

Removing Strongholds: Pride causes anxiety Philippians 2:1-8 FBC Canton

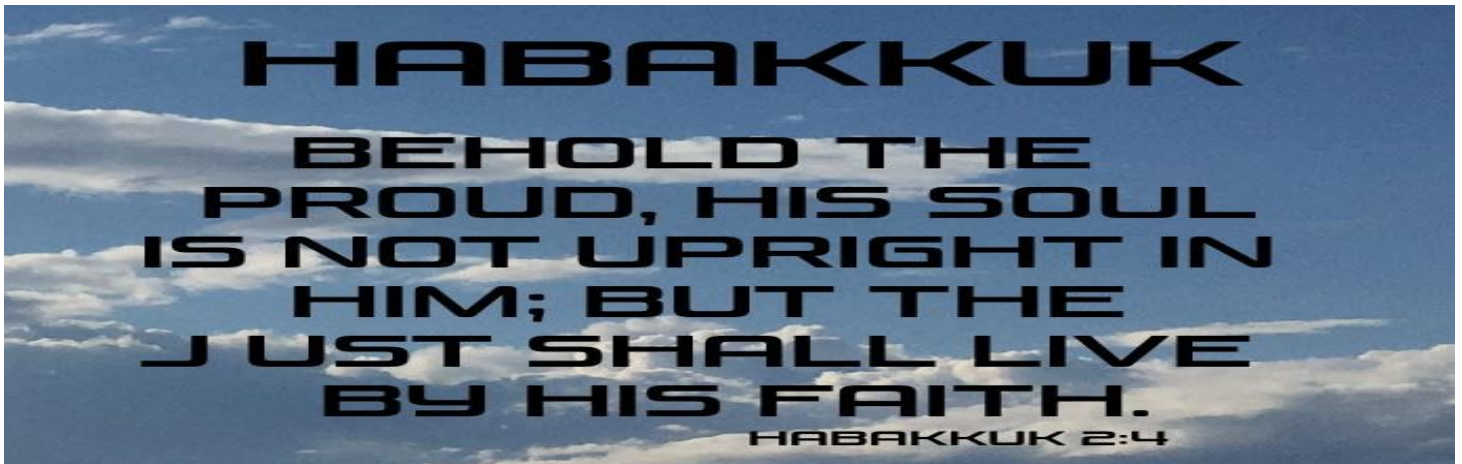
Sunday am September 13, 2026

Introduction: The only people Jesus rejected were prideful people: Pharisees.

Habakkuk 2:4

Why does the Lord hate pride so very much? Because it is the one sin that keeps you from being saved!

Proud: arrogant, self-important, self-adsorbed, inflated view of self, world revolves around self.



Pride is the original sin and thus the root of all strongholds. Isaiah 14:12-15



ISAIAH 14:12-15

12. How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!
13. For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of GOD: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
14. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.
15. Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

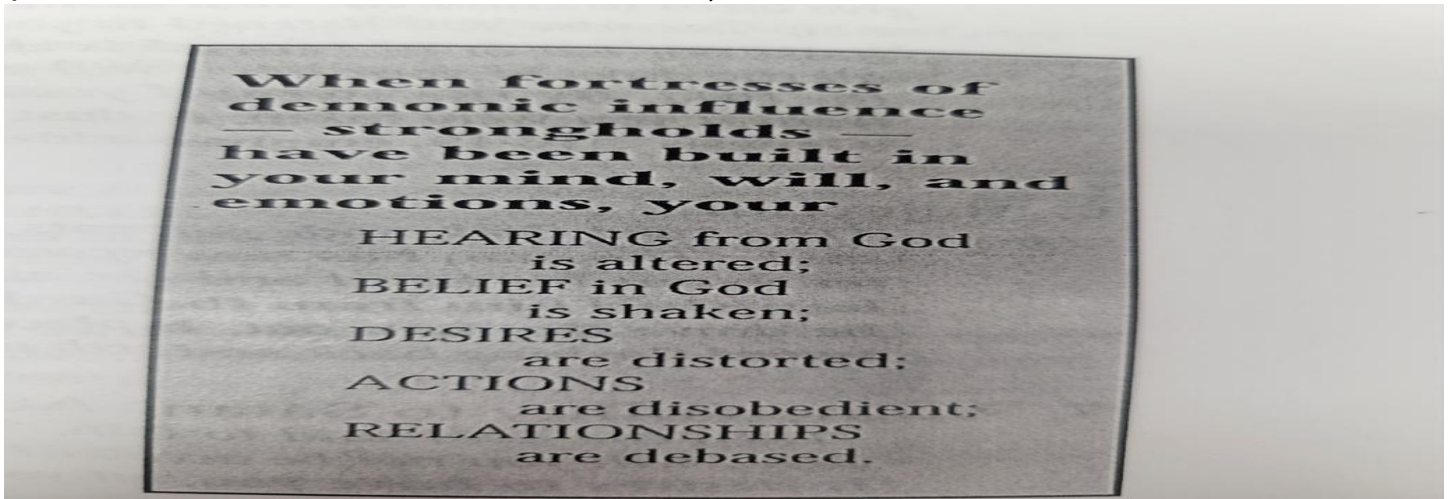
Pride is the original sin in Genesis 3. Romans 5:12-21

“In Adam we all die...”

Therefore, it is behind all other sins, including worry, homosexuality and prejudice of ethnicity.

Adam and Eve only knew that which was good in the beginning. When they fell they now knew good and evil....that was the lie of Satan...you will be like God.

(make this is the same as last week's slide)



How do you know you have the stronghold of pride? Proverbs 16:18

Relationships

Loneliness

Unable or unwilling to find deep companionship with God or with others (Psalm 25:16,17)

PRIDE

"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). "By your great skill in trading you have increased your wealth, and because of your wealth your heart has grown proud" (Ezekiel 28:5). "There are those who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers; those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth; those whose eyes are ever so haughty, whose glances are so disdainful" (Proverbs 30:11-13, CJB).

As a culture, Americans are obsessed with **image and appearance**. The focus on maintaining youthful health has surpassed stewardship of the body and has become an idol. We know more about fat grams than we do about the standards of holy living in Proverbs. The image we project through our homes, vehicles, attire, and activities reflects our **self-centered absorption**.

We have little appreciation for the sacrifices our parents have made for us (even in choosing life for us!), and often separate ourselves from them, either geographically or socially. Because God gives grace to the humble but resists the proud, the spirit of pride influences a person to arrogantly pursue **self-gratification and personal fulfillment**. In your desire to appear "Christian," you feel better about what you **don't do** that's "evil" than about the "good" that God wants to do in and through you.

Symptom:

Definition:

Ungrateful

Belief that you're entitled to anything you're given; failure to appreciate others; take others for granted (2 Timothy 3:2)

___ ___ <u>Self-righteous</u>	High opinion of your moral position compared to that of others (Luke 18:10-12)
___ ___ <u>Self-centered</u>	Obsessive egocentric pattern of thinking; "the world revolves around me" (Proverbs 21:4)
___ ___ <u>Insensitive</u>	Unaware of impact on others; a bull-in-a-china-shop (Proverbs 26:12)
___ ___ <u>Materialistic</u>	Obsessive desire to acquire and possess in order to gain recognition or prestige (1 John 2:15,16)
___ ___ <u>Seeks Positions</u>	Viewing people and resources as means of fulfilling ego needs; relationships have little worth except to advance self; presumptuous (Proverbs 25:6,7)
___ ___ <u>Stubborn</u>	Such high regard for your own views that you ignore or denigrate the input and counsel of others (Jeremiah 7:24)
___ ___ <u>Mocking</u>	Belittling others through words or mannerism, disparaging their dignity (Proverbs 18:3)
___ ___ <u>Vain</u>	Conceit about your own importance, abilities, appearance, possessions (Romans 12:16)
___ ___ <u>Spiritual Adultery</u>	Perverting God's grace into permission to sin; serving "another spirit" apart from the God of the Bible (James 4:4-6)
___ ___ <u>Impatient</u>	Intolerant of delay or opposition; your time is more important than others (Ecclesiastes 7:8)

and acceptance of his
His own. She prayed
work of God in her
heart to forgive and
believe in God's power
bring good out of it.
That afternoon, he
cleared. She sat down
wrote a letter to him
asking forgiveness
bitterness against
this time. He responded
immediately, begging
to come see him
healing had begun

RELIGIOSITY

Pride lies and says you are in control, you will have anxiety trying to maintain that illusion.

Set Goals

— — “Motor-mouth”

Indecisiveness; feel threatened by potential confrontation in decision making process (Ecclesiastes 5:7)
Constant chatter that precludes input from others (Proverbs 10:19)

CONTROL

“For he says, ‘By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding’” (Isaiah 10:13). “For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you” (Romans 12:3). “The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be” (James 3:6-10).

You feel that **your** input and decisions are key. In fact, you really don’t trust that anyone else can see the whole picture as clearly as you can. You need to be in charge! You enjoy leading, but only if others are willing to **follow your suggestions**. If others offer advice, you tend to doubt both their capability and their motives. Rather, you’re **driven even harder** to achieve your desired goal.

Symptom:

Definition:

— — Manipulative

Desire to maneuver or orchestrate the lives of others for personal advantage (Proverbs 27:6)

— — Striving

Endeavoring and struggling to accomplish; difficult for you to just “be” (Ecclesiastes 4:6)

— — Lack of Trust

Inability to rely on others or to have confidence in God (Proverbs 1:29-32)

— — Devil’s Advocate

Takes contrary position in discussions; argues without considering others’ feelings or needs (1 Timothy 6:3-5)

— — Insensitive

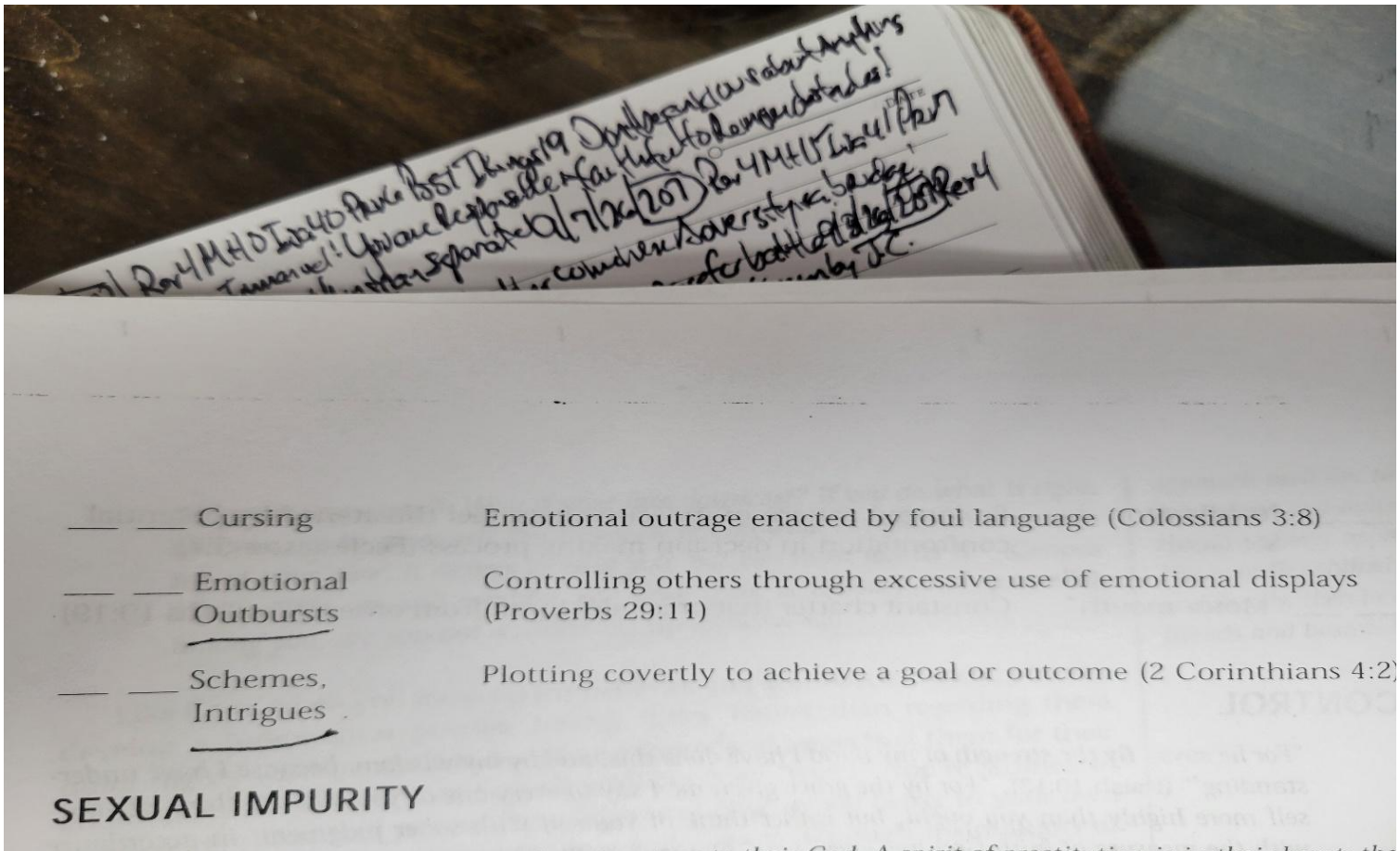
Unaware of impact on others; a bull-in-a-china shop (Proverbs 12:23)

— — Desiring Recognition

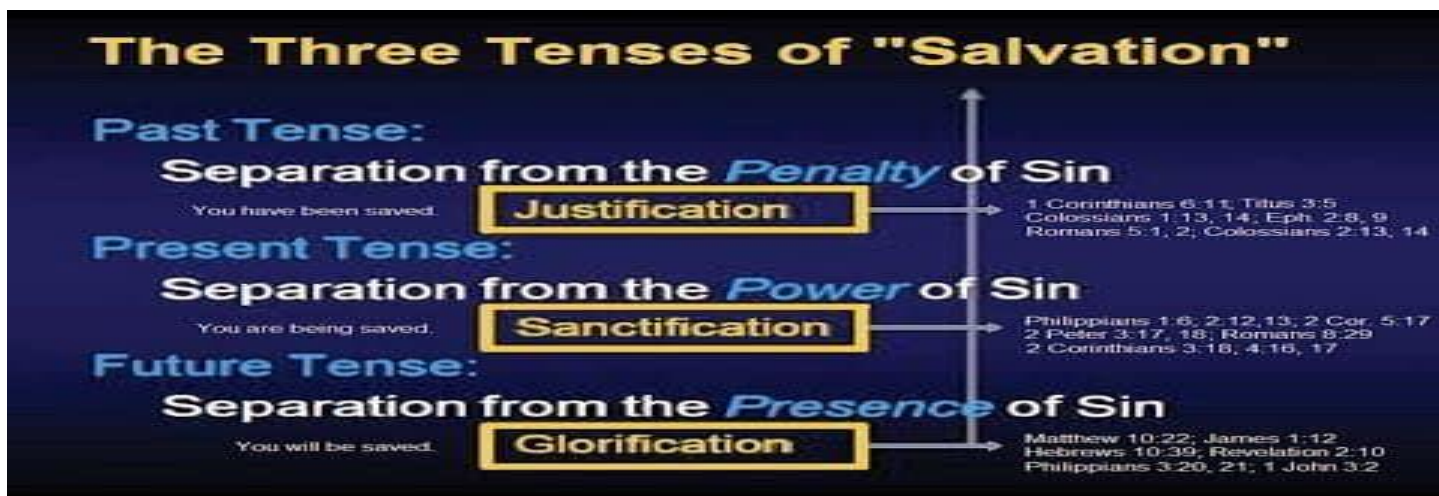
Seeking acclaim or notice for what you do (Proverbs 30:32)

— — Seductive Empowerment

Using flattery and overt attention toward others in order to feel empowered by their attention (2 Peter 2:18,19)



- I. **How do we defeat the Stronghold of Pride? V.1-2**
 - a. **Gratitude for the gifts erases entitlement. V. 1.** God has given you gifts that you didn't earn. Ultimately pride is against God.
 - i. **He came alongside us.**
 - ii. **Love persuades our progress.**
 - iii. **Joint partnership.**
 - iv. **Heart of compassion.**
 1. **Receiving means responsibility. V. 2**
 - b. **Change our minds to have full Joy. V. 2, Romans 12:1-2**
- II. **Submission is implied with salvation. V. 3-8**



- a. 3 "Lets for humble people."
 - i. Body: No actions for self-exaltation.
 - 1. It is empty glory.
 - 2. Do not believe the intent of others is negative.
 - ii. Soul: All attitudes begin with consideration of others before self.
 - iii. Spirit: Mindset of Jesus=Humble.
 - 1. He didn't hold onto his deity.
 - 2. He made himself a bondservant.
 - 3. He obediently died to self.
- b. Broken people break the stronghold of pride.
 - i. Brokenness is required for maximum usefulness.

This is what was part of the message on Revive our Hearts today

Nancy Leigh DeMoss Wolgemuth (1995 Campus Crusade recording (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLksNpfgAhY>)): God is more offended, I believe, by the arched back, the stiff neck, the haughty eyes, and the unteachable spirit than He is by the sodomite, the prostitute, the adulterer, the murderer, or the abortionist.

Because frequently those who are so wrapped up in sins of the flesh know that they are sinful, but those of us who are the respectable leaders, the Pharisees, the ones who have it all together, we so often find it difficult to acknowledge the real need of our hearts.

In recent weeks I have found God searching my own heart. I've gone before Him many times and said, "Oh God, show me what it means to be a broken person, to

live a lifestyle of brokenness.” What are some of the characteristics, the evidences of a proud, unbroken spirit? Let me just share with you some that have come to my own heart as I have waited on the Lord.

- 1) Proud people focus on the failures of others, but broken people are overwhelmed with a sense of their own spiritual need.
- 2) Proud people are self-righteous. They have a critical, fault-finding spirit. They look at everyone else's faults with a microscope but their own with a telescope, and they look down on others. But broken people are compassionate. They can forgive much because they know how much they have been forgiven. They think the best of others, and they esteem all others better than themselves.
- 3) When confessing their sin, proud people tend to deal in generalities, but broken people are able to deal under the conviction of God's Spirit to acknowledge specifics.
- 4) Proud people are concerned about the consequences of their sin, but broken people are grieved over the cause, the root, of their sin.
- 5) Proud people are blind to their real heart condition, but broken people walk in the light.
- 6) Proud people don't think they have anything to repent of, but broken people realize that they have need of a continual heart attitude of repentance.
- 7) Proud, unbroken people don't think they need revival, but they're sure that everyone else does. Whereas humble, broken people continually sense their need for a fresh encounter with God, for a fresh filling of His Holy Spirit.

Conclusion: Pray the powerful word of God.



David Guzik

Study Guide for Philippians 2

HUMBLE LIVING IN LIGHT OF JESUS' HUMBLE EXAMPLE

A. How Paul wants the Philippians to live with each other.

1. (Philippians 2:1) The basis of Paul's exhortation to the Philippians.

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

a. **Therefore:** This draws back to what Paul has built on in [Philippians 1:27-30](#), telling the Philippians how to stand strong for the Lord against external conflicts. Now he tells them how to act against internal conflicts in the body of Christ.

b. **If there is any:** This introduces the basis for Paul's exhortation to unity, humility and love among believers. The idea is that if the Philippian Christians have received the things he mentions, then they have a responsibility to do what he is about to describe.

i. "It is extremely difficult to give the force of these expressions; they contain a torrent of most affecting eloquence; the apostle pouring out his whole heart to a people whom with all his heart he loved, and who were worthy of the love even of an apostle." (Clarke)

c. **If there is any consolation in Christ:** Paul asked this as a rhetorical question, knowing of course that there was great consolation in Christ. Every Christian should know the consolation of Christ.

i. [Luke 2:25](#) says that one of the titles for Jesus as the Messiah is the Consolation of Israel. Paul could say in [2 Corinthians 1:5](#), *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ*. In [2 Thessalonians 2:16](#), Paul says that God has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace. Of course there is consolation in Christ!

ii. "The Holy Spirit consoles, but Christ is the consolation. If I may use the figure, the Holy Spirit is the Physician, but Christ is the medicine." (Spurgeon)

d. **If there is any... comfort of love:** This is Paul's second rhetorical question in this passage, affirming the great comfort of love. Every Christian should know what it is to have Jesus give him the comfort of love.

i. [2 Corinthians 1:3](#) says that God is the God of all comfort. There is no way He cannot comfort us and no circumstance beyond His comfort. But this is more than comfort; this is the comfort of love.

ii. The word **comfort** in this passage is the ancient Greek word **paraklesis**. The idea behind this word for **comfort** in the New Testament is always more than soothing sympathy. It has the idea of strengthening, of helping, of making strong. The idea behind this word is communicated by the Latin word for **comfort** (*fortis*), which also means “brave.” The love of God in our life makes us strong and makes us brave. Of course there is **comfort of love**!

e. **If there is any... fellowship of the Spirit**: This is Paul’s third rhetorical question in this context. Paul knew and valued the **fellowship of the Spirit**, and every Christian should know what it is to have the **fellowship of the Spirit**.

i. **Fellowship** is the ancient Greek word **kononia**. It means the sharing of things in common. We share life with the Spirit of God that we never knew before. The Holy Spirit fills and guides and moves in our lives in a powerful and precious way. Of course there is **fellowship of the Spirit**!

ii. “The Lord doth usually and graciously water the holy fellowship of his people with the dews of many sweet and glorious refreshings; so that they have a very heaven upon earth.”
(Trapp)

f. **If there is any... affection and mercy**: Paul’s final rhetorical question assumes that every Christian knows something of the **affection** of God and of the **mercy** of God.

i. Paul mentioned these things in a manner that suggests to us that they should all be obvious parts of the Christian’s experience. To make his rhetorical point, he could have just as easily said, “If water is wet, if fire is hot, if rocks are hard,” and so forth.

ii. Each of these gifts — **consolation in Christ**, **comfort of love**, **fellowship of the Spirit**, **affection and mercy** — are communicated to us both in a direct, spiritual way from Jesus, and from Jesus *through His people*. But there isn’t any doubt that these are real gifts for Christians to really experience.

2. **(Philippians 2:2-4)** The specifics of Paul’s exhortation to the Philippians regarding love and humility among believers.

Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

a. **Fulfill my joy**: This speaks of a personal request. Part of the reason Paul wanted the Philippians to take heed to his word was because they should know that it would make the founding apostle of their church happy.

b. **By being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind**: These together all speak of the same idea: a deep, abiding, internal unity among the Philippians.

i. This unity is the goal. What follows in [Philippians 2:3-4](#) are descriptions of how to achieve and practice the unity mentioned here in [Philippians 2:2](#).

c. **Let nothing be done through selfish ambition**: This is the first step to this kind of unity. In the flesh, we are often motivated by **selfish ambition** or **conceit**. Much of what we do is not done out of love for others, but out of our own desire for “advancement” or “promotion” (**selfish ambition**).

i. Paul found it important to say **selfish ambition**. Not all ambition is **selfish** ambition, and there is a **good ambition** to glorify God and serve Him with everything we have.

d. **Let nothing be done through... conceit**: This is the second step to this kind of unity. **Conceit** is thinking too highly of one’s self, of having an excessive self-interest and self-preoccupation. It could be more literally translated “empty glory.”

i. A dictionary definition of **conceit** is “An excessively favorable opinion of one’s own ability, importance, wit,” and so forth. When we live with the feeling that we are so important, or so able, or so talented, we are out of God’s will. We are working against the unity Paul pleaded with the Philippians and all Christians to have.

e. **In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself**: This third step to the kind of unity described in [Philippians 2:2](#) is completely contradictory to the attitude of the world, because **lowliness of mind** is about the least attractive thing to the thinking of this world.

i. The ancient Greeks considered **lowliness of mind** to be a fault, not a virtue. “The pagan and the secular idea of manhood is self-assertiveness, imposing one’s will on others; when anyone stooped to others he did so only under compulsion, hence his action was ignominious [disgraceful]. The Christian ethical idea of humility could not be reached by the secular mind; it lacked the spiritual soil.” (Lenski)

ii. “In pagan writers generally, the word had a bad meaning, ‘abject, grovelling.’ But when it comes into the New Testament, its meaning is ennobled.” (Wuest)

iii. “The apostle knew that, to create concord, you need first to beget lowliness of mind. Men do not quarrel when their ambitions have come to an end.” (Spurgeon)

f. **Esteem others better than himself**: This rebukes much of the culture’s concept of self-esteem. The Bible knows nothing of the idea that we should — and must — carry with us an attitude of confident superiority in every situation, and knows nothing of the idea that this is the foundation for a healthy human personality.

- i. While we recognize the intrinsic value of every human life, we can't deny that the low self-esteem of some is justified, and based in reality. When we are in rebellion against God, it is fitting for us to have a low self-esteem.
- ii. As we esteem others better, we will naturally have a concern for their needs and concerns. This sort of outward looking mentality naturally leads to a unity among the people of God.
- iii. If I consider you above me and you consider me above you, then a marvelous thing happens: we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on.

g. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others: Here the thought is completed. As we put away our selfish ambitions, our conceit, and our tendencies to be high-minded and self-absorbed, we will naturally have a greater concern for the interests and needs of others.

- i. Paul doesn't tell us that it is wrong to look out for our own interests, but that we should not only look out for our own interests.

B. Jesus, the ultimate example of humility.

Many regard Philippians 2:5-11 as a hymn of the early church that Paul incorporated into his letter. Some commentators go so far as to suggest stanza and verse arrangements for the "hymn." This is possible, but not a necessary conclusion; Paul was capable of such inspired, poetic writing himself (example: 1 Corinthians 13). For reasons which we will examine later, this passage is often known as the kenosis passage.

1. (Philippians 2:5) Paul applies the lesson before he states it.

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

- a. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Paul will, in wonderful detail, describe for us the mind of Jesus in the following verses. But here, before he describes the mind of Jesus, he tells us what we must do with the information.

- i. "Paul does not give all that is in the mind of Christ in these verses. He selects those qualities of our Lord which fit the needs of the Philippians at that moment... This lack of unity among the Philippian saints became the occasion for perhaps the greatest Christological passage in the New Testament that sounds the depths of the incarnation." (Wuest)

b. **Let this mind be in you**: It is all too easy for us to read the following description of Jesus and admire it from a distance. God wants us to be awed by it, but also to see it as something that we must enter into and imitate. **Let this mind** means that it is something that we have **choice** about.

i. Remember also that this **mind** is something granted to us by God. [1 Corinthians 2:16](#) says that *we have the mind of Christ*. But **let this mind** shows us that it is also something we must **choose** to walk in. You have to **let** it be so.

2. ([Philippians 2:6a](#)) Jesus was **in the form of God**.

Who, being in the form of God,

a. **In the form of God**: This describes Jesus' pre-incarnate existence. We must remind ourselves that Jesus did not begin His existence in the manger at Bethlehem, but is eternal God.

b. **Being**: This is from the ancient Greek verb *huparchein*, which "describes that which a man is in his very essence and which cannot be changed. It describes that part of a man which, in any circumstances, remains the same." (Barclay)

i. "Paul, by the use of the Greek word translated 'being,' informs his Greek readers that our Lord's possession of the divine essence did not cease to be a fact when He came to earth to assume human form... *This word alone is enough to refute the claim of Modernism that our Lord emptied Himself of His Deity when He became Man.*" (Wuest)

c. **Form**: This translates the ancient Greek word *morphe*. It "always signifies a form which truly and fully expresses the being which underlies it... the words mean 'the being on an equality with God.'" (Kennedy)

i. "*Morphe* is the essential form which never alters; *schema* is the outward form which changes from time to time and from circumstance to circumstance." (Barclay)

ii. "'God' has a form, and 'Jesus Christ' exists in this form of God." (Lenski)

iii. Wuest explains that the ancient Greek word translated **form** is very difficult to translate. When we use the word **form**, we think of the *shape* of something; but the ancient Greek word had none of that idea. It is more the idea of a *mode* or an *essence*; it is the essential nature of God, without implying a physical shape or image. "Thus the Greek word for 'form' refers to that outward expression which a person gives of his inmost nature."

3. ([Philippians 2:6b](#)) Jesus did not cling to the privileges of deity.

Did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

a. **Did not consider it robbery**: The ancient Greek in this phrase has the idea of something being grasped or clung to. Jesus did not cling to the prerogatives or privileges of deity.

i. Wuest defines the ancient Greek word translated **robbery** as, “A treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards.”

b. **To be equal with God**: It wasn’t that Jesus was trying to **achieve** equality with the Father. He **had it**, and chose not to cling to it. Jesus’ divine nature was not something He had to seek for or acquire, but it was His already.

i. Lightfoot wrote that it was not “a prize which must not slip from His grasp, a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards.” Jesus was willing to let go of some of the prerogatives of deity to become a man.

4. (**Philippians 2:7**) Jesus made Himself of **no reputation**.

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

a. **But made Himself of no reputation**: The more common (and well-known) translation of this is that *He emptied Himself*. From the ancient Greek word **emptied** (**kenosis**) came the idea that Jesus’ incarnation was essentially a self-emptying.

i. We must carefully think about what Jesus **emptied** Himself of. Paul will tell us plainly in the following verses, but we must take care that we do not think that Jesus emptied Himself of His deity in any way.

ii. Some develop the **kenotic theory** of the incarnation to the point where they insist that Jesus divested Himself of many of the attributes of deity — such as omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and even suffered the elimination of His own divine self-consciousness. Yet Jesus did not (and **could** not) become “less God” in the incarnation. No deity was **subtracted** (though he did renounce some of the rights of deity); rather humanity was **added** to His nature.

iii. “During his humiliation, as God and equal with the Father, was no encroachment on the Divine prerogative; for, as he had an **equality** of **nature**, he had an **equality** of **rights**.” (Clarke)

iv. “His condescension was free, and unconstrained with the consent of his Father... the Son of the Highest can, at his own pleasure, show or eclipse his own glorious brightness, abate or let out his fullness, exalt or abase himself in respect of us.” (Poole)

v. “Even as a king, by laying aside the tokens of his royalty, and putting on the habit of a merchant, when all the while he ceaseth not to be a king, or the highest in his own dominions.” (Poole)

b. **Taking the form of a bondservant**: This describes how Jesus emptied Himself. Though he took **the form of a bondservant**, Jesus did not empty Himself of His deity, or of any of His attributes, or of His equality with God. He emptied Himself into the form of a **bondservant**, not merely the form of a man.

i. **Taking** (the ancient Greek word *labon*) does not imply an exchange, but an addition.

c. **Coming in the likeness of men**: This further describes how Jesus emptied Himself. We can think of someone who is a servant, but not in the **likeness of men**. Angels are servants, but not in the **likeness of men**. In fairy tales, Aladdin's genie was a servant, but not in the **likeness of men**.

i. The word for **likeness** here may refer to merely the outward form of something. While Jesus did have the outward form of humanity, the outward form reflected His true humanity, which was added to His deity.

ii. "It was a likeness, but a real likeness, no mere phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics held." (Robertson)

5. ([Philippians 2:8](#)) The extent of Jesus' self-emptying.

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.

a. **He humbled Himself and became obedient**: Jesus **humbled Himself** when He **became obedient**. This was something that Jesus could only experience by coming down from the throne of heaven and becoming a man. When God sits enthroned in heaven's glory, there is no one He obeys. Jesus had to leave heaven's glory and be **found in appearance as a man** in order to become **obedient**.

i. One key to Jesus' obedience on earth was the endurance of suffering. This again was something He could only learn by experience after the incarnation. As it is written: *though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered* ([Hebrews 5:8](#)).

ii. Indeed, **He humbled Himself**.

- He was humble in that he took the form of a man, and not a more glorious creature like an angel.
- He was humble in that He was born into an obscure, oppressed place.
- He was humble in that He was born into poverty among a despised people.
- He was humble in that He was born as a child instead of appearing as a man.
- He was humble in submitting to the obedience appropriate to a child in a household.

- He was humble in learning and practicing a trade — and a humble trade of a builder.
- He was humble in the long wait until He launched out into public ministry.
- He was humble in the companions and disciples He chose.
- He was humble in the audience He appealed to and the way He taught.
- He was humble in the temptations He allowed and endured.
- He was humble in the weakness, hunger, thirst, and tiredness He endured.
- He was humble in His total obedience to His Heavenly Father.
- He was humble in His submission to the Holy Spirit.
- He was humble in choosing and submitting to the death of the cross.
- He was humble in the agony of His death.
- He was humble in the shame, mocking, and public humiliation of His death.
- He was humble in enduring the spiritual agony of His sacrifice on the cross.

iii. We can imagine that it was possible for the Son of God to become man and pay for the sins of the world without this great humiliation. He might have added the humanity of a 33-year old man to his deity. He might have appeared before man only in His transfigured glory, and taught men what they needed to hear from Him. He might have suffered for the sins of man in a hidden place of the earth far from the eyes of man, or on the dark side of the moon for that matter. Yet He did not; **He humbled Himself**, and did it for the surpassing greatness of our salvation and His work for us.

b. **To the point of death, even the death of the cross**: This states the extent of Jesus' humility and obedience.

- Crucifixion was such a shameful death that it was not permitted for Roman citizens (such as the people of Philippi). A victim of crucifixion was considered by the Jews to be particularly cursed by God ([Deuteronomy 21:23](#) and [Galatians 3:13](#)).
- Robertson called the **death of the cross** "The bottom rung in the ladder from the Throne of God. Jesus came all the way down to the most despised death of all, a condemned criminal on the accursed cross."

iii. **Even the death of the cross** shows that there is no limit to what God will do to demonstrate His love and saving power to man; this was and forever will be the ultimate. “What must sin have been in the sight of God, when it required such abasement in Jesus Christ to make an atonement for it, and undo its influence and malignity!” (Clarke)

iv. “The lower he stoops to save us, the higher we ought to lift him in our adoring reverence. Blessed be his name, he stoops, and stoops, and stoops, and, when he reaches our level, and becomes man, he still stoops, and stoops, and stoops lower and deeper yet.” (Spurgeon)

c. **Even the death of the cross**: All of this was a great display of the power of Jesus. Remember that because of Paul’s past experience among the Philippians, they were tempted to think of God’s power as being expressed only in exaltation and deliverance and not in terms of glorifying God through humble service and endurance.

i. In this, Paul reminded the Philippians that his current place of humble circumstances (his Roman imprisonment) could still show forth the glory and power of God, even as Jesus did in His humility.

The Bible Says Philippians 2:1-4 Meaning

Paul now admonishes the Philippian believers toward being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. The one purpose that God desires the Philippians to have is to follow the same basic approach to life that Jesus took. The approach Jesus took that Paul desires the Philippians to take is:

1. To view themselves as servants to a great mission, as did Jesus
2. To not view anything God asks them to do as being beneath them, but do whatever God asks
3. To be a servant of God, fully humbling themselves
4. To empty themselves of self-seeking purposes, and instead seek to fully serve the mission God gave them

What Paul will assert, paradoxically, is that if believers do these things, they will gain the most from life, even sharing the same amazing reward Jesus gained. This fits the paradox Jesus gave, that the way to gain our lives is to lay them down ([Matthew 16:24-25](#)).

Paul asks his Philippian brothers and sisters in Christ to make my joy complete by being of the same mind. This also seems paradoxical for Paul to ask them to make my joy complete, since this entire section focuses on serving others. However, it is consistent, because Paul will argue that serving others is completely in our ultimate, enlightened self-interest. Paul will tell us in the first half of Chapter 2 some specific steps to take in order to fulfill Jesus' admonition to take up our cross daily, and to lay down our lives that our lives might be found. He will argue that these difficult steps are actually in our great (longterm) self-interest. This fits with Jesus' admonition from Matthew:

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"

(Matthew 16:24-25)

In Chapter 4, it will become clear that the Philippians took specific interest in Paul's ministry, and had provided financial support for him throughout his ministry. In fact, the impetus for Paul to write this letter might have been his receipt of a financial donation to help him pay his expenses, including the house he stayed in while in Rome (Philippians 4:10).

Paul will express gratitude for the financial gift. But he will be even more enthusiastic because of the eternal reward he believes the Philippians will receive for their participation in the gospel (Philippians 4:17). This is because he loves the Philippians, and seeks their best. And Paul believes it is in his best interest to seek their best interest.

Chapter 2 will focus on choosing a perspective of life. God granted moral choice to humans. That is part of how they are made in His image (Genesis 1:26; 2:17). It can be observed that there are three primary areas of stewardship for choices each person manages. We all choose who or what to trust. We all choose what actions to take, or not take. And we all choose a perspective, how to look at things. Many choose a perspective without actually being aware they have done so. Paul is very specific here in exhorting his beloved Philippian partners in the gospel to be very intentional in choosing a perspective. The perspective Paul desires us to choose is the same perspective that Jesus chose. Jesus chose to view His best interest to be fully obeying His Father, and doing something that would from all appearances be undesirable and beneath His station.

It appears the Philippian believers sought to support Paul without being asked (4:15-16). They now have done so again, sending funds to support him while in prison. This shows particular love, because Paul is under house arrest in Rome, pending the hearing of his appeal before Caesar (Acts 28:18-19). This could put them in jeopardy: guilt by association. They apparently are fearless in this

matter. Perhaps the influence of the retired Roman soldiers within the number of Philippian believers translated courage from their former life into this new arena of spiritual warfare.

This fearless and faithful support by the Philippians is part of the reason Paul considers them to be full participants and partakers with him in the ministry of the gospel (1:5,7).

Paul now tells them how they can best minister to Paul: by becoming like Christ.

Paul introduces some ways to make his joy complete:

- Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ,
 - The Philippians can encourage Paul, he will tell them how.
- if there is any consolation of love,
 - The Philippians can love Paul, he will tell them how.
- if there is any fellowship of the Spirit,
 - The Philippians can fellowship with Paul fully, in the Spirit, Paul will tell them how.
- if any affection and compassion
 - The Philippians can have affection for Paul, in his imprisoned state, and have compassion on Paul in his distress; Paul will tell them how.

Paul tells the Philippians that they can make his joy complete, which will also accomplish conveying to him affection, compassion, fellowship, love, and encouragement. And this is how the Philippians can accomplish all that for Paul: by being of the same mind.

The phrase same mind is a translation of the Greek word "phroneo," which occurs in some form ten different times in this letter. It means "to adopt a mindset" of some kind. Paul says his joy can be made complete by the Philippians adopting a unified mindset toward life. That mindset, as will be explained shortly, is a mindset of radical obedience to Christ.

There is an implied question by the Philippians: "Paul, how can we help you? How can we love, encourage, and partner with you?" Paul answers, "The best way to help me is to be unified in purpose, to choose a common mindset of radical obedience in the Spirit." The Philippians best help Paul when they serve Christ in two ways a) by adopting Jesus' attitude/perspective and b) by obeying His commands.

He expands the purpose of unity: to maintaining the same love. Paul desires them to maintain the same love one to another. Jesus chose to love humanity, and give the ultimate sacrifice of laying down His own life, out of obedience to His Father. Jesus chose this mindset ("phroneo"). Paul wants

the Philippians to also choose that mindset. He desires them to be *united in spirit, intent on one purpose*. That *one purpose* will be to walk as Jesus walked. To constantly seek to serve the best interest of others. To do all God asks of them, knowing that (in spite of appearances) that is the very best path for themselves. It is a radical expression of faith that God is benevolent, and only asks us to do that which is best for us (even when that appears impossible).

Paul exhorts them to *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit*. We are of course all born with a bent to *selfishness*. We are oriented toward ourselves. This is recognized in the second greatest commandment, to love others as we love ourselves ([Leviticus 19:18](#); [Matthew 22:39](#)). The presumption in this command is that we already love ourselves. If we fail to recognize there is something greater than ourselves, and only follow our own way, it simply becomes *empty conceit*. Paradoxically, when we recognize that God knows what is in our best interest better than we know for ourselves, and then follow His ways, it actually ends up serving our true self-interest.

The proper perspective to choose is to have *humility of mind*. This is the opposite of *selfishness or empty conceit*. We serve our true self-interest when we obey the commands of Jesus, and *regard one another as more important than* ourselves. This does not mean that we no longer love ourselves; the command to "love others as you love yourself" still functions fully. Rather, this means that we shift focus off ourselves and onto others. Accordingly, we will then *not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others*. The exercise here seems to be to make a conscious shift away from "what do I want?" and to replace it with "what is in the best interest of the people with me?"

This seems to be a practical application of choice of attitude, in order to align our mindset as Jesus instructed. During His earthly ministry, Jesus told the disciples: "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all" ([Mark 9:35](#)).

Paul here is actually telling his beloved Philippian partners-in-the-gospel the way to be first. To be great. The way to the greatest reward. The path to our truest self-interest. In doing so he is instructing all believers. The way to true greatness is through service to others. This requires *humility of mind*. A single Greek word is translated *humility of mind*. The root of the "humility" part of that word is also found in 1 Peter, which states:

"You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the

proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."

[\(1 Peter 5:5-7\)](#)

The all-caps part of [1 Peter 5:5-7](#) appears to be a quote from [Proverbs 3:34](#) from the Old Testament. So this is a concept that is sprinkled throughout scripture. The Hebrew word in [Proverbs 3](#) translated "humble" is also translated "humble" in [Numbers 12:3](#), which states that Moses was the most humble man in all the earth. If we study Moses' traits, it becomes apparent that one of the core attributes of humility (if not the very essence) is the ability to see reality as it is. To set aside self-justification and embrace truth. One of the great truths is that we are very limited creatures who have been given the great gift of making moral choices. Paul exhorts us to recognize this reality, and choose to trust God, who has unlimited wisdom, rather than our own limited capability.

It is worth noting that humbling oneself is an active decision. It involves a recognition of God's sovereignty, along with faith that He knows what is in our best interest. If God allows something into our lives, He will somehow turn that to our best. In order to do this, we must set aside self. To rely on self rather than God is empty conceit. It is empty because there is no substance there.

It is worth further noting that if we choose to make the deliberate decision to have humility of mind, and trust that God's ways are for our best, God will reward that greatly. As the Apostle Peter stated, God will "exalt you at the proper time." When we operate from selfishness or empty conceit we will always demand that we be exalted in the way we demand and at the time we demand. This will result in us being brought low.

In the next section Paul will expand significantly on the subject of how to develop the kind of attitude he exhorts believers to adopt. It is the same attitude that Jesus chose. Each of us is given the choice of how to look at things, what perspective to choose, what attitude to adopt. How we steward that choice is at the root of who we become. Paul exhorts those whom he loves to make this choice wisely.

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Chuck Smith
Verse by Verse Study on Philippians 2 (C2000)

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if [there is] any comfort of love, if [there is] any fellowship of the Spirit, if [there is] any bowels [compassion] and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind ([Phl 2:1-2](#)).

And so Paul's appeal to them now, a very powerful appeal: if there is any consolation in Christ, if there is any comfort in love, and surely there is consolation in Christ, how we are consoled by Him, how we are comforted in the love, and especially the time of death, the fellowship in the Spirit, the compassion and the mercy fulfill my joy. As John said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that the children walk in truth" ([3 John 4](#)). Fulfill my joy, that you be likeminded having the same love, being of one accord and one mind.

And let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves ([Phl 2:3](#)).

You want to be great in God's kingdom? Learn to be the servant.

It is interesting to me, how that these words of Paul are so often disregarded by the church. I have shared with you before how my break came with the denomination, over the fact that they announced to the pastors that competition was carnal motivation, but we must realize that the majority of the people we minister to are carnal, and thus, have to be carnally motivated. So we have to use competition to motivate them. Well, competition is striving, because we were to call another pastor and challenge his church to an attendance contest. "We are going to strive with you to see who can have the largest attendance." And then the church that lost was going to have to treat the church that won to a dinner. And the church that won was going to be honored. You know, "We want to be first so we can be honored." Vainglory and strife, or striving for vainglory. And how many times, that is the motive that is being used with people within the church: get them into competition, get them into striving, and get them into vainglory. "We are going to put the names up here on the wall. In each windowpane we are going to inscribe your name. We are going to put stained glass in. The Lord has told me we should have stained glass windows, and you know, you can buy your window and put your name or the name of your loved one in a window." And everybody that comes, as they look down the window, they will see your name. Vainglory.

Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory. Those are wrong motivations for serving God. But in lowliness of mind, just esteem others better than yourself.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others [or the needs of others]([Phl 2:4](#)).

Don't just look at your own needs, but look at the needs of others around you.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ([Phl 2:5](#)):

And God minister to us now by Your Spirit, because we are treading in the Holy of Holies. We are getting down to the heart now of the whole issue. The issue of Christianity: my attitudes, my attitudes toward myself and my attitudes towards others. What is the mental attitude that I have towards myself? What is my mental attitude towards others? Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

"Do you know what he had the nerve to ask me to do? I told him I wanted to serve the Lord, and Romaine gave me a broom and told me to sweep the sidewalk. I hire people to sweep my sidewalks. Doesn't he know who I am? How much I have contributed to the church?" Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery [something to be grasped] to be equal with God ([Phl 2:6](#)):

He didn't grasp, have to grasp equality with God; He was with God. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God" ([John 1:1](#)). So being in the form of God, and not something to be grasped to be equal with God.

Now you talk about, "Hey, don't they know who I am? Don't they know how important I am? They didn't even offer to carry my suitcase. Don't they know?" Who, being in the form of God, and thought it not something to be grasped to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation [or in the Greek, emptied Himself], and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ([Phl 2:7](#)):

Well, we see now the steps downward as He emptied Himself: starting with God, equal with God, and yet, He emptied Himself and He came in the form of a servant, and was made like men.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ([Phl 2:8](#)).

And so, from glory and equality with God to that cruel Roman cross, hanging there with the jeers and the anger of the crowd, despised and rejected by man. What a tremendous downward, I mean from the highest height, down to death on a cross, surrounded by murderers. That tremendous plunge Jesus was willing to take for you. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him ([Phl 2:9](#)),

Now we see the steps out. For God said, "I will not leave your soul in hell, neither will I allow the Holy One to see corruption" ([Psalm 16:10](#)). And God has highly exalted Him.

and [He has] given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father ([Phl 2:9-11](#)).

So from the glory to the glory, but the cross in between. He emptied Himself. Now let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. That willingness to set aside what you are, to become a servant to others. Not esteeming yourself more highly than you should, just considering yourself privileged to be a servant of Jesus Christ. "Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up" ([James 4:10](#)). Christ the example, humbling Himself, but wherefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, Jehoshua, every knee will one day is going to bow, every tongue one day is going to confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord.

Now, you may not want to make that confession now. You may say that you are the lord of your own life. "I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul. My head is bloody but unbowed." One day you are going to confess Jesus Christ is the Lord. Those people who speak so despairingly of Him now, those people who still mock His name, those who use His name so carelessly in their profanity, those who have spoken out so adversely against Him, one day they too shall bow their knee, and they shall confess Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The problem is that in that day their confession will not be unto salvation. You see, Paul tells us that if we confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and believe in our hearts that God has raised Him from the dead, we will be saved, for with the mouth man confesses unto salvation. But that will not be so in that day, the confession will not be to salvation. It will be of condemnation of themselves. "Yes, He is Lord. I was wrong in rejecting Him as Lord of my life."

Matthew Henry Commentary on Philippians 2

Chapter 2

The apostle proceeds to further exhortations to several duties, to be like-minded, and lowly-minded, which he presses from the example of Christ ([v. 1-11](#)), to be diligent and serious in the Christian course ([v. 12, 13](#)), and to adorn their Christian profession by several suitable graces ([v. 14-18](#)). He then concludes with particular notice and commendation of two good ministers, Timothy and Epaphroditus, whom he designed to send to them ([v. 19-30](#)).

[Phl 2:1-11](#)

The apostle proceeds in this chapter where he left off in the last, with further exhortations to Christian duties. He presses them largely to like-mindedness and lowly-mindedness, in conformity to the example of the Lord Jesus, the great pattern of humility and love. Here we may observe,

- I. The great gospel precept passed upon us; that is, to love one another. This is the law of Christ's kingdom, the lesson of his school, the livery of his family. This he represents ([v. 2](#)) by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. We are of a like mind when we have the same love. Christians should be one in affection, whether they can be one in apprehension or no. This is always in their power, and always their duty, and is the likeliest way to bring them nearer in judgment. Having the same love. Observe, The same love that we are required to express to others, others are bound to express to us. Christian love ought to be mutual love. Love, and you shall be loved. Being of one accord, and of one mind; not crossing and thwarting, or driving on separate interests, but unanimously agreeing in the great things of God and keeping the unity of the Spirit in other differences. Here observe,
 - 1. The pathetic pressing of the duty. He is very importunate with them, knowing what an evidence it is of our sincerity, and what a means of the preservation and edification of the body of Christ. The inducements to brotherly love are these:-
 - (1.) "If there is any consolation in Christ. Have you experienced consolation in Christ? Evidence that experience by loving one another." The sweetness we have found in the doctrine of Christ should sweeten our spirits. Do we expect consolation in Christ? If we would not be disappointed, we must love one another. If we have not consolation in Christ, where else can we expect it? Those who have an interest in Christ have consolation in him, strong and everlasting consolation ([Heb. 6:18](#); [2 Th. 2:16](#)), and therefore ought to love one another.
 - (2.) "Comfort of love." If there is any comfort in Christian love, in God's love to you, in your love to God, or in your brethren's love to us, in consideration of all this, be you like-minded. If you have ever found that comfort, if you would find it, if you indeed believe that the grace of love is a comfortable grace, abound in it."
 - (3.) "Fellowship of the Spirit." If there is such a thing as communion with God and Christ by the Spirit, such a thing as the communion of saints, by virtue of their being animated and actuated by one and the same Spirit, be you like-minded; for Christian love and like-mindedness will preserve to us our communion with God and with one another."
 - (4.) "Any bowels and mercies," in God and Christ, towards you. If you expect the benefit of God's compassions to yourselves, be you compassionate one to another. If there is such a thing as mercy to be found among the followers of Christ, if all who are sanctified have a disposition to holy pity, make it appear this way." How cogent are these arguments! One would think them enough to tame the most fierce, and mollify the hardest, heart.
 - (5.) Another argument he insinuates is the comfort it would be to him: Fulfil you my joy. It is the joy of ministers to see people like-minded and living in love. He had been instrumental in bringing them to the grace of Christ and the love of God. "Now," says he, "if you have found any benefit by your

participation of the gospel of Christ, if you have any comfort in it, or advantage by it, fulfil the joy of your poor minister, who preached the gospel to you."

- 2. He proposes some means to promote it.

- (1.) Do nothing through strife and vain glory, v. 3. There is no greater enemy to Christian love than pride and passion. If we do things in contradiction to our brethren, this is doing them through strife; if we do them through ostentation of ourselves, this is doing them through vain-glory: both are destructive of Christian love and kindle unchristian heats. Christ came to slay all enmities; therefore let there not be among Christians a spirit of opposition. Christ came to humble us, and therefore let there not be among us a spirit of pride.
- (2.) We must esteem others in lowliness of mind better than ourselves, be severe upon our own faults and charitable in our judgments of others, be quick in observing our own defects and infirmities, but ready to overlook and make favourable allowances for the defects of others. We must esteem the good which is in others above that which is in ourselves; for we best know our own unworthiness and imperfections.
- (3.) We must interest ourselves in the concerns of others, not in a way of curiosity and censoriousness, or as busy-bodies in other men's matters, but in Christian love and sympathy: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others, v. 4. A selfish spirit is destructive of Christian love. We must be concerned not only for our own credit, and ease, and safety, but for those of others also; and rejoice in the prosperity of others as truly as in our own. We must love our neighbour as ourselves, and make his case our own.
- II. Here is a gospel pattern proposed to our imitation, and that is the example of our Lord Jesus Christ: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, v. 5. Observe, 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 have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his, Rom. 8:9. Now what was the mind of Christ? He was eminently humble, and this is what we are peculiarly to learn of him. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, Mt. 11:29. If we were lowly-minded, we should be like-minded; and, if we were like Christ, we should be lowly-minded. 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, and that we might follow his steps. Now here we have the two natures and the two states of our Lord Jesus. It is observable that the apostle, having occasion to mention the Lord Jesus, and the mind which was in him, takes the hint to enlarge upon his person, and to give a particular description of him. It is a pleasing subject, and a gospel minister needs not think himself out of the way when he is upon it; any fit occasion should be readily taken.

- 1. Here are the two natures of Christ: his divine nature and his human nature.

- (1.) Here is his divine nature: *Who being in the form of God* (v. 6), partaking of the divine nature, as the eternal and only begotten Son of God. This agrees with *Jn. 1:1*, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God*; it is of the same import with being the *image of the invisible* God (Col. 1:15), and the *brightness of his glory, and express image of his person*, *Heb. 1:3*. *He thought it no robbery to be equal with God*; did not think himself guilty of any invasion of what did not belong to him, or assuming another's right. He said, *I and my Father are one*, *Jn. 10:30*. It is the highest degree of robbery for any mere man or mere creature to pretend to be equal with God, or profess himself *one with the Father*. This is for a man to rob God, not in tithes and offerings, but of the rights of his Godhead, *Mal. 3:8*. Some understand *being in the form of God*—*en morpheu Theou hyparchon*, of his appearance in a divine majestic glory to the patriarchs, and the Jews, under the Old Testament, which was often called the *glory*, and the *Shechinah*. The word is used in such a sense by the Septuagint and in the New Testament. *He appeared to the two disciples, en hetera morpheu—in another form*, *Mk. 16:12*. *Metemorphoutheu—he was transfigured* before them, *Mt. 17:2*. And *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*; he did not greedily *catch at*, nor covet and affect to appear in that glory; he laid aside the majesty of his former appearance while he was here on earth, which is supposed to be the sense of the peculiar expression, *ouk harpagmon heugeusato*. Vid. *Bishop Bull's Def.* cap. 2 sect. 4 et alibi, and *Whitby* in loc.
- (2.) His human nature: He was *made in the likeness of men*, and *found in fashion as a man*. He was really and truly man, *took part of our flesh and blood*, appeared in the nature and habit of man. And he voluntarily assumed human nature; it was his own act, and by his own consent. We cannot say that our participation of the human nature is so. Herein he *emptied himself*, divested himself of the honours and glories of the upper world, and of his former appearance, to clothe himself with the rags of human nature. *He was in all things like to us*, *Heb. 2:17*.
- 2. Here are his two estates, of humiliation and exaltation.
 - (1.) His estate of humiliation. He not only took upon him the likeness and fashion of a man, but the *form of a servant*, that is, a man of mean estate. He was not only God's servant whom he had chosen, but he came to minister to men, and was among them as one who serveth in a mean and servile state. One would think that the Lord Jesus, if he would be a man, should have been a prince, and appeared in splendour. But quite the contrary: *He took upon him the form of a servant*. He was brought up meanly, probably working with his supposed father at his trade. His whole life was a life of humiliation, meanness, poverty, and disgrace; he had nowhere to lay his head, lived upon 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. But the lowest step of his humiliation was his dying the death of the cross. *He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross*. He not only suffered, but was actually and voluntarily obedient; he obeyed the law which he brought

himself under as Mediator, and by which he was obliged to die. *I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father,* [Jn. 10:18](#). And he was *made under the law,* [Gal. 4:4](#). There is an emphasis laid upon the manner of his dying, which had in it all the circumstances possible which are humbling: *Even the death of the cross,* 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 the nervous parts (the hands and feet) and hanging with all its weight upon the cross, -and the death of a malefactor and a slave, not of a free-man, -exposed as a public spectacle. Such was the condescension of the blessed Jesus.

- (2.) His exaltation: *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.* His exaltation was the reward of his humiliation. Because he humbled himself, God exalted him; and he *highly exalted him,* *hyperypsouse,* raised him to an exceeding height. He exalted his whole person, the human nature as well as the divine; for he is spoken of as being in the form of God as well as in the fashion of man. As it respects the divine nature, it could only be the recognizing of his rights, or the display and appearance of the *glory he had with the Father before the world was* ([Jn. 17:5](#)), not any new acquisition of glory; and so the Father himself is said to be exalted. But the proper exaltation was of his human nature, which alone seems to be capable of it, though in conjunction with the divine. His exaltation here is made to consist in honour and power. In honour; so *he had a name above every name,* a title of dignity above all the creatures, men and angels. And in power: *Every knee must bow to him.* The whole creation must be in subjection to him: *things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,* the inhabitants of heaven and earth, the living and the dead. *At the name of Jesus;* not at the sound of the word, but the authority of Jesus; all should pay a solemn homage. And that *every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord* -every nation and language should publicly own the universal empire of the exalted Redeemer, and that *all power in heaven and earth is given to him,* [Mt. 28:18](#). Observe the vast extent of the kingdom of Christ; it reaches to heaven and earth, and to all the creatures in each, to angels as well as men, and to the dead as well as the living. *To the glory of God the Father.* Observe, 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 honour the Son as they honour the Father,* [Jn. 5:23](#). Whatever respect is paid to Christ redounds to the honour of the Father. *He who receiveth me receiveth him who sent me,* [Mt. 10:40](#).

• Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary on Philippians 2

- The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians
- Commentary by A. R. FAUSSET
- CHAPTER 2

- [Phl 2:1-30](#). CONTINUED EXHORTATION: TO UNITY: TO HUMILITY AFTER CHRIST'S EXAMPLE, WHOSE GLORY FOLLOWED HIS HUMILIATION: TO EARNESTNESS IN SEEKING PERFECTION,

THAT THEY MAY BE HIS JOY IN THE DAY OF CHRIST: HIS JOYFUL READINESS TO BE OFFERED NOW BY DEATH, SO AS TO PROMOTE THEIR FAITH. HIS INTENTION TO SEND TIMOTHY: HIS SENDING EPAPHRODITUS MEANTIME.

- **1.** The "therefore" implies that he is here expanding on the exhortation ([Phl 1:27](#)), "In one Spirit, with one mind ([soul](#)).". He urges [four influencing motives](#) in this verse, to inculcate the four Christian duties corresponding respectively to them ([Phl 2:2](#)). "That ye be [like-minded](#), having the same [love](#), of [one accord](#), of one mind"; (1) "If there be (with you) [any consolation in Christ](#)," that is, any [consolation of which Christ is the source](#), leading you to wish [to console me](#) in my afflictions borne for Christ's sake, ye owe it to me to grant my request "that ye be like-minded" [CHRYSTOSTOM and ESTIUS]: (2) "If there be any comfort of (that is, flowing from) love," the adjunct of "consolation in Christ"; (3) "If any fellowship of (communion together as Christians, flowing from joint participation in) the Spirit" ([2Cr 13:14](#)). As [Pagans](#) meant literally those who were of one village, and [drank of one fountain](#), how much greater is the union which conjoins those who drink of the same Spirit! ([1Cr 12:4, 13](#)) [GROTIUS]: (4) "If any bowels (tender emotions) and mercies (compassions)," the adjuncts of "fellowship of the Spirit." The opposites of the two pairs, into which the four fall, are reprobated, [Phl 2:3, 4](#).
- **2. Fulfil**--that is, Make full. I have joy in you, [complete](#) it by that which is still wanting, namely, [unity](#) ([Phl 1:9](#)).
[likeminded](#)--literally, "that ye be of the same mind"; more general than the following "of one mind."
[having the same love](#)--equally disposed to love and be loved.
[being of one accord](#)--literally, "with united [souls](#)." This pairs with the following clause, thus, "With united souls, being of one mind"; as the former two also pair together, "That ye be likeminded, having the same love."
- **3. Let nothing be done**--The italicized words are not in the [Greek](#). Perhaps the ellipsis had better be supplied from the [Greek](#) ([Phl 2:2](#)), "[Thinking](#) nothing in the way of strife" (or rather, "factious intrigue," "self-seeking," see on JF & B for [Php 1:16](#)). It is the [thought](#) which characterizes the action as good or bad before God.
[lowliness of mind](#)--The [direct](#) relation of this grace is to God alone; it is the sense of dependence of the creature on the Creator as such, and it places all created beings in this respect on a level. The man "lowly of mind" as to his spiritual life is independent of men, and free from all slavish feeling, while sensible of his continual dependence on God. Still it INDIRECTLY affects his behavior toward his fellow men; for, conscious of his entire dependence on God for all his abilities, even as they are dependent on God for theirs, he will

not pride himself on his abilities, or exalt self in his conduct toward others ([Eph 4:2](#) [Col 3:12](#)) [NEANDER].

let each esteem--Translate as [Greek](#), "esteeming each other superior to [yourselves](#)."

Instead of fixing your eyes on those points in which you excel, fix them on those in which your neighbor excels you: this is true "humility."

- **4.** The oldest manuscripts read, "Not [looking each of you](#) (plural, [Greek](#)) on his own things (that is, not [having regard](#) solely to them), but [each of you](#) on the things of others" also. Compare [Phl 2:21](#); also Paul's own example ([Phl 1:24](#)).
- **5.** The oldest manuscripts read, "Have this mind in you," &c. He does not put forward himself (see on JF & B for [Php 2:4](#), and [Phl 1:24](#)) as an example, but Christ, THE ONE pre-eminently who sought not His own, but "humbled Himself" ([Phl 2:8](#)), first in taking on Him our nature, secondly, in humbling Himself further in that nature ([Rom 15:3](#)).
- **6.** Translate, "Who [subsisting](#) (or [existing](#), namely, originally: the [Greek](#) is not the simple substantive verb, 'to be') in the form of God (the divine [essence](#) is not meant: but the [external self-manifesting characteristics of God](#), the [form](#) shining forth from His glorious essence). The divine nature had infinite BEAUTY in itself, even without any creature contemplating that beauty: that beauty was 'the form of God'; as 'the [form](#) of a servant' ([Phl 2:7](#)), which is in contrasted opposition to it, takes for granted the [existence](#) of His human nature, so 'the form of God' takes for granted His divine nature [BENGEL], Compare [Jhn 5:37](#) [17:5](#) [Col 1:15](#), 'Who is the IMAGE of the invisible God' at a time [before](#) 'every creature,' [2Cr 4:4](#), [esteemed](#) (the same [Greek](#) verb as in [Phl 2:3](#)) His being [on an equality](#) with God no (act of) robbery" or [self-arrogation](#); claiming to one's self what does not belong to him. ELLICOTT, WAHL, and others have translated, "A [thing](#) to be grasped at," which would require the [Greek](#) to be [harpagma](#), whereas [harpagmos](#) means the [act](#) of seizing. So [harpagmos](#) means in the only other passage where it occurs, PLUTARCH [[On the Education of Children](#), 120]. The same insuperable objection lies against ALFORD'S translation, "He regarded not as [self-enrichment](#) (that is, an [opportunity for self-exaltation](#)) His equality with God." His argument is that the antithesis ([Phl 2:7](#)) requires it, "He used His equality with God as [an opportunity, not for self-exaltation](#), but for self-abasement, or [emptying Himself](#)." But the antithesis is not between His [being on an equality with God](#), and His [emptying Himself](#); for He never emptied Himself of the fulness of His Godhead, or His "BEING [on an equality with God](#)"; but between His being "in the FORM (that is, the outward glorious self-manifestation) of God," and His "taking on Him [the form of a servant](#)," whereby He in a great measure emptied Himself of His precedent "form," or outward self-manifesting glory as God. Not "looking on His own things" ([Phl 2:4](#)), He, though existing in the form of God, He esteemed it no robbery to be on an equality with God, yet made Himself of no reputation. "Being on an equality with God, is not

identical with subsisting in the form of God"; the latter expresses the external characteristics, majesty, and beauty of the Deity, which "He emptied Himself of," to assume "the form of a servant"; the former, "HIS BEING," or NATURE, His already existing STATE OF EQUALITY with God, both the Father and the Son having the same ESSENCE. A glimpse of Him "in the form of God," previous to His incarnation, was given to Moses ([Exd 24:10, 11](#)), Aaron, &c.

- 7. made himself of no reputation, and. . . and**--rather as the Greek, "emptied Himself, taking upon him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." The two latter clauses (there being no conjunctions, "and. . . and," in the Greek) expresses in what Christ's "emptying of Himself" consists, namely, in "taking the form of a servant" (see on JF & B for [Heb 10:5](#); compare [Exd 21:5, 6](#), and [Psa 40:6](#), proving that it was at the time when He assumed a body, He took "the form of a servant"), and in order to explain how He took "the form of a servant," there is added, by "being made in the likeness of men." His subjection to the law ([Luk 2:21](#) [Gal 4:4](#)) and to His parents ([Luk 2:51](#)), His low state as a carpenter, and carpenter's reputed son ([Mat 13:55](#) [Mar 6:3](#)), His betrayal for the price of a bond-servant ([Exd 21:32](#)), and slave-like death to relieve us from the slavery of sin and death, finally and chiefly, His servant-like dependence as man on God, while His divinity was not outwardly manifested ([Isa 49:3, 7](#)), are all marks of His "form as a servant." This proves: (1) He was in the form of a servant as soon as He was made man. (2) He was "in the form of God" before He was "in the form of a servant." (3) He did as really subsist in the divine nature, as in the form of a servant, or in the nature of man. For He was as much "in the form of God" as "in the form of a servant"; and was so in the form of God as "to be on an equality with God"; He therefore could have been none other than God; for God saith, "To whom will ye liken Me and make Me equal?" ([Isa 46:5](#)), [BISHOP PEARSON]. His emptying Himself presupposes His previous plenitude of Godhead ([Jhn 1:14](#) [Col 1:19](#) [2:9](#)). He remained full of this; yet He bore Himself as if He were empty.
- 8. being found in fashion as a man**--being already, by His "emptying Himself," in the form of a servant, or likeness of man ([Rom 8:3](#)), "He humbled Himself (still further by) becoming obedient even unto death (not as English Version, 'He humbled Himself and became,' &c.; the Greek has no 'and,' and has the participle, not the verb), and that the death of the cross." "Fashion" expresses that He had the outward guise, speech, and look. In [Phi 2:7](#), in the Greek, the emphasis is on Himself (which stands before the Greek verb), "He emptied Himself," His divine self, viewed in respect to what He had heretofore been; in [Phi 2:8](#) the emphasis is on "humbled" (which stands before the Greek "Himself"); He not only "emptied Himself" of His previous "form of God," but submitted to positive HUMILIATION. He "became obedient," namely, to God, as His "servant" ([Rom 5:19](#) [Hbr 5:8](#)). Therefore "God" is

said to "exalt" Him ([Phi 2:9](#)), even as it was God to whom He became voluntarily "obedient."
"Even unto death" expresses the climax of His obedience ([Jhn 10:18](#)).