

REDEEMING THE DISRUPTION

Quarantine. Isolation. Social Distancing. Masks. Stay-at-home. Safer-at-home. Worship-at-home. Sanitize. Disinfect. Stay AWAY! These are buzzwords we can't stop hearing. Each warns us against getting too close—in fact, the farther the better! Unusual times are upon us.

What's not so unusual, though, is "social distance" with our faith. Even in normal times, we might keep our faith private or think of our relationship with Jesus as mostly an individual pursuit. It's natural for us to isolate with spiritual matters, maybe even preferring to avoid the hassle and effort of community. From last week, though, Paul's instruction for us was clear: a "manner of life...worthy of the gospel of Christ" is one where we experience unity, even "striving side by side for the faith." But what does this kind of unity and proximity require, and where can we look for inspiration? Welcome to chapter 2!

Main Text: Philippians 2:1-11

CONNECT

1. How has this past week gone for you? Are there any new struggles or needs that you're experiencing?
2. What did you take away from last Sunday's sermon? Was something especially significant, inspiring, confusing, or helpful?

LEARN & OBSERVE

1. Look at verses 1-4. What is Paul's desire for the believers in Philippi (v. 2) and on what grounds is he making his appeal to them (v. 1)?
2. How would you describe the attitude or disposition being prescribed in verses 3-4?
3. Look at verses 5-11. How does Jesus' life (described in verses 5-8) exemplify what Paul is calling the Philippians to?
4. Paul could have stopped at verse 8, but instead emphasizes Christ's exaltation in verses 9-11. What impact might these last verses have had on the Philippians in their situation?
5. Verses 6-11 are saturated with deep, rich theology! As we look through these verses, where can we find indicators of, or insights into, both Jesus' divine and human natures?

APPLY

1. Who's the most humble person you know...besides yourself, of course? What makes him or her humble?

2. What do you see as the relationship between humility and unity? How does your understanding compare with this week's passage?

3. Verses 1-2 contain examples of benefits from following Christ. What would you say are some of the main benefits you've experienced as you follow Jesus? How could these help us live in unity at Calvary?

4. Paul began this letter by identifying himself as a "servant of Christ Jesus." This week's passage also uses the same word to describe how Jesus himself took on "the form of a servant." With Paul and Jesus in mind, what does it mean for us to live as servants?

5. Jesus humbled himself and was highly exalted by God. In a similar way, we can expect that our humbling in this life will result in future exaltation. Using verses 3-4 as a reference, take time to pray for each other. Consider these questions:

Am I acting out of rivalry?

Am I living with conceit (i.e., vanity or self-seeking ambition)?

Am I counting others as less significant than myself?

Am I pursuing my interests ahead of others' interests?