

2016: Week 40

Sunday, October 2nd 2016

“Having the Mind of Christ”

Psalm 138:6

“⁶ For though the LORD is exalted, yet He regards the lowly; but the haughty He knows from afar” (NASB).

Would any Christian ever argue that Jesus really isn't that deserving of our praise, worship, and eternal gratitude? Of course not! Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the one whom John writes, “All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:3). As Creator He made it all, and as our Savior He gave it all. He didn't come to this earth to be served (although He rightfully deserved that), but He came “to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). The passage we encounter this week from Philippians portrays the humble and sacrificial attitude of our beloved Savior. Theologians refer to this passage as the *kenosis*, or the “emptying” of the Christ. In no way did Jesus empty Himself of His deity, spending even one millisecond apart from being God. However, when He came to this earth as a man (the “incarnation”), He willingly subjugated Himself to a life of submission and dependence. By giving up the *independent* use of His divine power, He demonstrated a submission to His Father's will and a dependence upon the Holy Spirit for divine power. Paul urges the readers in this passage to have the same attitude of Christ. Such an attitude is therefore submissive to the will of God, dependent on the Holy Spirit for strength, humble as it chooses to view others as more important than self, and sacrificial in its demonstration of love. May we too have the mind of Christ today!

1. READ Philippians 2:1–2

- What does it mean to be “united in spirit, intent on one purpose”? (v.2)
- What are *obstacles* that prevent unity within the body of Christ?
- What can you do to foster unity within our church, so that we are maintaining and sharing Christ's love?

2. READ Philippians 2:3–4

- Why is it so difficult to “regard one another as more important” than yourself? (v.3)
- In what ways can you actually look out for the “interest of others”, even more than your own interests?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in empowering you to accomplish such a difficult work? What role do you play in receiving such power?

3. READ Philippians 2:5–11

- In v.5–8 Paul reminds us how much Jesus gave up for us. He gave the most valuable thing He possessed– His life.

What are you clinging to today that you haven't laid at the feet of Jesus?

Your time Your \$ Your job Your family Your future plans Your ability to live freely & independently

Bitterness & anger towards someone who has hurt you A life of self-sufficiency A relationship that you know is not God-honoring Your health The health of someone you love

A habit that you know is sinful Your refusal to forgive another person Your pride

- How can you practically live out “having the mind of Christ” this week?
- In v.9–11, Paul explains that God the Father exalted (and will further exalt) Christ because of His humility. Do you think the Lord can exalt you for your humility? (*hint read 1 Peter 5:5–7*)

FAMILY PRAYER: Ask the Lord to break you of your pride. Ask Him for the Spirit's help to love those in your life who are difficult to love. Ask that He help you live with the mind of Christ today.