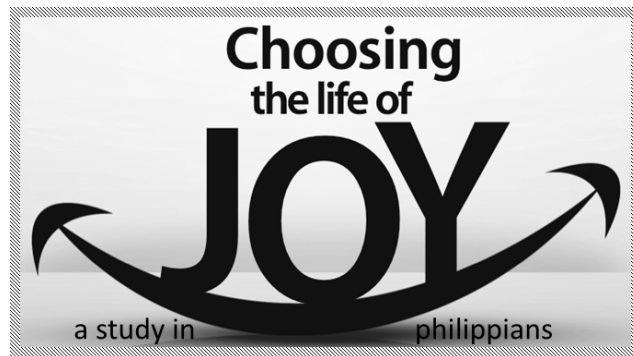


Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, November 14, 2018 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



CHOOSING THE LIFE OF JOY A Study in Philippians “The Great Example” *Philippians 2:5-11*

*“A believer's spiritual maturity can be measured by what it takes to steal his joy.”
-Dr. John MacArthur*

Questions:

- (1) What does it mean to be “spiritually mature”? And how do you measure “spiritual maturity”?
- James 1:2-4, *“² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect (NIV = “mature”) and complete, lacking nothing.”*
 - Ephesians 4:11-16, *“¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect (NIV = mature) man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up (NIV = mature) in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”*
 - Colossians 1:24-29, *“²⁴ I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the ²⁶ stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, ²⁶ the ²⁷ mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷ To them God willed to make known*

what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: ¹⁹which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect (NIV = mature) in Christ Jesus. ²⁹To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.”

- **Hebrews 6:1-3**, “¹Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ²instruction about cleansing rites,¹⁹ the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And God permitting, we will do so.”

(2) **What steals our joy as Christians and why would this be a “spiritual maturity” issue as Dr. MacArthur implies/states?** Maybe because we are not grounded in our faith or the word!

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*⁶Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” – **Philippians 2:5-11***

Christ is the ultimate example of selfless humility (see Matthew 11:29, John 13:12-17). Philippians 2:5-11 is the classic Christological passage in the New Testament, dealing with the incarnation. It was probably sung as a hymn in the early church. (see Colossians 3:16)

“being in the form God” – Paul affirms that Jesus eternally has been God. The usual Greek word for “being” is not used here. Instead, Paul chose another term that stresses the essence of a persons’ nature... his continuous state or condition. Paul also could have chosen one of two Greek words for “form,” but he chose the one that specifically denotes the essential, unchanging character of something... what it is in and of itself. The fundamental doctrine of Christ’s deity has always encompassed these crucial characteristics (see John 1:1,3,4,14; John 8:58; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:3)

“not... robbery” – The Greek word is translated “robbery” here because it originally meant “a thing seized by robbery.” It eventually came to mean anything clutched, embraced, or prized, and thus is sometimes translated “grasped” or “held onto.” Though Christ had all the rights, privileges, and honors of deity... which He was worthy of and could never be disqualified from... His attitudes was not to cling to those things or His position but to be willing to give them up for a season. (See John 17:1-5).

“equal with God” – The Greek word for “equal” defines things that are exactly the same in size, quantity, quality, character, and number. In every sense, Jesus is equal to God and constantly claimed to be so during His earthly ministry (see John 5:18; John 10:33,38; John 14:9; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:1-3).

Made Himself of no reputation – This is more clearly translated “emptied Himself.” From this Greek words comes the theological word “kenosis”; hence, the doctrine of Christ’s self-emptying in His incarnation. This was a self-renunciation, not an emptying of Himself of deity nor an exchange of deity for humanity. Jesus was fully God and fully man. Jesus did, however renounce or set aside His privileges in several areas: (1) Heavenly glory - while on earth He gave up the glory of face-to-face

relationship with God and the continuous outward display and personal enjoyment of that glory (see John 17:5); (2) Independent authority – during His incarnation Christ completely submitted Himself to the will of the Father (see Matthew 26:29; John 5:30; Hebrews 5:8); (3) Divine prerogatives – He set aside the voluntary display of His divine attributes and submitted Himself to the Spirit’s direction (see Matthew 24:36; John 1:45-49); (4) Eternal riches – while on earth Christ was poor and owned very little (see 2 Corinthians 8:9); (5) A favorable relationship with God – He felt the Father’s wrath for human sin while on the cross (see Matthew 27:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

“form of a bondservant” – Again, Paul uses a Greek word “form,” which indicates exact essence. As a true servant, Jesus submissively did the will of the His Father (see Isaiah 52:13-14).

“the likeness of men” – Christ became more than God in a human body, but He took on all the essential attributes of humanity (Luke 2:52, Galatians 4:4, Colossians 1:22), even to the extent that He identified with basic human needs and weaknesses (see Hebrews 2:14, 17; Hebrews 4:15). He became the God-Man, full God and fully man.

“in appearance as a man” – This is not simply a repetition of the last phrase in verse 7, but a shift from the heavenly focus to an earthly one. Christ’s humanity is described from the viewpoint of those who saw Him. Paul is implying that although He outwardly looked like a man, there was much more to Him (His deity) than many people recognized naturally (see John 6:24 and John 8:48).

“He humbled Himself” – After the humbling of incarnation, Jesus further humbled Himself in that He did not demand normal human rights, but subjected Himself to persecution and suffering at the hands of unbelievers (see Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 26:62-64; Mark 14:60-61; 1 Peter 2:23).

“obedient... death” – Beyond even persecution, Jesus went to the lowest point or furthest extend in His humiliation in dying as a criminal, following God’s plan for Him (see Matthew 26:39; Acts 2:23).

“the cross” – Even further humiliation was His because Jesus’ death was not by ordinary means, but was accomplished by crucifixion... the cruelest, most excruciating, most degrading form of death ever devised. The Jews hated this manner of execution (see Deuteronomy 21:23, Galatians 3:13).

“Therefore God” – Christ’s humiliation and exaltation by God are causally and inseparably linked

“highly exalted Him” – Christ’s exaltation was foretold. The early sermons of the apostles affirm His resurrection and coronation (His position at the right hand of God), and allude to His intercession for believers (Acts 32-33; Acts 5:30-31; Ephesians 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 7:25-26). Hebrews 4:14 refers to the final element, His ascension. The exaltation did not concern Christ’s nature or eternal place within the Trinity, but His new identity as the God-Man (see John 5:22; Romans 1:4; Romans 14:9; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25). In addition to receiving back His glory, Christ’s new status as the God-Man meant God gave Him privileges He did not have prior to the incarnation. If He had not lived among men, He could not have identified with them as the interceding High-Priest. Had He not died on the cross, He could not have been elevated from the lowest degree back to heaven as the substitute for sin.

“name... above every name” – Christ’s new name which further describes His essential nature and places Him above and beyond all comparison is “Lord.” This name is the New Testament synonym for Old Testament descriptions of God as sovereign ruler. Both before and after the exaltation, Scripture affirms that this was Jesus’ rightful title as the God-Man.

“bow... confess” – The entire intelligent universe is called to worship Jesus Christ as Lord (see Psalm 2). This mandate includes the angels in heaven, the spirits of the redeemed, obedient believers on earth, the disobedient rebels on earth, demons and lost humanity in hell. The Greek word for “confess” means “to acknowledge,” “affirm,” or “agree” with what everyone will eventually do in response to Christ’s lordship, willingly and blessedly or unwillingly and painfully.

“at the name of Jesus” – “Jesus” (=He will save His people from their sins) was the name bestowed at His birth (Matthew 1:21), not His new name. The name for Jesus given in the fullest sense after His exaltation was “Lord.”

“Lord” – “Lord” primarily refers to the right to rule, and in the New Testament it denotes mastery over or ownership of people and property. When applied to Jesus, it certainly implies His deity, but it mainly refers to sovereign authority.

“glory to God the Father” – The purpose of Christ’s exaltation!

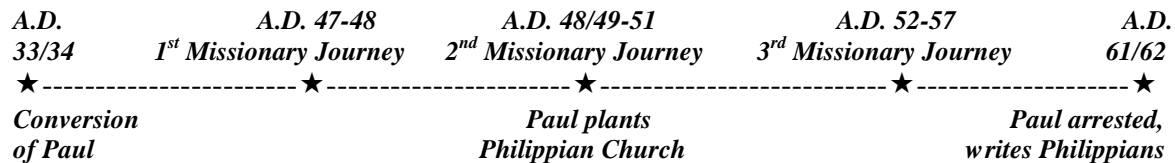
As we have been saying, Dr. Warren Wiersbe calls the book (letter) of Philippians, “a personal manifesto on how to live a life full of joy.” We began our verse by verse study of the book of Philippians a couple of weeks ago entitled, “Choosing the Life of Joy; A Study in Philippians.” The book is a book of joy, and that is surprising given the circumstances surround the book.

Just for review let’s be reminded of some of the more interesting facts about Philippians that we have been looking at as a background to the book.

5 Important Background Facts on the Book of Philippians: **these may be some things that set the book of Philippians apart from Paul’s other letters and writings*

1. **The book of Philippians is written by the Apostle Paul** – The apostle Paul wrote the book as clearly stated in Philippians 1:1-2, “*Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”
2. **The book of Philippians is written to believers/Christians at the church at Philippi** – As already stated Philippians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul during his Roman imprisonment to a group of people that were very special to him. These at Philippi had come to know the Lord Jesus through Paul’s witness to them during his “Second Missionary Journey,” and in response to the “Macedonian Call” of Acts 16. Notice who Paul identifies as the recipients of this letter in verses 1-2, “*Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”
3. **The book of Philippians is actually a letter written by Paul to the church at Philippi** – The apostle Paul wrote this as a letter to the Christians in Philippi, from Rome. Paul ministered at Philippi during his second missionary journey, spending about three months in the city. The ministry at Philippi marked Paul’s entrance into Macedonia (Greece, Europe), which came about as a result of a vision he had in the city of Troas, just across the northeastern corner of the Aegean Sea from the port city of Neapolis and its close neighbor Philippi (Acts 16:8–12). During this first stay in Philippi—he later briefly visited the city on his third missionary journey (20:6)—Paul brought to faith in Christ people who would form the core of the burgeoning congregation in the city. Among them were Lydia, a businesswoman who opened her home to Paul and his coworkers (16:13–15), and the Philippian jailer, who was converted under Paul’s ministry after an earthquake miraculously broke open the prison (16:22–34).
4. **The book of Philippians was written around A.D. 61/62** – Of the four Prison Epistles, Paul likely wrote Philippians last, near the end of his Roman imprisonment in AD 61 or 62. Paul sent the other three Prison Epistles—Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon—by the hand of Tychicus, as their destinations were near one another. However, the letter to the Philippians was to be delivered by Epaphroditus, who had come to Paul in Rome with financial help from the church at Philippi (Philippians 2:25; 4:18). But during his time in Rome, Epaphroditus took ill, which delayed his return home and, therefore, the delivery of the letter (2:26–27).

Philippians Timeline



5. **The book of Philippians is called a prison epistle, because Paul write the letter while he was imprisoned for his faith in Rome** - The book of Philippians is actually one of four “prison epistles” (or letters) and most likely the last of the four written by Paul. As stated, Paul wrote Philippians while he was in prison in Rome. The four “prison epistles” are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. Given the theme of the book it is significant that Philippians was written by Paul at a particularly difficult time in his life... while he was in prison.

Along with these essential background facts surround this letter written by Paul, we have also sated these interesting fact about the book/letter of Philippians:

5 Interesting Facts about Philippians:

1. **The book of Philippians has no Old Testament quotes** – This is distinction that not only sets it apart from Paul’s other writing in the New Testament where Paul is said to have quoted the Old Testament as many as 500 times, just not in Philippians. The Old Testament is quoted more than 1,000 time in the New Testament with half of those being found in Paul’s writings. The lack of Old Testament quotes in Philippians could be as simple as Paul’s purpose in writing. It is a more practical letter.
2. **The book of Philippians contains little historical or theological material, and is primarily a practical (*relevant, everyday, pragmatic, useful*) letter** - The only exceptions to this are the historical biographical material contained concerning Paul’s life in prison during his Roman imprisonment. And Philippians, chapter 2 that describes the humiliation and exaltation of Christ in theological terms. Philippians is the only of Paul’s letter that was not written primarily to address doctrinal, theological issues. The apostle Paul did not write Philippians in response to a crisis (caused by false teachers and false teaching), as he did with Galatians and Colossians. And, in fact, it may be the most practical of Paul’s 13 New Testament books/letters. What do we mean by practical? We mean that of all of Paul’s letters, Philippians in it purpose and content is the most pragmatic and common every-day letter he wrote. We will get more into this as we progress through our study, but suffice it to say that the very reason Paul wrote the letter is simple, every-day in it application.
3. **The book of Philippians is essentially a thank you letter** – This itself sets Philippians apart as the most unusual of Paul’s letters. Instead of writing to correct doctrinal matters, he writes a “thank you” letter to the church at Philippi that had been so generous in supporting him over the years. He primarily wrote to express his appreciation and affection for the Philippian believers. More than any other church, the believers in Philippi offered Paul material support for his ministry. Paul’s affection for these people is clear through the letter as he encouraged them to live out their faith in joy and unity.
4. **The book of Philippians contain the word “joy” in some form at least 16 times** – With the common occurrence of this word in some form repeated throughout the letter, it make it clear that this is the theme of Paul’s letter to the Philippians and to us. And as stated above this theme of “joy” is particularly astounding given the fact that it is a prison epistle, written while Paul was incarcerated and being persecuted for his faith.
5. **The book of Philippians was written to a church and Christians that represent the one of the most important advancements of the Gospel to the west, particularly Europe** - Paul’s

“Macedonian Call” in Troas during Paul’s 2nd missionary journey led him to his work in Philippi and the planting of the church there. Philippi was located in Macedonia, in northern Greece, on the continent of Europe. So the “Macedonian Call” and the planting of this church in Philippi through Paul’s second missionary journey, and Paul’s letter to the church at Philippi are very significant because they represent the advancement of the gospel further west, into Europe and ultimately to the entire world through Europe. It is not to be missed that the first converts on the continent of Europe were Lydia and her household, a demon possessed girl, and a Philippian jailer.

With these important facts about the book of Philippians let’s move on in our study to the second (2nd) chapter of this great “joy-filled” letter, and verses 5-11 (READ: Philippians 2:1-11)

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” – Philippians 2:5-11

People can rob us of our joy. Paul was facing his problems with people at Rome (Philippians 1:15-18) as well as with some of the people at Philippi, and it was the latter who concerned him the most. When Epaphroditus brought a generous gift from the church in Philippi, and good news of the church’s concern for Paul, he also brought the bad news of a possible division in the church family (which we will encounter in chapters 3 and 4, Philippians 3:1-3, 4:1-3). Apparently there was a double threat to the unity of the church: (1) false teachers coming in from without (Philippians 3:1-3) and (2) disagreeing church members fighting within (Philippians 4:1-3) What Euodia (“fragrance”) and Syntyche (“fortunate”) were debating about, Paul does not state. Perhaps they both wanted to be president of the WMU or something.

Paul knew what some church workers today know... there is a difference between “unity” and “uniformity.” True spiritual unity comes from within... within us through Christ Jesus and His indwelling Spirit... it is a matter of the heart. “Uniformity” is the result of pressure from without. That is why Paul opened this section (that we looked at last week) appealing to the highest possible spiritual motives (in Philippians 2:1-4). Since the believers at Philippi were “in Christ,” this ought to have encouraged them to work toward unity and love, not division and rivalry. In a gracious way, Paul was saying to the church, “Your disagreements reveal that there is a spiritual problem in your fellowship. It isn’t going to be solved by rules or threats; it’s going to be solved when your hearts are right with Christ and with each other.” Paul wanted them to see that the basic cause was selfishness, and the cause of selfishness is pride. There can be no joy in the life of the Christian who puts himself above others.

The secret of joy in spite of circumstances is a single mind. The secret of joy in spirit of people is the submissive mind. The key verse is “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better (more important) than themselves” (Philippians 2:3). In Philippians 1, it is “Christ first” and in Philippians 2 it is “others next.” Paul the “soul winner” in Philippians 1 becomes Paul the “servant” in Philippians 2.

It is important that we understand what the Bible means by “humility.” The humble person is not one who thinks meanly of himself; he simply does not think of himself at all! (I think Andrew Murray said that.) Humility is that grace that, when you know you have it, you have lost it. The truly humble person knows himself and accepts himself (Romans 12:3). He yields himself to Christ to be a servant, to use what he is and has for the glory of God and the good of others. “Others” is the key idea in this chapter (Philippians 2:3-4); the believer’s eyes are turned away from himself and focused on the needs of others.

The “submissive mind” does not mean that the believer is at the beck and call of everybody else or that he is a “religious doormat” for everybody to use. Some people try to purchase friends and maintain church unity by giving in to everybody else’s whims and wishes. This is not what Paul is suggesting at all. The Scripture put it perfectly, “ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4:5) If we have the single mind of Philippians 1, then we have no problem with the submissive mind of Philippians 2.

Paul give us four examples of the submissive mind in Philippians 2:

1. **Jesus Christ – Philippians 2:1-11**
2. **Paul himself – Philippians 2:12-18**
3. **Timothy – Philippians 2:19-24**
4. **Epaphroditus – Philippians 2:25-30**

THE SUBMISSIVE MIND... OUR GREAT EXAMPLE

Of course the great example is Jesus, and Paul begins with Him. Jesus Christ illustrates the four characteristics of the person with the submissive mind.

4 Characteristic of the Submissive Mind as Seen in Our Great Example: Jesus:

1. **He thinks of others, not himself (Philippians 2:5-6) –** *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,”* The “mind” of Christ means the “attitude” Christ exhibited. *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”* The NIV has it, *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”* After all, outlook determines outcome. If the outlook is selfish, the actions will be divisive and destructive. James said the same thing in **James 4:1-10**, *“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴ [d] Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”? ⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” ⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”* These verses in Philippians take us to eternity past. “Form of God” in verse 6 has nothing to do with shape or size. God is Spirit, and as such is not to be thought of in human terms. When the Bible refers to “the eyes of the Lord” or “the hand of the Lord,” it is not claiming that God has a human shape. Rather, it is using human terms to describe divine attributes (the characteristics of God) and activities. This means that in eternity past, Jesus Christ was God. In fact, Paul states that Jesus was “equal with God.” Other verses such as John 1:1-4, 14, Colossians 1:15, and Hebrews 1:1-3 also

state that Jesus Christ is God. Certainly as God, Jesus Christ did not need anything. He had all the glory and praise of heaven. With the Father and the Spirit. He reigned over the universe. But Philippians 2:6 states as amazing fact... He did not consider His equality with God as something selfishly to be held on to. Jesus did not think of Himself; He thought of others. His outlook (or attitude) was that of unselfish concern for others. This is “the mind of Christ,” at attitude that says, I cannot keep my privileges for myself, I must use them for others, and to do this, I will gladly lay them aside and pay whatever price necessary.”

How can I have the mind of Christ?

- (1) **Having the mind of Christ means I am first of all HIS** - In 1 Corinthians 2:16, Paul states, *“¹⁶ For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*” He is speaking of Christians. In other words as a believer, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, with Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you possess the “mind of Christ” or at least the capability inside of you in the person and work of Jesus. Now whether or not we are surrendered to and submissive to that mind is a different matter. But a believer has what it takes to have this “mind of Christ.” *In order to have the mind of Christ, one must first have saving faith in Christ (John 1:12; 1 John 5:12). After salvation, the believer lives a life under God’s influence. The Holy Spirit indwells and enlightens the believer, infusing him with wisdom—the mind of Christ. The believer bears a responsibility to yield to the Spirit’s leading (Ephesians 4:30) and to allow the Spirit to transform and renew his mind (Romans 12:1-2).*
- (2) **Having the mind of Christ means we understand God’s plan in the world** – What is that plan? To bring glory to Himself, restore creation to its original splendor, and provide salvation for sinners.
- (3) **Having the mind of Christ means we identify with Christ’s purpose** – What did Jesus say was His purpose in coming. In John 6:38 Jesus said clearly, *“⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* And what would that be? He said in Luke 19:10, *“¹⁰ For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*
- (4) **Having the mind of Christ means we share Jesus’ perspective** – What was Jesus’ perspective? It was one of humility and obedience according to our passage in Philippians 2:5-8, *“⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it ⁷robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”* In Matthew 9:36 we get to see Jesus’ perspective *“³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.”* (READ: Matthew 9:35-38)

⁶ However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ¹⁰ordained before the ages for our glory, ⁸ which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” ¹⁰ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the ¹⁰Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the

Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. ¹⁶ For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ. -1 Corinthians 2:6-16

According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:16 there are some truths that may be helpful in our grasp of what it means to have the “mind of Christ” that he speaks of in our passage in Philippians . In the verses leading up to 1 Corinthians 2:16, we note some truths concerning the mind of Christ:

Some important truths concerning the mind of Christ from Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16:

- (1) The mind of Christ stands in sharp contrast to the wisdom of man (verses 5-6)**
- (2) The mind of Christ involves wisdom from God, once hidden but now revealed (verse 7)**
- (3) The mind of Christ is given to believers through the Spirit of God (verses 10-12)**
- (4) The mind of Christ cannot be understood by those without the Spirit (verse 14)**
- (5) The mind of Christ gives believers discernment in spiritual matters (verse 15)**

2. **He serves (Philippians 2:7)** – *“⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.”* Thinking of “others” in an abstract sense only is insufficient... we must get down to the nitty-gritty of true service. A famous philosopher wrote glowing words about educating children but abandoned his own. It was easy for him to love children in abstract, but when it came down to practice, that was something else. Jesus thought of others and became a servant. Paul traced the steps in the humiliation of Christ in verses 7-8...

Steps in the Humiliation of Christ:

- (1) He emptied Himself, laying aside the independent use of His own attributes as God**
- (2) He permanently became a human, in a sinless physical body**
- (3) He used that body to be a servant**
- (4) He took that body to the cross and willingly died**

So Jesus called the twelve disciples to come closer to Him, and he began to give them some illuminating counsel on authentic servanthood. Listen close to his instruction in **Mark 10:42-45**, *“Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be first must be slave (bond servant) of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for man.”* The world system works through intimidation, abusive power, and self-centered drive. But God people are not to operate this way. They are to live the lives of servants, sacrificing themselves and their possessions for others just as Christ, the Son of God who became the son of Man, did. The Apostle summarized this timeless teaching well when he wrote in **Philippians 2:3-4**, *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

3 Traits of Authentic Selfless Servanthood:

- (1) Giving** – A servant unveils himself or herself rather than conceals, releases rather than keeps, and views the needs of others as opportunities to give rather than as interruptions to avoid.
- (2) Forgiving** – Understanding, acceptance, and adjustment replace blame and rejection in the life of the Christian servant.
- (3) Forgetting** – When true forgiveness occurs, forgetting the wrong done will naturally follow

3. **He sacrifices (Philippians 2:8)** – *“⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”* Many people are willing to serve others if it does not cost them anything. But if there is a price to pay, they suddenly lose interest. Jesus “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (v.8). His was not the death of a martyr but the death of a Savior. He willingly laid down His life for the sins of the world.

Dr. J.H. Jowett said, “Ministry that costs nothing accomplishes nothing.” If there is to be any blessing, there must be some “bleeding.”

The person with the submissive mind does not avoid sacrifice. He lives for the glory of God and the good of others, and if paying a price will honor Christ and help others, he is willing to do it. This was Paul’s attitude (Philippians 2:17), Timothy’s attitude (Philippians 2:20), and also the attitude of Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:30). Sacrifice and service go together if service is to be true Christian ministry.

A beautiful treatment of this picture of who Jesus was as a servant and how He exhibited that, and of how we are to follow his example is Paul’s words in Ephesians 5:1-21 **(READ: Ephesians 5:1-21)**

As servants of Christ we are to “imitate” His example. Paul literally calls us to “be imitators” or God as dear children. What was Christ’s example to us, and for us to imitate?

3 Pictures of the Servant Walk of Christ:

- (1) **Walk in a love that gives of ourselves to others -**
- (2) **Walk in a light that serves others by example –**
- (3) **Walk in a wisdom that redeems the time -**

4. **He glorifies God (Philippians 2:9-11)** –

SOME CLOSING QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Many are willing to share in Christlikeness only as long as it doesn’t mean sacrifice. But in this lab, John Piper reminds us that Christlikeness led Christ to the cross. Some questions to ask as you read and study Philippians 2:5-11:

3 Question to Ponder This Week on the Mind of Christ:

1. **What kind of mind-set do you think should define the Christian life?**
2. **What is the mind of Christ like? How do you know if you have it?**
3. **What can it look like to have the mind of Christ in your closest relationships this week? Who can you serve as Christ has served you?**