

Book of Philippians

Part 2

Philippians 2 NIV

1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Note:

- Philippians is considered the epistle of Joy. The Apostle will use the word joy or a derivative of joy many times in this letter.
- Joy is not happiness because happiness is tied to happenings. Joy is something that comes from God and is not tied to this world. Paul experiences this joy as he writes from prison.

Vs.1,2

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

- It seems that Paul is about making a withdraw on what has been deposited to the believers in Phillipi. But that's not what he's doing, he is simply bringing it to the surface as a reminder for the purpose of directing it towards unity in the body of Christ.
- Paul finds joy in seeing this kindredness of spirit in them, but there is something needed to make his joy complete. **2** "then make my joy

complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

- Perhaps one of the fastest way we can grieve the Holy Spirit and put out the spirits fire is to fall into the pit of backbiting, slander and becoming a device Christians.
- What Paul says here reminds me of how Jesus prayed for the Church.

John 17

20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **21** that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

- If Jesus prayed this prayer, how important is it for believers to the guard unity of the Church and the Churches that are in Christ.
- Paul continues

Vs. 3,4

3 Do nothing out of **selfish ambition or vain conceit**. Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves**, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

NIV - selfish ambition or vain conceit

KJV - strife or vainglory

NLT - Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others

3b Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

Humility: Lowliness of Mind, Modesty, having a humble opinion of one's self.

“Humility is not an emotion. Don’t try to feel humble that’s ridiculous. Humility is a decision of the will that is expressed in action.” (Derrick Prince)

- The ancient Greeks considered humility to be a fault, not a virtue. The pagan and the secular idea of manhood is self-assertiveness, imposing one’s will on others.

“If I consider you above me and you consider me above you, then a marvelous thing happens: we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on.” (Guzik)

“The apostle knew that, to create concord (unity), you need first to beget lowliness of mind. Men do not quarrel when their ambitions have come to an end.” (Spurgeon)

NKJV - “...esteem others better than himself.”

What does that look like?

When someone walks in the room does your body language say: Here I am, or there you are?

- If I practice honoring and esteeming others as better than myself, it will show up on my face when they walk in the room...
- No longer is the world's way the example these Philippian believers should follow; Now the Apostle Paul gives them and us the greatest example and that is Christ' example.

Vs. 5-11

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7

rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

8

And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

9

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

10

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11

and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

- Paul is speaking to a spiritual people, who are united with Christ, comforted from his loved, sharing in the Spirit and he adds this bit of instruction because they need to know that what Christ has done in them, also needs to be aimed towards one another.

Vs. 5

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

- How often have we seen people who claim to be deeply spiritual yet they are lacking in demonstrating that to others. It seems their spiritual walk with God never translated well to how they treat people. Yet the Bible never excuses that kind of behavior.
- Therefore, “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus”

Vs. 6

Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

- This describes Jesus’ pre-incarnate existence. We must remind ourselves that Jesus did not begin in the manger at Bethlehem, He is the eternal God.
- The first example we get from Christ is that even though he is God, He never used his position as God for His own advantage.
- Jesus didn’t go around wearing his rank on his sleeve.

Vs. 7

rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

ESV - but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

NLT - Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;
he took the humble position of a slave
and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,

- The more common translation of this is that He emptied Himself.
- The ancient Greek word (kenosis) gives the idea that Jesus' incarnation was essentially a self-emptying.
- This tells us that Jesus laid aside his divine power when he became flesh. He then modeled full surrender, obedience to God and yieldedness to the Holy Spirit. Therefore he become the second Adam by defeating temptation as a man, in His first wilderness experience and also in the Garden before his crucifixion.
- Because Jesus emptied himself of equality with God; this explains **John 5:19** "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
- And in **John 5:30** By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.
- Jesus modeled the kind of reliance on God that we are to follow.

Vs. 8

And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

- The fact that Christ died is proof that he emptying himself of His Divine place and become a man. This is a point of debate among some religious that don't believe the Jesus is God. They say if Jesus was truly God how is it that they killed him on the Cross. Can God be killed, can God die? The answer is only if he empties himself and is found in appearance as a man and becomes obedient to death.

Robertson called the death of the cross *"The bottom rung in the ladder from the Throne of God. Jesus came all the way down to the most despised death of all."*

Vs. 9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

10

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11

and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

"Now, just pause over this thought – that Christ did not crown himself, but that his Father crowned him; that he did not elevate himself to the throne of majesty, but that his Father lifted him there, and placed him on his throne." (Spurgeon)

- The life of the fully surrendered believer follows the example Christ gave us. The fully surrendered believer has put his own will aside. His confidence is not in what he can do, but what God can do through a yielded vessel...
 - Christ is exalted because he first humbled himself...
 - Is this the way the world thinks? No
 - Yet this is the example of how we should be in our attitudes towards one another...
1. We emptying ourselves of title or position, not using that to our advantage.
 2. Taking on the nature of a Servant
 3. Humbling ourselves even as Christ humbled himself to the lowest possible point.

The words of Paul here echos the words of Jesus in:

Matthew 20

25 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **26** Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— **28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Closing: