

Living As Citizens of Heaven
Mind Meld – Philippians 2:1-11
Crosspoint – Lee Eclov – June 30, 2024

Introduction:

I want to be sure we're on the same page. *Is it your active intention to grow as a Christian?*

How has your faith in Christ helped you in life's hardships? Were you encouraged by being united with Christ? Have you ever been comforted by Jesus' love for you? Has the Holy Spirit ever strengthened you through your fellowship with other Christians? Have you ever experienced the Lord's tenderness and compassion?

Phil. 2:1: *Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, [check] if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.*

I. All the advantages we share are reasons for our unity and sacrificial service (vv.1-5)

- V.3 - *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.”* There are the evil twins living in all of our hearts. What destroys Christian love and unity are not legitimate differences of values, backgrounds, and opinions, but rather self-centeredness.
- *“Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”*
- James 4:1 - *“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come **from your desires that battle within you?**”*
- How can we possibly do this?? V.5 - *“**In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.**”*

II. Never forget the humility and service of Christ Jesus (vv.6-8)

- V.6 - *“Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not **consider** equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;”*

- Jesus was God through and through. The Greek here means “*being in the past and continuing to be in very nature God.*” God the Son has always been God and *cannot* ever stop being God.
 - “*Did not consider...*” - God’s Son **reasoned** that, although all things are his by right, he did not *have* to lay claim to all he was entitled to possess
- V.7 - “*rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.* The Greek behind this verse uses a very important word: *kenosis*, translated here, “*made himself nothing.*” Other versions say, “*He emptied himself.*”
 - “*Taking the very **nature** of a servant.*” - The Son of God divests himself of all the mighty royal privileges of his God-nature, and instead fills his mind, emotions and desires with the very nature and heartbeat of a servant.
 - “*Being made in human likeness*” This is an incredible step down for the Son of God who was unbound by time or place or strength. He became a baby! He wrapped himself in a body, defined by genes, DNA, and I.Q., vulnerable to pain, age, and sorrow. And sharpest of all, tempted in all the same ways we are, and also, able to feel the blunt force trauma of death and grief.
- V.8 - “*And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and become obedient...*” The most essential duty of human beings to “love God and obey him forever.” Yet, because of our sinful nature, human beings do *not* obey God. So Jesus Christ, appearing in our world as a man with a servant’s heart, humbles himself to the point of absolute obedience to his Father. What Heb. 5:8-9 says about Christ never ceases to amaze me: “*Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*” Christ was the perfect Son of God but he *wasn’t* the perfect Son of Man *until* he fully obeyed God the Father, even when it meant death on the cross.
 - “*Becoming obedient **to death***” - Death is the ultimate human indignity. A corpse is the shame of humanity, the ultimate proof of our weakness, sin, and mortality.
 - “*even death on a cross.*” - William Hendriksen wrote, “Thus, while he was hanging on that cross, from below Satan and all his hosts assailed him; from round about men heaped scorn upon him; from above God dropped upon him the pallor of darkness, symbol of the curse; and from within there arose the bitter cry, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ Into this hell, the hell of Calvary, Christ descended.”

- There is the mindset of Jesus which we are to have in us. Growing Christians learn to die to ourselves—to “take up our cross and follow Jesus.”

Vv.9-11 - *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

I. Rest assured that we will be caught up in the ‘hyper-exalting’ of Jesus (2:9-11)

- “*Exalted him to the highest place*” – Paul made up one Greek word to say that: *hyper-exalted!* The Lord Jesus Christ returned to the throne he once left with **even greater glory** than he had before. How is that possible? Because he returned, not only as the Son of God, but also as Jesus (the name means ‘God saves’) the Messiah, the King of God’s redeemed people.
 - He returned having learned human obedience under the pressure of suffering so that he might sympathize with us as our High Priest when we pray for help in our suffering.
 - He returned in his **servant nature** blended as one with his royal nature. Luke 12:37, “*It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.*”
- “*God gave him the name that is above every name.*” It was only at the incarnation that the Son of God became Jesus the Messiah.
- Vv.10-11 - “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord...*” There is nothing more right, more true, more necessary in all this world than that all creation should bow to the name of Jesus, and all confess that he is Lord.
- “*To the glory of God the Father.*”