



Blessings of Unity



SERMON SERIES IN PHILIPPIANS

IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
SERIES: THE BLESSINGS OF UNITY
TITLE: THE SOURCE OF UNITY
SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11
DATE: NOV. 9, 2025

INTRODUCTION

Last week we looked at how joy and unity are connected. It truly is a blessing to be a part of a unified church!

We know from experience how hard it can be when we are not unified. Unity is precious and something to be fought for. And when it is achieved, it is something to cherish and maintain. We praise God for it and rejoice.

Today, we are looking at Philippians 2:1-11, where Paul stresses that unity is achieved and maintained through humility. And as referenced throughout Philippians, Paul includes how joy is connected to unity. He notes how his “joy will be complete” when the Philippians are unified by imitating Christ’s humility.

Text

Philippians 2:1-5

- [1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,
[2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
[3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
[4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
[5] Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

Explanation

If any... then be of the same mind

As we give explanation to these verses, it will be helpful to point out some often-repeated words in the passage. First, notice the word “any.” Paul says if there is “any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy...” The word “any” is not necessarily a specified amount of something, whether large or small. But in this case, Paul seems to portray that even a small amount counts as something. And he conveys that the church has experienced at least some portion of Christ’s blessing in their lives. Just a little bit of something counts as any. So with the repetition of this word, Paul is saying that if you have experienced even a little bit of encouragement from God, or even a little bit of comfort from God’s love, or a little bit of participation in the Spirit, or received affection and sympathy, then he has an expectation for you.

A second repeated word or concept are the words “complete/full.” Notice when he says, “make my joy *complete*,” and “being in *full* accord.” But also contrast the statement “do *nothing* from rivalry or conceit.” As we will see in a moment, Paul’s expectation for the church is that if they have experienced just a portion or any amount of Christ, then they have a full expectation ahead of them.

A third repeated concept to point out is the word same/one. Notice when Paul says, “by being of the *same* mind,” “having the *same* love,” “being in full *accord* and of *one* mind.” Thus, a central part of Paul’s expectation for the church is that they have unity. If they have experienced just any portion of the

blessing of knowing Christ, then the outworking of knowing Christ would lead to complete unity.

To be honest, not sure how many of us liked English class at school, but Paul writes very well in these verses. There is a contrast between *any* and *all*. And there is a movement from one's *individual* relationship to Christ to a *unified* relationship *with people*. Unity with Christ should lead to unity with other believers.

We should especially notice Paul's statement, "complete my joy." For Paul, what completed his joy was knowing that the Philippians were living out their relationship with Christ in unity. Because each one has experienced Christ in some way or another, each person *can* humbly consider others more important than themselves.

- Because Christ did not act toward them with rivalry or conceit, believers can act toward others without rivalry.
- Because God offers comfort and love, so too can believers toward one another.
- And just as there is participation in the Spirit, so too the church can participate with one another in true unity.

Discussion Questions

- In your own experience, is the word "any" a word that best describes how you have experienced God? Be honest, which word best describes your previous experience: (1) any, (2) average amount, (3) a lot.
- Which would you say you like to receive more of? (1) Encouragement, (2) comfort, (3) participation, (4) affection and sympathy?
- Similar question to before but which do you think you give best to others? (1) Encouragement, (2) comfort, (3) participation, (4) affection and sympathy.
- What tends to bring you more joy? (1) Personal success or (2) Watching the success of others?
- You don't need to name names, but is there a specific person that you would say, "Just as much as I want to grow spiritually, I also want them to grow spiritually?"

- How do you respond when you see others fight? Is there an element of joy in watching others fight? Or do you find more joy in watching others reconcile?

Text

Philippians 2:6-11

[6] who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

[7] but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

[8] And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[9] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

[10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

[11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Explanation

Christ's Humility

Here Paul once again writes so beautifully to describe the humility of Christ. Just as Paul has urged the church to complete his joy by showing humility to one another, he puts forth Christ as an example. If there was any doubt from the Philippians whether they have experienced any portion of Christ, Paul shows that there is really no doubt at all. In humility, Christ has given *all* of Himself to the Philippians.

As this passage states, Christ, although being God, humbled Himself by leaving heaven and coming to earth in the form of man. He made Himself a servant to man and to God. In obedience to God, He willingly offered His life to die so that the penalty of sin might be paid. No greater expression of humility is possible. JESUS LEFT HIS THRONE IN HEAVEN AND HUMBLLED HIMSELF TO DIE ON A

CROSS – THE MOST HORRIFIC OF ALL DEATHS. And yet, in response to Jesus' humility, God raised Him from the dead and seated Him once again on His throne. Christ now has a name that is above every name. And one day EVERY knee shall bow, and EVERY tongue confess that He is Lord.

Prior to saying these things about Jesus, Paul significantly tells the Philippians to “have this mind among yourselves.” Just as Jesus humbled Himself and became a servant, so too Paul expects the Philippians to humble themselves.

Notice these parallels in Paul's previous instructions and Christ's example.

- Paul told the church to “count others more significant than themselves” and “Jesus, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.”
- Paul told the church to “do nothing from rivalry or conceit.” And “Jesus made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant.”
- Paul urged the church towards humility, whereas Jesus “humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”
- Paul urged the church to unity by saying, “being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.” Now, because of Jesus' humility, His glory is the unifying ingredient. Notice as Paul says the following about Jesus: “so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Paul said the church should have the same mind, and the same love, and be in full accord. Their minds and love and accord should be centered on glorifying Christ.

Before we ask questions, it is worth point out Paul's own example of imitating Christ's humility. When Paul was faced with the options of life and death, he was confident that he would live—despite knowing that heaven was far better (1:21–24). Paul himself modeled a humility similar to Christ before the church. Just as Christ left heaven to come to earth, taking the form of a servant, so too Paul would have chosen to remain on earth and prolong his arrival in heaven so that he might serve the Philippians.

Discussion Questions

- To what extent do you think you would be able to model the same level of humility that Christ displayed? If you were to put it into percentages, how might you answer?

- What stands out to you more—the humility of Christ in that He humbled Himself to the point of death on a cross, or the exaltation of Christ to the point that every knee should bow and tongue confess that He is Lord?
- Paul modeled humility before the Philippian church. Are there certain people in your life who model humility before you?
- When it comes to service, which is harder: serving *whoever*, or doing *whatever*?
- Do you think it takes humility to recognize humility?
- Similarly, does it take pride to recognize pride in someone else?
- Do you think that you can truly grasp the humility of Christ if you are not humble to some degree?