

How You Magnify God's Glory On Earth

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Date: 27 October 2024

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[0 : 00] Our sermon text for today is Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 through 5. For many it's the favorite part of the Bible.

In these first 11 verses, as someone observed, they speak the soaring language of a musical piece. Think of that favorite piece of music that you could listen to over and over again.

That's best understood by being heard out loud to the end and then heard again. So as I read our sermon text 1 through 5, I'm going to read all the way through verse 11.

And I ask that the Holy Spirit will illumine to us His inspired word. It's infallible, it's clear, and it's sufficient only by the ministry of the Spirit to His people.

Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 through 11.

[1 : 28] Even the death of the cross.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

the word of the Lord for the people of God. Thanks be to God. Amen. You may be seated. Let's pray.

Amen. Let's pray. God, we ask that you please will open our eyes to see your glory.

We pray that you'll turn these words, Father, that you breathed out. You'll make them alive and active to set forth Christ before us, his people.

[3 : 23] We need Christ right now, Lord, this hour. We ask that you set him forth to us through your word. We ask for your Holy Spirit to press home the truth that our souls need right now, Lord.

I thank you for these dear brothers and sisters, for each one that you brought here by your providence this morning. And I pray that your spirit will minister and feed us. You know what each one needs, Lord, to keep going and to grow.

We trust that you will do this because you are faithful and you are faithful to your word. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, what I hope to do today is to walk through these verses and see together how you and I magnify the glory of God on earth.

How does the church magnify the glory of God on earth? this was how Paul described it in his own life in verses 19 and 20 he said I am this is chapter one of Philippians 19 and 20 I am confident of this that through your prayer and the supply of the Holy Spirit Christ will be magnified in my life and now he turns his focus to not his own situation in life but to the congregation in Philippi and he says in chapter 2 verse 5 let the mind of Christ be in you the mind of Christ and he rehearses for them in verse 6 Christ who shares the essence of the holy holy holy God verse 8 he humbled himself and he became obedient unto death verse 11 of chapter 2 he did all of this to the glory of God the Father so this is the concern of this passage it's how God's glory is magnified on earth through you his church a telescope magnifies a telescope takes something far away and brings it close makes it accessible

I looked up this morning we are in the Milky Way galaxy there's there's over I want to say over 200 I think it's 200 billion stars in one galaxy but then how many galaxies are there in the universe about 170 galaxies it's mind-blowing what God has created and he holds all the stars in the palm of his hand so those things are glorious and the telescope helps bring those things that are far away and make them accessible well what about the glory of the God who created these glorious stars in galaxies he brings his glory to this earth on this planet in this galaxy through people like you and me the person sitting to your right and your left the church four observations from this passage number one God's glory is magnified on earth in his church look at verse 5 again let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus so who is it that shares the mind of Christ well in chapter 2 he starts with the word therefore you've probably heard that every time you come across the word therefore you have to ask what's the question what is therefore therefore so you go a little bit and in chapter 1 verse 27 as heavenly citizens you could say as God's gospel colony in Philippi who are sharing in the suffering of Christ that's his audience and he says now in in verse 1 it's you who know what it is to be encouraged and exhorted in Christ it's you who are comforted by his love it's you who know this fellowship of the Holy Spirit it's the church it's impossible to be unregenerate to still have a heart of stone it's impossible it would go against your nature if you're still caught in verse 3 of Philippians chapter 2 where it says selfish ambition conceit see these are the words of those who don't know Christ who are not in him who don't have the fellowship of the spirit that's not who brings glory to God it's impossible and what a what a sting that would be because what he says in chapter 2 verse 3 that phrase selfish ambition that's how he spoke of those preachers who preach Christ with bad motives now he's saying be careful there's threats to the church from outside like those obvious ones but be careful your flesh is bent in that direction even if you're regenerate your pride is going to want to steal some glory for yourself that word is best translated I think as vain glory vain glory to pursue your own prestige one commentator called this vain glory that strangely addictive and debasing cocktail of vanity and public opinion it's strange how our flesh will even want that why would you want to keep drinking that and conceit it's to be puffed up it's to view reality in a distorted way it's to be out of touch with what's real and true conceit is what Satan brings that's how Satan thought and how Satan and all those under the pagan spell of the demons think that way Satan thought that equality with God could be grasped and it's the way of the world it's a threat to the church he also warned the church in Galatia

[9 : 17] Galatians 5 26 let us those within the church those hearing this reading let us not become conceited that's the word of Satan provoking one another envying one another to the church in Corinth 2 Corinthians 12 20 he warned them of this danger your church could become marked by here's the list contentions jealousies outbursts of wrath selfish ambitions backbitings whisperings conceits there's the same word again and tumults he says be careful it's possible to claim the name of Jesus to minister in the name of Jesus even to say the right message in the name of Jesus but it's a counterfeit that does not bringing glory to God you can use the name of God but you can have the mind of Satan if you're doing this for selfish ambition or vain conceit or you can even have the right message but do it for man's glory those are counterfeits

Jesus prayed in Matthew 11 we heard this I thank you father lord of heaven and earth that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and have revealed them to babes for so it seemed good in your sight so the question I'm trying to answer is who is it that truly does magnify the glory of God it's the answer is it's not everyone who claims the name of God it's not that it's more narrow he says in verse one again if there is any consolation in Christ how much any if there is any comfort if any fellowship of the spirit if any affection and mercy who magnifies the glory of God you who have tasted even the smallest amount of how good God is in Christ you magnify his glory on earth is there anyone here today who needed to be consoled spiritually and you were comforted and exhorted and encouraged in Christ then you are the one he's talking to you're the one who will bring glory to God on earth is there anyone here is there anyone here is there anyone here is there anyone here is there anyone whose soul was once so hollow you thought you were going to die and if you died won't even make a difference and then Christ poured his spirit into fill your heart to overflowing then he's talking to you you are the one who will bring glory to God on earth if there's any of us who have felt very lonely in this world we all have we have enjoyed now through Christ the fellowship of his spirit well then you're the one through whom he will bring his glory on earth if you can think back to that time when your heart was still ice cold toward God and his love melted your heart then you're the one through whom his glory will be revealed on earth if you're a much forgiven sinner who's been surprised by God's own mercy now in your heart toward his people where did my love for his church come from I I love his church where did that come from that's not natural he says if this is true of you then let the mind of Christ be in you you've gotten a taste of it you've gotten any amount of it want more and more and more and more do this to the glory of God the Father verse 11 so God's glory is magnified on earth in his true church you who have tasted any of his love number two the more you experience Christ's goodness the more you desire to magnify his glory the first question is who who are we talking about the next question is why the motive behind it but why look at verse two he uses a personal appeal he says fulfill my joy so don't do this because it's it's like a law or someone's regulating or forcing you no fulfill my joy do it do it to make me happy and proud by being like-minded having the same love being in one accord of one mind in the fourth chapter of Philippians we learn of a conflict between two very influential women in this congregation in Philippi now it's interesting in this whole letter Paul never says who was right or even what the conflict was about it's as if that doesn't even matter he does not take sides he does not call the church to erase their differences nor pretend like their differences don't exist and we can give gain some other insights there was this threat of of bad teachers all around them but also internally within the congregation there's going to be diversity of opinions and values and things that will be put into collision one with another among true Christians who have shared any of

God's love and shared any of his fellowship there will be conflict and difference remember in Acts there's there's these examples we have Paul and his team traveling with him Paul is a Jew and then we hear of the conversion of three other people Lydia was from Asia and she was of the wealthy class the slave girl that was demon-possessed and freed and converted she was most likely Greek and definitely of lower class she was a slave and then there's the Roman jailer who you know historians do their best guess to say that he was most likely a Roman soldier so you've got Jew Asian Greek Roman all together in this little church and this verse this passage verses one through four it's in Greek it's one continuous sentence that only has one verb and the verb is right here in verse two being like-minded being of one accord that's the verb this verb is plural so it's saying you or ye in the plural be this way and that phrase like-minded it's it's really literally translated this way may you plural all of you together may be being disposed it could almost be like have a shared mentality a shared mindset an attitude collectively that defines you you're not all bound to hold the same opinions that wouldn't even be good for a church but you are to be of one accord he says of one mind literally one sold like one shared personality one shared identity who are you I'm a member of this church that's who I am above everything else because I'm in Christ you have a shared mission and you're a team one commentator pointed out uniformity comes from pressure without but unity which is the need of the church in Philippi is only possible by the work of the Holy Spirit within internal divisions can only be resolved when our minds get filled with Christ over and over again by the Holy Spirit and this is a gift to the church to share a mind focused on Christ and his glory despite all of our differences and then our differences actually are a source of strength for the body for the congregation the more you experience Christ's goodness the more you desire to magnify his glory the hungriest people to lift that trophy that world cup trophy when you get the shot every four years biggest sports tournament in the world are those who have tasted it before that's why Brazil has won the world cup five times more than any other country they've tasted it the whole nation behind them rallying with them and so Paul's words here where he says if if if if then make my joy complete and be like-minded it's like an old coach and it's his last season before he's going to retire and he sits down all these young guys and he says if that crest over your heart the emblem of our nation if that stirs up any patriotism inside of you if your family name on the back of your jersey makes you willing to sacrifice for something greater than you as an individual then you will leave it all on the field if those great players who wore that number that you now carry on your back if that means anything to you and you have any respect for them then you'll dare to achieve something great with this team that most players would never even dare to dream of that's what he's saying to the church fulfill my joy do this for the old coach don't play for yourself for your stats

do it for my joy do it for the team do it for the legacy play our game for one another and we'll share the cup see this is the pattern of christ with his disciples isn't it it was for the joy set before christ that he endured the cross to share this joy with you to share his crown with his church paul says following christ's example fulfill my joy by being like-minded having the same love being of one accord of one mind see what you feel on the inside these are all emotional personal appeals someone said it's like it's like a rope with all these different hooks anything inside of your heart or your soul that he can hook on to and pull you toward christ he's appealing to it our faith can't just be a desire or a feeling it's a feeling that christ by the power of the holy spirit pulls into action with his church spurgeon commented on this principle he said if your religion can live and die within your own hearts nowhere else then you have not any that is worth having if you would adorn the gospel you must love others love them intensely and make it one objective of yours in your life to make other people happy for so you will then be acting according to the spirit and genius of the gospel you will be adorning the doctrine of god our savior in all things so if you've tasted any of god's goodness church then let the mind of christ jesus be in you also to the glory of god the father we do this day after day and the more we experience christ's goodness the more we desire to magnify god on earth don't we number three that god's glory it's magnified on earth when the minds of god's people get filled with christ that's how he does it we saw who we saw why the motive and now it's how how does god do this through his church it's by filling our minds with jesus christ in verse three he says negatively let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit number verse two he had said being like-minded of one accord of one mind sharing that mind of christ and that's why his example the first example he gives in this chapter is jesus christ verse five the trinity father son and holy spirit the creator of all is self-existent self-sufficient holy good loving glorious and his eternal decree before time and space are created the holy triune god says let's magnify our glory to our creation well how and the answer is in verse six jesus christ god the son being the essence of and equal with god verse seven he made himself of no reputation hebrews 10 5 and 7 says when christ came into the world he said a body you have prepared for me behold i have come to do your will oh god as it is written in the bible here are the disciples now with the lord jesus christ incarnate clamoring to have a position of honor and power in his kingdom and as alister beg pointed out the same god creator who that said let's make water be h₂o that's what water will be that same designer and creator put a towel around his waist and took the

water he created and washed the dirt off the feet of his disciples bringing their dirt unto himself this is what it means to have the mind of christ and jesus said to his disciples and all who will follow him john 13 a new commandment i give to you that you love one another how just as i have loved you you also are to love one another by this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another by this the creation the earth will see my glory when my love is inside of you for one another just as i have loved you titus chapter 2 verse 9 paul writes specifically to bond servants slaves within the church and he says be obedient to your masters to be well pleasing in all things not answering back but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of god our savior in all things how much ought we to serve one another even as a slave serving another master because it adorns the doctrine of our salvation it expresses to the world it makes it visible this is how glorious our god is who took on flesh and came to save sinners like us let this mind be in you that was in christ jesus he says in verse 5 and do this to the glory of god the father when christ fills your mind with himself there's no space left for our pride there's really no target left for satan when our mind is full of christ there's really nothing to be baited or tempted with when our mind is full of christ his love will ooze out as if it were jewelry on us it's his love john chrysostom made that observation he said as the children of the wealthy have an ornament of gold around their neck and never take it off because it exhibits a token of their high birth so compassion and mercy are our status symbol as citizens of heaven god's glory is magnified on earth the more your mind and mine get filled with christ fourth and final observation for today is that god's glory is magnified on earth as christ's people learn his humility from him god's glory is magnified on earth as christ's people learn his humility from him moises silva commented that the true obstacle to unity is not the presence of legitimate differences of opinion but self-centeredness in verse 3 paul cautioned he says don't let conceit creep in or vain glory but instead verse 3 in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself verse 4 let each of you look not only to your own interests but also to the interests or rights of others let the mind of christ jesus be in you we know that philippi in act 16 is described as the foremost colony the imperial colony in macedonia the citizens of philippi they would have assigned a high value to questions of roman social status and rank and so when he says in verse 3

[26 : 31] in lowliness of mind or in humility let each esteem others better than himself this would have been a shocking word for him to use in the Hebrew faith and religion humility was a virtue but in the Greek word it was a derogatory term so if you look in secular Greek literature nowhere will the word humility in this sense be used as a virtue it's rarely used and then only to push someone down to denote them as a servile beast like a person that's extremely weak and dumb they're like a donkey that's just meant to carry something from one place to the other to say a person is low-minded that's what you're calling them and he says in verse 3 be that be humble this word if you break it down it has a base and an adjective the base of this word humility humility or low-mindedness it's the mind the faculty of perceiving and judging and the adjective is not rising far above the ground very low in spirit deferring servilely to others and he says learn from Christ how to be humble how to be low minded our Lord Jesus Christ was humble toward his father the opposite would be to be proud before God to be unyielding but Jesus Christ he was here to obey his father to do his father's will he was always content and he never complained about God's providence in his life be like Christ have the mind of Christ think of a child in a household how powerless especially in the ancient world the child's completely at the mercy of the parents decisions and Jesus said in Matthew 18 for whoever humbles himself like a child is greatest in the kingdom of heaven someone had pointed out

I think very wisely that true humility biblical humility like Christ is not to think less of yourself but to think of yourself less such humility I apologize such humility as Christ provided with his own life it's not a sign of weakness but a sign of strength Christ lived to save others he lived to obey his father he put his own rights aside to accomplish the mission that God called him to someone concluded that there can be nothing so foreign to a soul that is united to this humble Christ as arrogance it's impossible and I was so encouraged to see what does this look like when this mind of Christ this humility like Jesus had when that slowly works its way into all of us I was encouraged to see how this actually becomes a protection for the church from the attacks of the enemy

John Chrysostom pointed out when there is a mutual unselfishness a mutual both looking out for the interests of one another and the rights of one another he called it a double wall of gentleness that Satan can't penetrate Satan wants to accuse us one to the other he wants to divide and try to conquer and God puts in the Christians by the Holy Spirit in each of us a gentleness toward one another that we learn from Christ a humility to serve one another and this puts up a double wall against the attacks of Satan to penetrate and try to break up his church Polycarp similarly he said this is like it's participating one another by the gentleness of the Lord it's his gentleness and kindness in us and we participate for one another to protect the walls of the church for the glory of God it's to walk in Christ's meekness and humble footsteps Jesus said blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth you know how this looks in our lives

I think it can take a variety of forms really small tasks we do every day one another you all do here on a Sunday and it can also take really colorful expressions different parts of the world that we would never even be aware of so we share this as a testimony to God's faithfulness one example like that is from an evangelist in China named Watchman Nying and he told about this Christian who was a farmer and he had a rice plantation and because it was on the mountains you had to create a terrace and you have different levels of rice plantation and when you irrigate one you have these little dikes that open up the water and it can flow to the lower fields well this Christian happened to live way high up on the mountain and he had access to water and he would do the hard work of getting up every morning and letting that water flood his rice plantation but he noticed the pattern that his neighbor who was not a believer kept opening up the dikes without permission and draining out the water so that the Christian's crops start to get dry and he couldn't figure out why and this neighbor that was further down with the help of gravity was stealing his water so the Christian did not know what to do and he went to his church and they prayed together they searched the scriptures and the church encouraged him his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ encouraged him to be like Christ be humble think of your interest but also the interest of others and with the power of the Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus Christ this believer started getting up two hours earlier and he would first fill up his neighbor's field with water take care of his needs and then he would keep working and fill up his own field with water say well hold on in this example this is dealing with the church it's talking about unity within the church serving those within the body brothers and sisters we don't know which souls

Jesus died for and it's whoever will believe will reveal to us who it is well in this example in China this evangelist shares this story that that neighbor who was stealing water and then got served so generously and humbly by this Christian he wanted to see if this is real he wanted to understand why and he came to church and became friends and got saved he's part of the church now he was one for whom Christ had died all along and this was the means this suffering and this sacrifice of the Christian looking out for the interests of his neighbor was the means God used to bring another soul into his family Romans 14 19 says let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building how do we do this what Jesus said in Matthew 11 29 learn from me we learn from Jesus Christ he says I am meek and lowly in heart learn from me and there's no striving you will instead you'll find rest for your souls so church

[34 : 08] God's glory is magnified on earth as you and I learn the humility of Christ himself from Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit in us so let this mind of Christ be in you more and more and that's how you and I get to magnify the glory of our creator right here on the earth where he's put us to the glory of God the Father let's pray we confess this is all your work from start to finish and you who began a good work you will see it through to completion we ask that your Holy Spirit illumine to us how it is you want to apply this truth for your glory in our lives today amen oh my God then