

Message Three

Taking Christ as Our Pattern

Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:5-11

I. In order to experience Christ and live Christ, we must know Him as our pattern and take Him as our pattern:

- A. In 2:5-11 Paul presents Christ as the pattern; we need to have this pattern infused into us.
- B. The pattern of the Christian life is the God-man Savior who emptied Himself and humbled Himself and who has been exalted and glorified by God:
 1. Although the Lord was equal with God, He did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped and retained; He emptied Himself, laying aside what He possessed—the form of God—vv. 6-7a.
 2. In His incarnation the Lord did not alter His divine nature; He changed only His outward expression from the form of God to the form of a slave.
 3. The Lord became “in the likeness of men”—vv. 7b-8a:
 - a. The form of God implies the inward reality of Christ’s deity; the likeness of men denotes the outward appearance of His humanity.
 - b. He appeared to men as a man outwardly, but as God He had the reality of deity inwardly.
 - c. Christ entered into the condition of humanity, and He was found in fashion as a man.
 4. Christ humbled Himself by becoming obedient even unto death—the death of a cross—v. 8b:
 - a. Humbling Himself was a further step in emptying Himself.
 - b. Christ’s self-humbling manifested His self-emptying.
 - c. The death of a cross was the climax of Christ’s humiliation.
 5. The Lord humbled Himself to the uttermost, but God exalted Him to the highest peak and bestowed on Him “the name which is above every name”—v. 9:

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- a. God has exalted Jesus, a real man, to be the Lord of all—Acts 2:32-33; 5:31.
 - b. This exaltation of Christ was the manifestation of resurrection power.
 - c. The highest name in the universe, the greatest name, is the name of Jesus:
 - 1) The name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord Jesus is in His person and work.
 - 2) *In the name of Jesus* means in the sphere and element of all that the Lord is—Phil. 2:10.
 - d. The result of our confessing that Jesus is Lord is that God the Father is glorified; this is the great end of all that Christ is and has done in His person and work—v. 11; 1 Cor. 15:24-28.
- C. The principle of this pattern is that someone with the highest life and position would be willing to live in a lowly way.

II. Christ as our pattern is not only objective but also subjective and experiential—Phil. 2:5, 12-13:

- A. The One who set up the pattern and who Himself is the pattern is now operating within us as the indwelling God—v. 13.
- B. The principle of Christ as the inward pattern for our living is that even if we have the highest standard or the highest position, we should not grasp it.
- C. We need to be partners with Christ in His human living, especially in His emptying and humbling Himself and in His not grasping equality with God as a treasure—vv. 6-7.
- D. The Christ who is our pattern is now the life within us—Col. 3:4:
 1. We have a life in us that is a self-emptying and self-humbling life; this life never grasps at something as a treasure but is always willing to lay aside position and title.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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2. We have Christ crucified as our pattern, and this pattern is the crucified life within us—Gal. 2:20:
 - a. The steps of Christ's humiliation in Philippians 2:5-8 are all aspects of the crucified life lived out in a full way.
 - b. When we live Christ, we live the One who is the pattern of a crucified life—1:21a.
3. Taking the crucified life as our pattern opens the gate of resurrection and brings us into the power of resurrection—3:10:
 - a. By living a crucified life, we can experience the power of resurrection which exalted Christ to the highest peak in the universe—Eph. 1:19-22.
 - b. The highest life on earth is a crucified life; whenever we live a crucified life, God will bring us into resurrection.
4. Christ should be exalted not only objectively in the universe but also subjectively in our daily life—Phil. 2:9:
 - a. Christ is exalted in us as we take Him as the crucified life to be the pattern of our daily life.
 - b. The bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ is the power that exalts Christ—1:19.

III. If we would take Christ as our pattern, we need to take Christ's mind as our mind—2:5:

- A. Paul not only took Christ as his living and expression outwardly but also took the mind of Christ as his mind inwardly.
- B. For the mind of Christ to be in us means that this mind is something living; actually, the mind of Christ is Christ Himself, for the person of Christ is manifested in His mind.
- C. We need to open ourselves and let "this mind" be in us—v. 5:
 1. *This* refers to the considering in verse 3 and to the regarding in verse 4.

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2. This kind of thinking was in Christ when He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, and humbled Himself, being found in fashion as a man—vv. 7-8.
3. To have such a mind requires us to be one with Christ in His inward parts—1:8.