

## Course Title: Servanthood Part 1

What we wanna' look at this morning, is the Christ-like mindset we're to have, as a mature believer in Jesus ... the mindset of a humble servant of God!

As we only have two, 30-minute sessions to cover allot of scripture ... there will fruit left hanging on the tree ...

So what we're going to do, is use each 30-minute session to mine as much truth as we can on the subject of servanthood ...

... And most importantly, we don't want to do this simply for the sake of information, but, [we seek to grow in our love, and intimacy with Jesus](#), as we spend time looking at His heart, as revealed in His word ...

Our scripture passages for our first segment of time together will be Philippians 2 which we mentioned:

- We'll be examining verses 1-8, where we'll look at Jesus' [servanthood](#) as [our](#) mission (our calling) ... and Jesus [humility](#), as our mindset

...Philippians 2 ... verses 1 through 8 ...

Paul says: Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, <sup>2</sup>fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

<sup>3</sup>Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

<sup>5</sup>Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>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.

Coming off of chapter 1, Paul acknowledges that suffering, is part of the Philippian believers experience ... just as it was for Jesus ...

... He tells them in verses 28 and 29 of chapter 1, that they need not be terrified by their adversaries ... and that it was granted to them, that they suffer for Jesus' sake ...

And so Paul says in verse 1 of chapter 2:

Therefore (or, in light of your situation ... that of great suffering for your Lord) Therefore, if *there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,* <sup>2</sup>fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind

So Paul's telling them here, that a suffering believer (and this goes for all of us actually), needs to focus on these wonderful truths ...

The consolation we have in Christ, the comfort of His love, the fellowship of His Spirit, and His affection and mercy!

If you're taking notes, we're going to go over some definitions here (several actually), and then seek to put it all together ... and then make some application:

First we have "consolation" in Christ ...

"Consolation", is speaking of "encouragements, comforts" ...

So, if there's any encouragement or comfort of (or in) Christ ...

... That needs to be part of our mindset ...

We need to have our thoughts focused on the comfort and encouragement we have in Him!

...

Next we have "comfort of Love" ... This is agape Love ... God's loyal, selfless, passion for us ...

... And the word for "comfort," here, speaks of "coming along side someone to comfort them" ...

So this is the comfort of God's love, that's experienced, in intimate caring relationships ...

God's agape love, is a love that comes along side others ...

It's not a distant principal, lacking passion and concern ... It seeks to go through life's challenges, with, the suffering individual ...

... And we want to have our thoughts focused there ...

Next we have "fellowship of the Spirit" ...

"fellowship" speaks of having common interests ... and here, it's the fellowship (or common interest)" of the Holy Spirit ...

And of course, those common interests of the Spirit, are the truths expressed in God's word ...

Ken Wuest says of this phrase, that this speaks of: ... : " a *common interest, and a mutual and active participation* ... in the *things of God, in which the believer and the Holy Spirit, are joint participants.*" ...

In other words: This is the Holy Spirit, and the believer, participating in the things of God ... The word of God ... The people of God ...

...

And then ...lastly, we have; "Affection and mercy"

\*\*\* This is "tender-hearted, compassionate yearnings and/or actions ..."

We want to have hearts, that are focused on the tender-hearted compassion of our Lord ...

...

Now, the word "if" here, is properly translated "since":

In other words (verse 1), since there is (as a matter of fact), comfort in Christ, since there is comfort in the Love of God, since there is fellowship of the Spirit, and since there is tender hearted compassion in Christ ... Since this is all true ...

Well then ... verse 2 says: fulfill my joy, by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind

A couple more quick definitions, then we'll sow it together:

"Like-minded" is "Thinking the same thing" ...

And “Being of one accord” is literally Having “unity of sentiment” ...Living “[Soul with soul](#)” Wuest says ...

...

So ... What we see in [all](#) of this, is the [great](#) compassion we’re to have, for one another ... and the [unity](#) we’re to share ... stemming from a heart and mind, that are grounded and nourished on the comfort, and love of Christ, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and the mercies of God!

\*\*\* And, if we’re going to serve others as our Lord served (and serves - to which we’re all called), we need to cultivate a “[soul to soul](#)” (or intimate), [passionate, unity and love among us](#) ...

...

Doesn’t that sound like a wonderful place for God’s people to be?

Living together, in a “[soul to soul](#)” ... [passionate, unity and love](#)

...

Well, that’s our Lord’s desire for us ... so I’m gonna’ say it again:

What we see in [all](#) of this, is the [great](#) compassion we’re to [have](#) for one another ... and the [unity](#) we’re to share ... stemming from a heart and mind that are grounded and nourished on the comfort, and love of Christ, fellowship of the Spirit, and the mercies of God!

\*\*\* So here at CCO, we’re called to a place of “[soul to soul](#)” [passionate, unity and love among us](#)

...

Paul would make a similar appeal in Ephesians 4: verses 1 through 3 ...

He says [there](#):

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you (that is: “I call you near in this”) ...

I beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup>with all [lowliness](#) and [gentleness](#), with [longsuffering](#), [bearing](#) with one another in [love](#), <sup>3</sup>[endeavoring](#) to keep the [unity](#) of the Spirit, in the [bond of peace](#).

That's the kind of like-mindedness, that the Lord desires for us ...

It goes beyond just academics ... and gets to the [heart](#) of intimacy with one-another ...

And here in our text, we're to have the [same](#) love ... being of one accord ...

\*\*\* We must be [committed](#), to a tender-hearted care ... for each other ...  
[Soul-to-soul](#) ...

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So, we're gonna' pause here ...

Don't answer out-loud, but is this [your](#) experience?

Are you one who has a [passionate](#) heart, for your fellow believers ...

Are you [committed](#), to pursuing ... and keeping a [soul-to-soul](#) unity here at CCO? ...

Because if we're not, we'll find it very difficult to serve, [as](#) Jesus did ...

In fact, if we seek to serve, without [dealing](#) with a loveless heart ... (a heart that has no room for [soul-to-soul](#) relationships), our service to the church will become non-committal at best, and harsh at worst ...

It's likely that our enthusiasm for serving will wane ...

... Over time, when love and unity are [not](#) a priority, when the consolation, and the Love of God and fellowship of the Spirit are [not](#) our focus ... we'll begin to [resent](#) others, for not serving as much as we do ... or ... for not [thanking](#) us, for [our](#) service ...

...

So this suffering Church at Philippi, while drawing encouragement from the consolation, love, fellowship of the Spirit, and tender mercies of God, they were told to have, a soul to soul, heart of compassion towards one another

...

And we're to do the same ...

We must cultivate a soul-to-soul, heart of compassion towards our brothers and sisters in Christ, here at CCO if we're going to serve as Jesus did ...

And so, to that end, Paul begins to unfold, what this looks like:

He says in verse 3: Let *nothing* be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others, better than himself

...

So here we see that we have choices to make ... of what *not* to do ... and choices regarding what we *are* to do, *and*, they all have to do with our attitudes ... our motivations ...

...

First, Paul says:

Let *nothing* be done through “selfish ambition” ...

In the Greek, “selfish ambition” is “Eritheia” ...

...

Many translations use “selfishness” in this verse ... which is good, but the word also carries the idea of being “fractious” “... ”

This would be irritable or quarrelsome ... creating rivalry” ...

Someone who fits this description, is one who looks to promote his *own* agenda, with little or no concern for the division he might cause ...

...

“Conceit” ... means “Vain glory” ... It comes from 2 words meaning ... “Empty” or “vein” ... and “to no purpose” ...

So, what we’re *not* to do, is:

We’re never, to do (and I would add – we’re never to “say), *anything*, for the promotion of a personal agenda ... which actually serves no Godly purpose, in the body of Christ ...

We’re not to do *anything*, to stoke our own ambitions, (to bring empty glory to ourselves) ... which of course, by it’s very nature, is fractious ... Quarrelsome ...

So we’ll pause here again:

\*\*\* Don't answer out-loud, but do you see any of this, in your service to the Lord's people?

...

Do you desire (or even feel that you need), acknowledgment or praise?

... do you find yourself agitated and quarrelsome, when serving Jesus becomes inconvenient, or, maybe you're unfulfilled because it doesn't bring you the reward of recognition?

...

The Lord has had to deal with this in my heart ...

... And if I take my eyes off Him, it can creep in again ...

Years ago, when our first Pastor had been away for a few months (recovering from illness), he had a letter read to the Church, in which he thanked two men for teaching, while he was away ... but he didn't mention me ...

I was so upset ... even though, in comparison to the other 2 men, what I did was very minimal ...

So, in my flesh, I let him know how offended I was ...

I mean, I had taken precious vacation time off from my job, to fill in (those couple of times), and he didn't mention my name in a letter to the Church

...

Well, that, is the definition ... of what Paul is describing here ...

Much ... (if not all) of what I had done, was for vain-glory ... for the praise of men ... to promote me, and with a quarrelsome heart, I let my pastor know, that I wasn't happy!

...

And perhaps each of us here, may have to deal with some degree of this self-promotion in our flesh, from time to time ...

...

So if we're going to serve like Jesus, we have to make the choice, to not bow, to this temptation ...

We must walk in the Spirit, and the result will be, we will not fulfill those lusts ...

And that scripture in Galatians 5 (where we're instructed to walk in the Spirit), doesn't say:

"walk in the Spirit, and you won't "have" the lusts of the flesh" ..., It says, "walk in the Spirit, and you won't "fulfill" them" ...

...

Unfortunately, we will likely have desires (off and on), for vain glory, throughout our life ... Even if they're just fleeting desires, in an unguarded moment ...

But the choice to not fulfill those lusts, must be made ... we must choose, to walk in the Spirit ... To be a man or woman, submitted to the work of the Spirit in our hearts, through the Word of God!

...

Let nothing be done, through selfish ambition or conceit

-P-

Continuing on ... The rest of Verse 3 says:

but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself.

"Lowliness of mind" ...

That's ... "humility" ...

In pagan writings at the time of this letter, "lowliness" here, actually had to do with "groveling" ... but Ken Wuest points out, that when it came into the New Testament, it's meaning was ennobled ...

\*\*\* it's ennobled because it's the heart, with which our savior (the ultimate nobility), served!

...

He served in lowliness of mind ... Humility ...



In Matthew 11:29, Jesus uses this word to describe Himself ...

He says there, the very familiar words:

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and [lowly](#) in heart,

Same word ... I am [humble](#) in heart ...

Interesting footnote about that portion of scripture in Matthew 11 ...

Jesus had just left a time of instructing His disciples, and now He's speaking to the multitudes ... and He says to all:

Come to Me, [all you](#) who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you and [learn](#) from Me, for I am [gentle](#) and [lowly](#) in heart,

So check this out: He invites all to [come](#) to Him ... He invites all (He says) to [learn](#) of Him ...

But then the very first thing, He wants the multitudes to learn ... to know about Himself is ...

...

He says: "[Learn](#) of me, for I am [Gentle](#) ... I am [Humble](#)" ...

And may the first thing that others learn about [us](#), is that we (like our Savior), are gentle and Humble ...

And so Paul says:

In lowliness of mind (in Jesus-like humility), let each esteem others better than himself

...

No matter our place in society ...

No matter if we're rich or poor ...

Executive or janitor ...

Business owner or hourly employee

We're all ... each one of us ... expected to esteem the other, as better than ourselves! (Esteem is to count of to think)

And the word for "better" here is: "To hold above" ... "To have or hold over"

...

This is what the heart of a servant, who looks like Jesus, does ...

This servant hold's others (their hearts, their interests ... their lives, their good), above his or her own ...

This doesn't mean that we don't have personal interests that are legitimate ... Only, that we consciously elevate the interests of others, to a place of prominence, in our hearts ...

... That we are consciously aware and invested in the interests of those we serve ...

...

One simple way we can check our hearts here is this:

In your conversation with others, do you listen to what they're saying, or are you phasing in-and-out, just waiting for them to stop talking, so that you can speak?

Are you investing your mind and heart, into the concerns of others, with the same interest you would want them to have, in your concerns?

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Did any of you see the movie about Fred Rodgers entitled: "A beautiful day in the neighborhood?" ...

... In it, Mr. Rodgers (played by Tom Hanks), is having a phone conversation with a reporter who wants to do a story on him, but he's very skeptical of the genuineness of Mr. Rodgers ...

He's seems to believe, that Fred's gentle, and kind persona, is just an act

...

So in a phone conversation, the reporter makes a comment about Mr, Rodgers having "more important folks to talk to," than him ...

To which Fred replies something to the effect:

“Well, right now, I’m having a conversation with you, so you’re the most important person I have to talk to” ...

Oh, I’m sure Fred other things to do ... Maybe even things he would rather have been doing ...

But at that moment, he chose to hold the interests of this reporter, above his own!

...

So what about us?

If we’re going to serve with a heart like Jesus ... we too, are going to hold the interests of others, above our own!

-P-

Verse 4: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

...The word “look” here, is from a Greek word meaning: “to fix attention upon, with a desire for, and interest in” something or someone ...

Paul uses the fact that we naturally see to our own interests, to give us the sense of how, we should be invested in others ...

In other words, just as I naturally ... fix my attention on my own interests, so too, with the same amount of vigor, I am to fix my attention ... of the interests of my fellow believers ...

... This is the heart, and the expression of one, who serves like Jesus ...

This person is not simply “others-minded” ... but he’s actually focused, on the life, and concerns of his brother or sister in Christ, as if, they were his own ...

...

This is what Jesus did for us, in carrying the guilt and the weight of our sin

...

He came (it says), to “give His life, a ransom” ...

...

And hear this: He *fixed His attention* ... on our *greatest* need ...  
“redemption from sin” ... so much so, that He gave His life, for us ...

So we’ll pause again for application:

... Is this *our* heart ... towards others?

Do we allow ourselves to step into their shoes, and therefore seek, to *fix our attention* on their needs ... ..

Do we invest ourselves in the interests of others, as if those interests, were our own?

This is the mindset of Jesus, and should be also the mindset of those who follow Him ...

Let each of you *fix your attention, not only* ... on his own interests, but also ... *fix your attention* on the interests of others

-P-

Getting into verses 5 through 8, we see more of our mission as servants of God ... And we also get a picture of the mind of Jesus ...

Verses 5 through 8: Paul says:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and coming in the likeness of men.* <sup>8</sup>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 noted at the beginning that we wouldn’t be picking all the fruit on the tree, and this is one of those places ...

... Obviously there’s so much here about our Savior’s deity, which we’ll only touch on, to bring us to the *main* instruction of this passage , which is, having the mindset of Jesus ...

... the one who, while being equal with the father ... Having created all things ... being worthy of *all* praise, adoration and worship *as* God ...

Even though He was “*all that*” ... He did the following:

- 1) He made HIMSELF of no reputation – God did that!
- 2) He took on the form of a servant - God did that!
- 3) Also, in coming in the likeness of man, He humbled Himself ... And of course that humility spanned the widest possible gap ... the gap from God, to man ... God did that!
- 4) And then, He became obedient unto death – and, that death, while most excruciating ... .. was also in place of those, for whom He suffered and died ... He died, actually carrying the guilt, the shame, and the penalty of those He loved and served ... God did that!

And so Paul says: “Let this mind, be in you” ...

\*\*\* I don't know about you, but when I read this, there's a stark realization of the fact, that I have a long way to go, if I'm going to serve, with a heart of love and compassion like Jesus ...

But it also gives me hope ...

Because the Lord doesn't ask us to do anything, that He doesn't also empower us to do!

And so I know, that the Lord (by His Spirit), can do in me (and in you), what this passage requires ...

So let's continue ... in hope ...

-P-

While the word “let” isn't in the Greek, it's here because having this mind, is in the present imperative ... So this is something we must do ...

We must have this mindset, that Jesus had (or has for that matter) ... if we're going to serve, as He did ...

... And we're instructed here, to look at it, from the perspective of what He showed us, while he was here physically ....

And that mindset began with Jesus, (and by extension begins with us) by “making ourselves, of no reputation” ...

That is: “He made Himself empty” ...

One of the things I love about this is; there is no being in heaven or on earth, who gave up more than Jesus ...

\*\*\* None of us (by following Jesus), can claim a loss, greater, than that, of which, He emptied Himself ...

He was in very nature, God ... and from that place of Glory, He emptied Himself ...

And so too, we must empty ourselves of what we perceive of our rights, our own glory ... our very lives ...

...

It's as Jesus said in Matthew 10:39:

He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

“Lose” in that passage is: To put out of the way entirely,

We must (as Jesus said), take up our cross daily, and follow Him!

We must, as Paul says here: make our-selves, of no reputation ... we must empty ourselves ...

...

So, by way of pondering: are you (am I), willing to do this ...

Are we willing, to empty ourselves of anything and everything that would be contrary, to the will ... and the call of God, in our lives ...

Are we willing to lay our own reputation at the cross, and live for Him?

That is the mindset the Lord desires we have, in our service to others, in His name ...

...

He emptied Himself ...

-P-

And then it says, He “took on the form of a servant” ...

That is: He “seized upon” this role of a servant ...

And “servant” here is “Doulos” (a bond-slave by choice) ...

...

This is a great place to pause, and ask if we have also seized upon our call to willingly serve?

Have we embraced servanthood, as God's call on our life? And have we given ourselves, to that call ...

If this sounds radical ... that's because it is ...

... It's not something we should put aside for another day ...

Paul says we must have this mindset ... seizing upon the call, to be a willing servant of Jesus ...

...

We'll examine what that looks like after the break ... and in Pastor Tom's class ...

For now ... continuing on in the middle of verse 7, Paul says:

and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself

...

There's that word again ... it means "to make, or to bring, low" ...

One of the great contrasts in Jesus' humility (as opposed to ours) is, just how low He had to go ...

He left heaven ... He left the presence of God the Father ...

He left behind the glory, that surrounded Him ...

He left a place where no unrighteousness dwells ...

He left the place of complete perfection and beauty ...

And He left all of that, in order to save you (and me) ... Because He loves us so dearly ...

...

And so, the one who humbled Him-self ... brining Himself so very low ... stepping from heaven ... into our lowly estate ... and then serving us, desires that we ... let that same mind be in us ...

We're to have this same mindset, of humility ...

...

Whatever heights of exaltation from which we need to lower ourselves to serve like Jesus, are nothing, compared to the distance He came ...  
Humbling Himself, on our behalf ...

So, given all that He left ... given all that He gave up ... Given the depth of humility He embraced ... how can we not also let that mind of humility, be in us?

That's the standard ...

That's the call ...

-P-

Now ... we've looked at the fact that Jesus left so much, in His emptying of Himself ... in His humility ...

In the second half of verse 8, we're told, to where, His humility would bring Him ... and that is, to the death on the cross ...

Verse 8 again:

... 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 first thing we're going to note here is ... one of the many unique things about the fact that He was fully man and fully God ...

And that is ... It says He "became" obedient ...

Now, just to say it out-loud ... this doesn't mean that Jesus went from a place of disobedience, to obedience ... obviously ...

...

What it's telling us is: Jesus (who had his own unique will, as a man), submitted that will, to do the will of the Father ...

Again, Jesus had his own personal will ... and that will was submitted to the obedience of the Father's will ...



We see this very clearly in Luke 22:42 ...

In that passage, Jesus is praying to the Father on the night before His crucifixion ... and there, He says to the Father:

“Father, if it is *Your* will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not *My* will, but *Yours*, be done.”

...

So, in the submitting of *His* will to the Father, Jesus (as a man), became obedient ...

And even in that passage (as our verse here says), His obedience, took Him to the cross ... *Obedient ... to the point of death...*

verse 8 again:

He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.

...

So keeping in mind the directive here from the Lord (through Paul) ... that we *must* have the mindset of Christ ... we do so, remembering, that His obedience to the Father, was such, that He was willing to submit His will to the father’s will ... and to *die* ...

...

The obedient heart of a servant of the Lord, is one that is willing to lay it all down for Him ... and for others!

Paul would say to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 4:2: For I am already being poured out as a drink offering,

...

He would also say to the saints in Colossi (in Colossians 1:24) – “I now rejoice in my *sufferings* for *you*” ...

...

So as we begin to wrap up our thoughts ...we’ll ask some questions: And I ask these questions of myself as well ...

How far (or to what place), are you willing to go, in your obedience and service to the Lord, and His people?

Will you hold on to at least a *little* selfish ambition ... or, will you choose to do *nothing* ... from selfish ambition?

Will you hold on to a bit of pride ... or will you humbly esteem others as *better* than yourself?

Will you allow yourself to *come along side* and concern yourself with the interests of others, or will you protect yourself from that kind of vulnerability?

Will you cling to maybe just a *little bit of your own* reputation ... or will you choose to make yourself of *no* reputation?

... Will you clock in and out with the Lord, assuming somewhat of a volunteer attitude in your service ... or will you choose to take the position of a bond servant of God ...

Will you obey, as long as the cost to you is limited ... or, are you willing to obey the Father, even to the point of taking up your cross ... and laying your own life down for Him?

That's the model for our service to the Lord, and to one another! For the Lord says to us:

Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, <sup>2</sup>fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Let *nothing* be done through *selfish ambition or conceit*, but in *lowliness* of mind let each esteem others *better* than himself.

<sup>4</sup>Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but *also* for the interests of others.

<sup>5</sup>Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself of *no reputation*, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>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 ...