

Introduction: The beauty of the Gospel is that when people come to faith, Christ is in them and this is their hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). Paul told believers in Rome that if Christ is in them: bodies dead through sin but spirit (is) life (Romans 8:10); i.e., their dead spirit comes alive (John 5:24-25). Also, people who are in the faith have Christ in them (2 Corinthians 13:5); and, people of all backgrounds in Christ's Church have Christ in them, (Colossians 3:11-14). *** Having Christ in us by faith is the beginning of eternal and abundant life. But the daily adventure, the journey of the life of God's people is to grow in Christ so as to become more like Him (Romans 8:29). Paul told the churches in Corinth they were being made holy in Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2). Believers have been created in Christ for good works in Him, which God enables them to do by grace due to His death for them (Ephesians 2:8-10). **God works in people through Christ who humbled himself in death** All this results in receiving Christ's righteousness through faith (Philippians 3:9) so believers may be presented complete in Him (Colossians 1:28). *** The key phrase in our passages this morning is that believers 'in Christ' will be enabled to live like Him, producing good fruit 'in Him'

I. In Christ, Paul commands believers to unity, seeing others in humility; and, he commands they be as Christ, who laid His divinity aside to die on a cross. (Philippians 2:1-8)

- A. On the basis of their encouragement in Christ, Paul requests believers in Philippi that they have unity in His love, not selfish conceit, humbly regarding others above themselves. (Verses 1-4)
1. If any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of Spirit, if any inmost feelings and compassions ... (Verse 1)
Four conditions: Paul asks the believers in Philippi four self-examination questions. Each church needs to answer if the members collectively are: encouraged IN Christ; comforted in God's love; have fellowship from God's Spirit; and, have feelings of compassion. If they can say they are united in all these, he has a command for them that will result in a blessing.
 2. You all must fill my joy, so that the same you all may be thinking: the same love; having same soul: one thinking. (Verse 2)
Unity produces joy: If they are united in encouragement, love, fellowship and compassion IN Christ, their 'church planter' (apostle) will be full of joy!
Unity flows from Christ: All of this unity and the benefit of united thinking will result in one soul and love from being IN Christ.
 3. Nothing through selfishness nor through conceit, but in the humility of mind, regarding each other surpassing of themselves. (Verse 3)
Pride and humility: Selfish pride goes nowhere; but, the humility of putting the needs of others first, is what the apostle advises the churches to do.
 4. Not the things of themselves each being concerned, but also the things of all others. (Verse 4)
Others orientation: People in Christ need to always put others above themselves.
- B. Paul commands they think as Christ, who being God, emptied Himself, having taken on servanthood in likeness of men, and humbled Himself obedient to death on a cross. (Verses 5-8)
1. This you all must be thinking in yourselves, which also in Christ Jesus. (Verse 5)
Command: Paul commands all followers of Messiah Savior in Philippi to be thinking as He thought.
Description: He will elaborate on this in the following sentences.
 2. He in the form of God being, not He considered a thing to be grasped to be equal to God. (Verse 6)
Equal in form to God: Under the inspiration of God, Paul declares Jesus as being the form of God. However, Jesus did not consider that He had to grasp at always appearing as an all-powerful spirit.
 3. But, He made empty (gave up, voided) Himself, form of a servant having taken, in the likeness of men having become. (Verse 7)
Became servant in likeness of man: What the Savior God did is amazing, unthinkable to humans. Being the form of God, He effectively emptied Himself of that, making Himself void of His true nature to all appearances, by taking on a servant's form. This is a double irony: The One who created men in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27), became the likeness of men; and, the one Zechariah said would enable men 'To serve [God], in holiness and righteousness' (Luke 1:74-75) did this by taking on the form of a servant.
 4. And, form having been found as a man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient until death, of death of cross. (Verse 8)
Humbly obedient death: He humbly and willingly obeyed His Father's will, which is His own will, to die in the place of all sinners so God may forgive and reconcile all people in Him by faith in His substitutionary death for them. This is a great mystery.

II. God lifted The Lord to be worshipped in glory so in fear they may cooperate in God's saving works in them, having hearts made good to produce good. (Philippians 2:9-13; Luke 6:43-45)

- A. So God raised Christ high, that in His Name every knee may bow to God's glory; so, in fear and trembling their salvation must be worked, because God works in them. (Philippians 2:9-13)
1. For this reason, God also raised Him to the highest and gave to Him the Name above every name, that in the Name of Jesus (Savior), every knee might bow of heaven and of earth and of under earth, and every tongue might confess ... (Verses 9-11a)
Exaltation: Because Jesus died on a cross for men, as Man, God exalted (raised to the highest) Him. As a result, whenever creatures with knees hear His Name, they may bow to Him in worship.

Isaiah: Through the prophet Isaiah, Yahweh had declared 'Every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will confess' (Isaiah 45:23, NLT). The promise of the Prophets has become the possibility for all in the New Covenant.

2. ... that Lord (is) Jesus Christ to glory of God-Father. (*Verse 11b*)

Lord Jesus glorifies Father: All who confess The Savior as Lord of everything bring glory to Father God through the reconciling and redeeming work of Jesus (Savior). His death for sin and resurrection to new life is the greatest miracle.

3. So that, my beloved, even as always you all have obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence (Paul is in prison in Rome, over 800 land and sea miles away) with fear and trembling, the of yourselves salvation, you all must be working. (*Verse 12*)

Command: Paul commands the Christians in Philippi to be working on their salvation with a reverent fear and trembling before the awesome God who created everything, and sovereignly rules everything.

4. Because God is working in you all, both to will and to do for the sake of His good pleasure. (*Verse 13*)

God is working: Believers can fulfill the responsibility to work on salvation because God's will is to work in them so His will is done and He may have the pleasure of completing His work of salvation in them in His Son.

We must go deeper IN Christ to become like Him in humility so we are willing to work sacrificially for the good of others.

God works in people through Christ who humbled himself in death

- B. Jesus said good trees are not making rotten fruit and vice versa, trees are known by their fruit; people bear good or evil from what is in their heart. (*Luke 6:43-45*)

1. For not is being good tree making rotten fruit; neither again, rotten tree making good fruit. (*Verse 43*)

Good and rotten: Jesus begins with a simple and true statement: good trees do not make rotten fruit and, conversely, rotten trees do not make good fruit.

2. Because each tree from its own fruit is being made known; because, not of thorns they are gathering figs, nor of bramble bush, grapes they are gathering. (*Verse 44*)

Trees known by fruit: A tree is known by the fruit it does, or does not, make.

No grapes from bramble bushes: Jesus states the obvious: grapes do not come from bramble bushes, but vines; and, figs do not come from thorns – just raspberries!

3. The good man out of the good treasure of the heart, he is bearing good. (*Verse 45a*)

Good hearts: Those receiving God's gracious gift of the Holy Spirit through Jesus have their hearts filled with the good fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We must cooperate by faith with God's gracious work in us to serve Him with fear and trembling so His Spirit may purify our hearts to bear good fruit.

The Holy Spirit bears good fruit in the faithful

4. And the evil man from the evil, he is bearing the evil. (*Verse 45b*)

Warning of evil: This is a strong warning to those who do not have God's Spirit in them by the faith of Jesus, that they are still under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19), and whatever good they try to do will eventually fail.

5. Because from the abundance of the heart his mouth is speaking. (*Verse 45c*)

Abundance of heart: This is true of BOTH evil people without God's Spirit bearing evil fruit AND people made good by the grace of God in the Holy Spirit who is given by the faith of Jesus. All who cooperate with God's working in them through Messiah Christ will bear good fruit because Christ humbled Himself to death on a cross. And when we receive grace to come to Christ in humility, He is in us by the Holy Spirit and we are in Him and begin to grow to be like Him.

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Conclusion: All who are in Christ may have unity in Him, becoming like Him in humility to one another and God.

They will be able to die to themselves to worship The One who died for them so they may cooperate in the work

God is doing in them so they bear good fruit in The Spirit with renewed hearts.

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