**The Mind of Christ**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Philippians 2:1-8**

**Wednesday Evening**

**February 16, 2022**

**Philippians 2:1-8**

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

**1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,**

Paul asked four rhetorical questions. These conditions already existed in the Philippian church. It had some problems to deal with, but the church had proven itself to be strong and unified.

Paul asked if there was any encouragement from belonging to Christ. The word translated “encouragement” is the same word when he spoke of the Holy Spirit as the Counselor or Comforter.

**John 14:16**

and I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever…

Every believer has received encouragement, exhortation, and comfort from Christ. That common experience ought to unite the Philippians.

The Philippian believers had comfort from his love. The common experience of Christ’s love should unite them.

**Ephesians 5:25**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her…

Saints, in turn, their common love for Christ should cause them to love one another. They had fellowship together in the Spirit. When a person believes in Jesus Christ as Savior, he or she receives the Holy Spirit.

Saints, each believer has personal fellowship with the Holy Spirit in his or her private life; all the believers are united by the same Spirit in times of fellowship. Because there is only one Spirit, there can be only one body factions or divisiveness have no place in the body of Christ.

**Ephesians 4:4**

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling…

**2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**

Saints, the four results of unity listed above are here joined by four goals for harmony in the church. The Philippians had given Paul great joy. Yet Paul was aware of a lack of unity in the Philippian church.

For example, believers were demonstrating a false sense of spiritual superiority over others, and some were not working harmoniously with others. Paul knew that even the beginnings of divisiveness could cause major problems unless the “cracks” were repaired quickly.

Saints, because of their common experience in Christ and their common fellowship with the Holy Spirit, they should be agreeing wholeheartedly with each other.

This does not mean that the believers have to agree on everything; instead, each believer should have the mind (or attitude) of Christ, which Paul describes at length in this epistle.

Paul also wanted the church to be loving one another. Christ’s love sent him from heaven, into humble humanity, to death on a cross on behalf of sinners.

Although believers cannot do what Christ did, they follow Christ’s example when they express the same love in their dealings with others.

**Galatians 5:22-23**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Jesus had prayed for future believers,

**John 17:22**

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

Saints, the church ought to be working together with one heart.

**3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.**

Saints, members in the Philippian church were causing discord by their attitudes or actions. They desired recognition or distinction, not from pure motives, but merely from being selfish.

Saints, those kind of people cannot work with others in the church in like-mindedness and love. So when people are selfishly ambitious and trying only to make a good impression, they ruin a church’s unity.

While selfish ambition and conceit can ruin unity, genuine humility can build it.

Being humble involves having a true perspective about ourselves in relation to God, which in turn gives us a correct perspective on our relationships with others.

**Romans 12:3**

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith”

Saints, being humble does not mean that we should put ourselves down. Instead, humility is a healthy respect for who God is, and then a healthy respect for ourselves because of what God did on our behalf.

Thinking of others as better than ourselves means that we are aware of our own failings and are thus willing to accept failings in others without looking down on them.

**4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.**

Saints, each believer should not be completely absorbed in his or her own affairs, but should also be interested in others, noting their good points and qualities.

Listen, a sure cure for selfish ambition is appreciative recognition of others’ good qualities and their walk with the Lord. It is easy to get caught up in competition, aggressive acquiring, and vying for our own rights and needs.

Saints, but compared to knowing Christ, those interests seem shallow. We need Christ’s attitude of self-sacrifice

**5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,**

Saints, many people feel that they can’t control their moods or attitudes. But Paul doesn’t accept the fact that Spirit-filled Christians are slaves to their attitudes.

**Romans 12:1-2**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Saints, Christ Jesus had a particular attitude; so must we. One of the great myths of popular psychology that has drifted into the church today deals with impulsive behavior based on emotions.

Those who accept Jesus Christ as Savior enter a community of believers, the church. Believers are to obey their Savior because of who he is and what he has done on their behalf. Paul eloquently describes this in the following verses.

**6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,**

Saints, this verse describes the status of Christ as he existed before the creation of the world—that is, his preincarnate state.

Jesus Christ was God. Everything God is, Christ is; the equality is in essential characteristics and divine attributes.

But Jesus did not demand and cling to his rights as God, but set them aside for a time in order to become human. When Christ was born, God became a man.

Jesus was not part man and part God; he was completely human and completely divine. Christ is the perfect expression of God in human form. As a man, Jesus was subject to place, time, and other human limitations.

What made Jesus’ humanity unique was his freedom from sin. He did not give up his eternal power when he became human, but he did set aside his glory and his rights. In his full humanity, we can see everything about God’s character that can be conveyed in human terms.

**7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.**

Saints, Christ voluntarily gave of himself, making himself nothing. The Incarnation was the act of the preexistent Son of God voluntarily assuming a human body and human nature. He did not give up his deity to become human.

Yet upon his birth as a human being, he took the humble position of a slave. What appeared on earth was not a prince in a palace, or a royal king, or a wealthy and scholarly teacher; instead, Jesus’ entire life was devoted to serving others.

**Isaiah 53:2**

“For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him”

**Mark 10:45**

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Jesus’ glory and divinity were veiled by his humanity and mortality.

**8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**

Saints, when Jesus took on a human form, he then humbled himself to accomplish that task for which he had come—to die for sinful humanity in order that they might have eternal life.

**But why did Jesus have to become human and have to die?**

A holy God cannot overlook sin. The sinfulness of humanity had to be punished. In the Old Testament, God required his people to sacrifice animals (“perfect” animals, healthy and whole) to atone for their sins.

Saints, the costly sacrifice of an animal’s life impressed upon the sinner the seriousness of his or her sin before God. When animals’ blood was shed, God regarded the people’s faith and obedience, cleansed them, and made them ceremonially clean.

**Why blood?**

There is no greater symbol of life than blood; blood keeps us alive. Instead of sending all humanity to eternal punishment, God took the punishment himself (Romans 8:3).

**Romans 8:3**

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh…”

Jesus shed his blood—gave his life—for our sins so that we wouldn’t have to experience spiritual death and eternal separation from God.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**