

Message Two

Knowing and 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—Phil. 2:5-11:

- 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—vv. 6-9:
 - 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—v. 7.
 - 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 the 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 the cross was the climax of Christ’s humiliation—Acts 8:33; Phil. 3:21.
 - 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”—2:9:
 - 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.
 - 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 for resurrection and brings us into the power of resurrection—3:10:
 - a. By living a crucified life, we can experience the power of resurrection that exalted Christ to the highest peak in the universe—Eph. 1:19-22.
 - b. The highest life on earth is the crucified life; whenever we live a crucified life, God will bring us into the power of 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 when 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—1 Cor. 2:16.
- 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—Phil. 2:5:
 - 1. This refers to the considering in verse 3 and to the regarding in verse 4.
 - 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.

IV. We need to know the Son's submission—2:5-11; Heb. 5:7-8:

- A. The Word of God tells us that the Lord Jesus and the Father are one—John 10:30.
- B. The Father and the Son are equal, equipotent, coexisting, and existing simultaneously.
- C. Philippians 2:5-7 forms one section, and verses 8 through 11 form another section:
 - 1. The first section is on Christ emptying Himself.
 - 2. The second section is on Christ humbling Himself in His humanity—v. 8.
- D. When the Lord came to the earth, He emptied Himself of the glory, power, position, and image of His deity.
- E. The Father became the representation of authority, and the Son became the representation of submission:
 - 1. When the Lord came down to the earth, He dropped authority on the one hand and picked up submission on the other hand.
 - 2. He set His heart to become a slave, to be restricted in time and space as a man.
 - 3. The Lord humbled Himself, becoming obedient; the obedience in the Godhead is the most wonderful thing in the whole universe.

- F. We should submit to authority; this is a great matter.
- G. We need to have the mind in us which was in Christ Jesus—v. 5:
 - 1. All of us should take the way of our Lord, taking His principle of submission as our principle of submission.
 - 2. Whoever knows this principle will realize that no sin is uglier than rebellion and that nothing is more important than submission—Jude 11; Rom. 1:5; 16:26.
 - 3. Only when we see the principle of submission can we serve God—Matt. 4:10; 20:28; Acts 6:2; Rom. 1:9; 16:18; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 22:3.
 - 4. God's principle can be maintained only by submitting in the way that the Lord submitted.
- H. Hebrews 5:8 tells us that the Lord's obedience was learned through suffering:
 - 1. Suffering brought obedience to Him.
 - 2. True submission is found when there is still obedience in spite of suffering.
 - 3. When the Lord came to the earth, He did not bring obedience with Him; rather, He learned it through sufferings.
- I. Salvation not only brings joy; it also brings submission—Rom. 1:5; 16:19, 26; Titus 3:1:
 - 1. Only the submissive ones will experience the fullness of salvation.
 - 2. We need to be submissive, even as the Lord was submissive.
 - 3. The Lord became the source of our salvation through obedience—Heb. 5:8-9.
 - 4. God saved us with the hope that we would submit to His will—Rev. 4:11.
- J. When one meets God's authority, submission is a simple matter, and knowing God's will is also a simple matter, because the Lord, who was submissive throughout His life, has already given us His life of submission—John 11:25.