

JOY: Gospel Humility: The Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:1-11

MPS Jesus came down and offered up His life that those who trust in Him might empty life of self to live for God's glory.

OBJ Every person should humble themselves because of five gospel distinctives that glorify God.

INTRO What do you think of when u hear "humility"? Humility, often like patience, is one of those qualities that people know they need, but not many pray or ask to learn it for fear of the lesson that may teach it. Biblical humility is not just a valuable characteristic, but essential for every Christian and the church.

READ Philippians 2:1-11

*So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **Philippians 2:1-11***

TRANS Once Paul establishes a Christian's right perspective of their circumstances, the priority in all their thinking, and a Christ-centered precedence in living, Philippians 1, he now turns to apply what he has taught them. The fact is, truth cannot be fully known until it has been trusted and applied to be lived out. And lived out was in high need in Philippi.

While Philippi did not have some of the problems of other New Testament churches, they were not absent of conflict and division. There were conflicts and divisions in the church, and mostly of differing opinions. What we learn from Paul's words is that this is normal when people continue to live with self at the center of their life. But when a Christian places Jesus at the center of their life, they live different by living distinctively for Him. This is the life God calls us to in Christ, a life of self-denial, not self-fulfillment, a life of self-sacrifice, not self-consumption, a life centered on Jesus. [The only way to live a Jesus-centered life is to learn the glory of humility by the gospel.](#)

Humility is not natural. It opposes everything that is natural about us, because in our natural state we are sinners. And that sin is embarrassing, a blight against our pride that must be constantly addressed. One commentator explains, "Before the New Testament era, the word 'humility' had a negative connotation. The adjective related to it 'was frequently employed, and especially so, to describe the mentality of a slave. It conveyed the ideas of being base, unfit, shabby, mean, of no account. Hence 'humility' could not have been regarded by the pagan as a virtue to be sought after."¹ [Humility was considered in the ancient world as many consider it today, despicable, but Jesus made it a virtue.](#)²

Paul calls the Philippians to unity in Christ by humility because of Christ. This is not just to live LIKE Jesus, though it surely leads there, but humility because of and through Christ; you can humble yourself by faith because Jesus did. True humility is only produced by the work of Jesus in the Christian's life. [Humility from every Christian is the key to unity.](#)

[Jesus came down and offered up His life that those who trust in Him might empty life of self to live for God's glory.](#)

¹ Richard R. Melick, [Philippians, Colossians, Philemon](#), vol. 32, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 94.

² Ralph P. Martin, [Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 11, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 101–102. Martin states, "True biblical humility was frowned upon in the ancient world as despicable because it was misunderstood as abject cringing before one's fellow-men. L. H. Marshall, who writes a full study of the word, comments: 'It was apparently through the teaching of Jesus that humility came to be regarded as a virtue.'"



TRANS HOW does the gospel produce humility?**OBJ** Christians humble themselves because of Five Gospel Distinctives that glorify God.**1. Christians humble themselves because the gospel forms you through fellowship. .1-2**

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

After celebrating the gospel fellowship in chapter one by drawing deeply from their experience together, Paul turns to build on the glories of that fellowship. “So if there is...” is more accurately understood as “Since”. There is no question as to whether these things are true. Paul is training them to recognize that what is true in Christ must form how they unite.

Joy fills the church when Christians live out what they know to be true of their life in Jesus. The work of God within His people through communion with Him translates into the reality of God among by fellowship with His people; communion with Him cultivates fellowship with them. Christians can have the same mind, love and be in full accord and of one mind with one another because the gospel addresses every doubt, fear, hurt, wound, and need of life. Paul is exhorting the Philippians to form their whole lives, by design and determination, around the truth of the gospel. This doesn’t mean there is no competing affection or countering ideology that comes, but that it is not entertained, tolerated, nor allowed to remain. We unite WITH one another because of Him who brings us together. Gospel fellowship forms us to reject individualism among us because of Jesus’ Lordship over us.

APPL LifePoint, this is what our “together” is all about; the full provision we have in Jesus uniting us to form us in His image.

Paul tells them to live this way because the gospel is sufficient, for joy to be full in them! Yes, he says “complete my joy”, but his concern is not only for himself but for them as well. Joy in the Lord is made complete and whole when life is fully formed by gospel truth lived out in gospel fellowship.

2. Christians humble themselves because the gospel is sufficient to source true life. .3-4

³*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, **but** in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

⁴*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, **but** also to the interests of others.*

Once Paul exhorts the Philippians to live out gospel truths to unite, he commands how they are to do this. Because the Christian is loved and accepted by God, we can cease rivalries and reject self-conceit to count others more significant. When our identity is consumed and defined by God’s love in Jesus, we live in the security of Christ that provides all the love and acceptance our heart demands, so we do not have to guard our own security of worth, value, dignity, or significance. We can reject looking to our own interests to consider and serve others. The person worried about self cannot afford to consider another. The gospel fills a person with God’s love in Jesus to empty life of self and consider the interests of others.

APPL The talk today about the church is the new divisions that are re-defining the church. Its now said that church affiliation will be determined by personal preferences of, mask/non-mask; vax/non-vax; even politics of red/blue. For decades we’ve lived in what I have labeled a ‘post-denominational age’, which is both good and bad, when people began to dismiss distinctives of doctrinal differences. But that accelerated the demise of church influence, both in the culture but even more within the church, by the same Biblical illiteracy that caused it. Studies show that the vast majority of people who claim to be Christians do not hold Biblical perspectives on many issues, and cannot explain why they believe what they believe from a Biblical position. Christians stopped worrying about studying to know faithful, Bible doctrine and just started listening to their favorite voice. Church participation was no longer determined by beliefs, but by personal preference, what songs do they sing, the sermon theme, programs offered, and other felt needs. This led the church to become driven more by entertainment rather than participation. From this the phenomena of “rock star pastor” syndrome emerged, as a way to identify and accept the most entertaining voice. After all, if that many people listen, he surely can’t be wrong. Ironically, this was strengthened by an “anti-authority” culture growing in society at-large, which determined, “as long as I can tolerate what you say, I’ll listen.” With such a hold on Christians, other sub-cultures began to determine what was acceptable, like ‘rage’, ‘cancel’, and the heightened emotional coddling of the ‘victimhood’ culture. Now Biblically-convoluted from all these



influences, but no faithful, Biblical framework to process or discern, people now choose 'home' & 'online' church over or as their participation with church. Sadly, there are no few who call themselves "churches" that are happy to count your click as their success. And, we've come to celebrate the 'fall and demise' of the 'rock star' we created with the same zeal we built them with, and all as we pay people to teach us how to deconstruct our faith. The influence of this most recent celebration-phenomena will prove as harmful as any other form of abuse. All of these are little more than personal preferences that only create and propagate the very thing the heart most loathes, dead, empty, self-centered, religion. It is as if modern Christians looked upon the Israelites as the foot of Mt. Sinai in the building of the golden calf and said, "Here, hold my communion cup. Watch this."

Humility is the ultimate level of trust in Jesus because it is a revolution against self. It says, "all of me is IN Jesus so I can go 'ALL in' to love others, knowing He is sufficient to source my whole life." Humility releases one of self-interest to invest in Christian community, to live vulnerably among God's people to grow in authenticity (sanctification) of God's redemption by serving others for the same. Without humility, fellowship is threatening and scary, because you may get "outed" as a fraud, discovered as something less than once thought. But in humility we make no claims of self, only of the sufficiency of Christ for us. We can only know the gospel's sufficiency for our life when we humble ourselves. [Gospel sufficiency sources the Christian with God's power to deny self and live to serve others.](#)

3. [Christians humble themselves by the gospel to adopt the mind of Christ.](#) .5

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,"

Once united in fellowship and living in the gospel's sufficiency, Paul says we leave nothing to doubt or chance in ourselves but take on the mind of Christ. He is not simply saying "be like Christ", but rather "because of Christ and what He has given to you". [Christians are given the mind of Christ to discern and do God's will](#)^{Rom12:2;1Cor2:16}, but we must adopt it as our own.

Paul's instruction is to form this mindset, or opinion, because it rightly reflects what you are given in Jesus Christ; in salvation and communion with Christ, strengthened by Holy Spirit, and through your fellowship with Christians. The Christian life only works as Holy Spirit enlightens the Living Word to empower us. Christians do not "accept the parts of the Bible that we like, prefer, or agree with", but the truth of God is our glory in its whole counsel. We are not being counseled to consider God's Word and any potential value for our life. [Adopting the mind of Christ means we submit to God's living Word fully by faith.](#)

4. [Christians humble themselves because the gospel motivates us by the sacrifice of Jesus.](#) .6-8

Paul moves to a hymn to exalt the attitude of Jesus Christ in his humiliation.

who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Paul demonstrates Jesus' humility by telling us Who He was and what He did as to come down to us as a servant. And then as a servant to humble himself to offer up himself as a sacrifice on the cross. Jesus "did not think of his equality as 'something to use for his own advantage.'"³ but applied it to the advantage or good of others. And in this act, he became the atoning sacrifice for sin. [The way Jesus thought about himself led him to act sacrificially for others.](#)

TRANS There is so much we could rightly say about this passage, but I want to clarify a two-fold purpose for today.

Jesus became our sacrifice by humbling Himself, and in His act he modeled ultimate humility for us. It is right to say that He is our highest model of humility, but only after we understand that He became our sacrifice. For the One who does not trust in Christ will find no true value in His model. Jesus' sacrifice stands at the center of God's redemptive work for sin. There will never be any repeat of His act. [We must behold to trust Jesus as our sacrifice on the cross FOR us, to humble our whole life by His model to God's will IN us.](#)

³ Richard R. Melick, [Philippians, Colossians, Philemon](#), vol. 32, The New American Commentary, 103.



Therefore, Jesus is not first our model of humility before God but the very sacrifice by which it is made possible for us to be with God. Jesus motivates us NOT by his model, but as our Master who sacrificed to bring us into the presence of God. The gospel only motivates when first you BEHOLD to trust what Christ has done as your sacrifice before you dare try to consider Him a model for how to live for God. We do nothing for God because in His sacrifice He has done it all. Therefore, all we do for God is modeled after Jesus because He alone is our sufficiency before God. Jesus is our redeemer who by faith in His humble sacrifice gives us life with God. And in our life with God, He motivates us to humble ourselves and live for God. The glory and beauty of Jesus' sacrifice in coming and giving up His life is the whole life motivation to trust Him for our own humility. *Jesus makes humility gloriously worthy by modeling the glory of humility ultimately for us.*

5. Christians humble themselves because only by the gospel do our lives glorify God. .9-11

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The glory of Christ's humiliation is revealed by the glory of His exaltation! When Jesus emptied himself to submit fully, God raised Him up to a place of glory above all others. In this we come to know who Jesus is and why the Father sent Him. But by Jesus we also come to know the Father. And what we know is that when we live in gospel humility, God is glorified through our life. This is not only modeled by Jesus, but promised in God's Word.

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. James 4:10

Christians humbles themselves by the gospel to rest in God's will because we know His faithfulness for us by His faithfulness to Jesus Christ. When we humble ourselves, He will raise us up too, and glorify Himself in us as well.

Jesus came down and offered up His life that those who trust in Him might empty life of self to live for God's glory.

CLOSE Are you taking the mind of Christ to empty yourself of you to be filled with Jesus Christ?

