

Giving of Oneself

Key Verse: “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*”
—*Philippians 2:5*

Selected Scripture:
Philippians 2:2-3:1

THIS LESSON STARTS WITH

Paul’s exhortation towards brotherly love and affection for one another. Such a condition prevailing in the brethren’s hearts and minds would promote unity of the spirit and prove to be a source of great joy for the apostle.—Phil. 2:1,2

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”—vss. 3,4, *New King James Version*

Our Key Verse sets forth the Master whose qualities of obedience, devotion, and sacrifice in the doing of God’s will during his earthly sojourn should be the standard for emulation by believers.

“Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”—vss. 6,7, *New American Standard Bible*

The mind of Christ is also characterized by our Lord’s great humility. Not only was he willing to leave the glory of heaven to take on the form of a ‘bond-servant,’ but he humbled himself further by rendering perfect obedience to God and enduring the death of the cross so that mankind would have an opportunity for salvation, as he

provided the ransom price for Adam's sin back in Eden.—Heb. 2:9; Phil. 2:8

The foregoing verses affirm that our Lord Jesus was a spirit being before he came to earth and took on human nature to bear the penalty for man's sin. Being in the 'form of God' refers to his glorious spiritual condition before he came to the earth. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."—John 3:17

In view of his faithful submission to the Heavenly Father's will, the Lord Christ Jesus has been raised from the dead and highly exalted to the divine nature. He has become the head of the 'Seed of Abraham' that will bless all the families of the earth during the future Millennial kingdom. "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-22

Paul then urges the church at Philippi to continue through obedience and humility to emulate the disposition of Christ by heeding the instructions of the Lord, realizing that the Heavenly Father will strengthen their minds as they seek to lead sanctified lives. The end result of such a regimen and devotion to the Master would lead to the brethren's becoming partakers of the divine nature at the end of their Christian walk.—Phil. 2:12-16

The admonitions by the apostles are equally relevant to believers today who are seeking to do God's will. Similar encouragement as to the rewards of faithfulness is also provided by the Apostle Peter. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:10,11 ■