

# Philippians 2:1-11

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Preacher: Daniel Swanson

[ 0 : 00 ] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but humility, count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

And we're going to stop there for tonight, but I'm going to keep going to 11 because it's hard to talk about one before without five to 11. So he says, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

Though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form.

He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

[ 1 : 09 ] And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Let me pray. Father God, I just beg you to be here tonight.

As we look over this text, God, as we read it, as we study it, and as we talk about it later, Father, would you be here? God, I want to feel the weight of you tonight.

Lord, I don't want to let another moment pass without feeling the huge weight of the weight of your glory, the weight of this impact on our lives. Father, I just pray that for a moment we be able to step away from our distractions and just sit at your feet and cheer for you.

God, we're wasting our time if you're not here. Would you please be here, Father? We ask this in Christ's name. Okay, so it's a really simple message tonight. It's cool because one through four is so simple and straightforward that it's not like we have to go into some huge theological debate about what this means.

It means what it means. And so it means it gives less room for me to insert my own opinion in it. And it gives us more room to apply this to our lives, which is good if we want to do that, if we have this heart for the Lord, if we have this heart to say, like, Lord, please change our lives.

[ 2 : 24 ] This would be good for us. But it's bad if you're kind of like me where you just like to talk about things and have a theory and say, well, what does this mean to you? And look at apologetics and just not do anything about it.

And so the thing that makes us talking about this in theory and apologetics so sweet is when we apply this. So that's what we're going to do. But before we do that, let's kind of set the context for what's going on in this passage.

Well, if y'all haven't heard what's going on in Philippians, Paul, the Apostle Paul is writing to the Philippian church. And he's just got done saying, only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel, which we said last time was a huge call on our lives.

How do you do that? How do you do that practically? And we believe that Paul is saying that you do that by being in unison with one another, that we're striving for the gospel. And then he also says that he's suffering for the gospel, which was kind of an alarming point because we're not really used to hearing the word suffering, especially here in the United States and in college.

But why? He says in verse 29, it's been granted to you. And we said that was kind of a strange thing for Paul to say, that it's been granted to you to suffer. And what is so sweet about suffering?

[ 3 : 40 ] Like, why does Paul say it's been granted to you? And it's nice because really this is a witness test for your faith. If we often ask the questions of, well, am I a Christian or not? A good

starting point is, well, man, are we suffering for the gospel?

Do you have any conflict within yourself of the gospel? Does it place a demand on your life? Are you suffering for it? Paul is saying that this actually is a clear sign of your salvation.

If you're suffering, if you're having a hard time, if you're saying tough things to people out of love, we said that wasn't necessary. So we're picking up this week. So Paul's saying that I am suffering. And then he says in these verses that we're going to go through, he says a lot of things.

And the three points that we're going to go over, really, we're going to say that Paul is saying that a true Christian, we're going to, because of what Christ has done for us in verses 5 through 11, we will be marked by unity, humility, and service.

So this is huge for our church body right now. Just in Christ's family, the church itself right here.

[ 4 : 45 ] This is huge for us because we want to know how can we specifically get to serving together as a community. If you're in any of our community groups, you know, that's like a question we're bringing up. We're bringing that up.

How do we practically do this? How do we practically serve? Like we're trying to cover these bases. We're trying to have unity with one another. We're trying to have humility. But how do we serve? So this is huge for our church right now, which is great because I think it's been so relevant to us right here.

And like I said, we're only going to get to verse 4, but 5 through 11 will be another week we'll talk about. That'll be next week. But it's impossible to go through 1 through 4 without the motivation of Christ.

And we can, there's a lot of really good things that Paul says here. He says, you know, that we need to have unity with one another. We need to have the same mind, the same love. We need to do nothing from selfish ambition or being conceived and having humility.

We need to serve other people. But if we just stopped there and did not look at Christ as an example, then we're no different from anyone else that just strives to be morally good.

[ 5 : 49 ] So 5 through 11 is kind of interwoven into this. It's our motivation. We said last week that Paul is just not to be motivated by him coming there and him being seen and them seeing him.

And our deeds that we do are motivated by the people that are around watching us. And he says, you know, be motivated by Christ. And so that's what we're getting to more. We're saying that these things are good, but we can't do them without Christ.

He is our motivation. So let's just jump straight into it. Unity. So Paul says, we're just going to read verse 1 and 2. He says, so if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one arm.

So he says that he's asking to make his joy complete. He's saying that there are those things. So it's kind of, it's not, he's not asking, well, is there encouragement in Christ?

Is there comfort in love? Is there participation in the spirit? He's not saying that because it's not like Paul's actually wondering if that's true. He's saying, therefore, if there is encouragement. So we know, so Paul's making a statement.

[ 7 : 00 ] If there is encouragement in Christ, because of what Christ has done to us, as we can see through 5, verses 5 through 11. If there is comfort from love. If we have participation in the spirit. If we have affection for one another.

And sympathy. And we will have unity. Paul's not saying, well, if these things are true, like, if we have these things. He's saying that because of these things, because of these things, we know that they're true.

He says, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. So, again, Paul's making a statement that because there are these things, we will have unity.

Like, we will be of one mind. We will be of the same love for one another. He's not leaving room for this. He's not leaving room for saying, okay, y'all can possibly not have unity with one another. Y'all can possibly not have the same love, the same mind. He's saying, we are obligated to have these things. We are obligated to have the same mind with one another. We are obligated not to have dissension.

[ 8 : 05 ] But it's kind of a strange statement. He says, if there are all these things, complete my joy. He says, complete my joy. Make it complete. And so the question is, what is Paul going to follow up

with? He says, okay, so complete my joy.

And then of all the things he says to complete his joy with, he says, be of the same mind, have the same love, be in full accord and of one mind.

Now, he could have said anything. He could have said, complete my joy by praying. Complete my joy by reading the scriptures more, by fasting more. He could have picked a million different things. But he says, complete it by having unity.

The thing is that before we go on, I'm reiterating the point that unless Christ is in this, unless Christ is the reason that's motivating us to have unity, we're at a loss.

We are completely insufficient to do these things without Christ being the driving point. And the nice thing is that this sounds so nice. Like Paul says, so many lovely things in verses 1 through 4.

[9:07] But if we're talking about unity, he says, complete my joy. It's being with the same mind and the same spirit. Pretty much every club, every sports team that you've ever been on, every Greek life, every sword, every fraternity will say, oh, yeah, we need to be one.

We need to have unison with one another. But what makes the gospel here so different? That's the question. If everyone is starting for that, everyone agrees, and they say, yeah, well, we need to have unity with one another.

What makes what Paul is saying so different? And Paul is saying this can actually be something attained. We're going to kind of look at Acts and see how the church attained this and how it looked like for them practically. But before I go any further, we are completely insufficient to be united for the gospel without Christ.

And Christ is not the reason why we do the things that we do. But we're wasting our time, and we're like everyone else. So why is unity so important?

Why does Paul say that it completes his joy by being with the same mind and the same love? Why is that so important to Paul? Because Paul is saying that this determines how efficient we are as a church body.

[10:15] If we are the hands and feet of Christ, Paul is saying that unity is the reason that determines. That is saying that this is going to be the cause of how efficient you are. So if we just look back a couple of verses, we would say that Paul is, and we're going to see this because we're going to contrast the Philippian church and the Corinthian church.

But if you're familiar with verse 27, he says, Only let the manner of life be worthy of the gospel, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

So we're looking at the Philippian church. Let's just take a look at the Philippian church. And it turns out that the Philippian church is partnering with Paul in his sufferings in the gospel, their sharing the gospel. Paul gives a brilliant testimony about a path that is who is doing the work in the gospel, who is ministering, who is working hard, who is laboring with them.

But there's still a little bit of disunity because he's bringing this up. He's saying he's urging them on to have unity. And so it's apparent that there's a little bit of disunity. And it's so important for Paul to correct this now.

It's kind of like the, if y'all are familiar with me, in Revelation, Jesus is starting to call out the Ephesian church. He says, y'all are doing all these good things.

[11:35] Y'all are caring for the poor. But the thing that y'all have lost is your first love. So it's possible that we can be, as a church, doing the right things and having the right direction, but allowing something as small as disunity to come in between us.

And it completely affects how efficient we are. I'm going to quote William Barclay, who kind of talks about how really this disunity can creep in and be very, very small.

And it can look harmless. He says, the one danger which threatened the Philippian church was that of disunity. He says there's a sense in which that there is a danger of every healthy church.

He says, it is when people are really earnest, when the beliefs really matter to them, that they are apt to get up against each other. The greater the enthusiasm, the greater the damage that they make alive.

It is against that danger Paul wished to safeguard his friends. So you hear about the Philippian church. We know they're doing huge things. But when we're getting more passionate and more and more excited about the gospel, the more excited we get about the things that we believe in.

[ 12 : 44 ] So those can kind of come to light with disunity. So then let's contrast this with a completely different church. The Philippian church, Paul is happy with them.

He's excited with them. And they're sharing the gospel. They're sharing the sufferings. And then let's look at the Corinthian church. If you all will turn to 1 Corinthians 1.10, we're going to kind of take a different look at the picture of what the Corinthian church looks like.

Okay. Okay.

So, Paul has his intro. He says, I'm Paul. I'm writing for the Corinthian. It's about the will of God. And he's like saying how thankful he is to them. Verses 4 through 9.

So he kind of gets through his introduction. And now he's starting on the main content of his letter. What is the first thing that Paul addresses in Corinthian? He's done with his grief.

[ 13 : 46 ] He's done with his thanksgiving. The first thing he says, he says, I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

For it has been reported to me by close people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. So, as we read on, as we keep going into Corinthians, we learn that there's dissension in the church. There is incest. There's pride. And there's self-sufficiency. There's a long one. We could go on all day about what the things that the Corinthians are doing, that Paul is calling them out on, that he's rebuking them over.

And most people, if you've been in the church, you've heard that the American church is compared to the Corinthian church a lot of the time. And I would kind of say that we're, in a lot of ways, really, really similar to the Corinthian church.

I would say that we definitely have a lot of dissension. We have a lot of pride. We have a lot of self-sufficiency. And I'm sure there's a lot of things that are so below the surface that we don't see that eventually will come to the light.

[ 14 : 45 ] So, I think that we're in this boat with the Corinthian church. And Paul is, he's saying that this is so important that we get rid of this disunity now.

Especially because this kind of, this mindset breeds the thought of, like, rugged individualism. Like we kind of talked about last week, we said that the gospel, if you're not careful, it can allow this thought of rugged individualism.

I can do everything on my own. I don't need other people. I don't need to be committed to the local church. I don't need people asking me tough questions. I can figure things out of my own. And the reason why that is because it's bred into us.

If you've grown up in the United States, you know that everything is saying, telling you that you got where you are, where you, because of your heart, you climbed the career ladder, and you're where you are because of you.

And what Paul is trying to get rid of, he's trying to get rid of this phantom illusion of self-sufficiency that is so rampant in the Corinthian church. And he's promoted in his letter to the Philippians, unity.

[ 15 : 48 ] He's saying we need to be one. And so when we look at self-sufficiency and when we look at rugged individualism, we see that it's not actually a gospel about you at all. I mean, you're not going to find many verses that Jesus talks about where he's promoting the advancement of you and you alone.

It's not a gospel about you. You're not going to find Jesus talking about it. And when we look at the book of Acts, we're going to find that that's not how the early church operated either. When God starts doing huge things to the Acts church, if y'all are familiar with the way the Acts works, you know that the church, the early church is doing huge things.

Like people are being brought to Christ by thousands. People are being healed. The homeless are being taken care of. The widows and orphans are being sheltered. And that's not done in the leaders.

We're passionate about the gospel. It comes through his unified church. If we can look at a specific, like I'm just going to read, you don't have to actually turn there, but I'm just going to read Acts 2, 41 through 45, just to kind of let this settle in for what does a unified body of Christ look like?

If Paul is urging us not to be disunified but to be unified, what does it look like when a church is unified? Acts 2, verse 41 through 45. So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about 3,000 souls, 3,000 people coming to Christ.

[17:17] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship to the breaking of bread and prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling the possessions and belongings and distributing proceeds to all as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts. And praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them, day by day, those who were going to be saved. That is a huge picture of the church. And we don't see that very often. I think a lot of ways we don't see it very often, especially in the United States of America, because we have a huge problem with disunity. No one's going to abruptly say that. It's kind of hard to narrow it down. But if we're really opening our eyes, we have a huge unity problem. We're relying on ourselves.

[18:19] We're not relying on one another. We're not in covenant membership with one another. We're not asking each other to carry our own loads. But at the same time, I don't need to discourage us and say that we need to be unified as the body of Christ.

Because we already are. If you're in Christ, we already are unified together. It's just that a lot of times we don't know how to operate together. We don't. We think we can do things on our own. If we're going to kind of, Paul is kind of reinforcing this idea of the Corinthians. And in 2 Corinthians 12, or 1 Corinthians 12, he gives this really brilliant picture of how the church body is supposed to operate.

I'm going to try not to go too long because I know that we have a lot to get on with here. But he says, For just as many as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

So then he kind of gives examples of how some people are the feet of Christ, and some people are the hands of Christ, and some people are the mouth of Christ. And we all are relying on one another. When one person suffers, we all suffer. When one person's doing great, and we're all going to do great.

[19:28] So he's trying to get the Corinthians back to this biblical view of what true unity looks like. He's trying to get back there. It's a good picture of what the gospel looks like when we are unified by Christ.

When we are in unity with one another. So he says, if we're going back to Corinthians, he says, Have the same mind. And so, if we're going to look at that, he says, Have the same mind. He does not mean nitpicky words, or nitpicky parts of doctrine. He does not mean that.

But he does mean a common understanding and a genuine agreement. He's kind of talking about harmony in this picture. But what does that look like practically? And so, for the sake of discussion later on tonight, I'm going to kind of give an example of what this looks like.

And it's kind of along the same lines of, for the sake of time, we're not going to go into it, but John Wesley's conversation with Charles Simian. And if you've been in the church long enough, you hear the words of Calvinism and Heresimism.

[20:35] They're around. And, you know, a lot of times they're dividing lines between us. I'd say a really biblical conversation with another believer who's truly on fire for Christ.

Who's truly wanting God's personal holiness. It looks something like the conversation between Charles Simian and John Wesley. I've had it. I can remember my freshman year.

I was sitting in jail, and I was talking to a friend named TJ. And we were talking, we were both on different sides of the fence about saying, well, God has sovereignly chosen us to be saved. And his blood was not a potential atonement, but it was a personal, specific atonement. And then TJ was kind of on the other side of saying, I completely disagree with you. Because that means this and this and that.

And it was this huge, it was like we were just on a completely different side. But at the end of the day, we were both kind of looking into each other's eyes and saying, man, I know you live and work on a different side, but I'm so on fire that you love Christ.

[21:32] And that you're sharing the gospel with people. And that there's unity between us. That is kind of a short example of kind of the conversation that goes on between Charles Simian and John Wesley.

So, are we divided as the body over small things? And we're not unified over the big things, I think. That's kind of what Paul is urging them on to.

He says, the same love. Okay, this is actually really interesting. I wanted to give an example of this. What does it mean to have the same love to where we're unified?

I just gave a really good example of Acts 2, where the church, he literally gives an example of what it looks like for the church to be unified and have the same love for one another.

Outrageous things are going on. If the same hype was going on around those things, like today, it would be so incomprehensible.

[ 22 : 30 ] I want to see more things like Acts 2. And I know every single person here who read that wants to see more of that. And we're kind of in this state of where you're either hopelessly romantic about Acts 2, and you believe, well, everything about that verse needs to be right here, and we need to make that happen.

Or you are pessimistically idealistic about it. You say, well, that's not going to happen. That's how it is. That's how it was. But that's not how it is anymore. So I feel like a lot of times you're in an island of two camps, and I believe that there's a middle ground where, and we are so unified, because Paul is urging us on to unity.

And he's saying, have the same love between yourselves. I'm going to give this quote of what did it look like. So we've got a picture of what a Christian was writing about Acts, like the early church.

So I sort of wonder if the writer of Acts was at all by this, about what's going on. And so I want to give this quote that Emperor Julian said about the early church.

So Emperor Julian was not a being raised, not a Christian. But he says this about us. So he says, atheism, in reference to Christianity, he says, has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers and through their care for the burial of the dead.

[ 23 : 52 ] Okay, so Jack, he says, it is a scandal that there is not one single Jew who is a beggar, and that the godless getter of Galileans, referring to Christians, care not only for their own poor, but ours as well.

He says, while those who belong to us look in vain for the help that we should render. So this is a huge picture that someone who is not a believer, is not a Christian, recognizes.

He's saying this is a problem. People, our own people, are looking to us in vain. Because the church is doing such a huge job with canning people that we don't have anything to do.

I'm going to ask the question that's very redundant and really hard to answer. Do people say that about us? Like, do people say that about the Church at Christ Family?

And I want to know for sure. So we're going to go into these discussion questions along the way I'm asking these questions. So besides the discussion question, I'm asking an interpersonal question.

[ 24 : 55 ] So a question you need to ask yourself that is not for everyone else to talk about tonight. Because Philippians 2, we can, a couple verses later, Paul says, he says, therefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trouble.

So there's a sense that, yes, we're going to talk about tough issues, like in these discussion groups. But if we're just relying on that, there's no inner depth of a relationship with Christ.

So Paul is urging them, you need to work out your own salvation with fear and trouble. So the question I have for you to ask yourself is, is there division between yourself and another believer?

And sometimes that can even look like relationships, where if you've had a relationship with another Christian, and something goes wrong, and y'all break up or something, and then there's this tendency to want to hold a grudge against them or act differently about them.

And we don't even realize that this is my sister, this is my brother that is in Christ with you. What about just to another believer in general? Do you hold a grudge against them? And even more so for the church is, do you disagree on something that a church is teaching, that is striving for the gospel, and then consequently, you're not bad-mouthing that church, or not attending that church, but holding a grudge against that church, instead of following Paul's advice to us, to strive together for the gospel, to wrestle together with the gospel.

[ 26 : 28 ] Paul is saying that we don't just hold grudges and not talk about it, and have issues and not talk about it. He's saying that we wrestle through those issues with the church, with other believers.

And so are you holding on to something that you have against the church that is not gospel-centered, instead of actually approaching that church or that person and saying, man, I have a huge issue that's been laying of sin in my own heart, and I need to confess it to you, and we need to work through this issue.

Like, do you have that in your heart? Because if you do, man, I would just say tonight it starts with repenting from that and asking God to lead you away from that.

So the discussion question that we're going to go to this first point is, we're saying, what are the ways that we can have, what are some ways that we can have the same mind with one another, in a way that there's a distinct harmony with one another, that other people can see it, and they can say, well, these people agree on two completely different things, and they're disagreeing about the subject they're fighting over, but they still love each other, and they're still agreeing on the mutual love they have.

Is that inherent to other people? And then, how can we practically have the same love that is unmistakable to the outside world like it was to you? Okay, so the third point, we're saying that a God-like Christian will possess humility that comes from a proper identity that's found in Christ.

[ 27 : 50 ] Verse 3, he says, Do nothing from rivalry and conceit, but humility count others more significant than yourselves. So Paul tells us, he says, not to have selfish ambition and vain conceit.

There are factors for disunity. He's saying, don't have those things. And this verse, this verse where he says, Do nothing from rivalry and conceit, but humility count others more significant.

If we take off our Bible Belt, church attending, fried chicken, sweet tea loving glasses, for like just a second, that is the most, like broad and wise, hardest thing to fall on.

But I don't believe that Paul is just being a hopeless romantic. Like, I believe that he's actually commanding this to us. The thing is, is that when we do that, when we take those lenses off, we realize that this verse is in a direct contradiction with everything else.

What does the school tell you? It says, you know, that you are the most important person. What does our careers tell us? It says, make the most money that you can make. Cultural advancement tells us that. Like, everything is, our own flesh tells us that we are not to do that.

[ 28 : 58 ] That you are the most important person. So, and most people agree this in kind of like a lighthearted way, but Paul is actually meaning this. He's actually trying to take this deeper.

And so the question is, why should you listen to someone who's asking you to, in humility, count others more significant than yourself, and do nothing from rivalry or vacancy?

So why should we listen to that? It's because that's how we stay unified. Paul is saying that we need to be unified. But he's saying that's how we do it. It's when we come to the church, when we come to the church with pride, and we come with arrogance, and we come with this high view of ourselves, instead of humility.

Well, there's going to be a ton of disunity among us. And when we get this, what's our motivation from that? It's Christ. If we're looking at verses 5 through 7 to 8, the first part of it says, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God, a thing to be Christ, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant.

And I would say that how we do this, how we have this humble identity, how we have this humble approach to the gospel, is tough. But the reason why we're usually not having that mentality, why we don't have a humble mentality towards others, is because you do not possess a proper understanding of what Christ has done for you.

[ 30 : 27 ] If you're coming to the church, if your own life looks prideful, and if you're attending church, and you have a prideful attitude that's getting in the way of the community in the church, I would say that the reason why that is, is because we don't understand who we were before Christ.

Do we understand that we were the prostitute, that we were the murderer, that we were the thief, before Christ came and took us away from these things?

He says, he says that Jesus, who is upholding the universe by the might of his word, by the power of his word, he said, he did not take equality with God as a thing to be grasped, but lowered himself, making himself a servant.

So, this is the king of the universe, who everything revolves around, he went and took himself out of that and served us. Because that God who gave us everything, therefore we owe us everything, he left and became nothing, so that we could give him everything.

A lot of times, I'm more prideful, but I don't think that we really understand what Christ has done for us. So that's something that we have to work out in our own hearts. You have to work out like, God, how do I view myself before you change me, before you make me a new creation?

[ 31 : 43 ] A lot of the times, I would say that it's just because we don't view ourselves in that way. We view ourselves a lot higher than we actually are. And personally, that starts in our hearts.

It starts in prayer, it starts tonight when you go home and you leave this place, and you're with Christ. It starts with saying, oh God, I think I have a really bad understanding of what you've done for me, and how you've changed me.

Because if we did have that understanding, we would be so humble, and we would count others as more significant than ourselves, and we would contribute to this unity that Paul is talking about. So a question that we're going to be talking about tonight, we're going to say, what are ways that we can cultivate humility personally, and also in the church?

How can you cultivate humility in the church? And I think a really good place to go to that is in 1 Corinthians 12. So the last point that we're going over is we're saying that proper humility will lead to service.

If we're going to read verse 4, he says, let each of you not only look to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Again, that sounds lovely, that sounds nice, and we want to nod, and we want to agree, and we say, yeah, but when we realize what Paul is saying, he says, let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

[ 33 : 09 ] He's making a huge statement here. Now, he's not saying, like if we read 3, and we said, do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but humility count others more significant than yourselves. We could jump, we could err on the side of saying, well, therefore, I need to completely forsake myself, and neglect myself, and not take care of myself, and not do all these things, but we're not reading what Paul is saying.

Paul is saying, we need to count people more important than ourselves, and not only to your own interests, but only to the interests of others. So it's so important that we read the context there. But still, we're still left with this hard statement of saying, count others more important than yourself, when that is so contrary to everything that you've been taught, how you've been raised, what your flesh tells you.

It tells you that you're the most important person. And the gospel is telling it's the opposite. It's like, we have this pyramid scheme of how things work, of I'm on top, and everyone else is below me, and Christ is flipping that upside down.

That's why it is, why it's such a tough thing to live out the gospel, because we have to put ourselves at the bottom of that pyramid. But Paul is saying that the reason why we do this isn't just to be good people, isn't because it's a lovely thought, but because he's saying that's exactly what Jesus did, and the funny thing is that we falsely have this view that we're on top.

Our view is actually incorrect, because there's nothing that makes Michael any better than you, any better than Michael. But the truth is that Christ has every reason to be on top, has every reason.

[ 34 : 42 ] He is the one who creates, he's the one who's giving breath to people who are deliberately acting in contribution to his word. like, he's giving the breath to people to sin against him.

And he takes himself from the top and puts himself on the bottom. It's this flipped up view, and we can see that in the 27, or chapter 2, verse 7, where he says that he took the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men.

And so, I find that so frequently our mentality is that others are here to serve the community. And this affects the way that we come together.

Like, do you look to the benefit of others? Throughout your day, do you look to the benefit of others? Or does everyone else revolve around you? Does the world revolve around me, and does what everyone else does, does the point of it to serve me?

I think the area where we're most guilty of this is in the church. Honestly, when you come here tonight, this is tough, because it's, we're just getting into practicality of tonight.

[ 35 : 46 ] Did you come tonight with wanting to know, well, is Michael going to be playing the gym day tonight? Is it just going to be Alex playing the guitar? Is it going to be a song that I know? Is it going to be another hymn that's probably like 5,000 years old?

And, you know, is there going to be coffee? Is the message going to be good? And so we come to the church with all these opinions, and that's just Thursday night. Like, Sunday morning is so much more than that as well, of our community here.

We can take this so many different directions. And so, we often have this idea of the church is here to serve me. And so, it's so rare when we actually take what Paul is saying here and apply it to our own lives and approach and say, you know, I just worked out in the church.

How can I serve other people today? Okay? And I want to be so welcoming to other people today. And how can I, how can I be a part of this church and serve them? What are the needs of this church for the church that I'm a part of somewhere else?

I think it's so rare and I think it's hard for us to fully and honestly say that we approach the church with this mentality of how can I serve the church instead of how can it serve me?

[ 36 : 50 ] we so often have a consumerist mentality rather than a giving mentality, a mentality that Paul is asking. So the question that I think about tonight as we're doing our community is I'm saying, do you approach the church with this consumerist mentality or are we coming to serve the church?

Do we have a Christ-like mentality? So, the cool thing is, again, this is an easy message because it allows less room about discussion of what this verse actually means.

We can read these verses and we can agree that this is exactly what it means. And I think the tough part when, again, when it's less theory-length, less in-depth, is that we come to a point when you have to really address this in our hearts.

Like, I don't think anyone likes being called out on very, very simple things. I don't think we like having our hearts repealed to us. And so, as we conclude this, the question is, are we looking to Christ as the example of this?

Is Christ the reason why we're doing these things? Or are we doing them because we're good Christians and we know this is what good Christians do? And this is probably the right thing and this is how we've been raised. Or are we looking at Christ and every morning we're waking up and realizing, God, I was homeless, broken, naked, and poor before you saved me.

[ 38 : 13 ] Like, I was in so much trouble and if you hadn't done something, I would be forever lost. Is that creating unity in us? Is that creating humility?

Is that creating a sense of service where we want to put others above ourselves despite the fact that the world tells us to put us above everyone else? Jesus was a servant who had every right to elevate himself if he took a form of a servant.

That needs superior motivation. Nothing else can be our motivation. Christ has to be reason why we're doing these things. We're going to talk about this next week, 5 through 11.

We're going to be able to get more into it. So, we're just concluding about going out. He served us. This ought to humble us. We're obligated to have unity.

There's no room for disunity. There's no room for pride. And there's no room for selfishness because Christ came. Because Christ redeemed us.

[ 39 : 13 ] So, that's where we're going tonight. Again, that's where we're going on. Discussion groups. I'm going to pray.

Alex is going to come up and Bags and Aaron and they're going to do two songs and then I'm going to come back and I'm going to kind of get instructions for our discussion groups.

Let me just pray before Alex comes about. Heavenly Father, you are so sovereign over tonight.

You are so sovereign over our church. Father, would you please change us because of what you've done for us, Lord? Lord, would you give us a beautiful union that leads us to humility, Lord?

That leads us to service. Father, thank you for saving us from where we were. Father, let's pray that you would change our hearts. First of all, that we be able to give ourselves to you in our own hearts and then we be able to give ourselves to one another.

[ 40 : 17 ] Father, that's when you would start changing our lives. Father, thank you for tonight. God, I thank you for every single believer that's here. Lord, I pray that as we worship through music and through discussion, Father, that you would be changing our hearts.

that's when you would start, Lord. Please change our hearts and not our actions without our hearts, Lord. Please. God, I just pray that you would have weight here tonight. Father, we ask all these things in knowing that you're going to do them in Christ's name.