

Finding Joy

A study of Paul's Letter to the Philippians

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5- *Finding Joy* by Being like Christ *Philippians 2:5-11*

Php 2:5-11 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Many times it is true that we become like those that we idolize or the ones who are our heroes. Years ago when Michael Jordan was the hero of many little boys there was a commercial who's jingle was, "Like Mike, I want to be like Mike."

When asked who our hero is what would be our answer? Would it be some star of Hollywood fame or some sports personality? Many might name their parents or some godly mentor as their hero's. Would we think of Christ as our hero? I believe that God would have us to consider at this time that we can find joy when we make Christ our model to live by.

I- Mind of Christ:

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

We touched just a bit on the mind of Christ in our last session. The NASB renders this verse as "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus."

Barnes Notes says, "The principle in the case is, that we are to make the Lord Jesus our model, and are in all respects to frame our lives, as far as possible, in accordance with this great example."

I often think of the battlefield of spiritual warfare that seems to so often be where the

battle is fought that being in our minds. Jesus told us in *Mar 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.* Now we can certainly state that Christ loved the Father perfectly as They were One.

Speaking of the warfare of the mind Paul stated in *Rom 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

I have discovered that many times the flesh get in our way of having the mind of Christ. We must continually bring our flesh under the control of the Christ like mind or as it says in *Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

When we can bring our mind under the subjection of the Holy Spirit of God, I submit that we will find the joy of the Lord. This runs contrary to popular opinion which says that we must look out for ourselves and place great emphasis on defending our rights and promoting our status in life. The worlds

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way of thinking is in some ways like the story of the fox and wolf.

It seems a fox was peering into a well from which people drew water by lowering an empty bucket, and pulling up the full one that was at the bottom. By accident the fox fell into the empty bucket and found itself at the bottom of the well. It made a lot of noise trying to get out. A wolf, hearing the noise, looked down and said to the fox, "What are you doing, my friend?" "I'm catching fish," was the sly answer; "Come down to help me." "How can I?" asked the wolf. "Jump into that bucket up there and you'll be down here in a moment." The foolish wolf obeyed, and because it was heavier than the fox it went down and the fox came up and started to run away. "Are you leaving me down here?" cried the wolf. But the fox answered slyly, "That's the way of the world, my friend; when one goes up, the other goes down."

A scary thought is what if Christ had only looked out for Himself. He would have never left heaven.

II- Equal With God:

As difficult as it is for us to imagine eternity in the future it is equally difficult for our finite minds to envision or even comprehend eternity in the past. Both are true but beyond our understanding.

When we begin to ponder this however we need to go back to the first verse chronologically in the Bible. ***Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

Christ is eternal just as the Father is eternal. Paul states in ***Php 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:***

Williams New Testament translates ***Philippians 2:6 Though He was existing in the nature of God, He did not think His being on an equality with God a thing to be selfishly grasped.***

Christ, who was God from eternity past, was equal with God because He is part of the one true God. The term "form" of God is the Greek word *Morphe*. Robertson Word Pictures says it "means the essential attributes as shown in the form. In his preincarnate state Christ possessed the attributes of God and so appeared to those in heaven who saw him. Here is a clear statement by Paul of the deity of Christ."

After Jesus declared that He is the way, truth and the life and the only access to the Father notice the exchange He had with Philip. ***John 14:7-9 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?***

Beloved Christ was equal with God but did not boast about it. He did not feel like He had to hold onto it at all cost because that was Who He was.

III- The God Man:

How can a man be God and still be a man has been one of the tough questions that has been asked. Many men have claimed to be God and set themselves up as gods but that does not make it so. We have already seen that Christ existed as God from eternity past.

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Php 2:7 *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.*

There are three items in this verse. We might say they were the steps that lead Christ from the glory of Heaven to the humility of earth. First He made Himself of no reputation. The HCSB says, **“He emptied Himself...”** There has been a lot of debate over the Christian era about the meaning of this. What did He empty Himself of? Some claim in error I feel that He set aside His Godhood. I think there could be an argument made from Scripture that He set aside His full glory or we might call it prestige as God.

The second thing is He who had been worshipped by the angels from their creation now takes on the form of a servant, a slave. He did not come as a king in some palace with servants but the lowest position of humility. And then we see He became the God man. All man at the same time He was all God. John wrote in **Joh 1:18** *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

IV- Mind of Obedience:

Did Christ have to do this because He was powerless to resist. Hardly, I say. He did it in obedience to the will of the Father.

Php 2:8 *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Notice it says He humbled Himself. He did not have to be beaten into submission but willingly suffered for us. **Hebrews 5:8** *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.*

This reminds me what Samuel told Saul after his disobedience by keeping the animals he was to destroy. **1 Samuel 15:22** *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

It has not changed to obey is still better than sacrifice. Jesus said, **“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”** **John 14:15** Would you not agree that obedience leads to joy. Christ was obedience, when we are obedient we find joy by being like Christ.

V- The Exalted One:

Because of His obedience we see that He is the Exalted One both now and forever.

Php 2:9 *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Christ in humility and obedience brought glory to God. He submitted His will to the perfect will of God. Was Jesus will every contrary to God's. Notice **Luke 22:42** *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.* Now quickly I must point out that Jesus was never out of the will of God. His flesh wanted relief, He wished He cup of suffering and death could be removed, but still submitted His will to the Fathers. May I submit to us that when we can get our will out of the way, that we can find joy in being like Christ in total surrender. Our problem is we keep crawling off the altar of sacrifice.