

CHRISTMAS JOY

Phil 2:1 - If you've gotten **anything** at **all** out of following Christ, if his love has made **any** difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means **anything** to you, if you have a **heart**, if you *care* - **then complete and fulfill my joy** by doing me a **favor**: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.

⁵⁻⁸ **Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became *human*! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.** Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honored him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth—even those long ago dead and buried—will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that he is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father.

**** In this verse, **Paul** gives us the **KEY** to being **FILLED** with **JOY** - a life defined by **HUMILITY & LOVE**.

**** Paul starts **OUT** by saying this mindset **SHOULD** be the **BASIC, FUNDAMENTAL FOUNDATION** of knowing **Jesus**.

1 Cor 13:1) - If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. ³If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it;* but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

⁴**Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.**

Philippians 2:7 (NCV) But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born to be a man and became like a servant.

Phil 2:6 (NLT)- Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. **7** Instead, he gave up his divine privileges & emptied himself ; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, **8** he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

LOVE & HUMILITY = The **FULLNESS** of **JOY**

Phil 1:27

²⁷ Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are **standing together** in unity with **one spirit** and **one purpose**, fighting **together** for the faith, which is the Good News.

//--> **LOVE & HUMILITY** = The **FULLNESS** of **JOY**

//--> **UNITY** is produced by **walking** in **LOVE & HUMILITY**

//---> **UNITY** (Walking in **Love & Humility**)
COMPLETES & brings **FULLNESS** to our **JOY**.

Phil 2:2

² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord in unity, of one mind. ³ *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

1. **UNITY** is focused on **WE**
DIVISION is focused on **ME**

2. **UNITY** is created from **LOVE & HUMILITY**
DIVISION is created from **DISLIKE & ANIMOSITY** (bitterness, resentment)

V.27 " stand fast in **one spirit** in unity, with **one mind** striving **together** for the faith of the gospel" have "**conduct** that is **worthy** of the **gospel** of Christ"

**** **UNITY** is **NOT** **CONFORMITY**

**** **UNITY** is a **decision** to walk in **LOVE & HUMILITY**

2. **UNITY** is created from making a decision to walk in **LOVE & HUMILITY**.
DIVISION is created from making a **DECISION to DISLIKE** & unfortunately that creates **ANIMOSITY** (bitterness, resentment)

GOD is GOOD, **ALWAYS**
GOD is LOVE, **ALWAYS**

1. **UNITY** is focused on **WE**
DIVISION is focused on **ME**
2. **UNITY** is created from **LOVE & HUMILITY**
DIVISION is created from **DISLIKE & ANIMOSITY** (bitterness, resentment)
3. **UNITY** creates a **LIFE FULL** of **JOY**
DIVISION creates a **LIFE FULL** of "OH BOY"s

The 3 Levels of Year-Round Christmas Joy

J = JESUS
O = OTHERS
Y = YOU

1. J = JESUS

*** **Its All About HIM!**

*** **JESUS was the Human Embodiment of the Fullness of JOY**

//--> "Put God first and you'll never be last."

//--> "The secret of a happy life is giving God the first part of your day, the first priority to every decision, and the first place in your heart."

//--> "As God is exalted to the right place in our lives, a thousand problems are solved all at once." – A.W. Tozer

Matt 6:33

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you"

2. O = OTHERS

Phil 2:3

Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.

///-----> The **GOLDEN RULE** must become our **DAILY FUEL**

Matt 22:34

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ “Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?”

³⁷ Jesus said to him, ‘*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’ ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

3. Y = YOU

Mark 9:35

³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “*If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.*”

**** Theres NOTHING like experiencing the JOY that comes from Serving or Giving to Someone that will never be able to pay you back

**GIVE something that everyone can give –Love and Acceptance. And if you can afford more than that, give it. Give out of your need. God will bless it.

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O = OTHERS

Y = YOU