

## Humility is the Answer - Philippians 2:1-11 – December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- For today's teaching, I want to talk about how that humility is the answer to many of the problems we have in our Christian lives.
- In the text before us, the Apostle Paul will put his finger on two reasons as to why they were experiencing conflict in the church.
- Namely, selfish ambition and vain conceit, both of which are fueled by pride and as such, are the source of conflict and division.

- In chapter 4 Paul will name the two women that were creating the conflict, and causing those within the church to choose sides.

Philippians 4:2-3 – 2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

- I suppose you could say Paul is rightly trying to deal with all this before the conflict reaches the point where it splits the church.
- Enter our text today where Paul, by the Holy Spirit, will teach us that humility is the answer to resolving interpersonal conflicts.
- This because pride is the source of fights and conflict by virtue of how pride is at the center of selfish ambition and vain conceit.

James 4:1-10 - 1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. 4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Proverbs 13:10 - By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.

- I would suggest that it's when we humble ourselves before the Lord that all pride-fueled contention will ultimately be dismantled.
- The reason being is pride causes us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, which results in looking down on others.
- As one so aptly stated it, "If we looked into people instead of down on people, we would be filled with compassion for people."

### 1. Compassion for others (Verses 1-2)

1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

- In verses one and two, Paul says they would make his joy complete by their love, tenderness, and compassion for each other.
- However, in order to have this same love, being one in spirit and of one mind, there first has to be the humbling of ones self.
- Absent this humility, we can never taste from the cup of joy that brings with it, this tenderness, love and compassion for others.

### 2. Value of others (Verses 3-4)

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

- What Paul is saying here in verses three and four is that when we humble ourselves, we will then value others above ourselves.
- Then, when we value others above ourselves, we won't just look out for our own interests, we will look out for others interests.
- However, it's when we have selfish ambition and vain conceit, that we fancy ourselves, and our interests, to be most important.

### 3. Relationship with others (Verses 5-11)

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Verses 5-11 are very interesting for a number of reasons, chief of which is many regarded this as a hymn of the early church.
- The reason being is it ever so eloquently describes our relationship with others in light of having the same mindset of Christ.
- In other words, Jesus is our ultimate and perfect example when it comes to humbling Himself and His dying for us on the cross.

- I'll close with a question that I think we would all do well to answer, and it's that of what conflict could be resolved with humility?