



9/2/26

How appropriate for today's passage. The 15th reason given in A Gospel Primer for why we should rehearse the gospel to ourselves daily is that it cultivates humility in us. God designed the gospel to help us give up pride and embrace humility because He knows that pride is at the root of all sin, and He wants to free us from pride and sin. When we rehearse the gospel to ourselves, we can't help but learn humility in light of who God is and what He's done for us. Our humility opens for us a pathway to a deeper, more passionate love for the Lord as it replaces our pride that once blinded us to His great love for us. Amen!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Philippians 2:1-11

Paul told the Thessalonians he praised God that they received the truth of His word and became imitators both of Paul, and even more importantly, of Jesus. Today, as I look at Philippians 2, I see more clearly WHAT it means to imitate Christ and WHY. So often, we ask the question "why" when we're struggling with trials. This passage in Philippians gives me an answer.

Before I start with Philippians 2:1, let me just remember why Paul started with the words, "So if..." He spoke in Philippians 1 about suffering for the Lord. He knew that was a hard lesson to handle. So... he gave great hope in chapter 2. I think it's great to have chapters and verses, but sometimes with the bible, it's easy to treat a section of scripture as though it stands alone. It's always important to understand the context.

Vs. 1-2 ~ "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind."

What's the WHY for following Jesus' example when I've just been told I'm going to suffer for

Him?

- *I have encouragement in Christ... Jesus told me things like, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" and, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" and, "Come to Me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*
- *I have comfort from God's love... God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that I might have life. Romans 8:35-39 tells me that nothing can separate me from His love, not even suffering.*
- *I have participation in the Spirit... I have been sealed by the Holy Spirit as a guarantee that I will spend eternity with the Lord. The Holy Spirit transforms me and leads me and renews my mind and pours the love of God into my heart among so many other things that He does.*
- *The Lord is affectionate and compassionate toward me... He is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. In Philippians 1:8, Paul said he yearned for these believers "with the affection of JESUS."*

Before I can truly live out the example God calls me to, I must understand the WHY of my motivation. Otherwise, I'll muscle it or think that I have to earn His favor or view Him as an angry God. My natural default is to head to the wrong view of God. I have to remind myself over and over again of the WHY so I don't forget when I'm trying to do the WHAT.

With the WHY in mind, I now look at the WHAT. Paul called the believers to complete his joy by...

- *Having the same mind... a mind of encouragement, comfort, Holy Spirit oneness, and affection and compassion toward each other*
- *Having the same love... the sacrificial love of Jesus. Jesus said in John 15 that abiding in His love means obedience to Him by loving each other. To have the love of God poured into my heart means that I pour love out toward others... as Jesus did for me.*
- *Being in FULL accord with all other believers... being united in soul, knowing that we are all united in Christ because of His sacrifice for us.*
- *Of one mind... Romans 15:5-6 clarifies this mindset, "May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, IN ACCORD with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our one minded goal is to glorify the Lord as Jesus modeled to us. We do not go rogue and choose our own way, making our own standards of what it means to glorify God. We choose to follow Jesus in accord with His word.*

Vs. 3-4 ~ What does this look like more specifically? Is there wiggle room here? "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Yikes. To have one mind in Christ means that nothing I do is done for SELF-interest. Everything I'm called to is for US, not ME according to the example I have in Jesus.

To have one mind in Christ is to do nothing from conceit. The Greek word for this means "empty glorying, empty pride." It's being puffed up like a balloon that has no substance inside. The only one who has the right to glory in Himself is Jesus, and as I'll soon see, He emptied Himself of His real glory and humbled Himself for my salvation.

Contrary to what the world teaches and what has sadly infiltrated the church, to have one mind in Christ means that I'm not focused on self-care and self-interest before I care for others. I trust that the Lord is taking care of me and providing what I need while I consider what others need first.

I don't make sure that I get the best piece of cake. I don't say I can't go to the hospital to visit someone in need because I need my beauty sleep more. I don't refuse to rearrange my schedule if someone needs me to. My mindset is, "Lord, not my will, but Yours be done."

I also don't carry someone's load if they can handle it, because that would get in the way of what God has called them to. I don't do everything I can to make them happy if making them happy means I have to compromise my obedience to the Lord.

On the one hand, I don't think ME, and on the other hand, I don't think YOU. In all cases, I think US... as it honors the Lord.

Vs. 5-7 ~ My first example is Jesus. Anyone else I look at as an example needs to look like Jesus. "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

Jesus is my example. Jesus gave me Himself as an example, "so that I might follow in His steps" (1 Peter 2:21). Jesus Himself was in the form of God, but took the form of a servant... the form of man. He emptied Himself of His glory and majesty and beauty (John 17:5, Isaiah 53:2).

Wow. This is huge. Ezekiel 28:17 says of the evil one, "Your heart was PROUD because of your BEAUTY. You CORRUPTED your WISDOM for the sake of your SPLENDOR." He is the antithesis of who Jesus is!!! The evil one thought that the form of God WAS something to be grasped. But he was a created being who thought he could overthrow the Lord God Almighty, and the Lord cast him to the ground! He is on a leash and his time of the destruction of God's people is coming to an end, but the word of the Lord remains FOREVER!!!

Yikes! Lord, how often have I struggled and fought to live by the wrong example??? How often have I acted as though equality with You was something to be grasped when I am just a

grasshopper, a worm, a speck of dust in the light of Your sun??? Please help me to fix my eyes on the right example, Jesus Christ!!! Help me to know that one way or another, I am a servant. Please help me to choose to serve You ALWAYS.

Vs. 9 ~ To follow Jesus' example and to have the same mind as Him is to be genuinely humble. "And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." True humility is not delayed pride. It's not acting humble until you can't take it anymore. It's not deciding that being humble toward others requires their humility toward me. True humility is being humble at any cost because Jesus was humble to the point of death on a cross. How humble? So humble that He could have stopped it at any moment but chose not to.

Two reasons why Jesus chose to remain humble...

- 1. To act in pride would have meant to sin... which would have meant that He was no longer God.*
- 2. To act in pride would have meant to let all people die in spiritual death, which meant eternal separation from Him.*

For the joy set before Him, Jesus endured the cross, disregarding the shame (Hebrews 12:2). The amount of humility that takes is unmatched by man. If I don't understand what He did for me, I will justify pride. I will pick and choose who deserves my humility toward them. "Humility toward men will be the only sufficient proof that our humility before God is real" (Andrew Murray).

Vs. 9-11 ~ Let me not forget the encouragement in Christ from James 4:10, "Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you." This is what Jesus did, and this is how the Father exalted Him, "Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus gave us the greatest sacrifice of humility, and the Father exalted Him to the highest position of authority. I start by recognizing what Jesus did for me and then bowing before Him and confessing Him as Lord. The time is coming when EVERY knee will bow, no matter where their heart is. Those who bow now... who believe in their heart that He truly is our hope for salvation... will be exalted to live with Him forever in heaven... to the glory of God the Father.

To truly be a disciple of Jesus, a follower of His, imitating His example... is to think US, not ME, according to what we see in Him, living for HIS glory in full humility because we see that we have no hope apart from Him but all hope because of Him.

O Lord, there is still so much I do for ME. There is still so much arrogance to be removed from

my heart. I bow to You and say, "Yes please, remove it from me." Let the evidence of my life in You be found in my treatment of others. Jesus said, "When you've done it to the least of these My brothers, you've done it unto Me." With all that You've done for me, Jesus, please help me to humbly serve You and only You, for the glory of my God and Father through Your humble sacrifice.