www.generouschurchproject.org - Download the App Now

Sermon 1.1

FOLLOWING JESUS´EXAMPLE

Generously Loving

Philippians 2:1-11

[1] Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, [2] then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. [3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

[5] In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
[6] Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
[7] rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

[8] And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! [9] Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, [10] that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

KEY OUTCOME

By using Jesus' life as a model, the Generous Church will be defined as the church fully engaged, multiplying and serving at the center of healthy and vibrant communities. This is revealed in the way each individual generously loves, lives, serves, and gives.

CONTEXT

Philippians is a letter written by the apostle Paul from a Roman prison to a church he founded on his second missionary journey (Acts 16). In this passage he emphasizes the importance of Christian fellowship and solidarity in the work of the gospel. He also stresses the importance of imitating Christ's sacrificial example.

The "if" in verse 1 is not a question. It can also be translated using the word, "since". The apostle is saying, in effect: "Since there is so much encouragement in Christ, since His love has such a tremendous persuasiveness, since the Holy Spirit brings us all together in such a wonderful fellowship, and since there is so much tender affection and mercy in Christianity, we should all be able to get along in happy harmony with one another."

*MacDonald, William (2008-04-06). Believer's Bible Commentary (p. 1950). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

SERMON POINTS

1

To Generously Love is to Be Extravagantly Selfless

Jesus demonstrated His extravagant selflessness in "not considering equality with God something to hang on to" but in willingly giving it up to "take on the very nature of a servant." John 3:16 reminds us that He did so out of a tremendous amount of love. He had one purpose: redeeming the world. He stayed focused His entire life and never let selfishness override His love.

In Philippians 2:2, Paul tells us to have one purpose: to be like minded, being tender and compassionate toward all so that the world can be redeemed through Christ. Our actions should always come from us acting out of love.

Insert a story about someone who demonstrated a selfless love in your life or community to help the congregation understand this point.

2

To Generously Live is to Obediently Live With Purpose

Jesus demonstrated His extravagant selflessness in humbling Himself even to the point of dying on the cross. His life was marked by His obedience to the Father. Even when tempted, as recorded in Matthew 4, Mark 1, and Luke 4, Jesus remained obedient and never once sinned.

Philippians 2:3 commands us to do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Live with purpose. Know your purpose; that you were created, chosen, redeemed and called to share with a sinful world that redemption is at hand. Live out your purpose, and obediently finish your purpose well. Jesus created you for His purpose; you are not your own. Discover this and live accordingly. By obediently living out His purpose, your life will demonstrate Jesus Christ in everything you do, say, and think.

Give the congregation some examples of what this might look like in their lives.

3

To Generously Lead is to Humbly Serve

Jesus demonstrated His extravagant selflessness in making Himself nothing and taking on the form of a servant. John 13 shows Jesus' demonstration of servant-leadership by His stooping down and washing His disciples' feet. He was doing the task that should have been done by the least competent and least educated servant in the room.

Verse 3 reminds us that servant-leadership often looks like humbly considering others better than ourselves. This goes against our human nature. We want to say, "I'm a leader because I'm better qualified, or better educated", but Jesus and Paul would remind us that true leadership is best expressed to others by putting others first and helping them accomplish what God has in mind for them. In doing so, we will accomplish what God has in mind for us.

Share a story about someone who is always serving others. Explain why this makes them a leader worth following.

4

To Generously Give is to See a Need and Meet That Need

Jesus demonstrated His extravagant selflessness in obediently giving that which cost the most. He willingly, unselfishly, and lovingly gave up His life. What are we being asked to give? For some it might mean giving up our lives, for others the giving of material items or food, and others still, might need to give of their money or of their time. And many of us might need to give in multiple ways.

Philippians 2:4 reminds us that giving unselfishly is giving because we are looking to the interests of others, not ourselves. Take time daily to actively look to see what needs others have around you.

Provide examples of every day needs people might see around them. Then share ideas of how they might meet those needs.

SUMMARY

We just talked about generously loving, leading, living, and giving and what each of these means to us as followers of Jesus. None of these are meant to be done individually or in a vacuum. It's the combination of all four of these that directs us and marks us as the body of Christ. So when I see a need, I meet that need out of an extravagant love for the person, purposely living my life to love, live, lead, and give generously. But we don't do this alone. God created the Church so that we would have a community of believers to grow alongside. God's purpose for you, as a member of His Church, is to live in such a way that you love extravagantly, live purposefully, lead humbly, and give selflessly, thus becoming the Generous Church fully engaged, multiplying and serving at the center of healthy and vibrant communities.

Jesus demonstrated extravagant selflessness in the way He loved us, in the way He lived His life here on earth, in the way He led by example, and in the way He so generously gave. He obediently and humbly lived this way and in doing so God exalted Him to the highest place giving Him a name that is above every other name that at its mention every knee will one day bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

As disciples, with the help of the Holy Spirit we continue to grow and be equipped to embody this same love, and in doing so, we get to play a very small part in allowing others to be introduced to the One whose name is above all others. We are to change our attitudes to reflect the attitude of Jesus Christ while He was here on earth.

Jesus demonstrated extravagant selflessness in the way He **loved us,** in the way He lived His life here on earth, in the way **He led** by example, and in the way he so **generously gave**.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

As Christ followers, we are to have the same attitude as Jesus, who showed us how to generously love, live, serve, and give. Philippians 2:3-4 says; “in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” This week, ask God to help you become more like Jesus and also actively try to consider others as better than yourselves.