



LIVING THE GOSPEL TOGETHER
A STUDY IN PHILIPPIANS

SESSION 4

The Mind of Christ

Text: Philippians 2:1–11

Focus: Living the gospel together begins with shared faith and prayer

Big Idea: Living the gospel together requires Christ-shaped humility that leads to unity, obedience, and God's glory.

Recap of Session 3

In Session 3, Paul called the church to live **worthy of the gospel**—standing firm together, striving side by side, and remaining courageous in the face of opposition and suffering. We saw that gospel faithfulness is not merely individual endurance, but **corporate unity under pressure**.

Session 4 now addresses the **greatest threat to unity inside the church**: pride, self-interest, and rivalry. Paul does not address this with rules, but with **Christology**. The solution to disunity is not better technique, but a deeper grasp of who **Christ is and how He lived**.

Introduction: (Pastoral & Contextual)

Philippians 2:1–11 is one of the most profound Christ-centered passages in all of Scripture. It is both **pastoral exhortation** and **theological confession**.

Paul understands that churches do not usually fracture because of doctrine alone, but because of:

- Selfish ambition
- Desire for recognition
- Lack of humility

Rather than rebuking directly, Paul **appeals to the shared experience of grace** and then points the church to **Christ Himself**. Unity flows not from suppressing differences, but from **sharing the same mindset as Jesus**.

In-depth Exegesis of Philippians 2:1–11

Verses 1–2 – The Foundation of Unity

“If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit...”

- Paul uses “if” rhetorically—these realities are assumed to be true.
- The Trinity is implicitly present: Christ, love (the Father), and the Spirit.
- Unity is rooted in shared gospel experience, not personality or preference.

Theological Insight: Christian unity flows from shared life in the Triune God.

Verses 3–4 – The Call to Humility

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit...”

- “Selfish ambition” was often used for political rivalry.
- Paul commands intentional humility, not false modesty.
- Humility involves actively considering others' interests.

Theological Insight: Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less—for Christ's sake.

Verses 5–8 – The Example of Christ

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus...”

Paul presents Christ's downward movement:

1. Pre-existence – Fully God
2. Incarnation – Took the form of a servant
3. Obedience – Even to death
4. Humiliation – Death on a cross

Christ does not cling to status but empties Himself—not of deity, but of privilege.

Theological Insight: True greatness in God's kingdom is revealed through self-giving obedience.



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In-depth Exegesis of Philippians 2:1–11 Contd.

Verses 9–11 – The Exaltation of Christ

“Therefore God has highly exalted him...”

- God responds to Christ’s humility with exaltation.
- Every knee will bow—willingly or unwillingly.
- The ultimate goal is the glory of God the Father.

Theological Insight: God exalts those who humble themselves under His will.

Study Questions

1. Why does Paul ground unity in shared experience rather than rules?

2. What does selfish ambition look like in modern church life?

3. How do verses 3–4 challenge cultural views of success and self-promotion?

4. What does it mean to have “the mind of Christ” practically?

5. How does Christ’s humility redefine leadership?

6. Why is the cross central to understanding humility?

7. How does God respond to Christ’s obedience?

8. What does Christ’s exaltation teach us about God’s values?

9. Where do you see pride threatening unity today?

10. How can this passage reshape how your church handles conflict?



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Key Doctrines Highlighted

- Incarnation
- Pre-existence and deity of Christ
- Kenosis (self-emptying)
- Obedient suffering
- Lordship of Christ
- Glory of God

Personal Application

- Examine your motivations in relationships and service.
- Confess areas where pride or self-interest have shaped your actions.
- Commit to intentional humility modeled after Christ.

Personal Challenge:

Where is God calling you to lay down status, recognition, or control for the sake of others?

Reflective Practice

Journaling Prompt:

- How does Christ's humility confront your current attitudes?
- Where do you resist serving quietly?

Guided Reflection:

- Slowly read Philippians 2:5–8.
- Ask God to form Christ's mindset within you.

Points for Prayer

Personal Prayer

- *Repentance from pride*
- *Growth in humility and obedience*

Church Prayer

- *Unity rooted in Christ's example*
- *Servant-hearted leadership*

Mission Prayer

- *Churches marked by Christ-like love*
- *A compelling witness through humble unity*

Closing Summary

Living the gospel together means embracing the mind of Christ—humble obedience that leads to unity, service, and the glory of God.