

Studies in Philippians

Lesson III

Text: Philippians 2:1-11

¹If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature^[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
⁷but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature^[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

FOOTNOTES

a. Or “in the form of” b. Or “the form”

Questions for Discussion

1. One of the biggest challenges the church faced in the first century and today faces more than ever is the challenge of achieving Christian unity.
 - What is unity? (vs. 2)
 - Is unity realistic? Is it even necessary? What motivates us to unity (vv. 1-2)
 - According to verses 3-5, what are the keys to achieving—and maintaining—unity? What is your part? What attitudes and actions subtly undermine unity in congregations today?
2. What example did Jesus set for us? (vv. 5-8)
 - Why is it imperative that we follow him with all of our heart?
 - Do the popular culture and the prevailing religious, social and political norms of our time ever compete with our loyalty to Christ?
3. What's so special about Jesus, anyway? (vv. 6-11)
 - What is the appropriate response to his Lordship? (vs. 11)