

# Humility

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 26 March 2023

Preacher: Jeremy Sarber

[ 0 : 00 ] So last Sunday, we began what will be a three-week series on the subject of humility. And in case you weren't here, I told the story of D.A. Carson, who was speaking to a prominent theologian, and he asked the man how he was able to maintain such a humble disposition throughout his life despite all of his fame and accomplishments.

And the man replied, how on earth can anyone be arrogant when standing beside the cross? So that's where we began.

We stood beside the cross, so to speak. We looked at Philippians chapter 2, where Paul writes, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself.

As we learn, Christ emptied himself of many of his divine rights and privileges. He became a man. He became a servant among men.

And if that weren't enough to leave us stunned, he humbled himself all the way down to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[ 1 : 22 ] So if we are to learn anything about humility, it begins with Christ. Today we'll look, we'll return to the book of Philippians and begin to look at ourselves.

We'll consider ourselves. Now that we've had an opportunity to marvel at God the Son's humility, let's turn our attention to us. Go with me, please, to Philippians chapter 1.

Philippians chapter 1. Now before I read the text or attempt to expound upon it, let me just make a simple observation regarding how we typically think about humility.

When we think about humility, we're prone to think of it as a very hard thing. We think of it as a burdensome thing.

We think of it as something to be dreaded. Now this is going to be a somewhat silly example, but earlier this week I was thinking back to high school. And in my high school, and I'm sure this was true of yours, we had popular kids and we had not so popular kids.

[ 2 : 36 ] And for me, I usually found myself somewhere in the middle. I don't know where I was at exactly. I could have some fun with both groups, but I never felt like I really belonged to either group. But there were moments when I would witness some of the more popular kids picking on some of the less popular kids.

And I'm sure you've seen something along those lines if you haven't been involved. And to my shame, in those moments, I did not really want to associate with the unpopular kids who were getting picked on.

I may have hung out with them other times, but in those moments, you know, I wanted to be the Pharisee, if anything. I did not want to be one of the tax collectors or the prostitutes.

To have the humility to lock arms with the oppressed seemed as though it was too great a burden to bear. I had empathy for them.

I felt terrible. I never joined the bullies that I can remember. But the prospect of humbling myself to the level of those kids that were getting picked on and potentially being picked on myself seemed, as a high school student, too hard, too unbearable.

[ 3 : 51 ] What could I possibly gain from it? A little pain? A little suffering? A little humiliation? No, thank you. Interestingly enough, in mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis argues, listen to this, to get even near humility, even for a moment, is like a drink of cold water to a man in a desert.

Tim Keller once said, there is nothing more relaxing than humility. Now, that may seem really radically counterintuitive, but let's not forget what Christ himself said in Matthew 11.

He said, take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Now, did you catch that? He said we should learn from him, and I believe learning from him would include learning humility, humility, and as a result of learning from him, we find rest for our souls. Our souls are not increasingly burdened by learning humility. Instead, they find rest. They find rest we could not have found any other way.

[ 5 : 19 ] In other words, humility is a path to rest. It is a path to joy. It is a path to many blessings.

Again, that may sound very counterintuitive, but as we continue this study, I pray we come to see that that is, in fact, very true. So, we've looked at the humility of Christ himself.

Let's now consider ourselves as we examine what Paul says in primarily Philippians 2. However, I'd like to read the fuller passage, starting in chapter 1, verse 27.

Notice how this begins. Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.

This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him, but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

[ 6 : 39 ] So if, or therefore, there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interest of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

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

So in the beginning, Paul says, let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Above all else, he wants the Philippians, and by extension us, to live in a way that is worthy of the gospel.

[ 8 : 17 ] What does that mean? Well, the root of the primary verb here is polis, or city. Paul, I think, is implying allegiance here, but we're not instructed to give our allegiance to a city or to an earthly nation.

Instead, our allegiance is to Christ and to his gospel. It's reminiscent of 2 Corinthians chapter 5, where Paul says we are ambassadors for Christ.

The king has entrusted us with his message, and he expects us to live in submission to his will. He expects us to reflect him well, to be a good citizen of his kingdom, to represent our king in a worthy manner to the people around us.

We are ambassadors. In short, to let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ is to live in such a way that is consistent with the word of God.

Elsewhere, Paul says, walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. Do you remember what comes next in that passage in Ephesians 4? With all humility.

[ 9 : 30 ] With all humility. In Colossians chapter 1, he writes, walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

That's the path to spiritual rest. That's the path to meaningful joy. And included in that worthy conduct is, of course, humility.

Obviously, Paul's primary concern here in Philippians 1 and 2 is potential divisions coming into the church. Specifically, he's concerned about unnecessary, trivial divisions.

The book of Jude says, contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. And that is going to require division when heresy creeps into the church.

So Paul's not necessarily thinking about necessary divisions, but more along the lines of unnecessary divisions. He doesn't want us to give up contending for the faith, of course, but he also doesn't want us fighting over trivial things because that would not be living in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

[10:47] I quoted this last week, but Paul says to the church at Corinth, 2 Corinthians 12, 20, I fear that perhaps when I come, I may find you not as I wish, that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.

All of those things, by the way, are completely contrary to the humility Christ displayed. And if we're supposed to reflect Christ, humbling ourselves as he humbled himself, of course, we have to avoid these things.

And how do we avoid quarreling and jealousy and anger and hostility and slander and gossip and conceit and disorder? Step number one, stand beside the cross.

Stand beside the cross. Study our Lord and Savior. We can learn from his humility. Again, from Colossians, Paul says, put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.

And if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony, and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful.

[12:31] Just imagine if everyone in the church were to fit that description. That would be a pretty challenging environment for conflict to exist.

I don't know how it could exist. Frankly, if we were to strip away all of our pride, division would not have a door to come through.

Skipping ahead in Philippians, let's look at chapter two. So if there's any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy, and we'll stop right there for a moment.

Now, if you ask me, the NIV is actually a bit stronger at the beginning of verse one. It starts with the word, therefore. Therefore, if you have any encouragement, and so on.

I like the word, therefore, because it draws our attention back to what's been said previously. It encourages us to think about the context. It shows us that chapter two isn't isolated from chapter one.

[13:39] Paul's point is that because we have this divine injunction to live worthy of the gospel of Christ, being of one spirit and of one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, we must do something.

That must result in something. What is it? We're going to come to that. The point is chapters one and two of Philippians are connected. And it's interesting because therefore points us back to the chapter before it.

But Paul also uses the word if. That points us forward. In other words, this passage in chapter two depends on chapter one, and chapter one depends on chapter two.

Again, they're just connected. So ignore that chapter break and just keep right on reading. Paul didn't put it there. It looks forward. But what does it look forward at?

Well, here's the list. Encouragement in Christ, comfort from love, participation in the spirit, affection, and sympathy. These are what we might call motivations for unity.

[14:49] And by the way, I realize that we're not studying the subject of unity, but for now, let's just go where Paul takes us. First, we have encouragement in Christ.

This is the first thing on Paul's list that motivates us to strive for unity. To encourage someone is to come alongside them, to help them in any way that they need.

It is to provide comfort or counsel or positive affirmations. It's to assist them with whatever they need. It's to build them up.

Think of the good Samaritan who's passing along and sees the half-dead man on the side of the road. He helped him, yes. Took him all the way to the end so he'd have a place to rest and recover. He paid for his care. He agreed to pay for whatever care he would need in the future until he was back on his feet and able to do for himself. That's encouragement. That's not above and beyond encouragement.

[15:49] That is encouragement. The second motivation on the list is comfort from love. Now, comfort has this literal meaning of speaking closely with someone.

Think of maybe approaching a grieving family member at a funeral. You know, you lean in close. You hug his or her neck. You quietly offer your condolences.

You don't shout them from across the room. There's a degree of intimacy here. You speak gently, softly, side by side, face to face.

There's a tenderness in it. There's a genuine care and concern. There's love. Third, we have participation in the Spirit. Personally, I like the word fellowship, as some translations say. Paul's talking about intimacy. In the church, we share intimacy with one another. We share intimacy with the Spirit. The body of Christ is really joined together in that way.

[16:53] We're bound together in Christ. We're bound together in the Spirit. We're bound together. And it stands to reason that we should do everything to promote peace among us.

Because what affects one person affects the next. We are bound together. Fourth, we have affection. And then we have sympathy or tenderness and compassion.

Now, I suspect these terms are clear enough to most people. Paul is basically describing Christ here. If there is to be unity, there must be affection, there must be sympathy among us.

Now, remember that conditional if before each of these things. If there is to be any encouragement in Christ. If any comfort from love. If any participation in the Spirit.

If any affection and sympathy. We must have what? We must be, verse 2, of the same mind.

[17:57] Having the same love. Being in full accord. And of one mind. So, we need these four essential things as a body. First, we need to be of the same mind.

We need to think alike. We need to think alike. We need to have the same worldview. The same understanding.

We need to have a theological, a substantial, a fundamental theological agreement with one another. Paul really summarizes this unity of thought in verse 5 when he says, Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

He does not give us multiple minds. There is one mind. Have this mind among yourselves. You might say, we're striving for the mind of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2.16 says of believers, we have the mind of Christ.

We have the mind of Christ. So, on the one hand, we possess the mind of Christ as believers. On the other hand, we're not perfectly conformed to it.

[19:10] But that's what we're striving to achieve by God's grace. Now, to be clear, we don't want merely unified thought. There are a lot of people who think alike, but they think all wrong.

We want the right kind of unified thought. In Romans 8, Paul says, For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. That's the mind we want. That's the unified thinking we want.

Set on the Spirit. Set on spiritual things. Set on heavenly things. Not on earthly things. And so on. Second, Paul says we want to have the same love. Same love.

In other words, we want our affections bent in the same direction. We want to be devoted to the same things. Furthermore, we want to have love for one another, which is probably what Paul is really referring to here.

[20:18] The Apostle John says we know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. According to John, our love for our brothers and sisters in Christ is, in fact, evidence of our salvation.

Third, we want to be in full accord. Full accord, are united in spirit. Paul uses an interesting word here that could quite literally be translated, one-souled.

S-O-U-L-E-D. One-souled. The Lord has called us to be soul brothers and soul sisters. As we'll see in a moment, we are bound together by selflessness.

There shouldn't be any selfishness, hatred, envy, jealousy. Even personal ambition should be excluded.

We're bound together by our care and our concern and our love for one another. Not ourselves, but for one another. We think the same. We love the same.

[21:31] And consequently, we are one soul together. And last but not least, we need to be of one mind. I know that sounds redundant on Paul's part.

He's already told us to be like-minded or of the same mind. But I believe the emphasis here, though similar to being like-minded, is to be oriented toward the same purpose.

To have your mind and your thinking and your motivations and everything else pointed in the same direction. In fact, the New American Standard Bible says, intent on one purpose.

Intent on one purpose. That implies that we're not only on the same page in the way that we think, but we're also on the same page regarding our goal, what we're trying to accomplish, what we're trying to achieve.

We're moving in the same direction. It's like competing in one of those three-legged races where our ankles are tied together. But this isn't a problem because we're naturally walking in lockstep with one another.

[ 22 : 36 ] So we get exactly where we need to go without stumbling. That's the idea. I think I read this already, but let me read again from Colossians chapter 3 because this passage beautifully summarizes what Paul is really conveying here.

This is Colossians chapter 3 starting at verse 12. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.

And if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other. As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Now granted, everything Paul says in both Colossians 3 and here in Philippians 2 is pretty much inseparable. Each item on these lists, they overlap, they complement each other.

[ 24 : 03 ] But again, let's continue following Paul's train of thought here. Everything may be wrapped up together, but there's a sense in which the summary of it is really articulated in Philippians 2, verse 3 and verse 4.

At the very least, verses 3 and 4 help to break down exactly what Paul means and how exactly we accomplish the kind of unity he's described.

Paul says, Now it's taken me a few minutes to get here, I realize.

But this is the part of the passage I really want to highlight because it essentially defines for us humility in some of the most practical terms.

In fact, we basically have a simple list of five marks of humility. Three are negative, two are positive. And to keep things in the broader context, what we really have are five means of unity.

[ 25 : 15 ] But when you accomplish humility, unity becomes a lot easier. Let's consider them one at a time here. First, do nothing from selfish ambition.

Now I don't think any of us are surprised that Paul rejects selfishness first and foremost. After all, humanity was plunged into sin in the first place because Adam and Eve, they lifted their own wills above God's will.

And frankly, selfishness has been at the heart of every subsequent sin. There's a reason both the ESV and the NIB translate this as selfish ambition.

Selfish ambition, not merely selfishness. Technically, the word do doesn't exist in the Greek text here.

It's implied, but more literally, the verse might read, nothing by way of selfishness. Nothing by way of selfishness. Period. In other words, it's not just about what we do, it's also about what we think.

[ 26 : 32 ] It's about what moves us. It's about what motivates us. Frankly, a person could do something that appears entirely virtuous, but he could be motivated by selfish ambition.

Think back to the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus warned, beware of practicing your righteousness before other people to be seen by them, for in that you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

So he goes on to give some examples. Somebody goes into the temple to give, and he's sounding trumpets, and he's being as loud as he can be to draw attention to the fact that he's doing this great, wonderful, benevolent thing he's giving.

Next, Jesus gives similar warnings about praying and fasting. He describes men who do all kinds of things that are right on the outside.

As far as the eye can tell, they're doing everything right, but inwardly they're actually motivated by selfish, self-serving ambitions. Even here in Philippians, in the first chapter, Paul talks about those

who preach Christ from envy and rivalry.

[ 27 : 43 ] He says they proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely. Now, how does someone preach Christ out of selfish ambition?

That seems counterintuitive, but the fact is maybe that man wants to preach only to get attention. Maybe he's trying to make a name for himself. Maybe he's doing it for what the King James Bible would call filthy lucre.

If that's what he's after, I could point him in much more profitable directions, but to each his own. Whatever the reason, self is actually at the center of his motivation, not the glory of Christ, not the glory of God, not the good of others.

He's thinking about himself. I'm afraid selfishness is our default position, isn't it? Back in 1981, Banner of Truth published an article by Walter Chantry about self-denial.

And I had saved this quote. In that article, he wrote, the roots of this depravity are quite evident in very young children. Babies may not show all the ugly outworkings of sin, but their selfishness is quite apparent.

[ 29 : 04 ] Any time of the day or night, they will howl when their little egos are annoyed. Brothers and sisters have noticed how small children are self-seeking. When treats are being given, a me-first attitude prevails.

Small children want the chief attention. It is all self-serving. This all-demanding self-will matures into that of a grasping adult. Though clever devices will make the selfishness polite and genteel, all of life outside of Christ is for one thing.

Self. Self is the idol to which all men naturally bow. True? True. This is a clear and present temptation for every last one of us.

And Paul says, do nothing. Do nothing out of selfish ambition. Let's continue. Second, Paul mentions conceit.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit. I think the NIV adds the word vain. Vain conceit. Avoid vain or empty conceit.

[ 30 : 17 ] Literally, Paul means avoid empty glory. Vain glory. Which is why the King James Bible has a kind of a neat word.

Vain glory. We want to avoid vain glory. Paul provides a pretty good definition in Romans 11.25 when he says, lest you be wise in your own sight.

Lest you be wise in your own sight. Empty glory is having an exaggerated view of yourself. It seeks personal glory.

And often comes with a very skewed perception of self. An elevated view of self in most cases. Another word for this might be arrogance.

Arrogance. I like what Paul says in Galatians 6. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

[ 31 : 23 ] By nature, conceit is a form of self-deception. When we're conceited, we move ourselves closer and closer to the center of the universe.

Knowingly or unknowingly robbing God of the glory only he deserves. But it's all vain. We can't take the place of God. The glory that we give to ourselves is always empty.

It's meaningless. Third, we move to a positive trait. Humility. Humility.

Some translations say humility of mind. Interestingly, I've always found it fascinating that the Greeks evidently did not have a word for humility.

It didn't exist. The thought of voluntarily humbling yourself or thinking that humility is a virtue was just a foreign concept to their world so they didn't even have a word for it.

[ 32 : 36 ] Evidently, scholars have tried to find this word in any Greek literature. But they don't find it anywhere until the writings of the New Testament. And specifically, the Apostle Paul's writings.

And for all we know, Paul had to make a word up. And frankly, he doesn't even, he doesn't use a technical term. It's not really humility.

He has to use a description to describe what he's thinking. He says, in Greek, of course, not humility but lowliness of mind or a lowly mind, lowly minded.

That's how he describes this concept of humility because it didn't exist. Of course, the Greek world did understand the concept of lowliness, of someone being lowly.

That term was applied to slaves, for instance. It was a term they applied to someone they deemed to be common or having lesser value. So basically, it was a derogatory term.

[ 33 : 48 ] So naturally, no one thought of lowliness as a good thing. It wasn't a virtue. It certainly wasn't something to strive for. And here you have the Apostle Paul saying, yes, do this.

We need a lowly mind. The Bible flips the Greek system on its head. Proverbs 11.2, when pride comes, then comes disgrace.

disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom. Proverbs 16.19, it is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

And when the Old Testament speaks of the coming Messiah, I love this from Zechariah 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you, righteous and having salvation as he. And if it had stopped right there, everybody would have said, Amen, I can't wait.

[ 34 : 48 ] And then it says, comma, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Hmm.

Obviously, this was contrary to everything the Greek and the Roman world assumed. For them, it could never be better to be humble.

No, they thought, survival of the fittest. You know, the strong survive. It's better to be strong. It's better to be proud. And even in Israel, humility may have been a virtue, but few people seem to think that would apply to the coming Messiah.

This king who's going to reign on David's throne. How could he? But he did. He was. 1 Peter 5.5 says, clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another.

For God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.

[ 36 : 03 ] Now, before I go any further, let me clear up one great misconception about humility. Humility is not about lowering yourself below what you deserve. I get the impression that some people think that way.

Humility is actually a recognition of how lowly we truly are. And we begin thinking and acting accordingly. That's humility. Let me illustrate what I mean.

Let's say we're looking at a scale from 1 to 10. 1 represents the lowest, the most unworthy. I think naturally we want to at least put ourselves at maybe a 5.

Somewhere in the middle there. I'm not the worst. I'm not the best. We think we're right there in the middle. And so, humility then would be I'm going to feign as though I really think of myself as maybe a 3 or a 2.

I'm just going to lower myself below what I really think I am on that scale. Truth is, however, we are not 5s. We are certainly not 10s. We are 1s.

[ 37 : 12 ] We are 1s. We are at the very bottom. Whatever the lowest number is, we are at the bottom of that scale. And if we're not convinced of our own lowliness, then we should all follow John Calvin's advice and compare ourselves with God for a moment.

John Calvin said, man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty.

If you think you're a 5, study God and you will fall right down to the bottom of that scale where we all belong. So humility doesn't mean that we're acting beneath ourselves.

As sinners, we can't go any lower than we truly are. And even if that weren't true, we still do not have much room to argue about being humble people or being told to be humble people when we see the humility of God in Christ.

Go back to the latter part of this passage in Philippians 2. But humility isn't just about lowering ourselves, it's also about raising others up.

[ 38 : 27 ] Third, Paul says, verse 3 again, in humility count others more significant than yourselves. I don't know that much commentary is needed here, except I will point out that significant, that's a relatively strong word.

For example, both Paul and Peter use it to talk about the governing authorities who are supreme over us. Supreme, that's the same word.

Paul uses it in the next chapter here in Philippians when he says, Philippians 3.8, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Same word, surpassing. Surpassing, supreme, unparalleled, significant. That's how we are to think of others.

Relative to ourselves, they surpass us. They are supreme over us. That's how we're to think about them. That's how we're to treat them.

[ 39 : 39 ] Fourth, verse 4, Paul says, let each of you look not only to his own interests. Now you'll notice that the Bible does not expect us to altogether ignore or neglect our own interests.

That's not what it says. That's not the idea. It's that we have to make lots of room for the well-being of others, for the good of others. So imagine, imagine holding a cup in your hand.

Well obviously, that cup, no matter how small or how big, it can only hold so much. And so, if you fill it up with self-interest, do you have room for others?

And what's good for them? No, there's no more room. So Paul says, leave a little room. Leave a little room in that cup for the good of others.

Paul himself was a good example of this. In 2 Corinthians 11, starting at verse 24, he describes some of his personal hardships in the ministry.

[ 40 : 48 ] Now I want you to think back to the last bad day you had. And now listen to this. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes, less one.

Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. A night and a day I was adrift at sea on frequent journeys in dangers from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers, in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

And apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. Why did Paul suffer all these things?

It certainly wasn't for his own gain or comfort or pleasure. It wasn't because he was self-centered. He poured out most of his cup for the good of others, namely the church.

All of that was for God's glory and for the church. It's tragic that our modern culture, sometimes even in the church, has been so predominantly influenced by secular psychology.

[ 42 : 15 ] It rejects the virtue of humility and selflessness. Instead, even young children are taught that the supreme goal in life is self-fulfillment.

Little do they know humility is the path to meaningful joy. Humility. Lastly, I'm out of time. Paul says, let each of you look not only to his own interest but also to the interest of others.

This clarifies that we don't stop at emptying ourselves of self-interest but we also need to fill our cups up with what is good for others. Have this mind among yourselves, Paul says, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

And we'll end right there where we began last week. Lord willing, we'll return to the subject next week and bring it all together and make it just as practical as possible. Thank you.

We're dismissed. We'll be right back.