



Sermon Growth Guide

November 8, 2020

Give Thanks – For Jesus

Philippians 2:1-11

Key Verse: Philippians 2:3-4

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

Big Idea: When we are truly thankful for Jesus we desire to act like Jesus.

Foundations

Welcome to week two in Philippi! This week, we see the gift of Jesus Himself. Jesus came to us from the most affluent position in the universe, yet humbled Himself, even to death, even to death on a cross. Why? Why such radical humility? To save us! To save you. To offer you and me the opportunity to receive the salvation of God.

Philippians 2:1-11 contains a rich appeal to believers to live extraordinary lives that reflect the very life and humility of Jesus. “Then you will shine (in your city) like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life” (Philippians 2:15-16). As we reflect the beauty of Jesus the yet-believing world is that much closer to receiving the salvation of the Lord.

New Testament theologian Gordon Fee writes, “One can only imagine what might happen if we were to rethink—and re-experience—the love and encouragement that is ours through the Trinity, and on that basis also rethink—and thus reorient—our life in Christ in terms of our relationships to one another. If we ourselves were more truly characterized by the content of this appeal (in Philippians 2:1-11), we might become a more effective people in the world.”

Open your time of study in prayer.

Understanding God’s Word

In verse 1 of chapter 2, Paul asks the believers if they have any “encouragement from being united with Christ” or any “comfort from His love.” Share how you have personally experienced, or not experienced, the union and love of God.

In verses 2-5, what is the appeal to the believer on the basis of having experienced the love of God?

Applying God’s Word

We are called to have “the same mindset of Christ” in verse 5, which is outlined beautifully in verses 6-8. Describe how your circle can pray for you in your growth of living each moment with the very mindset of Christ.

Pastor Tim points to Colossians 2:6 in this week’s sermon. How can you better “walk in Christ” this week?

Witnessing God’s Word

Clothing yourself in the humility of Christ, what one strategic step can you take toward someone this week to witness to them the true Savior and Lord of their heart? Pray together that your time together will result in the saving of many lives.

About seven years ago, there was a young man in Texas arrested for a DUI. His attorneys went before the judge and argued for leniency. You must have mercy, they said. You see this young man is sick. He doesn't need to be punished; he needs to be healed. He suffers Affluenza. He was the son of wealthy parents. He was so rich he had no limitations and so unsupervised by his disinterested parents that he had no moral compass. He was just too spoiled to be held accountable! Affluenza. It is laughable, except that his DUI accident took the lives of four innocent people. If the son of rich Texans can come into the world as such a terror, what about the Son of the Living God? What are we to expect from Him? Today we give thanks for Jesus, the Son of God, and how He came to us.

Give Thanks. Can you start a little list of things that make you grateful? It's not just for one day a year. It's a lifestyle of living in gratitude. Last week we talked about the gift of grace. God is for you, not against you.

God's gifts are grounds for gratitude.

When you don't think you have anything to put on your list of blessings, start with God's grace.

Today we see Jesus Christ, the Son of God, coming into the

world. What has just been read is one of the most powerful and profound texts ever written. The Christ Hymn of Philippians 2. It's so lyrical and poetic that scholars say it had to be a praise song Paul was quoting, something that stretched back into the foggy, early days of the Church. James Montgomery Boice said the whole gospel is here in these verses: "They teach the divinity of Christ, his preexistence, his equality with God the Father, his incarnation and true humanity, his voluntary death on the cross, the certainty of his ultimate triumph over evil, and the permanence of his reign." Give thanks for Jesus. Jesus came humbly. Jesus came as our Savior. Jesus came as Lord.

Jesus came humbly. "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, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (Philippians 2:1-4). What do you like most in a leader? Humility is a positive quality. The best leaders put themselves in humble service of others. The Servant Leader. Jesus shows the way. Coming from all the power of heaven, from the seat of the Son of the Living God Most



High, here is how His coming, His advent, is described: “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Philippians 2:5-7). The Son of the Living God entered the world as a baby in the arms of a vulnerable girl.

Jesus came as our Savior. Upon arrival, Jesus kept going down. Lower and lower to serve. “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:8). Why? To die as man, mankind to save. To die on our behalf and pay the penalty for our sins. We needed saving, because we were swamped over and drowning in all the ways we had broken the law. Jesus did not come to erase the law, but to erase our ledger of crimes against that law. He came and died to expunge that record. The way He did that was to take the ledger onto himself, like a sponge, soaking up our disobedient transgressions, soaking up the retribution for them, the punishment they deserve, He took all that upon Himself and took it to the cross where He “...canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14).

As Paul says in another letter.

Do you need a Savior? As long as you think of yourself as pretty much OK, you won't understand the meaning of having Jesus as your Savior, because you won't understand your need for a Savior. As long as you delude yourself into thinking you pretty much have it together, you will not look for a Savior. You will look for a teacher, a guide, a coach. God save us from Jesus the coach! If Jesus is just a coach to us, then it's up to us to find our way home to salvation. If Jesus is a guide, then we are supposed to look to Jesus and do what He did. Here's the thing, when it comes to salvation, you cannot do what Jesus did. You can't die for your sins. You can die in your sins, but you cannot die for your sins. You cannot save yourself.

Even in the church, we resist Jesus the Savior. We might think about it, understand it, even cherish it as a beautiful idea, but never make it our own, never appropriate it, never take Jesus as our personal Savior. Imagine a man drowning in the ocean after his sailboat capsized in a storm. The Coast Guard hovers over him in a rescue helicopter and drops down one of those baskets to climb in. There he is in the waves, treading water, looking at that basket and saying “That's great! What a kindness. How noble for these guys to risk like that and sacrifice to send that basket down. I could sing a song about how great that is,



that they would drop that basket down for me. Amazing love, how can it be?" But he doesn't get in the basket. Why? Why? Something deep inside resists the need for a Savior. So long as you think of yourself as together, doing alright, making it happen, just in need of a little coaching here and there, you will not get into the basket and you may well drown. Jesus isn't a coach. Jesus didn't throw a window open in heaven and say, "Climb on up here." He didn't lower a rope over your dying soul and say, "Shimmy on up, pal!" He came all the way down to die for you and be your Savior. You have to get in the basket. You have to throw yourself entirely, your whole body, into that basket and let Him lift, let Him pull, let Him save. Jesus came as Savior.

Jesus came as Lord. "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place," that is, God raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus ascended into heaven and regained His high place, His proper place. Jesus went down, God raised Him up. Now, Jesus is God also. In this mystery of the Trinity, God is doing this whole thing as one and as three, but we think of it as this passage presents it as interaction between Father and Son. Jesus went down; God raised up. "... and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God

the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11). I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior at a Young Life camp in 1986 when I was 12. I walked into the gift shop there the next day. I wanted to buy something to help me remember this moment in my life. A keychain jumped out at me. It had Colossians 2:6 on it, "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him" (Colossians 2:6). A keychain. What did I need a keychain for? I was 12. But I thought, "That's me. I've received Christ." I still have it. As you have received Christ Jesus, as you have taken Him for your Savior, so now walk in Him, order your life toward Him, around Him, subject to Him. He is Lord.

Jesus came humbly. Make no mistake, this Jesus is your Savior. Your Savior is also your Lord. In every way, bend the knee. Jesus is not a coach whose advice you take here and leave there. Christianity is not a talisman or a lucky penny you put in your pocket. Jesus has beaten a path all the way to where you are. He has lowered the basket; in fact He is the basket, and you must throw your entire life into His hands. "My Savior is my Lord. I trust you, Jesus, not only to save but to take my every thought, my every opinion, my every desire, my every intention, to take them all into your hands for your service. I am yours. My life is yours." That's what it means to be saved. That's what it means to have Jesus as Savior and Lord. What do we have to be grateful for? I give thanks for Jesus.

