

Think Like Jesus

In your relationships with one another,
have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God
something to be used to his own advantage;

Philippians 2:5-6 (NIV)

In western society we can have a difficult time trying to understand the effects of poverty on billions of people in our world.

I know of several humanitarian organizations that arrange trips for their supporters to the countries where the most basic needs to support life are scarce. The idea is that if you can get people with some wealth to go to areas of extreme need, the experience can help the visitors understand better why funds need to be given.

Taking someone who owns a 3-4 bedroom home, complete with double car garage, central air conditioning, and other amenities, to witness people living in a one room hut 10 feet by ten feet can cause the donor to have the “mindset” of the impoverished. Asking the visitor to sit on the mud floor of the home and eat a meal of maize and tough goat meat with their fingers can really be a wakeup call to how the other half of

the world really lives.

Recognizing that goat meat is a luxury for these poor people who serve it to honor you and learning that they usually eat rodents instead for protein, is a startling revelation. Now the visitor can develop the mindset of the people that need their help so desperately.

Paul wants the Christians in Philippi to be humble like Jesus, and the best way for him to help them develop humility is to point them to the story of Jesus and how He left the glories of heaven to become a man. Jesus did not regard His rightful privileges and exalted position in heaven something to cling to when opportunity came to rescue helpless sinners.

Paul will go on to tell of how Jesus did not insist on His “rights” but rather humbled Himself, and so the Lawgiver submitted to the laws He created. The Infinite One took on finite humanity in order to substitute for the sin of His

people. John 10:11 (NIV) “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

So Paul asks God’s people to look at how much Jesus humbled Himself and strive to have a similar mindset. Do not be someone who “demands his rights”. Look for opportunities to be the servant of those around you. Lower your own standard of living in order to elevate the standard of others.

If you find it hard to interfere with your enjoyment of this life’s pleasures to minister grace to others, go back to the Gospels. Read again the stories of how Jesus suffered such humiliation for us and you will soon find it in your heart to give of your goods and your time to serve the needs of those who have so much less than you do.

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