

Christ: The Pattern of Life

Philippians 2:58

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

We have in the book of Exodus the account of that visit which Moses paid to God Himself in the excellent glory above Mount Sinai. A visit that lasted forty days and forty nights, during which time Moses received from God explicit instructions concerning a *tabernacle* which he was to make for the particular dwelling place of God among his people. And not only did he receive the specifications, concerning the *structure of that building*, but he also saw the heavenly things, the heavenly purpose, the great truths of which that building, when it should be finished, would be but a *type*, a kind of *parable* in *gold* and *linen* and *brass* and *silver*. Hebrews 8:5 reminds us that God again reminded Moses, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”

In other words, nothing was left to Moses' originality or initiative. A perfect plan was given to him and the most elaborate and detailed instructions as to execution of the plan, and his responsibility began and ended with strict and implicit obedience to the instructions, which he had received. And my purpose is to try and draw from that event, its central and permanent truth that Moses was commissioned to *build something on earth* that *should be a reflection of something in heaven*.

But what does any of that have to with those of us here tonight? Romans 8:29 gives us the answer, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” In other words, the Christian life, in its truest sense, should show the world a reflection of what Christ is really like! Look again at Philippians 2:3-5 from the Greek, “Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.” Verse 9 reads like this in the New King James Version, “Let this mind be in you

which was also in Christ Jesus.” Paul once more reminded us in 1 Corinthians 2:16, “But have the mind of Christ.”

Now how does one go about developing “the mind of Christ” in our everyday living? Jesus gives us the answer in John 16:12-15, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” Jesus said this in John 14:16-20, “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”

Therefore, when Paul says, “Let is mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,” **he is not telling to try to imitate the mind of Christ, but to allow what is already there to show forth the person and attitude of Christ!**

Paul made this statement in Colossians 3:3, “ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” **Now know Paul is not talking about physical life because we are still alive in the flesh!** And with that comes the pull of the flesh, as seen in Romans 7:15-25 this truth, “For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

Therefore, when Christ saved me, He gave me all of the necessary ingredients to, live the Christian life, but I must appropriate them in my every day living. That is why Paul was saying

in Philippians 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things.” The construction of the Greek here is that we must choose to do those things! Because they simply do not come naturally!

There are four results of having the "mind of Christ" that will show up in our service.

First of all, there will be harmony in our relationships. Paul admonishes believers Philippians 2:1-2, “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if there is any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”

There seemed to a problem in Church at Philippi between two of the women, as seen in Philippians 4:2, “I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.” Very likely, as in most Church issues, the problem was caused by something trivial, probably not even noticed by the rest of the congregation. Maybe one got a little more praise than the other, or perhaps someone was given a job in the church that the other thought she should have been hers. But whatever the cause, Satan had taken advantage of the situation, blown it out of proportion, and was on the verge of causing division in the entire church and hindering the work of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When Paul says in verse 2 to be “like minded,” it is the same idea found in Acts 2:1, “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord.” That doesn’t mean we are all going to agree on everything, it simply we need to agree what is most important for the spreading the Gospel! In other words, it means there will be harmony in our fellowship! It means we will have one common denominator as our church seeks to move forward – and His name is Christ!

Second, there will an agreement on spiritual values.

That means we are going to have a common agreement on our spiritual values, as seen in the words, “the fellowship of the Spirit.” Far too many believers started with high spiritual commitments to Christ, to the Church, and to obedience to the Gospel. And somewhere along the way they got their feelings hurt by something someone said (or didn’t say). And Satan used that incident to cause them to fall by the wayside. And when we get crossed up on our spiritual values, other things became more important than the things of God.

The third result of having “the mind of Christ” is that we will have the same *ambition*. There is a Greek article before the word “mind” that carries with it the idea of “thinking on one thing.” The universal church of the Living Lord should have, the same *ambition!*

Notice the progression - if the church has only one *affection*, and that being our love for Christ; and if the church has only one *attitude*, and that is to accomplish what Christ has called us to do; then the church will have only one *ambition*, and that will be to glorify Christ Jesus in every, organization within our fellowship. And when all of that comes together the glory of God will manifest itself every Sunday!

The fourth result of having the “mind” of Christ” is seen in our text, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

The problem, as I see it, is that we have seemingly lost our *prospective or the sovereignty of God in our worship services.* The attitude of our present day Sunday Morning Worship Service is something like this When our Worship Service begins, the *band* and the *singers* become the *performers* and the congregation is the *audience*. When the preacher stands to preach becomes the *performer* and the congregation is the *audience*. And because of this kind of attitude – we measure our success on the response of those around us! But that is not according to the plan and purpose of God, for *God is the audience*, and the cause of our worship, what we do is to please Him!

And when we follow the pattern that God has laid out for us here in Philippians, then the Church of the Living God will be an earthly reflection of a heavenly truth,