

October 17, 2024

## Thinking about Others

Do you enjoy talking about things you are interested in? Statistically, most people enjoy talking about things they love. I could sit here and, without doing any research, write an article about certain Mercedes-Benz vehicles, certain roller coasters/theme parks, or all about the reasons why everyone should be tuning into the National Hockey League this season (it is going to be EPIC). We tend to love things we are interested in, and if people give us a chance to talk about those things, we want to talk about them! We would spend hours doing so if people showed interest in who we are and in our interests.

Stop here and ask this question: *How does it make you feel when people ask you questions about things you are interested in?*

Let's face it. Our world is in a point of turmoil. When you turn on the news, people are fighting. When you open social media, people are arguing (about everything). We live in a society that is filled with people who finally have a voice to state their opinions. Hence, each person's opinion is all that each person cares about.

PAUSE: how opposite to a life led by Christ is this attitude? You just spent time discussing/thinking about how good it feels when people show interest in things that you are interested in. You probably thought about how good it feels to have a conversation that isn't controversial with someone!

Philippians 2 is one of the most read passages in scripture. It highlights the ways that we can seek the humility of Jesus in our lives. Today, though, I want us to notice something that is shockingly applicable.

In Philippians 2:1, notice how there is an ultra-spiritual Jesus follower talked about.

[1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,

This is describing somebody who has united themselves with Christ, has found comfort in life through the love of Jesus, they are in constant fellowship with the Spirit, and they are filled with tenderness and compassion.

Stop here and briefly discuss: *How would you look at this person and judge their spirituality?*  
I think that our natural reaction is to say, "THIS PERSON IS VERY SPIRITUAL!" And they are!  
This is a very spiritual, Jesus-centered individual!

We could find ourselves saying, "WOW! I WANT TO BE JUST LIKE THAT!"  
However, This passage doesn't stop here. It moves into verse two, where we see a very similar list of callings, but with a twist: suddenly, I have to participate in these spiritual things with other people.

Check this out: Philippians 2:2

[2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

This is a person who is excited to unite with other people through Christ, it is someone who loves everyone around them with the comforting love of Jesus, it is someone who united through the Spirit with their brothers and sisters, and is someone who allows their mind to be the mind of others (they key to tenderness and compassion).

The second level is to take this personal spirituality and make it interpersonal spirituality. Remember the first thought we had in this study? We love it when people ask us things about ourselves. Someone who is seeking a life transformation to the life of a fully spiritual person is going to be someone who takes my spirituality and connects with other people through it!

The next part of this passage makes this eerily applicable.

Philippians 2:3-7

[3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. [5] Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, [6] who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

When I am having conversations, I should allow myself to think about other people! Don't let conversations center around me! Think about ways I can connect with others and show them the love of Jesus in every way, and give them the opportunity to talk about themselves and feel the love that we would all enjoy feeling!

To close, have this discussion: *What are ways I can do a better job at rejecting myself and choosing other people in order to live out Philippians 2:1-7?*