

BROKEN CHAINS
The Philippian Series #9
May 21st, 2017

TEXT: Philippians 2:1-13

CONSIDER THIS: Have you heard the saying, “The wonderful healing power of humility”? Probably not, because I think I came up with it in my office this week (perhaps I heard it from someone else, but if that is the case I don’t remember). Biblical humility not only has healing power, it has breaking power. As we study today’s passage we will see how the humility of Christ, when we imitate it in our own relationships, can bring healing, hope, freedom and **BROKEN CHAINS**.

REMINDER: In last week’s study on the same passage we got the sense that although the Philippian church was healthy, Paul had detected the early warning signs of potential problems. Relationships are important to God, but there is much that can go wrong with them. We compared it to the **check engine** light on our dashboard (which we usually ignore!). For many people the chains of bitterness, resentment, loneliness, sorrow, disappointment, discouragement, anxiety, depression fear and anger are directly related to things that have happened to them within their relationships.

GOD’S WORD TEACHES US ...

I THE EXHORTATION TO HUMILITY (2:1-4)

(Last week’s sermon!)

Just remember that **God’s callings are His enablings**. Because you have the 4 “since”s of verse 1, you can fulfill God’s call in 2:2 to be like-minded and have agapé love in your relationships.

II OTHERS ARE BETTER THAN ME?

A) The command in 2:3 is about the **attitude** of humility = “consider” others better. It is the attitude that makes it possible to live out the commands of Jesus in Matthew 7:1-5.

QUESTION: How is this possible if others, by their wrong-doing, are the source of my pain, frustration, disappointment, disillusionment?

ANSWER: REMEMBER THE CROSS!

B) The example of Jesus’s humility in 2:5-8 is the model for our relationships and the cure for what Paul saw in Philippi.

- This was an early church hymn
- It is called “the Kenosis passage” from the Greek verb *Kenoo*, “to empty”.
- From eternity past, Jesus was fully equal in His divine nature to God the Father. Jesus did not have to strive to be fully God; He was God by nature (John 1:1). But He emptied Himself, **MADE HIMSELF NOTHING**, and took on the very nature of a slave (doulos).

Do you remember Philippians 1:1?
Christian, being a slave of the One Who became a slave for
your sake is one of the keys to joy, peace and contentment.

- C) Was it “fair” that Jesus became a slave for me? **NO!** He did this selflessly, sacrificially, unconditionally. It was the agape love of 2:2. Beloved, we have no grounds for saying that it is unfair for us to be asked to consider others to be better than ourselves. I do not deserve to be loved by Jesus and He has never asked me to earn it or **taken it away from me when I sin.**

III THE WONDERFUL HEALING POWER OF HUMILITY

- A) Behind many of the relationship wrongs that have been done against us is the attitude that says “I don’t deserve this”. Biblically, humility does NOT tell us to say “yes, I deserve to be mistreated”. But what biblical humility does say is “I will not let my pride or love of self keep me from granting mercy, forgiveness, patience or love. When I compare myself to my offender I will find a way to consider him/her better than myself. I will not pretend he has no speck in his eye, but I will choose to see my shortcomings as beams in comparison (Matthew 7:1-5).
- B) Biblical humility actually frees my heart and emotions because it:
1. Gives me an eternal perspective of my temporary pain
 2. Keeps my focus on the cross
 3. Motivates me to want to be like Christ, even to the point of accepting suffering (see Acts 5:40-41; Philippians 3:10-11). This is a mystical sweet communion with my Savior.
 4. Keeps me appreciative of how constantly God lavishes mercy upon me.
- C) “Working out my salvation” (2:12-13), in this context, means to apply the gospel of Jesus Christ to all my relationships, **especially the difficult ones!**

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