

Philippians 2:5-8
Women's Bible Study, March 27, 2024
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Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Verse 5:

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.

The attitude that Paul is talking about here is the humility that he encouraged in verse 3 and 4.

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.

This humility is what will enable the Philippian church to be united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Without humility, there will be no unity. Everyone will be working for their own good not for the good of others or the gospel of Christ. The word attitude is the Greek word *phroneo* which means to exercise the mind, set one's affection on or think. Once again Paul is emphasizing the mind. This shows us that this attitude is a deliberate change on our part.

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

The highest example of humility is our Lord Jesus Christ. When we find ourselves assaulted from within and without by temptation to be proud or complain about our situation or be angry at imperfect humans we should stop and think about Jesus. This was never his attitude. We are called to be like him.

- Our minds (not our emotions or other people) seem to be the key to having the right attitude. What prevents us from thinking correctly?

Verse 6:

...who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.

The NKJV states:

...who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.

The KJV and NKJV state that Jesus did not consider it robbery to be equal with God. The original Greek supports this translation rather than saying that he did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped. Jesus knew he was God and he stated that in His ministry.

John 10:30-33

“I and the Father are one.” The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”

Such as God himself is, and therefore God, for there is no one in all parts equal to God but God himself. Christ, that glorious and everlasting God, knew that he might rightfully and lawfully not appear in the base flesh of man, but remain with majesty fit for God: yet he chose rather to debase himself. If the Son is equal with the Father, then is there of necessity an equality, which Arrius that heretic denies: and if the Son is compared to the Father, then is there a distinction of persons, which Sabellius that heretic denies. Geneva Bible Notes

Jesus is God and before He came to Earth as a baby, he was worshipped in Heaven by all the created heavenly beings and equal to the Father. He chose in obedience and submission to the Father to set aside his glory and become a human. When he came to Earth he did not come as the King of the World, he came as a humble carpenter's son. He lived in relative poverty. During the three years of his ministry, He served others sacrificially. He then willingly allowed himself to be crucified as a common criminal. Crucifixion has been called one of the most degrading and painful ways to put to death a person.

The phrase "form of God" has caused some controversy because some people think that this means that Jesus was only a really godly human or that he lost his divinity when he became a human. Neither of these two ideas are true.

By the form of God we are rather to understand that visible, glorious light in which the Deity is said to dwell...This interpretation is supported by the term morph, form, here used, which signifies a person's **external shape or appearance, and not his nature or essence**. Thus we are told, (in) Mr 16:12, that Jesus appeared to his disciples in another morph, shape, or form. And, (in) Mt 17:2, metemorfwyh, he was transfigured before them-his outward appearance or form was changed. Farther this interpretation agrees with the fact: the form of God, that is, his visible glory, and the attendance of angels, as above described, the Son of God enjoyed with his Father before the world was, Joh 17:5; and on that as on other accounts he is the brightness of the Father's glory, Heb 1:3. Of this he divested himself when he became flesh; but, having resumed it after his ascension...

Adam Clarke's Commentary

Mark 16:12

And after that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along on their way to the country.

Matthew 17:2

And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

John 17:5

And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

1 Timothy 6:15b-16

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

Hebrews 1:3

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

...but emptied Himself,

The NASB and ESV translation of “emptied Himself” is the best translation. The KJV translates this phrase “made Himself of no reputation” and the NIV states “made himself nothing”. According to the Albert Barnes NT Commentary: The Greek is, eauton ekenwse.....The essential idea is that of bringing to emptiness, vanity, or nothingness; and hence it is applied to a case where one lays aside his rank and dignity, and becomes, in respect to that, as nothing; that is, he assumes a more humble rank and station.

taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Here we have that word “form” again. This is the outward appearance of Christ. It has nothing to do with his nature.

The word bond-servant in verse 7 is the Greek word *doulos* which can be translated slave. Surely if Jesus gave up his glory, we should be willing to humble ourselves and consider ourselves slaves to Christ and righteousness.

- Do we consider ourselves slaves to Christ?

Romans 6:16-18

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

At the beginning of verse 7 we see that Jesus “emptied himself” and then as if it was not enough to have emptied Himself and taken the form of a slave, He then humbles Himself by voluntarily dying on a cross meant for the worst of criminals. We are the beneficiaries of the humility of Christ.

He humbled himself. Laid himself as low as possible:

1. In emptying himself - laying aside the effulgence of his glory.
2. In being incarnate - taking upon him the human form.
3. In becoming a servant - assuming the lowest innocent character, that of being the servant of all.

4. In condescending to die, to which he was not naturally liable, as having never sinned, and therefore had a right in his human nature to immortality, without passing under the empire of death.

5. In condescending, not only to death, but to the lowest and most ignominious kind of death, the death of the cross; the punishment of the meanest of slaves and worst of felons. **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! Adam Clarke's Commentary

(Numbering is my doing.)

We could never have paid the price required by God, but Jesus took our punishment. If Jesus, the Prince of Heaven, set aside His glory, then shouldn't we be willing to put aside ourselves to be obedient? Why do we consider ourselves so important that we are not willing to give up our own dreams, goals and ambitions for the Kingdom of God?

Do any of these statements sound familiar?

- You don't know what I have to put up with.
- God wants me to be happy.
- I'm too tired for _____ (fill in the blank).
- I don't have time.
- I'm not strong enough.

Discussion??

How low was our dear Redeemer brought! How then can we be proud? Stand at the foot of the cross, and count the purple drops by which you have been cleansed; see the thorn crown; notice his scourged shoulders still gushing with encrimsoned rills; see hands and feet given up to the rough iron, and his whole self to mockery and scorn; see the bitterness, and the pangs, and the throes of inward grief, showing themselves in his outward frame; hear the thrilling shriek,

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And if you do not lie prostrate on the ground before that cross, you have never seen it: if you are not humbled in the presence of Jesus, you do not know him. You were so lost that nothing could save you except the sacrifice of God’s only begotten. Think of that, and just as Jesus stooped for you, so bow yourself in lowliness at his feet. A sense of Christ’s amazing love for us has a greater tendency to humble us than even a consciousness of our own guilt. May the Lord bring us in contemplation to Calvary, then our position will no longer be that of the pompous man of pride, but we shall take the humble place of one who loves much because much has been forgiven him. Pride cannot live beneath the cross. Let us sit there and learn our lesson, and then rise and carry it into practice. Mornings and Evenings with Spurgeon