

Philippians: Gospel Partnership

The Most Exalted Example

Have the
same mindset
as CHRIST by
looking to him

Philippians 2:5-8 ESV Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Intro

- Spend time in football watching film
- Film is helpful for understanding opposition
- Greatest benefit watching film → watch yourself
- 1000 repetitions to correct a mistake or end a bad habit
- You can learn much by seeing it done poorly
- Greatest learning occurred in seeing it done correctly

Paul understood that the best way for the Philippians to have the same mindset as CHRIST was for them to SEE a good example - the perfect example - of what that looked like

Do we want the same mind
as CHRIST?

Four Complex Ideas – *passage is most glorious... and most misunderstood*
 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Form of God

- Morphe – the inner nature of something, not external features, essential characteristics and qualities
- Alien in the form of a human – humanoid
- He exists in the very nature of God with the inner divine substance that is God's alone, he is fully God since he exists in the form of God
- This + equality with God
- Nothing is equal to God except God! Therefore, Jesus is God. And distinct from God
- Questions about trinity/deity of Jesus...developed later on...not a NT thing

A thing to be grasped

- **Philippians 2:6 NIV** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
- Thing to be grasped = something to be selfishly exploited
- Roman gods used power for selfish gain
- **Ware:** Surely what Paul means is this: Christ being fully God, possessing the very nature of God and being fully equal to God in every respect, did not thereby insist on holding onto all the privileges and benefits of his position of equality with God (the Father) and thereby refuse to accept coming as a man. He did not clutch or grasp his place of equality with the Father and all that this brought to him in such a way that he would refuse the condescension and humiliation of the servant role he was being called to accept.

Jesus was not a grasper
 • we are "graspers" – grasping to get everything we deserve and much of what we don't deserve

ARE YOU A GRASPER?

Emptied himself

- Paul is not saying Jesus emptied something from himself or something out of himself
- He did not pour out his divinity, or some of his divine characteristics
- He poured out HIMSELF
- How did he pour out himself? How did he empty himself?
- He emptied himself by taking, he poured out himself by adding; it is emptying by adding

1) Christ emptied himself by taking the form of a servant

- He was the form of God, he takes the form of a servant
- He became a servant in the fullest sense of the word

2) Christ emptied himself by being born in the likeness of men

- Taking the form of a servant required him becoming a man
- We think emptying means losing something whereas it really means taking something on
- **Augustine:** Christ "emptied himself not by losing what he was, but by taking to him what he was not." (213)
- Bruce Ware illustration

ARE WE WILLING TO SERVE... ARE WE WILLING TO STOOP?
 ARE YOU WILLING TO EMPTY YOURSELF BY TAKING ON THE ROLE OF SERVANT
 AND STOOPING TO HELP THOSE IN NEED?

Born in the likeness of men


Is Paul saying Jesus was only like men, not really and truly a man?

Paul used this word because the word allows for some ambiguity – Paul understood that in becoming human, fully human, that did not mean that Christ was no longer divine. The word likeness allows for some similarity, in this case Jesus was similar in that he was fully human-but it also allows for some dissimilarities-Jesus was human, but without sin because he was divine...he was human, but not only human

Summary of passage:

You should have the same mindset as Christ, the same way of thinking about the world, the feelings and emotions, the same desires and will as Jesus. This Jesus, in every quality and characteristic had the same nature and essence as God; and only God has God's essence and nature. And even though he was equal with God, and only God is equal with God, he did not hold on to and use his divinity for his own selfish advantage or ambition. Rather, he emptied himself by taking on the very essence of servant and by adding full humanity to his full divinity. This Jesus Christ, who was fully God and fully human who did not use his divinity for his advantage but rather set aside his privilege and prerogatives as God, this is the Jesus with whom you should have the same mind.

Paul now describes what having the mind as Christ looked like



IF YOU WANT TO BE OBEIDENT TO THE WORD'S COMMAND TO 1) WALK WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL, 2) HAVE A UNIFIED MIND SET, AND HAVE THE SAME MIND AS CHRIST... WE NEED TO GAZE AT, SCRUTINIZE, EXAMINE, BEHOLD, OBSERVE, AND IN EVERY WAY LOOK TO JESUS! BECAUSE HE IS THE MOST EXALTED EXAMPLE! DO YOU HAVE THIS DESIRE?

The Most Exalted Example

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Christ is the most exalted example of the sacrificial and humble mindset that is required for the Philippians to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel, and to do so together. Christ's example is exemplary due to the magnitude of Christ's humiliation and the manner of his death.

*John Flavel - 1600s
Puritan pastor
and author*

The Magnitude of Christ's Humiliation

Paul is certainly emphasizing the largeness of Christ humbling himself

Flavel: For the sun to fall from its sphere, and be degraded into a wandering atom; for an angel to be turned out of heaven, and be converted into a silly fly or worm, had been no such great abasement; for they were but creatures before, and so they would abide still, though in an inferior order or species of creatures. The distance between the highest and lowest species of creatures, is but a finite distance. The angel and the worm dwell not so far asunder. But for the infinite glorious Creator of all things, to become a creature, is a mystery exceeding all human understanding. The distance between God and the highest order ^{of} creatures, is an infinite distance. He is said to humble himself ^{God} to behold the things that are done in heaven. What a humiliation then is it, to behold the things in the lower world! but to be born into it, and become a man! Great indeed is the mystery of godliness.

↳ Glory, beauty, awe! ⇒ Police officers B-ball → Steve Tyler // street musician

The Manner of Christ's Death

A most humiliating death

Flavel: ~~Thirdly~~ The death of the cross was a shameful death: not only because the crucified were stripped quite naked, and so exposed as spectacles of shame, but mainly, because it was a kind of death which was appointed for the basest, and vilest of men.

FIRST →

Back of insert

Isaiah 53:3 ESV

He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

SECOND → A sacrificial death

Flavel: And indeed, he must either die a violent death, or not die at all; partly, because there was no sin in him, to open a door to natural death; as it does in all others. Partly, because else his death had not been a sacrifice acceptable and satisfactory to God for us. That which died of itself was never offered up to God; but that which was slain, when it was in its full strength and health.

Isaiah 53:5-7 ESV

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

GOSPEL → *JESUS - GOD - BECAME HUMAN - DIED ON THE CROSS*
GOD
SIN

NON - WILL YOU PUT YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST ?
XIAN - WILL YOU LOOK TO THIS EXAMPLE ?

A Functional Gospel

The Gospel provides the means for obedience

The Gospel provides the motivation for obedience

The Gospel provides the might for obedience

The Gospel provides the model for obedience