8** τὸ λοιπὸν = “finally” (cp. 3:1) | λογίζομαι = “to ponder, dwell on” (BDAG 2)
- 10** ἤδη ποτέ = “now at last” | τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν = “your concern for me” (articular infinitive) | ἐφ’ ᾧ = “with regard to which,” referring back to τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν (Moule, p. 132) – ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε = “with regard to which you were indeed concerned” | ἠκαιρεῖσθε δέ = “but you lacked the opportunity” (until now)
- 11** καθ’ ὑστέρησιν = “out of need” | ἐν οἷς εἰμι = “in whatever circumstances I am”
- 12** ἐν παντὶ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν = “in any and every circumstance” (ESV) | μύεω + infinitive = “to learn the secret of doing/being x” (technical term for being initiated into a mystery religion)
- 13** πάντα ἰσχύω = “I am able to endure all circumstances,” i.e., whether need or abundance (v 12) | Instrumental ἐν (BDF §219)
- 15** ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου – see commentaries | εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήμψεως = “in the settlement of a mutual account” (BDAG λόγος 2b, cp v 17)
- 17** εἰς λόγον ὑμῶν = “to your account”
- 19** πληρώσει – future indicative (“God will fill/supply”); other MSS have πληρώσαι – optative of wish (“May God fill/supply”)

Colossians 1

- 6** τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς = “which has come to you” | καθὼς καὶ ... καθὼς καὶ = “just as ... so also” | ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας = “from the day that” (cp. v 9, and note typo: ἧς → ἧς)
- 9** ἵνα – final sense attenuated, “asking *that*” (BDAG 2αγ)
- 10** περιπατῆσαι – infinitive of purpose | εἰς πᾶσαν ἀρεσκείαν = “to please (the Lord) in all respects” (BDAG)
- 13** τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ = τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (adjectival gen.; Moule, p. 175)
- 16** Note shift from ἐκτίσθη (aorist, “were created”) to ἐκτίσται (perfect with continuing effects, “are created”) (BDF §342)
- 18** τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἐκκλησίας = “of the body, the church” (appositive gen.; BDF §167) | ἵνα γένηται ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων = “so that he might come to have first place in everything” (BDAG)
- 19** Ἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα the subject of εὐδόκησεν (“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,” ESV) or κατοικῆσαι (“For God was pleased to have all his fulness dwell in him,” NIV)? Hard to decide; seems to amount to same thing in end.

- 23** ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει = either (1) “in all creation” (NASB, ESV), or (2) “to every creature” (NIV, BDAG; ἐν = dative, BDF §220) (on the duality of πᾶς, cf. Moule, pp. 93-95)
- 25** Again: ἧς → ἧς | εἰς ὑμᾶς = “for you” (equivalent to dative of advantage; BDAG εἰς 4g)
- 26** Note transition from participle to finite verb (Moule, p. 180; BDF §468(3))
- 29** εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ = “for this purpose also I labor” (NASB; BDAG εἰς 4f)

Colossians 2

- 2** παρακληθῶσιν – 3p aorist passive subjunctive of παρακαλέω | Note variety of meanings of συμβιβάζω (BDAG) | εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν = “resulting in the true knowledge” (NASB) (BDAG εἰς 4e)
- 5** εἰ καὶ ... ἀλλά = “although ... yet” (BDAG εἰ 6e; ἀλλά 4a) ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν = τὴν τάξιν ὑμῶν
- 7** περισσεύοντες ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ – imperatival participle
- 8** βλέπετε μή τις + future (instead of subjunctive, BDF §369(2)) = “see to it that no one” | ὑμᾶς is the direct object of ὁ συλαγωγῶν
- 11** ἡ περιτομὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ – could be (1) objective gen. (“the circumcision that Christ himself received,” i.e., his death), (2) subjective gen. (“the circumcision that Christ performs”), or (3) adjectival gen. (“Christian circumcision”)
- 12** ἡ πίστις τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ – could be (1) objective gen. (“faith in the working of God,” NASB, ESV, NIV), or (2) gen. of production (Wallace, pp. 104-6) (“faith which is produced by the working of God”)
- 14** κατὰ + gen. = “against” | τοῖς δόγμασιν = “with its legal demands” (ESV) (Moule, p. 45)
- 15** ἀπεκδύομαι – could be (1) true middle, “to strip oneself” (of clothes, here metaphorically, as if the powers had encircled Christ like a garment), or (2) deponent (middle with active meaning, BDF §316(1)), “to disarm,” i.e., to strip one’s foe of his armor/weapons | θριαμβεύω – see discussion in BDAG | ἐν αὐτῷ = ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ (instrumental ἐν)
- 16** ἐν = “in connection with” (BDAG 8) | ἐν μέρει + gen. = “in the matter of, with regard to” (BDAG μέρος 1c)
- 17** ἃ ἔστιν – neuter pl. subjects take sg. verbs (cp. vv 22-23)
- 18** θέλων ἐν = “delighting in” (NASB, cp. BDAG) (possible Septuagintism [1 Chron 28:4; Pss 1:2; 111:1; 146:10], Moule, p. 183; but BDF §148(2)) | ἃ ἐόρακεν ἐμβατεύων – see discussion in