

Philippians 2:3-4  
Women's Bible Study, February 21, 2024  
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Before we jump into these verses let's review what we have studied over the past two studies of Philippians. We learned at the end of chapter one that **we should conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ**. That is the theme of this whole section. After Paul makes this statement, he launches into what this means and how it is to be accomplished. First, he tells us to **stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel**. Next, we are **not to be alarmed by our opponents**. Finally, we are to strive for unity. Paul says in Philippians 2:2 that **we should be of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose**.

The reasons or motivations for the need to conduct ourselves worthy of the gospel of Christ is because **we have been given encouragement in Christ, consolation of love, fellowship of the Spirit and affection and compassion**. These are indeed wonderful gifts given to us by the Spirit of God and should highly motivate us in our quest to conduct ourselves worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Our striving for unity will not render us clones of each other but will cause us to be alike in that we have the same mind, the same love, we are united in spirit and intent on one purpose. This involves the way we think and what we dwell on. The word mind in 2:2 is the Greek word *phroneo*. The word means to think, judge or seek for. Paul uses the word mind 10 times in Philippians. He also uses the word think and remember several times. Since we are told to use our minds as we strive to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, we should be aware that just like studying for a difficult algebra test, success in this area will not come easily or automatically. It involves huge changes in us. Our thought patterns must completely change.

- How can we change the way we think?
- Is it a simple process?
- What is evidence that the way we think is changing?

### Philippians 2:3-4

**Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**

These two verses show us one of the biggest changes that will occur in us. Before we were given faith in Jesus Christ our life motto could have been written:

Do everything from selfishness and conceit. With arrogance of mind regard one another as less important than me. Make sure that my own personal interests are cared for first.

Let's be honest. This is how we all were before Christ and even after we were adopted into God's family, we can think this way so easily.

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit...

The KJV says "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." The term selfishness here is with the idea that we achieve what we want at the expense of others. We can be so worried about ourselves that our thoughts and actions are designed to only improve our existence without thought of our brothers and sisters. We do things to be thought of as better or superior to others. I can relate to this. I was a very competitive person as a child and even into my adult years which caused me to want to be the best in whatever I did. This was not a Christlike trait. This was prideful. Some other examples of ways that we might be selfish are worrying about our looks to the point that we don't want to participate in activities or worrying about our house which keeps us from inviting people to our home. We might try to make others look inferior in different ways to make ourselves look better. Anything that causes the glory to go to us and not to Christ is "empty conceit" or "vainglory". Even if it is our service for Christ.

Galatians 5:26

Let us not become boastful (conceited), challenging one another, envying one another.

Philippians 1:17

The former, however, preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can add to the distress of my chains.

Galatians 5:13-16

For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one

another, take care lest you be consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

...but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

We should be outdoing each other in serving others. Others' needs should be considered more important than our own. This is a recipe for a well-functioning home and church. Jesus talks about serving often.

#### Matthew 20:26b-28

...whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

#### John 13:4-5,12-15

(Jesus) rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 12. And when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you."

#### Romans 12:9-16

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

#### Galatians 5:13

For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

### Galatians 6:9-10

And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

To truly serve requires humility. Sometimes we serve to be noticed or to be praised. We are prideful people and I believe this is a fight we will be in until the day we die.

What does it mean to be humble? Humility means lowliness of mind or modesty in the Greek. The Oxford dictionary defines the word humble as “having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance”. In his book Be Joyful, Warren Wiersbe says “The humble person is not one who thinks meanly of himself; he simply does not think of himself at all!” He attributed that quote to Andrew Murray. God highly values humility in the people he has created. It seems that his most severe punishments have been due to stiff-necked pride in people.

### Deuteronomy 8:2

And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

### 2 Chronicles 7:13-14

If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

### Psalms 10:17

O LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will strengthen their heart, You will incline Your ear.

### Proverbs 22:4

The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life.

### Matthew 5:3

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

### 1 Peter 3:8-9

To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

### 1 Peter 5:5

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. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.

Here are two examples of God's treatment of people who because of their boastfulness God chooses to bring low.

### Daniel 4:30-34

The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.' Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. But at the end of that period I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever.

### Acts 12:21-23

And on the appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. And the people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

Yikes!!

We have peace with God through the sacrifice of his precious Son. There is nothing we could have done to obtain that peace. We were completely lost in our sins. What do we have to be prideful about? A question for the ages. But God in his great love and mercy saw fit to save us rebellious, prideful people that He created. God does not change. He still despises pride. Let us be careful to not be prideful toward the will of God or toward each other. We should daily be examining our hearts for pride, and then stop looking at only our interests and instead focus on the needs of others. Let us be looking for ways to serve people. Not just our friends or family but anyone that God brings across our path. Let us be like the Good Samaritan who served that Jewish person that he could have thought of as his enemy but instead treated him as a dear friend or family member.

### Philippians 2:12-13

So then my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

### Psalms 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.

- How can service be prideful?
- Why should we examine our hearts daily with the help of the Holy Spirit?