**IMITATING CHRIST’S HUMILITY**

Philippians 2:1-11

Key Verse 5

**“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:”**

**Introduction**



 In our relationship with others, today’s passage urges us to have the mindset of Christ Jesus. Due to our sinful nature, divisions inevitably occur. A married couple can have a dispute over a very small matter. To have one mind is difficult even between a husband and wife. But Jesus Christ has made a breakthrough. We can have one mind and heart by remembering Jesus and His example. Jesus also called us and joined us together as his church. Members of the church must first be one and establish a community of love in Christ Jesus. Ever since Paul began God’s work in Philippi, Paul was continually thankful to God. But this church had the problem of the disunity. There were quarrels and divisions. Often they would become irritated with each other. In today’s passage, Paul urges them to have the mindset of Christ. As we know well, our mindset determines how we live day to day. Let’s learn Jesus’ mindset.

**1. Read verses 1-2. What virtues should believers have? (1) How can we make our joy complete? (2)**

**1-1, Read verses 1-2.**

 **Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind**.

**1-2. What virtues should believers have? (1)**

 ***Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,***

* Paul mentions four virtues of believers by using four “if” clauses.
* "If there is any encouragement in Christ” - We are supposed to encourage each other in the Lord to support and strengthen each other.

**16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope ( 2 Thess. 2:16)**

**11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. (1 Thess. 2:11,12)**

* "Comfort of love” - We can get true comfort from God’s love. If we are comforted with God’s love, we can comfort others with the love we received. The comfort of love that comes from God, causes the weak to become strong. It helps them to even stand again.
* "A common sharing in Spirit” - It means fellowship and communication in Spirit. God called the believers to have fellowship and share things in the Spirit. We need to make effort to increase all types of sharing among us. The more we share things, the closer our relationship would be.
* “if any tenderness and compassion” - God treats us with great tenderness and compassion. We are supposed to treat each other with the same tenderness and compassion, having merciful hearts.
* These virtues can be obtained not through an individual’s high morality but in Jesus and through being united with him.

**1-3.How can we make our joy complete? (2)**

 ***then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.***

* Being like-minded, having the same love, and being one in spirit and of one mind are the main clause after mentioning four conditional clauses in verse 1.
* Having the four virtues, believers should maintain unity by having the same mind, love, and being one in spirit and of one mind.
* When we maintain unity in Jesus, it pleases God. Unity in Christ helps us to experience joy and power in the Lord.

**2. Read verses 3-5. How should believers treat others in the Lord? (3, 4) Whose mindset should we have in our relationships with one another? (5)**

**2-1. Read verses 3-5.**

 **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:**

**2-2. How should believers treat others in the Lord? (3, 4)**

 ***Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.***

* Here Paul mentions how to keep unity among believers.
* “Do nothing out of selfish ambition and vain conceit.” - There is no greater enemy to Christian love than pride and selfish-ambition. If we do things in contradiction to what is best for our brethren, this is doing them harm through selfish ambition. If we do harm to them through self ostentation, this is also harming them through vain-glory. Both are destructive of Christian love and unity.
* Christ came to humble us. We should not allow a spirit of pride to dwell among us.
* In lowliness of mind, we must esteem others as better than ourselves.
* We must not look to our own interests but to the interests of the others.
* A selfish spirit is destructive to Christian love. We must be concerned not only for our own credit, ease, and safety, but for those of others also; and rejoice in the prosperity of others as if it were our own.
* When we take care of other’s interest, we can be united in the Lord.

**2-3. Whose mindset should we have in our relationships with one another? (5)**

***In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:***



* The same mindset as Christ Jesus. When believers keep the mindset of Jesus, they can be fully united.
* Christians must be of Christ's mind. We must bear a resemblance to his life, if we would have the benefit of his death. If we don’t share the Spirit of Christ, we do not belong to Him.

Romans 8:9 reads,

 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.

* What was the mind of Christ? He was eminently humble, and this is what we are to learn from him.

Matthews 11:29 reads,

 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

* We are supposed to have the same Spirit of humility as his disciples.
* We must walk in the same spirit and in the same steps with the Lord Jesus, who humbled himself to sufferings and death for us; not only to satisfy God's justice, and pay the price of our redemption, but to set us an example, that we might follow in his steps.

**3. Read verses 6-11. How did Jesus set a good example in humility? (6-8) How did God exalt Jesus? (9-11)**

**3-1. Read verses 6-11.**

 **Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness.8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

**3-2. How did Jesus set a good example in humility? (6-8)**

 ***He did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!***

* Divine nature: Who being in the form of God, the eternal and only begotten Son of God.

John 1:1 reads,

 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God.

* He gave up and laid aside the majesty of his former appearance while he was here on earth.
* He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, humbled himself by becoming obedient to death

2 Corinthians 8:9b says,

 “…though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”

* But our fallen nature is not interested in being a nobody or a nothing. We are more interested in becoming something and somebody in the eyes of other people.
* In our fallen nature, we don’t want to take the very nature of a servant, but to take the very nature of a master and someone who is very important.
* But Jesus made himself nothing and became a servant for us. To serve, take care of others, and embrace others, we must have Jesus’ mindset to make ourselves nothing and to take the very nature of a servant.
* When we think ourselves as somebody or something, there will be quarrels, divisions, fights, and many heart-aches. But when we make ourselves nothing, the life-giving work of God, healthy fellowship in our families, and in our church will thrive.

***being made in human likeness.8 And being found in appearance as a man,***

* He was truly a man and took part of our flesh and blood. And he voluntarily took human nature; it was his own act, and by his own consent.
* His whole life was a life of humiliation, meanness, poverty, and disgrace; he had nowhere to lay his head, lived by alms, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, did not appear with external pomp, or any marks of distinction from other men. This was the humiliation of his life.

***he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!***

* But the lowest step of his humiliation was his death on the cross. He became obedient to death, even to death on the cross. He not only suffered, but was voluntarily obedient; he obeyed the law which he brought himself under as Mediator, and by which he was obliged to die.

John 10:18 reads,

 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father,

* The manner of his dying - Even His death on the cross was a cursed, painful, and shameful death, – a death accursed by the law (Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree) – full of pain, the body nailed through nerves (the hands and feet) and hanging with all His weight upon the cross, exposed as a public spectacle.
* Through his humility and sacrifice, Jesus served sinners to get life. As a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies in order to nurture the new sprout of wheat, Jesus died to bring forgiveness and life for others.
* Jesus didn’t fight against those who put him on the cross. Instead He prayed for them to the end. Through his humble death, Jesus could welcome all kinds of sinners even his enemies and gave his life to them. In the same way, to love and serve all kinds of people, we must set our mind to humble ourselves to the point of dying to self.
* When we die to self, we no longer get our own way but welcome and serve all kinds of people in the church. We must say to ourselves, “I,\_\_\_\_\_, am dead in Christ and now live for others.” Let us pray to set our mind to die every day in order to make others rich and to give them life in Jesus Christ.

John 12:23-26 reads,

Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **24** Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. **25** Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **26** Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

**3-3. How did God exalt Jesus? (9-11)**

 ***Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

* God highly exalted Jesus. His exaltation was reward for his humility. Because he humbled himself, God exalted him; raised him to an exceeding height.
* His exaltation here is made to consist in honor and power. In honor; so he had a name above every name, And in power: Every knee must bow to him. The whole creation must be in subjection to him: things in heaven and things on earth and under the earth.
* Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord – every nation and language should accept him as the Lord. All power in heaven and on earth is given to him,

Matthew 28:18 reads,

 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

* To the glory of God the Father. It is to the glory of God the Father to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; for it is his will that all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father,

John 5:23 reads,

  **that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.**

Matthew 10:40 reads,

 **“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.**

**Conclusion**



 Jesus made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant and humbled himself by becoming obedient to death. Jesus showed the example for us to follow as his disciples and as children of God. We have to keep the same mindset of Jesus and love and serve one another out of Jesus’ love and humility. Then there will surely be God’s glory and exaltation. If we live each day, having the mindset of Christ, we can have true hope that our world will be fundamentally changed. Our relationship problems with others have a clear solution by having the mindset of Jesus Christ. May we throw away our self-centered mindset, selfish ambition, and vain conceit. We are Christ’s followers. Let’s have the mindset of Jesus and enter into a new, joy and spirit-filled relationship with others. Amen.

**One word: Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus!**