

## DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

*Mind of Christ (part 2)... By Sareth*

### READ PHILIPPIANS 2: 1-13

- There was evidently one weak spot in the church at Philippi, for three times in his letter the apostle Paul reproves the Christians, not for doctrinal error, but for careless and undisciplined living – look up 1:27, 2:1-5 and 4:1-5.
- They were sound in doctrine, but they were not manifesting “the unity of the Spirit” (*Ephesians* 4:3). Instead of concord there was discord; instead of harmony there was disharmony; their believing was all right, but their behaving was all wrong. What is the reason for the presence of such things in the church? What causes them? S-E-L-F every time – and self in its ugliest manifestation – P-R-I-D-E! It was because some of the Philippian Christians were self-centred and proud that Paul appealed to them (in the words of *1 Peter* 5:5), to “*clothe yourselves with H-U-M-I-L-I-T-Y*”, for the secret of harmony, concord and unity is humility. Let us consider the valuable teaching contained in *Philippians* 2:1-13, and first notice:

- **THE EXHORTATION WE ARE TO OBEY**

This is indicated in verse 5: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” – i.e. the humble, lowly attitude. In verses 1-4 we see why the exhortation of verse 5 was (and is) so necessary. Paul knew the root cause for their presence was pride, he exhorted the Christians to have the same attitude as the Lord Jesus Christ. That is a humble, meek, loving mind. But the apostle did not leave the matter there.

- **THE EXAMPLE WE ARE TO FOLLOW**

Read verse 5 again, and then read the first word of verse 6. In the Lord Jesus we see humility personified. He alone could say – *Matthew* 11:29. He is the supreme example of humility.

- In verses 6 to 11, the amazing condescension and the glorious exaltation of the Lord Jesus are contrasted. Who is this who stooped so low and whom God raised up so high? Verses 5 and 6 tell us – “*Christ Jesus who...*”:
- “*Being in very nature God...*” As God the Father has no visible form, this can only mean that Christ Jesus was, and is, Himself God. He always was, and is, and always will be God – *John* 1:1. “*Did not consider equality with God something to be grasped...*” Because He was God, He was not taking something to Himself that did not belong to Him when He claimed equality with God – *John* 5:18; 5:23 and 10:33.
- The Amazing Condescension of our Lord Jesus Christ is described in verses 7 and 8. These verses tell us of the seven steps He voluntarily took from the throne down to the cross.
  - He “*made himself nothing...*” – verse 7. This does not mean that He divested Himself of His deity; it means that when He became Man, He voluntarily laid aside His glory. He took off His royal robes and came amongst us as a man – but He was still, and always will be, the same royal Person – *Colossians* 2:9.
  - He took “*the very nature of a servant...*” – verse 7. Compare “*the nature of God*” (verse 6) with “*the nature of a servant*” (verse 7), and look up *Mark* 10:45 and *Luke* 22:27. Now read *John* 13:3-5 and 13-17

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## WEEKLY EVENTS/NOTICES

Week 30

- He “*was made in human likeness...*” – verse 7. Compare *Romans 8:3* – only in human likeness – truly God, but truly man.
- He was “*found in appearance as a man...*” – verse 8. He looked like a man (*Hebrews 2:17*); He became hungry (*Matthew 4:2*); He was tempted (*Matthew 4:3*); and He was tired (*Mark 4:38*) – compare *Mark 15:39*; *Luke 15:2*; *23:41* and *7:46*.
- “*He humbled Himself*” – verse 8. He was born in little Bethlehem (*Micah 5:2*); He lived in despised Nazareth (*John 1:46*); He plied a humble trade (*Matthew 13:55*); He had nowhere to lay His head (*Luke 9:58*).
- “*became obedient to death...*” – verse 8. Compare *Hebrews 5:8-9* with *Romans 5:19* and *2 Corinthians 8:9*.
- “*Even death on a cross...*” – verse 8. This was the most degrading and shameful death known – yet He willingly submitted to this awful indignity and “scorning its shame” (*Hebrews 12:2*), because He loved us so!
- But having come right DOWN, God raised Him UP. The Glorious Exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ is described in verses 9 to 11. They tell us of the steps up from the shame of the cross to the glory of the throne.
- “*God exalted him to the highest place*” – verse 9. As God, Christ always shared His Father’s glory; but now God exalted Him, as man – look up *Ephesians 1:20-21*.
- God “... *gave him the name that is above every name..*” – verse 9. The precious name of – JESUS! His name is above every name because He is above all others *Matthew 1:21* and *Acts 4:12*.
- “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...*” – verse 10. Every believer should humbly and adoringly bow (*Ephesians 3:14*), (*Romans 14:11*) but one day even His enemies will bow in recognition of whom He is, for God has declared that it will be so (*Isaiah 45:23*); *Revelation 6:15-17*.
- “*Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father...*” – verse 11. How wonderful! Do you not feel like singing *Revelation 5:12*.
- Thus, our Lord Jesus is portrayed before us as our great Example in humility, lowliness and selflessness; and we are to “*let this attitude*” be in us. But how?
- **THE ENABLING WE ARE TO ENJOY**
- Verse 13 tells us “how”. What we have to do is to let go (verse 5), and let God... (verse 13), so that we work out what He works in.
- In many respects we could live out this verse every day of our lives. In every situation ask yourself:
  - Do I have the mind or attitude of Christ here?
  - Even in our past actions, did I have the attitude of Christ?
  - Is there anything that I can put right even now?
  - Some action/spoken word/gossip or wrong thought about another believer.
- To correct this known wrong is allowing God to carry out His work V13. Whilst also tearing down pride/selfishness within our own lives. Let us be encouraged this morning, God is working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. He takes pleasure in us, He takes delight in us. ■