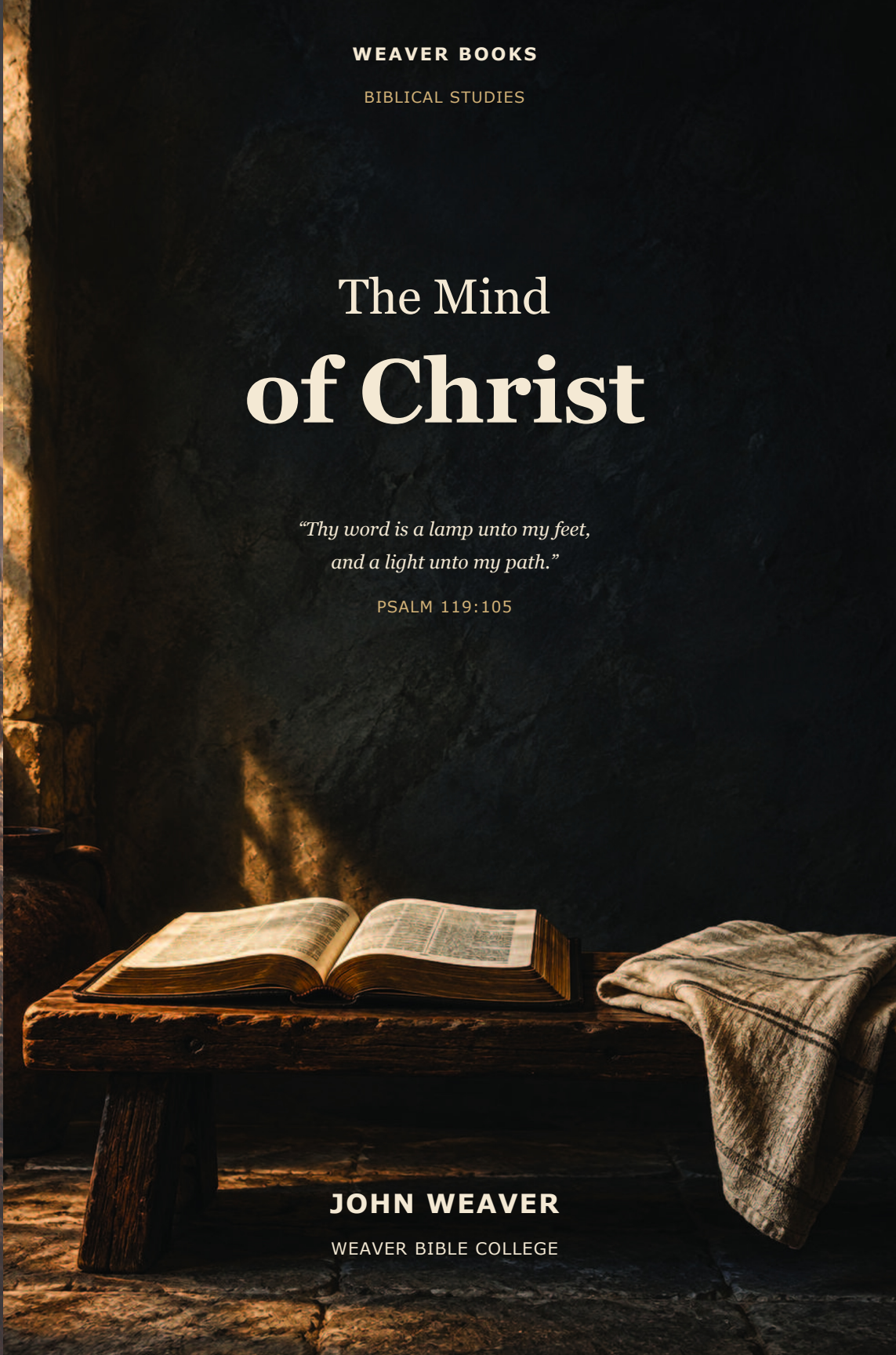
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The Mind of Christ

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

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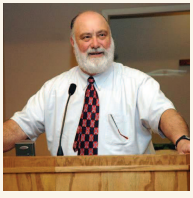
Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5

The mind of Christ is expressed in humility and obedient service. John Weaver considers the believer's attitudes, motives, and response to the teaching of Scripture. These messages invite readers to examine the practical choices through which Christian character becomes visible in everyday life.

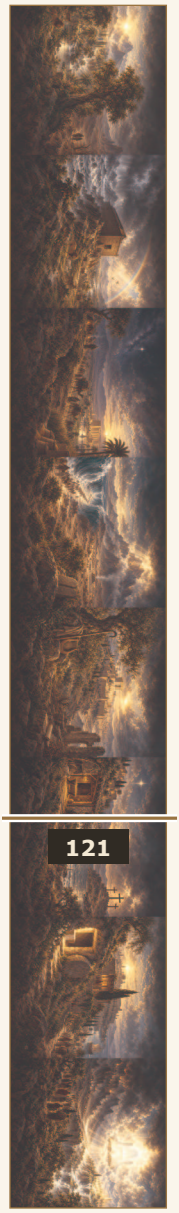
"The mind of Christ consists of two essential graces: humility and obedience."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.



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CHAPTER 1

The Mind of Christ

Part One of Two

Introduction and Reading of Philippians 2:1-8

Paul writes in Philippians 2:1–8: “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

The main theme and gist of this message, and especially more specifically next Lord’s Day, is centered around verse 5: “Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus.”

The Command to Possess the Mind of Christ

Do you possess the mind of Christ? Can you define, delineate, or declare the mind of Christ? Can you tell me the essence of the mind of Christ? If you are unable to delineate and declare the mind of Christ, how do you know whether or not you possess the mind of Christ?

We have been specifically commanded in verse 5, "Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus." The goal of every child of God should be to possess the mind of Christ. When God commands, "Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus," He is not making a suggestion. He is not giving advice nor asking for consent.

The truth of the matter is, the Greek construction here is a present passive imperative. Since it is an imperative, it means it is a command. Secondly, since it is a command and it is in the present tense, it means it is to be applied now and each and every moment of every day. We're to seek, ask for, have, and possess the mind of Jesus Christ in every situation and circumstance in our lives.

The Mind of Christ Revealed in Scripture

The Apostle Paul asked a very important question, and then he made a statement in 1 Corinthians 2:16. Listen carefully: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?" And then he made his statement: "But we have the mind of Christ." When Paul asked this question, it should be obvious that he was either alluding to or quoting from Isaiah 40:13. For in Isaiah 40:13 the question is asked, "Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor, hath taught him?" If you would look in your Bibles very quickly to Romans 11:34, you will see that Paul asks basically this same question again: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord or who hath been his counselor?"

Obviously, no one can know the mind of God totally, completely, and absolutely. It requires God to comprehend and understand God. Likewise, in light of that truth, no one can counsel God, nor does God need any counsel, for He is omniscient. He knows absolutely everything. How wicked and how blasphemous it is for a puny, finite man to endeavor to counsel or correct the sovereign God of heaven

and earth. Do you understand that when man pits his mind against God—when man is either trying to counsel or correct God, or disparage the most perfect, most high God—it is a sin of the highest order? It is blasphemy.

Some of you are aware of the controversy with Piers Morgan, the news commentator. Do you realize that this British subject just said, just this past week, that not only does the Constitution of the United States need amending, but the Bible needs amending as well? There is a petition now in the White House with over 80,000 signatures to deport him and send him back to England. One guy from England said, "No, it took us 40 years to get rid of him; don't send him back here." Then the same guy gave a tweet and said, "Don't you Americans remember? You wrote the second amendment because the British tried to take away your guns years ago."

That is what he is advocating. It is interesting to see this puny journalist thinking that he can correct and amend the Bible and make it mean whatever he wants it to mean. But the apostle Paul does say, "We have the mind of Christ." Matthew Poole, one of the early commentators, says, "We who have the Spirit of God given to us, dwelling and working in us, and instructing us, we have the mind of Christ. For the Spirit of Christ, which is our Teacher, knows His mind, and hath revealed it unto us."

It is true that the Holy Spirit of God knows the mind of Christ, that the Holy Spirit is our Teacher, and that our minds are illuminated by the Holy Spirit of God. But while all of that is true, I believe there is another obvious and very simple implication of Paul's statement: We have the mind of Christ revealed in His Word.

Do you want to know what Christ thinks about economics? Read His Word. See what He thinks, and conform your thinking to what He says. Do you want to know what the Word of God says about a godly wife or a godly husband? Read the Word of God. See what He thinks, and conform your thoughts to His thoughts. Do you want to know the mind of Christ on self-defense? Read the Word of God and find out. In the Word of God we have the mind of Christ, and we are required to conform our thinking to His Word.

The Exhortation to the Mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1-4)

The Word of God, very generally, reveals the mind of Christ to us. When we get to Philippians chapter 2, there are some specifics in possessing the mind of Christ. Let us begin with this general revelation. The exhortation to the mind of Christ actually begins in Philippians chapter 2 and verse 1: “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies.” Notice the four uses of “if.” When the Apostle Paul uses the word if here, and in many other instances in Scripture, he is not suggesting that there might not be any consolation, comfort, fellowship, or mercies in Christ.

The problem that most of us have is that we do not understand Greek construction. In this construction it is called "ei" with the indicative mode. Every time you see the little word "ei" with the indicative mode, it is an affirmation. Literally, you could read it like this: "Since there are consolations in Christ, and since there is comfort of love, and since there is fellowship of the Spirit, and since there are bowels of mercies." In other words, it is an absolute strong affirmation. The Apostle Paul is telling us this is where consolation and comfort really and truly are. Now, why would the Apostle Paul begin by talking about consolation and comfort and fellowship of the Spirit and bowels and mercies when he is admonishing us to the mind of Christ?

Look in chapter 1, verse 28: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear to be in me."

The Philippians at this particular time were going through some very trying circumstances and very difficult times. So what Paul begins doing in Philippians 2 and verse 1 is directing their mind to the only source of true comfort, true consolation, true fellowship, and true mercies. He is telling us these are to be found in Christ alone. In suffering, in trials, in persecution, in troubles, the apostle is admonishing us to seek to have the mind of Christ.

The apostle Paul had gone through many scenarios. The Apostle Paul experienced trouble like you and I have never experienced trouble. In 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 24, he says, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one." According to the law of God, if a man deserved to be beaten, he was not to be beaten over forty stripes. To make sure they did not go over forty, usually they would only go thirty-nine. But Paul said, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one." They were really angry with Paul, so four out of the five times, he got the full 40. Then he says, "Thrice was I beaten with rods. Once was I stoned. Thrice have I suffered shipwreck."

"A night and day I've spent in the deep." I don't know about you, but I don't like floating around in the ocean, especially for a night and a day. He says, "In journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak? I'm not weak. Who is offended? I burn not."

Notice what the Apostle Paul is saying. He endured all these things. None of us have endured circumstances as the Apostle Paul endured. How did he make it through all this suffering, trouble, trial, and tribulation? The answer is that he had the mind of Christ.

Stop and think about this. If you really want to think about it, read Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Think of all the martyrs who were beheaded, poisoned, stoned, burned at the stake, and suffered absolutely horrible deaths. You have to ask yourself, how could anyone endure burning at the stake?

Some women were staked out at the edge of the ocean, and as the tide came in, it drowned them. They had to be tied to that stake until they were finally drowned. How can anyone stand such things? I understand that an awful lot of grace and mercy must be given to those individuals, but I believe that during those circumstances they were able to endure by having the mind of Jesus Christ, viewing the

sacrifice of their lives and the suffering they endured as Jesus Christ endured that suffering as well.

None of us are looking toward a martyr's death, as far as we know. But do you realize that each one of us is required by God to live a martyr's life? Romans 12:1-2 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies, what? A living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

"And be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed, how? By the renewing of your minds, that is by having the mind of Christ, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." So we are to present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice. We may not face the same trials the Apostle Paul faced or the same persecutions that other Christians face; however, we are facing our own trials and difficulties.

How do we endure and successfully go through these tests and trials? By possessing the mind of Christ. In Philippians chapter 2, verse 1, Paul tells the Philippians where consolation, comfort, mercy, and fellowship are really found. Now, look at verse 2. Philippians 2, verse 2. He says, "Fulfill you my joy that you may be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, being of one mind."

The apostle is speaking about being like-minded, having the same love, being in one accord, and being of one mind. Meditate on these subjects and think how it is possible to accomplish these commands. In verse 2, when the Apostle Paul says, “Fulfill ye my joy,” it is an aristocratic imperative, which means, once again, he is commanding us to do this. The way that we are to obey is by conforming to his commands.

Now look at verse 3. He says, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” The Apostle Paul here gives us two of the most dangerous dispositions that a Christian can face: strife and vainglory. Strife is when we are opposed to each other. We are acting selfishly, seeking our own interest, and failing to consider others. It is a denial of our unity in Christ.

Strife and vainglory separate the body of Christ as effectively as a chainsaw separates the human body. Strife divides families, splits churches, and severs fellowships and friendships. Stop for a moment and think of all the families that you know that have been separated because of strife. Think of the churches that have been split and destroyed because of strife. Over and over in the Bible, God condemns strife.

Hold Philippians 2 and turn first to Proverbs chapter 15. Let us begin with verse 18 and see what the Word of God says concerning strife. “A wrathful man stirreth up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.” What does a wrathful man do? What does an angry man do? He stirs up strife. But then God says, “He that is slow to anger, appeases strife.”

Look in Proverbs 16 and verse 28: “A froward man soweth strife, and a whisperer separated the chief friends.” A froward man—a man that is evil and wicked—what does he do? He sows strife. The Word of God shows us that strife is stirred up by wrath and sown by a froward man, while the person who is slow to anger appeases it.

He likes to see fights and divisions. Look in chapter 17, verse 1: “Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.” When I read, “Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith,” I could not help but think of that dry dog food our dogs eat. I would hate to have to munch on that stuff. But when he talks about a house full of sacrifices, you have lambs and bullocks slain. In other words, you have plenty of good things to eat. Yet God said it is better to munch on dry dog food, or a dry biscuit, without strife than to have a house full of sacrifices and strife.

Look in chapter 17, verse 14: “The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water. Therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.” This is one of my favorite verses, and I love to illustrate it. Put a plug in it. The beginning of strife is when one letteth out water. Here you are in the bathtub; you have finished your bath, reach over, and pull the plug. As the water starts to swirl, it goes down the drain. If you do not like that sound, God says, put the plug back in it. The water will stop going out.

This is exactly what He says: “Leave off contention, therefore, before it be meddled with.” When you see things starting to get out of hand, God says, just put a plug in it. Just be quiet. Just shut up. Just walk away. You do not have to have it. Look in chapter 17 and verse 19.

"He loveth transgression that loveth strife. And he that exalted his gates seeketh destruction." He loveth transgression that loveth strife. Transgression is a violation of God's law. So he's saying, if you love to violate God's law, then you're going to love strife. Proverbs 17:19 says, "He loveth transgression that loveth strife, and he that exalted his gate seeketh destruction." So if you don't want to violate God's law, stay away from strife.

Proverbs 20:3 says, "It is an honor for a man to cease from strife, but every fool will be meddling." It is an honor to put a plug in it. That's what God says. Proverbs 22:10 says, "Cast out the scorner and contention shall go out, yea, strife and reproach shall cease." Get rid of the scorner, get rid of the one causing it, and the strife is going to cease. The apostle tells us in Philippians chapter 2 that we're to stay away from strife and vain glory.

Vain glory is often times the cause of strife. Vain glory is empty pride, empty self-esteem, a useless and worthless exaltation of self. Vain glory is when we think that we are something when in reality we are nothing. Let me point something out. Vain glory will always lead to tyranny and lording it over other individuals.

Let me give you an illustration. In 3 John, beginning with verse 9, we see the Diotrephes complex. The apostle says, "I wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, received us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words, and not content therewith, neither doth he receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church."

Here is a man who loves to have the preeminence. He will not receive the apostles or Christian brothers, and he will not allow anyone in that church to do so. If they do, he will cast them out of the church. John said, "When I come, I will remember his prating deeds

which he doeth." The Bible says, "I wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes who loveth to have the preeminence."

Did you know that the word preeminence occurs only twice in the New Testament? The first time is in Colossians 1, where it refers to Christ and His preeminence. The second time concerns Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence. In other words, if Diotrephes could displace Christ, he would do so. That is what vainglory is: saying, “I have the right to tell everyone what they can do and what they cannot do.” Here, the Word of God is condemning the Diotrephes complex.

Instead of vainglory, there should be humbleness and lowliness of mind, which leads us to understand our own smallness and calls us to be sober and modest. Do you remember Isaiah chapter 6 and verse 5? When Isaiah saw the glory of God, he also saw his own sinfulness.

He said, “Woe is me, for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” If you ever truly see the holiness, righteousness, and majesty of God, you cannot help but have a small view of yourself. We need to soberly assess our lives according to the Word of God. The Apostle Paul commanded in Romans chapter 12 and verse 3, “For I say through the grace of God given unto me, to every man that is among you, to not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man a measure of grace.” Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think.

I could have a card made up and send flyers to various churches saying, “John Weaver, soloist and vocalist, invite me for your Christian music.” Someone who did not know me might be foolish enough to invite me, but after I sang one song, they would disinvite me. Would it not be foolish for me to think I have musical talent when I have none? Would it not be foolish to think I have many talents when I do not?

The apostle is saying that if you will deal honestly, soberly, and righteously with yourself, you are going to realize that you are not the greatest person in the entire world and that the universe does not

revolve around you. What will lead us to think more soberly of ourselves? What will lead us to think more greatly of others? I will tell you what: not only must we see God, His righteousness, and His majesty, we must see our own sins.

Do you realize that everyone in this room has secret sins? You have secret faults and secret failures. With your knowledge of your secret sins, you ought to esteem others better than yourself. But others have their secret sins as well, which ought to lead them to esteem you more highly than themselves. Once we are aware of our sins and of who God is, we should be willing to fight the Apostle Paul for his position as chief of sinners, because we know that we are indeed sinners. If we had such a disposition, it would lead us to esteem others more excellent, seek their promotion, and seek their edification.

Such a right view of self is going to seek the blessing of others and will be true humility. Look in your Bibles to Philippians chapter 2 again and verse 4. We have just looked at verse 3: "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory," and, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." All of these statements are building up to verse 5. Now verse 4 says, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

When the Apostle Paul tells us to look on the things of others, He is not telling us to have a covetous attitude. He is not telling us to say, "Wow, I wish I had a truck like Dr. Holmes," or, "Wow, I wish I had a full head of hair like Ed." It is about gone, I know, Ed. That is not what he is saying. What does it mean? Literally, the Apostle is commanding us not to be selfish by considering only ourselves and our advantages. We are to look out for our brethren as well, consider their welfare, and ask how we may benefit them and help them. John Trapp, an old Puritan, said this.

John Trapp said, "It is his pleasure, his profit, and his preferment that is the natural man's trinity. The unsaved man thinks of his profit, his pleasure, and his preferment. That is the unsaved man's trinity and his carnal self that is these in unity." It is me, me, me. Indeed, it is that flesh that is the principal idol; the others are deified in relation to ourselves. In other words, what John Trapp is saying is that when we are thinking only of ourselves, we are setting ourselves

up as God. All we are looking for is our pleasure, our profit, and our preferment.

So when the Apostle Paul says, “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others,” the idea is that we are not simply looking out for number one. We are looking out for the good of our brethren as well. We cannot and must not make ourselves an idol by selfishly considering only ourselves. This is leading us up to verse 5, but we are not through with verse 2 yet. Paul says, “Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus.” What we consider here around verse 2 should prepare us for verse 5.

The Call to Like-Mindedness and Unity (Philippians 2:2)

The Apostle Paul says, “Fulfill ye my joy,” and that is a command. He is commanding them to fulfill his joy: that ye may be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and being of one mind. In verse 2, the Apostle Paul emphasizes the same basic truth over and over. He tells them to be like-minded, to be of one accord, and to be of one mind—to have the same mind and the same love. The truth is simply this: if we think alike, we love alike.

First of all, when he commands in verse 2, “Fulfill ye my joy that ye be like-minded,” like-mindedness means that you think the same thing. It implies unity of sentiment, opinion, and plans. Like-mindedness prevents discord, schism, contention, and strife in the church and in communities, so that there may be harmony in the work and in the ministry.

Secondly, he says, “having the same love.” The same love refers to loving the same objects. If you think alike, you are ultimately going to love the same object. We are to love Christ, His Word, and His people, and we are to have the same love one for another. Our thoughts and opinions may differ on some points, yet we should always be united in love for Christ and His ministry.

Thirdly, he says in verse 2, “one accord.” One accord speaks of being one soul, having our souls knit together. The word here is used only in this instance in the New Testament. It means a union of soul in the sense that when we move, we move as one body. If we have the

same mind, the same love, and are knit together, we will move as a body.

Then he says, “one mind”: “being of one accord, of one mind.” Once again, the one mind refers to thinking the same thing. The Apostle Paul is using various expressions to denote the same truth. His object is that we have a union of heart, a feeling of plan and purpose. He wanted the Philippians to avoid all division and strife and to show the power of Christ by their common life and common cause. If we are thinking the same thing, we will love the same thing, be knit together for the same purpose, and move in one accord.

How is that possible for a church group, for a church body? How is this possible for a community? Let us suppose that all of us decided to have our own Christian community. We get our property, and all of us come and build homes on that property. We are next-door neighbors.

How in the world are we going to have the same mind and the same love, think alike, and be united as one soul? Let me give you an illustration from the Philippian church. There were two women at odds with each other, Euodias and Syntyche. Because they were fussing and fighting, they were at odds with each other. Sometimes I slip up and mispronounce their names and call them Odious and Stinky.

In Philippians chapter 4, verses 1 and 2, the Apostle Paul says, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech you, Euodias, and I beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."

The name Euodias comes from the Greek word euodia, which literally means prosperous journey. Syntyche comes from a Greek word that literally means pleasant acquaintance. These ladies were having anything but a pleasant acquaintance and a prosperous journey. They were fussing and fighting. How, then, did the Apostle Paul expect Euodias and Syntyche to come together?

Watch it in verse 2. He says, "I beseech you, Euodias, and I beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." What does that mean? Euodias and Syntyche, you must be of the same

mind in the Lord. Put away your foolish thinking, selfish conduct, strife, pride, and vain glory, and both submit your minds to the Word of God. Come up and think the way Christ thought. Be of the same mind in the Lord.

The Necessity of One Mind for Unity in the Church

Do you realize that every problem, every difficulty, and every occasion of strife and turmoil would instantly cease if we simply submitted our minds to the Word of God and came up with the mind of Christ? That would be the answer for every problem, every turmoil, and every situation. Yet it would do no good for Euodias to submit her mind to the mind of Christ if Syntyche did not.

Now, it would do Euodias some good, because the strife and the turmoil would cease in her life, but it would not solve the problem. For the problem to be generally solved, both must submit their minds to the Word of God and come up with the mind of Christ. If they do not, the strife is going to continue to rage.

I want you to understand, and I am going to show you this from the Scripture. It is your duty, it is your responsibility, to have the mind of Christ. I want to take the time to show you the absolute importance of having the mind of Christ. I want you to turn, first of all, and hold Philippians 2, but turn to the book of Romans, chapter 12. We are going to go through a number of passages, and then we are going to come back to the book of Romans. Look in Romans, chapter 12 and verse 16, and look at what the Apostle Paul writes.

He tells these Roman Christians, "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." Notice, "Be of the same mind, one toward another." That means my mind should be toward Joe, in a biblical sense of the word, and his mind should be toward me, in a biblical sense of the word. We are to be of the same mind, one toward another.

Notice 1 Corinthians, chapter 1 and verse 10. The Corinthian church was racked with divisions, strife, and vainglory. The apostle Paul writes, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no

divisions among you, and that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Now my question is this: how is a church going to come together in the same mind and in the same judgment?

How are we going to speak the same thing so that there be no divisions among us? The answer is that each one of us must submit his mind to the Word of God and come up with the mind of Christ.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 11, Paul says, “Finally brethren, farewell. Be perfect. Be of good comfort. Be of one mind. Live in peace. And the God of love and peace shall be with you.” By the way, I hope you understand it is impossible to live in peace unless you are of one mind. What causes fusses and fights and divisions? Having different minds. Thinking differently.

It is amazing how many times this same truth occurs in Scripture. In Philippians chapter 1 and verse 27, the Apostle Paul writes, “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.” We are to stand together in one mind, standing together in one mind and striving together for the faith of the gospel.

In Philippians chapter 3 and verse 15 he says, “Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded. Be thus minded, if anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you as well.” Once again, he is talking about being like-minded. Those who are perfect are to be thus minded, and if anything is otherwise minded, God shall reveal it.

First Peter chapter 4 and verse 1 says, “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” Notice that he says, “Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” Over and over in Scripture, we are told that we are to have the same mind. The Apostle Paul also said, “Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same.” I want you to go back in your Bibles to Romans

chapter 15. I told you we would come back there. I want to show you another passage and then try to tie this message together.

In Romans 15:5–7, Paul says, “Now the God of patience and consolation grants you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive you one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

One Mind Leads to One Mouth, One Motive, and One Mission

Why does God require us to have the mind of Christ? There are plenty of answers. We can say that this enables us to be holy, godly, and obedient. But think about this first: He requires us to have one mind. If we have one mind, we think alike. Alice and I will soon be married fifty years, and I can assure you that we think alike. We like the same things. Our ideas on most subjects are identical. There may be a difference in the sense that she likes girl stuff and I like man stuff, but in everything else we are basically the same. Theologically and practically, we think alike.

What does that do for us? What would thinking alike do for every Christian in every church? Romans 15:6 says, “That you may with one mind and one mouth.” If you think alike, if you have one mind, you are going to have one mouth. You are going to speak alike, say the same thing, and have the same words. If you think alike, it will naturally lead to speaking alike. Our words are a reflection of our minds.

David said in Psalm 116:10, “I believe, therefore have I spoken.” His mouth uttered what his mind thought. The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:13, “We having the same spirit of faith according as it is written, I believe, therefore have I spoken, we also believe and therefore speak.” Our mind will always control our mouth. If we think wrongly, we will speak wrongly. If we think biblically, we will speak biblically.

So God requires us to have one mind, that we may have one mouth. That is not all. One mind and one mouth will lead you to one motive: to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you ever stopped to think that the reason Christians are running in so many different directions is because they do not think alike? They do not have the same mind, the same mouth, and consequently, the same motive. Our ultimate motive is found in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." One mind will lead to one mouth, which will lead to one motive.

"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. One mind, one mouth, and one motive will lead you to one mission.

What is our mission as Christians? First of all, it is learning to receive each other as God, for Christ's sake, hath received us. Years ago I preached on this text. I probably need to preach on it again and demonstrate from the Bible what real biblical receiving is. There is a biblical way to receive each other in faith and in obedience. The other part of that mission is found in verse 8.

Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. We learn not only to receive one another and work with one another, but also to confirm the promises made to the fathers. In other words, by living obediently and submissively, by having the mind of Christ, we demonstrate that all the promises God gave to our fathers are true. Redemption is real. Salvation is genuine. God does deliver from sin.

It does make a difference how we think and how we speak. We can confirm those promises by our lives. Therefore, 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, to the glory of God the Father." We confirm that with our lives. It is impossible to live as we should, to obey as we should, or to glorify God as we should without having the mind of Christ.

Conclusion and Prayer

Our Lord said, “And He that sent Me is with Me. The Father hath not left Me alone, for I do always those things that please Him.” Would it not be the joy and delight of your life to be able to say, “I do always those things which please my Heavenly Father”? You can only do that with the mind of Christ.

We must learn to think like Christ, to talk like Christ, to walk like Christ, and to act like Christ, so that we can truthfully and honestly say, “I do those things which please my Heavenly Father.” That is why Philippians 2:5 says, “Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus.” Would you consider making it a matter of prayer that God would give you the mind of Christ in every area of your life? Stop and think: How would Christ think? How would Christ act? How would He walk? How would He talk?

How would He live? I want to do that, so that I may always please my Heavenly Father.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee this day. We thank You. We love You. How desperately we need the mind of Christ. Help us to submit our minds to the Word of God and develop a biblical worldview and perspective, so that we may walk, talk, act, and live as our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, did, pleasing Thee in all things. Give us grace to serve Thee acceptably with reverence and godly fear. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 2

The Mind of Christ

Part Two of Two

Review and Introduction

Last week I started a message entitled “The Mind of Christ.” Basically, last week was an introduction bringing us up to the passage that I really wanted to deal with. Today I am dealing with the second part of the mind of Christ. For those who missed the first part, I will review it so that you will hopefully be able to tie everything together.

In Philippians chapter 2, we begin with verse 5, since we dealt with verses 1 through 4 last week and mentioned verse 5: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Last week I began this message by asking, Do you possess the mind of Christ? I also asked, Can you define, delineate, or declare the mind of Christ? Can you express its essence? Then I proceeded to say, If you cannot express the essence of the mind of Christ, how in the world do you know that you possess the mind of Christ? The Bible says very plainly in verse 5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

In the last message, I endeavored to show the absolute necessity of possessing the mind of Christ in order to please and to glorify our Heavenly Father. I also explained that the mind of Christ is revealed in His Word. Here we do have the mind of Christ very plainly declared. But secondly, I also pointed out that we have the mind of Christ in the sense that those who are true believers are indwelled by the Holy Spirit of God.

The Bible says in Romans 8 and verse 27, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." The Holy Spirit, who is God, certainly knows the mind of God; and in that sense, since we possess the Holy Spirit, or He possesses us, we do have the mind of Christ in that sense as well. But I spent all last week covering one point, and that is the exhortation to the mind of Christ.

In Romans chapter 15, verses 5 and 6, the Bible says, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." Verse 8 says, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Here is what God requires of us in possessing the mind of Christ.

First of all, we must have one mind. That is, we must learn to think alike. We must learn to think biblically and scripturally. If we think biblically and scripturally, we are going to have one mind.

Secondly, one mind will give us one mouth. The Bible says, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one

toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God the Father." In other words, if we think alike, we are going to speak alike. If we have one mind, we are ultimately going to end up with one mouth. It is just that simple. David said in Psalm 116, "I believed, therefore have I spoken."

Thirdly, there is also to be one motive. "That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The one motive that we should have is that everything we do is to be for God's honor and God's glory. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Verses 7 and 8 tell us that if we have one mind, one mouth, and one motive, we are going to have one mission: to learn to receive each other as Christ received us to the glory of God, and also that we might confirm the promises made unto the fathers. In other words, when people see that truth is real in our lives, we are indeed confirming the promises made unto the fathers.

If we possess the mind of Christ, we are going to have one mind, one mouth, one motive, and basically one mission. Because the Bible says, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

Christ as the Supreme Example

The specifics of what the mind of Christ really consists of are given to us in Philippians chapter 2, beginning with verse 5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The obvious and best example of the mind of Christ is Christ Himself. Christ was the highest example which could be furnished, and His example would illustrate and confirm all the apostle had said of the virtue of possessing the mind of Christ. The principle is simply that we are to make the Lord Jesus Christ our model and our example, framing our lives in every respect according to Christ. In First Peter 2 and verse 21, the Scripture says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." So Jesus Christ, then, is our example. We are to follow Him.

If we think like Him, we will walk like Him. As long as we think like Christ and follow Christ, we are never ever going to err in our steps, because He is the absolute perfect example.

When we look at verse 5, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,” we must understand what God gives us in this statement. It is not a suggestion, it is not advice, and He is not asking for our consent. It is an imperative in the Greek; it is a present passive imperative, and an imperative is a command. Actually, what we are being commanded is to have the mind of Christ. Since it is a present imperative, it means that we are constantly and continually to be conforming our thinking to the mind of Jesus Christ.

What specifically is involved in having the mind of Christ? First, it means that we will have the mind of Christ if we have the humility that Christ has. Look in Philippians 2 and verse 5: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

The Kenotic Passage and Christ's Two Natures

Now watch verse 6, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Now, the passage that we're dealing with is an extremely important passage. And let me just tell you, you're going to have to listen very carefully to what I'm about to say in the next 10 or 15 minutes. Because this passage is very, very important. It is known as the Kenotic Passage. It is from the Greek word kenosis, which is a noun, or from the Greek verb kenoo. And there are an awful lot of views concerning this passage. In fact, one may find all kind of heresies concerning this passage.

There are so many people that try to use this passage to even deny the deity of Christ. Others then try to use the passage to deny the humanity of Christ. Denying the deity of Christ is heresy. Denying the humanity of Christ is heresy. There are others that even try to use this passage to confuse and co-mingle the two natures of Christ, which also is heresy. So, I'm just simply saying, as you look at this passage, you're going to have to look very carefully, and you're going to have to consider not only this passage, but what scripture teaches in relationship to this passage. Why there are so many heresies

regarding this passage is because it is surrounded with this little word right here when it says, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation." And when the Bible says he made himself of no reputation, there are many who translate that as he emptied himself. Well, if Christ emptied himself, what did he empty himself of?

You see what I'm saying? So, some would say he emptied himself of his deity, therefore he's not God. Some say he emptied himself of his humanity, so therefore he cannot be the God-man. You get in all kind of heresies. The Gnostics, there was a group of them called the Docetists. The way they got around some of this stuff is they said Christ was nothing more than a divine apparition. He was not real. He just appeared to be real. All kind of crazy things.

Let me point something out and listen carefully. Jesus Christ is both God and man. Jesus Christ is one person with two natures. The natures are not combined, they're not commingled, they're not conflicted. Whenever the deity of Christ is denied, it is heresy. Whenever the humanity of Christ is denied, it is heresy. Whenever the two natures are combined and commingled and conflicted and confused, it is heresy. Now, I want to do something and I want you to listen very carefully.

The ancient creeds show how the doctrine of Christ's incarnation has been fought over throughout history. The Athanasian Creed, written by Athanasius in the fourth century, declares: "It is also necessary for eternal salvation that he believes steadfastly in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The true faith is, we believe and profess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man. As God, He was begotten of the substance of the Father before time. As man, He was born in time of the substance of His mother. He is perfect God and He is perfect man with a rational soul and human flesh. He is equal to the Father in His divinity, but He is inferior to the Father in His humanity.

"Although He is God and man, He is not two, but He is one Christ. And He is one, not because His divinity was changed into flesh, but because His humanity was assumed to God. He is one, not at all because of a mingling of substances, but because He is one person. As a rational soul and flesh are one man, so God and man are one

Christ. He died for our salvation, descended to hell, arose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

Thus, the Athanasian Creed teaches that Christ is one person with two natures. The Creed of Chalcedon, written in 451 A.D., was also developed to fight against Arian heresies, Gnostic heresies, and the other heresies that came down through the ages. It declares: "Following the Holy Fathers, therefore, we all with one accord teach the profession of faith in the one identical Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. We declare that He is perfect, both in His divinity and in His humanity, truly God, and truly man, composed of body and a rational soul. And He is co-substantial with the Father in His divinity, and co-substantial with us in our humanity, like us in every respect except for sin. We declare that in His divinity, He was begotten of the Father before time, and in His humanity, He was begotten in this last age of Mary, the Virgin, the mother of God."

For us in our salvation, we declare that the one self-same Christ, also begotten Son and Lord, must be acknowledged in two natures, without commingling or change, division or separation. The distinction between the two natures is not removed by their union; rather, the specific character of each nature is preserved. They are united in one person and one hypostasis. He is not split or divided into two persons, but is one self-same only-begotten Son, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what the prophets taught about Him from the beginning. Jesus Christ Himself taught us this. It is the creed of the fathers handed down to us.

In this creed, Mary is called the mother of God. The Greek word is Theotokos, which literally means God-bearer. But the truth is that Christ is both God and man. He is one person with two natures, and these two natures are not commingled. Quite frankly, I am uncomfortable with the phrase “the mother of God.” Mary was indeed the mother of the human nature of Christ, but she was not the mother of Christ Himself. Christ assumed that human nature. Philippians 2:6 says, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation,

and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Our Lord took upon Himself the form of a servant; He assumed our nature. Now look back at Luke 1:35, where the angel revealed to Mary that she was to be the mother of the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Luke 1:35, the angel Gabriel said, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." What was the holy thing? It was the human nature of Christ. Christ assumed that nature. If you ask me when He assumed that nature, I do not know. But He did assume it. Here is one thing I do know, and one thing I can say without equivocation. First Timothy 3:16 says, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Notice what he said: "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." And then he said, "God was manifest in the flesh."

Let me give you one more confession of faith. This is from the Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith, paragraph 2: "The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance, and equal with Him who made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things that He hath made, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon Him man's

nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowing her. And so was made a woman of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David, according to the scripture, so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person without conversion, composition, or confusion, which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man."

So, here's what you need to learn. Jesus Christ is one person with two natures. He is perfectly God and perfectly man and these two

natures are not combined, they are not confused, they're not conflicted and they're not to be confounded. He is one person with two natures.

Now, I want you to look back in Philippians 2 and verse 7. The Bible says, "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

Christ's Self-Emptying Explained

Now I want to give you one quick quote before I start explaining and preaching. And this one quote will help you understand. John Calvin is writing on Philippians 2 and verse 7 and he says this, "In order to exhort us to submission, by his example he shows that when as God, he might have displayed to the world the brightness of his glory, he gave up his right and voluntarily emptied himself, and that he assumed

Christ took the form of a servant and, contented with that humble condition, suffered His divinity to be concealed under a veil of flesh. So how are we to understand, “He made himself of no reputation”? If you try to say He gave up His deity, then He is not God. If He gave up His attributes, then He is not God. If He ceased to be omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, then He is not God. But Calvin was right when he said, “He suffered His divinity to be concealed under a veil of flesh.”

If you will hold Philippians 2, turn in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10. Notice verses 19 and 20: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”

What did our Lord’s human nature do? In one sense, it veiled His divinity. When people saw our Lord, they saw Him as they would see us. Isaiah chapter 53 said, “there is no comeliness in Him that we should desire Him.” In other words, He looked like a normal, everyday human being. He was a normal man. But that flesh veiled His deity.

Christ was, is, and always will be God. He did not cease to be God. He did not lay aside His attributes; He did not lay aside anything.

The way He emptied Himself, or became of no reputation, was that He allowed human flesh to veil His glory.

The Voluntary Humility of Christ

Philippians 2:6 says, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” In order to comprehend this phrase, you must understand that Christ did not seize upon the opportunity to lawfully and fully display His deity, His glory, and His majesty. He had every right to do so. He was God, yet He willingly concealed His deity in His flesh.

The Mount of Transfiguration was an instance where His glory did shine through the veil of His flesh. The Bible says, “And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” This is known as the Mount of Transfiguration. It would not have been sinful, wrong, or unlawful for Jesus Christ to shine forth in the brightness and the glory of His deity and His majesty, for He was God.

But verse 6 tells us that our Lord’s abasement and His humility were voluntary and were not of necessity. The Bible says, “He humbled Himself. He made Himself of no reputation.”

The first Adam, who was a man and a creature, sinfully seized the opportunity to become God and was kicked out of the garden. The second Adam, who was God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God in the sense of displaying His glory and His majesty, but He willingly and in humility concealed that glory in the veil of flesh. The first Adam demonstrated his pride, his arrogancy, and his vain desire. The second Adam demonstrated His humility and His obedience.

The mind of Christ consists of two essential graces: humility and obedience. First, consider the humility of Christ. You must understand that Christ left His throne of glory. He concealed His deity. He came into the world which He had created.

The Mind of Christ: Humility

He was born in the lowliest of places, a manger, of parents with the lowliest of social status, a carpenter. He was under the law. After He was made in the likeness of man, He became a servant. He was made under the law, and it was a law which He had made and given. He suffered as a man. He died for sins that He did not commit. He endured the wrath of God and gave His life for a people who by nature hated and despised Him.

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Our Lord created the world; He came into the world. He could have and should have come as the shining King of glory, but He did not. He veiled His glory; He willingly veiled it and humbled Himself.

This is the humility of Christ. Look carefully at this amazing truth. Turn to Psalm 113, verses 5 and 6, and consider what it reveals. Hold Philippians 2; we are coming right back there. Psalm 113, verses 5 and 6, presents the humility of Christ as an amazing truth. The One who created the world came into the world, veiled His glory, and humbled Himself.

"Who is like unto the Lord our God who dwelleth on high? Who is like Him?" "Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!" Can you imagine that? It requires extreme humility on God's part just to behold things in heaven and in the earth. God is so high above, He is so holy, so righteous, so glorious, so majestic, it takes humility for Him to look down and see heaven and see earth.

If it requires humility for God just to observe and look at the heavens and what is in the earth, which He made, how much more humility is required for that same God to lay aside the righteous manifestation of His glory, veil Himself with flesh, become man, become a servant, and then die and suffer for others. He willingly, voluntarily assumed a meaner position and a lower rank. He not only became flesh, He became a servant. And He became obedient unto death.

How are we unlike Christ? Look at us: how we fight for position, strive for rank, strive for popularity. Christ was not in a popularity contest. He voluntarily humbled Himself. The mind of Christ is a mind of humility.

Do you remember that passage in Isaiah 55, verses 8 and 9, where God said this? "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Man always strives to be the greatest. You remember even the apostles were fighting among themselves who should be the greatest. And what did our Lord do? He took a little child and put him in the midst and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

And then He says, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Our Lord said in Matthew 11 verse 29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

In Colossians 3:12–13, the Apostle Paul commands and admonishes us: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” He commands us to put on humbleness of mind, meekness, and longsuffering.

I told you last week, and I am going to remind you this week: if we ever saw who God really was—how holy, righteous, and godly He is—and if we really saw the depth and depravity of our sin, I guarantee you there would be a natural humility. You remember Isaiah, when he saw the Lord high and lifted up. In Isaiah 6:5, he said, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

What is the mind of Christ? It is a mind of humility, in which He willingly humbled Himself. Do you remember that passage in John 13, where our Lord took a basin and towels and washed the feet of His disciples?

I don't know about you, but I never really wanted to wash any dirty feet. But our Lord washed their feet. So what is the mind of Christ? First of all, it is a mind of humility. Secondly, it is a mind of obedience.

Philippians chapter 2, verses 7 and 8, says, "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The Mind of Christ: Obedience

One of the most frequently used phrases in the New Testament concerning Christ is a phrase that he used of himself. He referred to himself as the sent one. He always said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Christ came as a servant.

In Luke chapter 22, beginning with verse 24, we read: "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."

Our Lord came to be a servant. He was a servant of the Father. He did not labor to promote a separate interest. As the Son of Man, He studied how to promote the glory of God and the welfare and the salvation of His people. He came to serve, He came to save, He came to die. Only Christ, the perfect servant, could say as He said in John 8 verse 29, "And he that sent me is with me:

The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. Let me ask you, is there any wife who can say that

she always does the things that please her husband? Or a husband who can say, “I do always those things that please my wife”? Or children who can say, “I do always those things that please my parents”? Or is there a Christian who can say, “I always do those things that please my Heavenly Father”? Unhappily, sometimes we do not please Him. We should. But only Christ, the perfect servant, could say, “I do always those things that please him.” Our goal should be the goal of Christ. We should desire and strive to do always those things that please our Heavenly Father.

Paul said, “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” One of his prayers for the Colossians was that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. Have you ever really made it a matter of prayer to ask God to enable you to walk pleasing unto Him? We can only walk pleasing unto Him as we keep His Word, as we obey the principles in His Word.

This might throw a little enlightenment on the subject of why our prayers are not answered sometimes. John writes, “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” Because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. Do you do those things that are pleasing in his sight?

Our Lord became a servant. He became obedient, and He became obedient unto death. We may live and be obedient until we die. However, our death will be quite different from that which our Lord experienced. He knew that in His death, He would incur and experience the full wrath of God for our sins. His death was unique. It was a sacrificial death. It was a substitutionary death. It was a propitiatory death. When Christ died in our stead, that is, as our substitute, and when He gave Himself as a sacrifice, the full wrath of a holy, righteous, sovereign God fell upon Him. He appeased, satisfied, and placated the righteous wrath of God on our behalf. The only reason that we can be forgiven is because our sins were paid for in Christ.

I do not know if you have ever thought about this, but sin must be paid for. If it is not paid for in Jesus Christ, that means you must pay for it yourself, and you do not want to pay for it yourself. Our Lord became a servant. He became obedient. He became obedient in death. But it was not just what you and I would call dying. It was not just a natural death. He experienced the fullness of the wrath of a righteous, holy God.

Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." What was the joy that was set before Christ? How could He endure the cross and despise the shame for joy?

The Joy Set Before Christ and Our Duty

There were two answers. First, there was a joy of being obedient to His Father even unto death. Secondly, there was the joy of saving His people: “Who for the joy that was set before him”—Father, I have completed the work which You have given Me to do. I have saved the people. In doing so, He endured the cross, despising the shame.

That is why we are commanded in Philippians 2:5, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” What kind of mind was it? A mind of humility, a mind of obedience. Before making the applications, consider John Gill’s words: “Let the same condescending spirit and humble deportment appear in you as in him. This mind, affection, and conduct of Christ may refer both to His early affection to His people and the love He bore to them from everlasting, the resolution and determination of His mind in consequence of it, and His agreement with His Father to take upon Him their nature in the fullness of time and to do His will by obeying, suffering, and dying in their room instead, and also the open exhibition and execution of all this in time when He appeared in human nature, poor, mean, and abject, condescending to the lowest offices, and behaving in the most meek and humble manner throughout the whole of His life to the moment of His death.”

What was the mind of Christ? He was eminently humble, and this is what we are peculiarly to learn of Him: “Learn of me, for I am

meek and lowly in heart." If we were lowly-minded, we should be like-minded. If we were like Christ, we should be lowly minded.

We must walk in the same spirit and in the same steps as the Lord Jesus, who humbled Himself to suffering and death for us, not only to satisfy God's justice and pay the price for our redemption, but to set us an example that we should likewise follow in His steps.

The command is, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We may complain that it is difficult to walk humbly and obediently, especially since we are in the flesh. It is very difficult. Our flesh will not lie silently on the altar as did Isaac. Our flesh will scream and cry and beg and plead for fulfillment.

We have our duty. Micah 6 and verse 8 says, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Humility may be difficult—extremely difficult—but it is still our duty.

We may complain loudly concerning our duty and the difficulty of conforming our minds to the mind of Christ. Yet there is really no reason to complain. Hebrews 12 and verse 4 says, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." How many of us have sweat great drops of sweat as blood? How many of us have shed blood resisting sin? None of us. Until we start shedding our own blood in resisting sin, we have no reason to complain. We must do our duty and learn to walk humbly and obediently with our Heavenly Father.

Conclusion and Prayer

If we love the Lord, we will obey Him. Romans 13 and verse 10 declares that love is the fulfilling of the law. Therefore, if I have the option of sin before me and the option of obedience before me, as badly as my flesh may want the sin, I must resist it and walk in obedience and submission to my Heavenly Father, so that I may have the mind of Jesus Christ: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." It is a mind of humility and obedience.

That does not mean that we do not stand. We stand humbly, obediently, and lawfully. We fight, but we fight in humility and

obedience. Deuteronomy 17 and Deuteronomy 20 are tremendous passages, especially concerning warfare. Yet God gives regulations and rules for humbly and obediently fighting righteous and godly battles. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask You for Your blessing, help, and grace. Teach us that we may think like Thee and act like Thee. Help us, Heavenly Father, to honor Thee in all that we say and do. May our desire be to say with Jesus Christ, “For I do always those things that please my Father.” Father, help us. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

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