

## The Jesus Attitude

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5yo, and Ryan, 3yo. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother, though busy making the pancakes, saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here (she said), He would say, "Let my brother have the first pancake; I can wait."

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

Today's epistle reading is from Philippians 2. The center of gravity in this letter, the heart of Philippians, is a poem in Php 2:5-11. It artistically retells the story of the Messiah's incarnation, his life, death, resurrection and exaltation; **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. (9) 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.**

..... that poem we call 'Carmen Christi', the hymn of Christ, or the song of Christ. Many believe that it was a song that the early church used for worship and Paul is either the author of it or is quoting it.

It seems that the story of the Messiah was not only the focal point of Paul's letter to the Philippians but also the focal point of his whole life; Paul lived to know the Messiah and become like Him... in Php 3:10 Paul says I willingly and joyfully sacrificed everything "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, **and may share his sufferings**, becoming like him **in his death**,"... Paul had that Jesus attitude... and out of that poem/this Messiah story, Paul prescribes to the Philippians the answer to the issues at the church... notice, his introduction to the poem, he says to the Philippians; **Have this mind (attitude) among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus**, in other words he wanted them to see that living as a Christian means seeing your own story as a lived expression of Jesus' story.

So what were the issues Paul needed to address? One main themes of Philippians is **unity**, Paul touches on it in chapter 1 Php 1:27 "**standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel**"

And in chapter 2 he elaborates on it; we'll get to talk about that, and in chapter 4:1 he mentions a specific case of disunity

**Php 4:2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.**

And he describes these 2 women in verse 3 as;

**Php 4:3 ... women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel .... whose names are in the book of life.**

They're not only Christians, they are ministry leaders at the church, who worked alongside Paul at some point.

So, unity is a main theme as you can see... Paul deals with the cause of disunity;

**(3) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,**

Brothers and sisters "the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart", and the problem of the human heart is as old as humans, from the very day Adam rejected God, his heart changed his mind/his attitude changed from being God-centered / other-centered to self-centered... that's what causes disagreements, quarrels and division in a church.

You know that no outside power can destroy the church... it actually funny that the churches grows the most under pressure, opposition and persecution. The fastest growing church in the whole world today is the underground church in the Islamic republic of Iran. No outside power can destroy the church, but unfortunately the church is capable of self-destruction from within. So, Here is Paul pleading with his friends in Philippi

**(3) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,**

And then Paul gives the remedy; humility – the Jesus attitude.

**"but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."**

Humility is not to think less of yourself, it's to think of yourself less... it is you not being the center of attention, but rather God and others,

**counting others more significant than yourself**, as in more worthy of service, considering the needs, the desires, the opinions of others.

As Paul continues to explain;

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

**(5) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,**

Have the Jesus attitude, be imitator of Jesus, become like Jesus.

Did you know that Christlikeness, to become like Christ, is the purpose of your salvation, the end goal for your Christian life? Don't take my word for it, take His word; Romans 8 and verse 28

**Rom 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined (why/what for) to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.**

This is the end goal; If you're not cooperating with the Holy Spirit as he shows and grows His fruit in your life and makes you more like Jesus, you have, somehow, picked the wrong purpose for your Christian life, the wrong for your walk with God.

From the very beginning God created man after His own image; he wanted man to become more like him. And when the devil tempted man he addressed a legitimate desire in him, something man was created for; to become like God... **"when you eat from the tree your eyes will be open and you will become like God"** the devil told Eve... the problem is the devil convinced man that he can become like God without God, and in rebellion against God.

By one selfish act of rebellion, Man brought death upon himself, and by one unselfish act of obedience Jesus the second Adam gives life to everyone who believes in Him.

The second Adam reversed, undid what Adam did,  
Before becoming human, the Messiah pre-existed in a state of glory and equality with God.

And, unlike Adam, who tried to seize equality with God,  
the Messiah chose not to exploit his equal status for his self-advantage.

Rather, he emptied himself of status.

He became a human.

He became a servant to all.

And, even more than that, he allowed himself to be humiliated.

He was obedient to the Father by going to his death on a Roman execution rack.

But through God's power and grace, the Messiah's shameful death has been reversed through the resurrection.

So, Paul pleads with his friends in Philippi to strive for unity and deal with the decrease of selfishness which causes disunity...

Look... it doesn't really matter if you're a nurse, a school teacher or a pastor... you can do what you do with God in the center of it, or with self in the center of it, You can have the first Adam attitude or the last Adam attitude... God called us to become like the last Adam; Jesus, Paul shows us in **2Co 3:18** **And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.**

This is the work of the Holy Spirit, you only need to let him, cooperate with Him as He does it in, When we let Him, the Holy Spirit he will make us more like Jesus... we start thinking like Jesus and acting like Jesus.

The last verse in today's reading

**(13) for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

I love this verse, I really do, it legitimizes prayers like these... "God I don't love you enough, I don't really want love you... God I pray that you help me want to love you more".... That's a legitimate prayer... let me read the verse again

**(13) for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

God, I know I'm selfish and I like it, I don't have the desire to change, help me want to become unselfish like Jesus...

This verse means there is hope for you and me, wherever you're at, wherever sin has taken you to ... it reminds me with Jeremiah prays

**Jer 31:18** ***You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God.*** (the verse literally says Turn me, and I will be turned"; make me repent that I may repent)... isn't great to know that no matter how law sin has taken me, even if I don't have the strength or desire for repentance and change, I can cry out to God for help, and he will come to my assist " he will turn me and I will be turned.

It is the Messiah who was and is in the image of God, who died for you on a Roman rack who gives you forgiveness for your sins and selfishness, it is Him who removes the veil of sin an every veils and barriers ... it's His empowering Grace and the work of His Holy Spirit in you that enables you to become like him...

Little Kevin said to his younger brother Ryan: "you be Jesus" and that's exactly what Paul is saying to the Philippians and to you today: "you be Jesus"

**To His name be glory for ever and ever Amen...**