



THE VINE
CHURCH

Philippians · Week 4: Taking the Form of a Servant (Philippians 2.1–11)

Weekly Devotional, Week of October 11, 2026

This past Sunday we kept going in Philippians (week four) and stepped into chapter 2. Paul didn't stop and say "okay, now chapter two." He wrote it in the same breath as last week's passage. Paul has just shown us how he's praising God while stuck under house arrest. Now he turns to us: "complete my joy by being of the same mind and love..." This instruction, this high bar that we are called to, is sandwiched in between the story of his own journey, and what Christ did as our example...Here's how I'm handling this, here's how you should walk with one another, and here's why: because of who Jesus is and what He did. Let's grow in this! Here are three short devotionals to help us carry that into the week.

DAY 1: HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED GRACE?

Philippians 2.1–2 (ESV)

"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."

Romans 5.1 (ESV)

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Same mind" doesn't mean we all have to agree on everything. It's better understood as mindset. Paul isn't asking us to have the same opinions, hopes, and views as each other. He's asking us to share the mindset he just showed us: walking through adversity and still giving God the glory.

Before he gets to the zinger, he asks questions. Have you experienced any encouragement in Christ? Encouragement is almost too soft a word. We've been justified by faith. That's the get-out-of-jail-free card, not because we earned it, but because of what Jesus did. Any comfort from love? God's love "has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5.5). What box did I have to check? Nothing. Any participation in the Spirit? When I came to faith, my heart was racing. I didn't want to walk down to the altar, but I was being drawn by the Holy

Spirit. I didn't even fully understand what that meant back then, but if you're a follower of Jesus, all of us at one time or another have experienced the participation of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

If you can answer yes to any of those, then Paul says to change your perspective. You've been given grace, mercy, and love. Can you turn around and give them?

This week: Write down one way you've experienced God's grace. Then think of someone who needs that same grace from you, and give it.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You that I didn't earn Your love. Help me give away the grace You've given me. Amen.

DAY 2: AIM FOR RESTORATION

Philippians 2.3–4 (ESV)

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in 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."

2 Corinthians 13.11 (ESV)

"Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."

Isn't it true that we get annoyed? I don't know anybody who's never been annoyed. The church in Philippi and the one in Rome had disagreements, and some people in the church back then had the wrong motives. Two thousand years later it still happens, because the church is full of broken people. Sometimes we're led by the Spirit, and sometimes we're led by the flesh.

I love the phrase "aim for restoration." Think of an old piece of furniture in an antique shop, falling apart, until someone who knows what they're doing strips it down and refinishes it, and suddenly it's beautiful. We all need restoration, and we get to aim for it with each other.

Paul gives us one really practical tip that covers all of our different personalities, strengths, and weak spots: in humility, count others more significant than yourself. That takes care of a lot of stuff. It means stepping outside our natural attitude, our strengths, flaws...and recognizing that we don't have it all dialed in, and that our way/preference is not the only way others can be used by God. My wife and I have very different personalities. She's the quiet one. But I've heard her speak incredible words of truth, hope, and life into someone, inspired by the Holy Spirit. That's what it looks like to operate outside your personality in exercising gifts. The same is true for our weaknesses, extending grace to others for their areas of needed growth...and ours!

This week: Think of one person who gets on your nerves. Look out for their interests this week, with a kind word, a favor, or a prayer for them by name.

Prayer: Lord, tamp down my pride. Teach me to count others more significant than myself and to aim for restoration. Amen.

DAY 3: THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME

Philippians 2.5–11 (ESV)

"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 grasped, but emptied himself, by 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, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

When I started seminary, theology sounded boring and dry to me. Just teach me how to preach! But these verses aren't dry academics. They're core to our faith.

Jesus is God. "In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God" (John 1.1), and "in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1.17). Yet He didn't hold on to His equality with God for His own advantage. Jesus became human. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1.14). He was tempted. In the garden He prayed, "remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22.42). The "cup" was the suffering of the cross ahead of Him. Jesus yielded to the Father's will, went to the cross, and died. And then He rose. That's what turned Peter, who denied Him three times, into a bold preacher. And Jesus is exalted, yet He isn't distant. He's still moving toward those who believe, with "the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe" (Ephesians 1.19).

If Jesus, who is God, walked in humility, I'm not above it. And it starts with believing: "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10.9).

This week: If you've never said yes to Jesus, tell Him today. If you have, pick one way to pour yourself out for someone else. And join us Wednesday night (light supper at 6, study at 6:30) for our small group study on the IMAGE OF GOD.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You emptied Yourself for me. You are Lord. Make me more like You. Amen.

If you missed this past Sunday's sermon, or would like to revisit it, you can watch the full service here (the sermon starts at about 28:14):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hsY0_CFdFQ&t=1694s

See you Wednesday or Sunday as we keep going in Philippians. Let's lean in and grow together.

Blessings!

Pastor Gregg & Karen