

(1) 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!

(3) 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. Have this mind among yourselves --- which is yours in Christ Jesus ---

(6) 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.

(9) 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.

Think on these things:

- 1) What does Paul say will “complete his joy” for Christians being encouraged by Christ, comforted by His love, who walk in the Spirit, and experience His compassion (v.2)?

**Christians being like-minded, united in spirit and purpose, and having the same love (NIV).**

- 2) What should Christians do from selfish ambitions or conceit (i.e., excessively favorable opinion of one's own abilities or importance, v.3)? Is this only a church rule or a life rule?

**Do NOTHING out of selfish ambitions or conceit. This should apply in all of life for Christians.**

- 3) Being a recipient of Christ's grace (undeserved favor and kindness), what is shared here as the defining characteristic of a Christian man or woman (v.3)? Who's more important, me or you?

**Humility! Being a humble person in life (strengths under control). By submission to Jesus and deference to others, consider others more important than ourselves. This is not always easy!**

- 4) Using the analogy of eyesight, Christians should keep one eye on \_\_\_ and the other on \_\_\_ (v.4)? Is it wrong to care about my own needs as a Christian? If not, when might it become wrong? Who leads by example this important lesson? See also Matthew 8:20; 10:9-10; 14:13, 22-23.

**Christians should keep one eye on “the interests & needs of others” and the other on “their own interests.” It is not wrong to take care of one's own needs, but Jesus taught us to “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,” and all the needs we have will be taken care of by God (an act of faith). When self-focus rules out caring practically for others, we might be crossing the sin line. Jesus' actions in life serve as the Christian's example to follow.**

- 5) Quoting the NIV for v.5, we have this: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” It's a personal viewpoint issue for individuals. I may have my own needs, but my Christian duty in life --- due to God's love and grace shown to me --- is to subjugate my needs to help address your needs, i.e., put your needs first and do what I can. Not for class discussion, but personal reflection, is this how your friends and family would describe you? It really takes a lot of self-discipline and commitment to always (or mostly) put others ahead of yourself. Remember the Sunday School chorus: “J-O-Y, J-O-Y, Jesus first, yourself last, and others in-between.”

- 6) From v.6, what essential truth do we learn about Jesus BEFORE He became a human being?

**Being in His very nature GOD, He didn't hesitate to "descend" into the world of men. He willingly stepped away from His role in the Trinity Godhead for His role as Savior.**

- 7) What personal sacrifice did Jesus make to be able to help people before He became a human? This may help us understand the phrase that He "emptied" Himself (v.7). What did He willingly set aside? Consider also Colossians 1:19 and Hebrews 1:3a.

**Jesus made Himself "nothing" and took upon Himself the form of a human servant (as an infant child who grew up into manhood). For most of a 33-year period He accepted human limitations to His God-hood. Col. informs that, "in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." Heb. states "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature"**

- 8) How far did Jesus' willingness to be humble go (v.8)?

**He was willing to become obedient (as a man) to death --- even death on the cross!**

- 9) What has God the Father decided will be Jesus' reward for humble obedience to "save" the whole world? It is a two-fold reward: something in heaven, and something with all humanity. How do you personally feel about the declaration made about Jesus as the reward God gives him for all humanity (vs. 10-11)?

In Heaven? **The Father has exalted Him to the highest place in heaven, with a name greater than any other.**

On Earth? **Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD --- both on earth and in heaven! (quote from Isaiah 45:23?)**

My Feeling? **Personal expression/opinion. Hopefully that will include a sense of joy, relief, and/or even "justice served" at the triumph of Jesus at the end of the age. A combination of celebration (for us) tempered by solemnity (for others to be judged) --- a toned-down, "We told you so...!" for the ungodly of this world.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: