

Keynotes from Pastor Tims' am Sermon on 15/3/2020

Following Jesus into humility

(Please read these notes whilst listening to the sermon audio file.)

Reading:- Philippians 2 verses 2-8

Philippians 2:2-8 ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Currently we are all very conscious of the virus that is sweeping the world, and if we knew a cure, our moral duty would be to pass that on to the authorities. Yet there is a far more deadly virus affecting everyone in the world – that of sin. We follow a Saviour who is the cure for the virus of sin – a virus that doesn't just lead to physical death but also to spiritual death, bringing eternal punishment under the just wrath of a holy God. How much more, then, do we have a responsibility to be actively seeking opportunities to tell people about Jesus – the cure for sin.

- 1) **To be able to do that with integrity, what we say we believe needs to be seen in our lives, particularly in the area of our relationships within the church.**
 - a) When relationships in church break down, it damages our witness.
 - b) We need to demonstrate that we are people who share life together and love to do so, modelling our Saviour who came to reconcile us to God and each other.
- 2) **For this to happen, we need to be a people who follow Jesus into humility.**

- a) Pride is the major root of damaged relationships in the church and in our family and social lives. When we seek the best for ourselves, because we think we are better than others, division occurs.
- b) The Philippian church was divided, affecting their witness to the world. Paul was calling them back to unity, using teaching on humility to do so.

3) **Paul points us to Jesus – the perfect example of humility.**

v2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **v5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

- a) Paul calls the church to be united by having the same mind, a unity of mind. How can this happen? We will have the mind of Christ (**v5**)
- b) How does the mind of Christ show itself in the life of Christ? In **vv 6-8**, (see below) we are privileged to follow the mind of Christ. As we meditate on these verses, we will find deep truths that reform our lives, burning up every trace of pride, if we are receptive to the Spirit's working in us.

The mind of Christ – perfect example of humility:

vv6-8 Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1) **The eternal God became incarnate – vv6-7 (above)**

- a) Jesus was in the **form of God**, meaning he was in full possession of the divine nature. He created all things, and without him we would not exist. He is the greatest reality in the universe and worthy of our worship, above all other gods in our lives.
- b) **Yet: v6** (Jesus) **did not** count equality with God a thing to be **grasped**. Grasping means to hold on to something by force or to take advantage because you are in a position of power. Jesus did not cling on to his glory, or use his deity to take advantage.

c) **Instead: v7** (Jesus) **emptied himself**, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. Jesus didn't lose his deity, but added humanity to it, choosing to live in obscurity for 30 years and then to be rejected by those who should have worshipped him.

2) The incarnate God became a curse – v8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

a) Nothing humbles a person more than death. Only God has authority over death, but Jesus allowed death, which had no power over him, to take his life.

b) Jesus voluntarily took our sin on himself, becoming a curse for us and allowing death to take his life so we could be redeemed. **Gal 3:13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree".

The mind of Christ was a mind that chose the path of self-denial for the good of sinful humanity.

How will we know if we have the mind of Christ?

- 1) We will show **self-denying unity**, (**v2**) being of one mind. A disparate group of people united in our worship of God.
- 2) We will have **self-denying motives**. It is possible to do good things with sinful motives, but Paul says (**v3**) don't do anything out of selfish ambition (what can I get out of this?) or arrogance (look at me!). Whatever we do, we need to ask why am I doing this? If the reason is anything other than the glory of Jesus and the good of others then we need to repent.
- 3) We will have **self-denying consideration**. **v3** in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Pride makes life all about me. Jesus didn't live like that. His ministry was all about serving the needs of others, and **v4** shows us what we should do: Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Our choices today are: repentance and asking God to change us **or**
: resisting the Spirit and continuing in our pride

We can only make progress as we abide in Christ and he abides in us. We need to look to Jesus and he will change us as we submit our lives to him, so allowing us to follow him into humility.