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This Sunday we were continuing our series in Philippians, tackling the section from 1v27-2v11 as Paul was beginning to deal with some of the issues the Philippian church were facing.

#### **1v27-30: Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of Jesus:**

Paul's desire as the passage begins is that the Christians in Philippi will remain united (v27) despite external pressure on the church (v28 and v29). Persecution and opposition has a way of causing **Christians to compromise or churches to fracture**. His response to their possible compromise is to urge them to conduct themselves in a manner worthy - better still 'exercise your citizenship in a manner worthy' – using the language of citizenship calls to mind the fact that Philippi was a colony of Rome – full of Romans but not 'at home. Well so for the Christian – when everyone bows to Caesar, they are to bow to Jesus and to live a different life for him.

#### **2v1-4: Keep loving and serving one another...**

The second concern seems to be disunity – the problem with proud, stubborn, hard hearts is that we consider our selves first and so we divide. Paul urges them rather to look to others first (v3 and v4). The way we can do this is by giving out of the abundant grace and love that we've been given – see v1-2. Because of all that we have in Christ, so he wants them to make his joy complete by loving one another and remaining united. And the antidote to thinking that we can't do this, or we don't want to do this is to fix our eyes on Christ

#### **2v5-11: ...because Jesus loved and served you**

Foundationally Paul urges us to change the way we think (see v2 and v5). To have the deliberate mindset of Christ in the way that we relate to one another. We see his mindset in v6 and 7 – instead of taking the worship he uniquely deserved, he

serves - taking 4 steps 'down' taking on a human nature, becoming a servant, dying, becoming a curse. He serves because it is in the nature of God to serve. We are to take on the mindset of Christ – to serve is to be like him, to be like him is what you were made for. God the Father then exalts God the son – he is the one who glorifies, we do not need to take it for ourselves.

*Here are some possible questions for your group, as always feel free to tweak as needed...*

*What do you remember so far from Philippians?  
How are you doing with joy glasses?!*

*v27-30*

*How does Paul want the Philippians to behave? What are his concerns?  
What seems to be the situation there? Why does opposition create division?  
Do you face opposition? How does / might opposition affect your conduct as a Christian?*

*v1-4*

*How does Paul motivate the Philippians to remain united?  
How does he want them to treat each other? What does this mean?  
How do you feel about this challenge?*

*v5-11*

*What does it mean to have a mindset of Christ?  
How do we (practically) do that?  
What was Jesus prepared to do? Why?  
Where is he now? Why?  
What would you say to someone who wanted to be great in God's kingdom?*