

Text: Phil 2.1-18

I was planning to do a review of chapter 1, then I realized that our quizzing would proceed to chapter 2 on the second Sunday of August.

Our message today will try to help prepare for that.

Philippians 1 ends with Paul turning to exhortation or teaching as he urges the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel.

Chapter 2 begins with, “therefore” — in these words he will begin to explain what that kind of conduct is.

And of course, that conduct is an imitation of Christ who is offered as our supreme example in this chapter.

I will try to treat this message as we did the last – a kind of commentary on the text to help you prepare for quizzing.

I. The worthy walk described (1-4)

A. The four “ifs” of verse 1: “ifs” that mean “since” — all these things are true.

1. If encouragement in Christ (there is)
2. If consolation of love (certainly)
3. If fellowship of the Spirit (absolutely)
4. If affection and compassion (of course)

B. The four corresponding decisions (2)

1. Make up your mind to be the same
2. Maintain the same love
3. Keep united in spirit
4. Remain intent on one purpose

C. Motivations addressed (3-4)

1. No selfishness or conceit
2. In humility prefer one another
3. Look out for the interests of others

II. The supreme example displayed (5-11)

Big word connected to this passage: *kenosis* — “emptying”

Imitate the mind of Christ (5)

A. The downward steps (6-8)

1. Equal with God (Father), gave up form of equality
2. Emptied himself (of glory), took on humanity
3. Appearing as a man, humbled himself to death of the cross

B. The upward response (9-11)

1. God highly exalted him (present)
2. Every knee will bow (future)
 - a. Every tongue will confess (future)

III. The life of obedience demanded (12-16)

- A. Consequently: in my absence, continue to obey by working out your salvation (12)
- B. Understand that God is working in you (13)
- C. Keep your spirit cheerful (14)
- D. Result: a good testimony in a corrupt generation (15)
- E. Motivation: give Paul reason to boast in God’s work in them (16)

IV. Total commitment desired (17-18)

- A. Even if Paul is poured out (executed), he continues to rejoice (17)
- B. Paul urges them to rejoice in the same way (recall the “total commitment” message from ch 1)

Conclusion:

Paul wants the people of Philippi to be models of Jesus Christ. Jesus humbled himself, there is no reason why we can’t humble ourselves.

Our whole lives ought to be lived for others (this is the ideal) — how often, how much we live our lives for our own agenda!