

Looking Forward

A Challenge for 2017
from Philippians 2



The Context

- Paul was in jail (1:12-14)
- Paul was wrestling with wanting to go to heaven vs. helping people on earth (21-24)
 - He knew he should remain for their ‘progress and joy in the faith’ (25-26)



The Context

- He wasn't certain he would see them again, so he gave them an exhortation: (27)
 - “Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ” (cf. Col. 1:9f)
 - “standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel”

The Challenge

- Therefore (2:1)
 - Flesh out what ‘worthy conduct’ looks like
 - If* assumes it is true (i.e. – *since you have...*)



The Challenge

- *Therefore, since you have:*
 - *Motivation from being in union with Christ*
 - *Tender encouragement from mutual love*
 - *Intimacy with(in) the Holy Spirit*
 - *Deep feelings and practical concern*

The Challenge

- *Therefore, since you have all this, make my joy complete*
 - He was staying for their joy (1:25); he was asking for them to *complete* his joy
 - How?



The Challenge

- Make my joy complete by being of the same mind
 - *The same thing think*
 - Unity is a by-product
 - Unity in truth: ‘striving together for the faith of the gospel’ (1:27; Eph. 4:13)

Unity

1. Like-mindedness

–Having the same love

- Reciprocal, mutual love (James 2:8)

–Thinking the one thing, as ones joined in soul

- Harmony in desires, ambitions (see 1:27)

Unity

2. Humility

—*Regarding one another above yourselves*

- No selfishness – faction, party, division

 - 1:15; Gal. 5:20; James 3:13-4:3

- No empty conceit – pride, ambition, *self*

 - Cf. Gal. 5:26; 2 Cor. 5:9; James 4:6

Unity

2. Humility

–*Looking also at the interests of others*

- Look attentively; focus attention (cf. 3:17)
- Not license to be irresponsible!
- Allow the wants / needs of others to influence your choices (i.e. - *love others*)

The Greatest Example

- Let this thinking be in you which was also in Christ Jesus (5)
 1. Jesus emptied Himself (7)
 2. Jesus humbled Himself (8)



The Greatest Example

1. Jesus emptied Himself (7)

—*Form = proper expression of essence*

—Jesus pre-existed in the form of God

—Jesus stopped expressing Himself in the form proper to *Godness* and took on the form of a human—even a bond-slave!

The Greatest Example

2. Jesus humbled Himself (8)

–Obedient = *under + to hear* (cf. Heb. 5:7-8)

- Even to death

- The Father wanted Him to die?

- Even to death on a cross

- In the same way a criminal would die



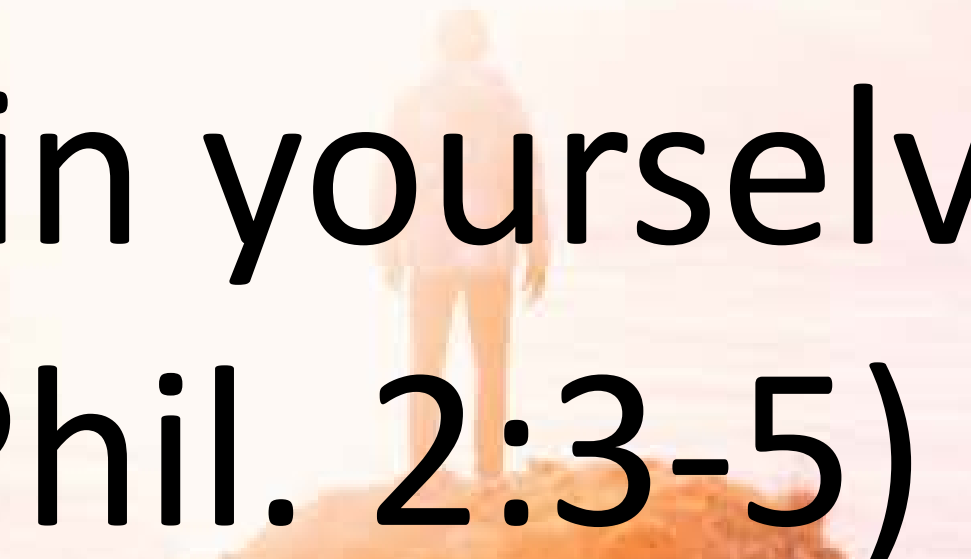
The Greatest Example

- The result?
 - God highly exalted Him
 - Luke 1:52; 14:11; 18:14; James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6
- To the glory of God the Father! (11)



Meditate for a Moment

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus... (Phil. 2:3-5)

A person is standing on a small, dark rock in the middle of the ocean. The person is silhouetted against the bright, glowing light of a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of blue, pink, and orange. The water of the ocean is visible in the foreground and background, reflecting the light from the sky.

So What?

- What areas of life does this affect?
 - Home, church, work, community, ...
- What relationships does this apply to?
 - In the home?
 - Spouse, children, parents, extended family
 - What would this look like?

So What?

- What thoughts/attitudes does this rule out?
 - What behaviors/responses? (see 2:14)
- What thoughts/attitudes does this encourage?
 - Grace, patience, service, self-sacrifice ...



So What?

- Is there anything you need to change?
 - Pick one area / relationship
- What specifically will you do differently?
 - Make a plan
 - Share your plan with someone else

