

February 1/2, 2003

## Study Questions

*Experiencing Joy: A Study in Philippians*

### Be Like Christ

**Philippians 2:1-11**

Pastor Bryan Clark

### Opening Discussion

1. There is little doubt that selfish ambition is the rule of the day in our culture. Give some practical examples of everyday behavior that is driven by selfishness.
2. In what ways do you see selfishness affect your behavior and attitudes? As a rule, do you believe you're selfish or not?
3. In what ways do people try to excuse, rationalize or explain away selfish behavior?

### Bible Study

1. In Philippians 1:27 Paul commands the believers to conduct themselves worthy of the gospel. Review what he meant by that from 1:27-30.
2. Philippians 2:1-2 could be paraphrased to read:  
"If Christ has become your mentor/teacher (and He has), if you've experienced His love and the love of the family of God (and you have), if you share the same Spirit (and you do), if you genuinely care (and I know you do), then make my joy even greater by living like you believe this is true, by being of the same mind, same love, united in spirit and focused on the same purpose (advancing the gospel)."

How are we to live out the truth of verses 1,2 according to verses 3,4?

3. Compare Romans 12:1-3 with Paul's word in Philippians 2:1-4.

The "therefore" in Romans 12:1 refers to the previous 11 chapters covering the truth of salvation by grace through faith. In what way is selfish ambition in conflict with what we believe about our salvation by grace?

Given what we believe about salvation by grace, are we hypocrites if we are characterized by selfish behavior? Why or why not?

In what way does legalism produce selfish ambition?

4. In 2:5-11 Paul uses Christ as the supreme example of the attitude we are supposed to have as Christ followers. Review what He did for us.

In what ways does Jesus model what Paul has been talking about?

Given what Jesus did for us, is it unreasonable for Paul to ask us to think of others as more important than ourselves?

Given Jesus' example to us, is there any valid reason for allowing conflict between brothers and sisters in Christ?

Have any of us been offended by someone greater than we have offended Jesus?

## **Application**

1. When it is all said and done, the greatest barrier to fulfilling our mission is not a lack of programs or the need for better gospel presentations. The greatest barrier is selfish ambition—Christians who put their needs ahead of the mission Jesus assigned us. Whether it's in the marketplace, at home, at school or in the church, selfish ambition is contrary to what we say we believe about salvation by grace. The essence of our salvation is we die to ourselves and our human ability to accomplish righteousness before God and receive a gift of God's grace. Therefore, selfish ambition discredits our message because it runs contrary to grace and reveals a heart of legalistic pride.

What specific area of your life do you need to address in order to conduct yourself worthy of the gospel?

In what arena is your selfishness most likely to rear its ugly head?

3. Spend time praying for one another that we might each learn to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel. Pray that we might model for the world 2:3,4 as we properly represent our Savior.