



Mid-Week Bible Study: RELATIONSLIPS

Week 5: YIELD

Text: Philippians 2:1-8; 13-15

Introduction:

Q: When have you really wanted to be first in line?

As a teenager I remembered several of friends waiting overnight outside of the mall so they could get the latest pair of Jordan's. I have also laughed at images and video of people in stores on Black Friday getting into fights over a TV, iPad, or some other gadget.

These examples highlight one thing: **Selfishness.** Know that the desire for something is not sinful unless it prompts us to Obtain it at the expense of others. When we put ourselves first, it leads to damaged relationships.

Setting: The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to the church at Philippi while he was under house arrest in Rome awaiting his first trial before the emperor. He wrote this letter to not only thank the Church for their gift and the circumstances of his imprisonment, but for them to remain united in Christ. Paul pushed this them in these verses shared that the only thing that we should be looking to be first in line to do is to look out for others.

Point: Relationslips are avoided when we humbly place the needs of others before our own.

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

Verse 1: Paul urged the Philippians to live in humble unity that places the needs of others over themselves. Here he points out 4 different realities of the Christian life that should lead us to be humbly united.

- Note that each phrase/reality starts with the word "if". This world was not mean to convey doubt. In Greek grammatically the phrase is constructed to state "because there is."

- Encouragement from unity with Christ- to come alongside of for the purpose of support/advocacy. because we are all unified in Christ, we are called to support each other as Christ supports us.
- Comfort from his love- comfort in Greek = persuasion/incentive. God's love provides an incentive to stay unified.
- Common sharing in the spirit - this suggests a partnership.
 - ***Read Philippians 1:5***
- Tenderness & compassion -our call to Christ leads us to be affectionate and Kind especially in sharing our sorrows and meeting other's needs.

Verse 2: Based on these 4 realities Paul appealed to the church at Philippi to make his joy completed by being unified. Paul then stressed that strong relationships require us to be:

- like-minded (same values)
- Same love (agape love)
- One in spirit (close knit harmony)
- One mind (moving towards the same goal)

Q: Why are these requirements necessary for strong unified relationships?

Verse 3-4: Unity cannot be achieved without a selfless disposition. Most people don't need an alarm to remind you to eat, sleep or play. We take care of ourselves. But we do need to be prompt to focus on others' needs.

Relationships work when we are not self-centered but other-centered.

- Not in competition or ego driven but humility.

Christians need a clear understanding of Humility.

- Humility is not weakness or a false denial of one's talents and skills or accomplishments.
- Humility is a healthy, balanced view of ourselves- recognition of both strengths & weakness.
- Humility means you are comfortable enough with us but strong enough to intentionally care for another's welfare without judging them.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8

Paul challenged believers to observe Jesus to learn what humility looks like. He is the perfect model for navigating our way through personal relationships, which is why Paul tells us to have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.

Verse 5: Paul gave an imperative *“have the same mindset.”* This command by Paul states that having the mind of Christ causes us to be self-sacrificing, self-giving, obedient, and focused in serving others. Christ again is the supreme example of a proper attitude of humbled selflessness.

Verse 6: Paul emphasizes Christ’s Deity.

- The phrase *“in the very nature”* means that Christ had the essential attributes as God. Christ is God.
 - Jesus is our example to better understand God.
- Even though Christ is Deity, he refused to use his deity selfishly.
 - We should not be impressed with our worldly status or positions, but instead look to serve others.
 - **Some relationships suffer because someone’s head has taken all the space in the room.**
 - Jesus taught us that greatness comes from servitude.
 - ***Read Mark 10:43-45 & Luke 14-7-14***

Verse 7: Rather than holding on to his deity, Christ made himself nothing.

- The Greek word here means to waive one’s rights to something/to humble oneself/or to set aside a worthy reputation.
- Jesus chose to follow God’s will, leave heaven, and to lay aside the glory of God for us.

Q: How do we balance our responsibility to ourselves and to others?

Verse 8: Again, Jesus is to be our example because during his stay on earth he fully submitted to God’s will.

- ***Read John 4:34 & Mark 14:36***

Instead of flaunting an elevated status among people, Jesus chose the path of self-sacrifice = “even Death in a cross”.

- The word even suggests that the dart on the cross was regulated for a certain segment of the population.
 - Crucifixion was reserved for criminals, slaves, and insurrectionists.
 - It was meant to dehumanize an individual.
- Paul wrote this to remind us that **if we are going to be in unified healthy relationships, we must be willing to take hits and even humiliation by the masses for the one(s) we are connected to.**

PHILIPPIANS 2:13-15

Verse 13: Paul informed his readers how one can live a humbled and submitted life to Christ.

- Only because God is at work in us. The terms “*works and to act*” in Greek gives us the word energize.
- God literally energizes and empowers us to actively live this kind of life.

Paul suggested that God does so we can fulfill his good purpose not just individually but also collectively.

- *Our relationships and our unity in the church enables us to achieve the goals of building God’s kingdom here in earth.*

Verse 14: Paul wrote that we are to live and serve others without grumbling or arguing.

- The Philippians we’re experiencing controversy in the church that was not being addressed in a healthy fashion.
 - Grumbling = complaints/displeasure which often leads to gossip.
 - Arguing=evil thoughts/disputes/doubts-public displays of disagreement.
- These behaviors never prompt unity but instead the opposite, division.

Verse 15: This verse is the purpose behind Paul’s challenge to live like Christ in humble unifying relationships.

- The Apostle wanted the believers to be blameless towards each other and the world. So he told them to their behavior sure be pure in light and submission to each other and Christ.
- Paul contrast what our relationships and behavior should look like in comparison to “*warped and crooked generation.*”



- Christ calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light. When we don't embrace Christ's truth we live in darkness and deny the truth of the word of God.
- Thus our relationships must look different than the worlds. For the world should be able to look to us find a road map to Christ and salvation in him.

Q: How do we evaluate our effectiveness as witnesses for Christ?

Paul concluded by stating that if live for Christ and yield to others we will shine like stars. The term Stars only occurs here and Revelation 21:11. Star means luminaries or light-giving bodies. Light glows and shines.

- Christians are to be light in dark places.
- ***Read John 9:5 & Matt 5:14-15***

As members of the Star, we have a mandate to GLOW for God in the a dark and sin-sick world. Thus our relationships must do the same!