



## “JOY” - Philippians - Week 4 March 24th

Who is the most humble person you know? Describe the personality and behavior of that person.

Every example of humility we can name among the relationships in our lives is simply a reflection of the humility modeled by Christ on the cross. He selflessly sacrificed Himself for us all. In Philippians 2, Paul taught that this ultimate sacrifice is also the ultimate standard of humility toward which we are to strive.

### **Read Philippians 2:1-4.**

What four specific areas of unity did Paul desire for the Philippian believers? How would you describe what Paul meant by each phrase?

How are each of these areas represented in our church and in our relationships?

**Read John 13:34-35.** What additional insight does Jesus' commandment give into the purpose of unity among Christians?

Paul called them to fulfill his joy by pursuing unity with one another. Their harmony could exist only by their having the same outlook—thinking the same way. They would express that unity by having the same love as Christ had, sharing the same feelings, and by their focusing on one goal. Jesus Christ stated that this kind of obvious, mutual love and practical unity is the distinguishing characteristic of His disciples.

Why would unity and love among the church complete Paul's joy, as he noted in verse 2?

What does it mean to consider someone “better than yourself” (v. 3)?

As a way of promoting unity in our churches, we must willingly demonstrate an unselfish attitude toward others. Any concern that one believer in Philippi had was to become a concern of the whole church. Paul's affirmation in this verse represents the epitome of unselfishness, and it sets the stage for the remainder of this passage. We are to give priority to our unity as believers. We demonstrate this priority by our behavior and by the biblical principles we use as our guides.

### **Read Philippians 2:5-8.**

With verse 5, Paul called believers to imitate Christ. He admonished Christians to have the same disposition or attitude that our Lord exhibited in His life and death.

What would it mean for you to have the attitude of Christ?

**Read Mark 10:43-45.** How did Jesus describe His own attitude? Why is serving others necessary if you want to display humility?

Though culture often views humility as a weakness, in what ways did Jesus' humility convey and require strength?

Paul pointed to Christ's love for others and His obedient service to God as examples for his Philippian friends. Christians who follow Christ's example and exhibit self-sacrificial love toward other believers and willing obedience to God help promote their churches' unity. We are to live with an attitude of humility as we relate to others. With a healthy, balanced view of ourselves, we neither think too highly nor too little of ourselves. With that wholesome attitude, we can serve others effectively.

**Read Philippians 2:9-11.**

For what reason did the Father exalt the Son, according to these verses?

How does this passage challenge society's definition of success?

God's exaltation of Christ is because of His death of humiliation on the cross. Our Lord did nothing out of selfishness, nor was He disobedient at any time to His Father's will. He did not seek His own glory. And, even in His exalted state, all of the glory will belong to the Heavenly Father. In this passage Paul lifted up Christ's self-sacrificial love for others and His obedient service to God as an example to the Philippians.

### **Conclusion and Prayer**

If we are to be the church Christ wants in our community, what types of sacrifices should we be prepared to make?

We read in these passages that humility and self-sacrifice is the key to unity as a church. Take some time as a group and pray that as individuals our Christ-likeness would increase so that our church unity would grow. We want to grow in unity so that God can continue to use us in mighty ways to further His Kingdom.