

Sermon Study Questions

The Self-Emptying God

1 January 2023

Read Philippians 2:1-11

1. What problematic attitudes and perspectives is Paul challenging in this passage?
 - a. “Selfish ambition” and “vain conceit.” Paul calls on the Philippian believers to be humble, lowly, deferential; to consider others as better than oneself, to look out for the needs of the other.
2. What is some of the range of meaning for the Greek word for “know” in our passage? Why does this matter?
 - a. Perception, sense, heart, soul, purpose, will. This matters because it is much weightier than just ideas; it speaks to purpose and will as well.
3. **How** do we “have” the mind of Jesus?
 - a. Acquiring the mind of Jesus is both gift and discipline. The gift (1 Cor 2:16) is the Gift of Grace that makes possible any interest in God’s will for us. The disciplines (Romans 12:2) are the classical spiritual disciplines like reading, prayer, study, meditation, and fellowship that will strengthen the spiritual life so the gift won’t fade.
4. **What** was this mind/spirit/will that Jesus had that we, too, should have?
 - a. Emptying self of all but love. Abandoning all fame, power and status & allowing love to make a difference in the lives of others.
5. **Why** should we appropriate the mind of Jesus?
 - a. Jesus is not only our redeemer to be worshiped, he is also our example to be followed. Those who have begun to be renewed will recognize that it is the path of great cost, enormous courage and true spiritual power.
6. Question for reflection: What might this look like in day-to-day life?