

The Serving Community, Philippians 2:1-11
Treasuring our Treasures: Living Unselfishly
October 10, 2021

What was your reaction to the author's idea of "treasuring our treasure"? (Seeing the beauty and worth of everyone you meet) Why?

How do you feel about Dallas Willard's comment: "The most important task we have, especially for those in church leadership, is to pray for the success of our neighboring churches."

Read Philippians 2:1-4

What encouragement do you have from belonging to Christ? Discuss a time when you experienced the comfort of God's love.

Do you think agreeing wholeheartedly with each other means always having the same ideas and opinions? What do you think it means practically to be one in mind and purpose?

Why do you think we often feel such a strong desire to impress others? How does our culture contribute to this attitude of trying to impress?

What does Paul suggest we should do to counteract our natural tendency to try to impress others? What can you do to shift your focus toward taking an interest in others?

Why is it so difficult to think of others as better than yourself? What are some of the reasons that we struggle to live with such humility? Verse 3 says that we should consider others better than ourselves.

What about the things I'm good at? How would you rate yourself on the 4 qualities of verse 2? How would you rate our church? (Be careful not become critical but rather to honestly evaluate how we are doing and how we can grow.)

Some people are better than other people at certain things. Is it prideful to acknowledge this fact? Why or why not? What does humility actually look like?

How would you rate yourself on the 4 qualities of verse 2? How would you rate our church? (Be careful not become critical but rather to honestly evaluate how we are doing and how we can grow.)

Read Philippians 2:5-11

Paul understands that the key to living out the commands mentioned in the first four verses of chapter two is to "have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had" (Philippians 2:5, NLT). He then goes on to give one of the most powerful passages of scripture in all of the Bible. In the poem that follows in verses 6-11, Paul details the humility that Jesus demonstrated during his earthly ministry as an example for all believers to follow. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. (Philippians 2:6, NLT)

Who does Paul start by saying Jesus is? (Also see John 1:1-5.) Reflecting on questions 3 & 4 above, what does this demonstrate to us about Jesus' attitude?

How does it make you feel to know that a perfect God, the King of kings, willingly chose to take the position of a slave? How did Jesus demonstrate his position as a servant during his earthly ministry and death?

What are some of the divine privileges Jesus temporarily gave up during his earthly ministry? Jesus demonstrated his humility by his obedience. How does obedience to God demonstrate our humility as well?

What are some practical things we can do that demonstrate an attitude of sincere humility?

1. Select two of the following areas and describe what you learned about unselfish living:

family work church daily life

2. What was the most difficult aspect of living unselfishly?

3. What did you learn about others as you lived unselfishly?

4. Did you grow in your ability to treasure others through this practice?

1. The author of the Good and Beautiful Community opens the chapter with the story of a committee meeting. The point of the story is that how people behave in committee meetings is the best indicator of how spiritually mature the church is. How have you seen narratives of self-centeredness and self-sacrifice at work inside or outside the church? What has been the fruit of those meetings?

2. In exploring the false and true narratives, the author contrasts a self-focused church with an others-focused church. Consider your own faith community. With your group, list the ways your community is self-focused and others-focused. What do these lists tell you?

3. The author writes, "The value of a church is not in its longevity but in its love. The success of a church is not in its size but in its service to the people and the community" (p. 72-73). Do churches struggle to focus on love instead of longevity, and service over size? What factors contribute to this struggle?

Next Steps

Memorize Philippians 2:9-11

Treasure Your Treasure, by blessing someone outside of your normal friend circle.

Eat with someone this week and work on listening to what they have to say and what they are going through.