

Philippians at Home

Week Three: Philippians 2:1-18

Chapter 2 brings us to the heart of Philippians and one of the most amazing passages in the New Testament. Paul summarizes God's purposes in Christ to bring us to salvation and urges the church to be unified by looking to Christ and his example of humble servanthood.

Prepare

Find a comfortable seat, grab a Bible and a device to access YouTube, and ask the Holy Spirit to work in your heart and mind through your study of Philippians.

Watch & Listen

As we read Philippians 2, a question arises. How can God be fully human and fully divine? Battles surrounding the person, nature, and role of Christ dominated the first 4 ecumenical councils of the early church as they attempted to shape the language we use to talk about Christ. Watch the following 20 minute video for a great summary of the [Council of Chalcedon in AD 451](#) or read this [shorter summary](#) from Pastor Kevin DeYoung.

Read & Discuss

Scripture Reading One: [Philippians 2:1-4](#).

- What are four realities of being in Christ listed in Philippians 2:1? Why would Paul remind his listeners of these realities marking our life with Christ before calling us to unity?
- Why do you think adopting the characteristics of unity listed in Philippians 2:2-4 are particularly challenging in our American culture? How can we move from feeling sad about failure toward getting it right?

Scripture Reading Two: [Philippians 2:5-11](#).

- What do the incarnation and cross of Christ teach us about servanthood?
- What does it mean that Jesus "though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself taking the form of a servant..."?
- Does Paul's statement in 2:7-8 imply Jesus let go of his divine attributes in the incarnation? (See [Colossians 2:9](#) & [John 17:5](#)). If you would like to explore this topic more consider listening to this [12 minute episode](#) from Desiring God.

- Why is it important that Jesus is fully human and fully divine?
- What does it mean that Jesus humbled himself (2:8), and what was the result of his humbling (2:9-11)?

Scripture Reading Three: [Philippians 2:12-18](#).

- We must read Philippians 2:12 in the context of Philippians 1:6. How do we work out all the aspects and blessings of salvation with fear and trembling (2:12)? How is God working in you for his good pleasure?
- Think back to the generation of Hebrew people wandering in the wilderness. What were some major themes in their disobedience to God?
- How do we do shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, and what do we need to resist doing? (See [Isaiah 49:6](#); [Matthew 5:14-15](#)).
- What does “holding fast to God’s Word” mean for you?
- What does a life “poured out” for God’s service look like?

Apply & Pray

- Consider making this a week of “no grumbling or complaining” in your household. Come up with a game as a reminder not to do so (i.e. a quarter penalty, 10 burpees, or chores for every grumble or complaint).
- Choose one person to serve in humility this week as you count him/her more significant than yourself.
- Write a note of thanks to someone who has impacted your life with humble service.