

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JAN 30TH-31ST, 2021 // BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

HUMILITY TOWARDS OTHERS (PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4)

- Our relationships matter to God- truly pleasing God in our relationships is being unselfish and treating others as we'd like to be treated.
- If our relationship with Christ is truly as it should be, we will work to honor God in our relationships with others.
- Anytime anyone who claims to be spiritual has constant, significant, repeated relational issues, something is amiss spiritually.
- "If you have any...encouragement in Christ, comfort from His love, fellowship with the Spirit, affection and mercy" (vs. 1)
- Paul is connecting the inward work of God in our hearts to the outward reality of relationships.

"Complete my joy...practically apply that in your relationships with other believers by..." (vs. 2).

Being of the same mind, Having the same love, Sharing the same feelings, Focusing on one goal.

DO NOTHING FROM... (VS. 3)

- "Selfish ambition" - A spirit of competition that manifests itself in actions grounded in a need to prove ourselves as somehow superior to those around us.
- "Conceit"- A belief that we are somehow more important or that our needs matter more than the people around us.

BUT IN HUMILITY...

- Consider others as more important than yourself.
- Look after others' interests, not just your own (vs. 4).
- This means we must first die to ourselves and be willing to sacrifice for others.
- How much workplace drama, family conflict, marital strife, and church issues could be completely resolved if we just obeyed this verse?
- "I love you **more than I love being right**"

THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST (PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11)

- This is one of the more difficult theological passages in the Bible, prompting various theories on what attributes of Jesus's divinity He "emptied Himself" of in the incarnation (kenosis).
- Christ didn't become any less God, but He chose not to use some of his divine attributes (Jn 17:5).
- For God to become a man was humbling, but Jesus was willing to go even further.

Christ could have come as an earthly king, instead He took the role of a servant-the creator chose to serve His creation (vs. 7).

- In this next section, Paul invites the Philippians to meditate on Christ. "Have this mind...which is yours in Christ Jesus." (vs. 5)
- The "mind of Christ" is available to anyone in Christ. The question is, are you applying it?
- Jesus did not consider His own interests, thus allowing them to dominate His actions.
- Instead He came as the supreme example of humility, love, and selflessness.
- He emptied Himself and assumed the "form of a slave" (vs. 7)-He was a servant and no task was beneath Him.
- Loving people implies action, not just talking about it.

"EMPTIED" (VS. 7)

- He was born in the "likeness of man" and He came for us and "dwelt among us" (Jn. 1).
- Sometimes the best way to love someone is by being there for them.
- "...He humbled Himself and became obedient." (vs. 8)
- Even though Jesus is equal to God the Father, He submitted to the Father's will (Jn 5:30).

True power never feels the need to prove itself. Insecurity often drives individuals to do or say ridiculous things to prove their worth, competence, or intelligence.

- "...even to the point of death" (vs. 8)
- Becoming a man was humbling, taking on the nature of a servant was humbling, but still Christ went further.
- He died for the ones He created!

"...EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS" (VS. 8)

- Crucifixion was the most degrading kind of execution that could be inflicted on a human being.
- It was a form of capital punishment reserved for foreigners and slaves.
- Christ died this death as an innocent man! He didn't have to die for us in this manner, but He did.

Following Jesus' humility and obedience, God the Father exalted Him to His rightful position of honor and glory (vs. 9).

- Through the miracle of resurrection from the dead, the Father gave new honor to the obedient, humble Son.
- Jesus then assumed His preincarnate rank and dignity seated at the right hand of God's throne (Heb. 12:2).

The result of Christ's humiliation was exaltation.

- Following His obedience, the Father decreed that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess He is Lord (vs. 10-11).
- The emphasis here is that every creature in the universe will someday acknowledge Christ as the rightful King.

HUMILITY IN REAL LIFE (PHILIPPIANS 2:12-30)

"WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING..." (VS. 12)

- "Work out" means to apply salvation, not to earn it.
- "Fear and trembling" is the appropriate response to the darkness and power of sin, and the even greater power of God's grace to save us from it!
- We should live with a healthy fear of sin, a healthy fear of God, and an overwhelming awe of God's goodness in salvation.

"FOR IT IS GOD WHO WORKS IN YOU..."

- Paul makes it clear- only God is the one who can do a work in us. We are simply responsible in drawing near to Him.
- Proximity matters. What you are closest to changes you.
- Draw near to Christ and He'll change you. Draw near to the ways of the world, and they will change you (James 4:4).

"DO EVERYTHING WITHOUT GRUMBLING..." (VS. 14)

- Constant "grumbling" (complaining) is a sign of a discontented, ungrateful heart that is focused primarily on self.
- The more we complain, the more we find reasons to complain.
- Constant complaining has absolutely nothing to do with circumstances- a complaining heart will manifest no matter how ideal the circumstance!

"DO EVERYTHING WITHOUT DISPUTING..." (VS. 14)

- Constant "disputing" (arguing) is a sign of a proud heart that cares more about being right than the person or even the truth of what is right.
- An argumentative person will find an argument wherever or whenever there is an opportunity to prove a viewpoint or an individual as somehow inferior to themselves.
- Can you walk away from an argument?

"SO THAT YOU MAY BE BLAMELESS AND PURE..." (VS. 15)

- If we truly put this into practice- choosing to not complain, argue, or grumble- Paul says we will "shine as lights in the world".
- Our lives will stand as a stark and distinct contrast from those whose only hope is found in the things of this world.
- Do you realize how revolutionary and supernatural it is to behave this way?

How do we do this? How do we not complain or argue? How do we "shine as lights" in the world?

We "hold fast to the Word of Life" (vs.16)

- Only God's Word and the power of the Gospel can give us the direction and power to let God do His work in our lives and keep us pure before Him.
- Practically speaking, what is your greatest attitude/mindset influencer? TV? The news? Social media? Or the "Word of Life"?

Facing possible execution or death in prison, Paul simply viewed His situation as an act of worship to God (vs.17).

- He then encourages his readers to have his same attitude and rejoice with him.
- Paul finishes this chapter with a return to personal matters. Timothy was apparently with him in Rome, and Paul intended to send him to the church in Philippi soon (vs. 18).

Timothy stood out as someone that, like Paul, had a genuine interest in their well-being.

- He ministered out of love, not self-ambition and a desire to fulfill a need for affirmation or personal success.
- Paul then talks about sending Epaphroditus, most likely the pastor of the Philippian church, back to Philippi (vs. 25).
- "E" was most likely a leader of the Philippian church who had delivered a financial gift to Paul and stayed in Rome to assist him in ministry (vs. 26).
- "E" was apparently homesick, physically sick, and worried over the reaction of family and friends at the news of his illness.
- This is selflessness and the "mind of Christ" in human form!