

Consumed by Self

December 6 & 7, 2008

Make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Philippians chapter 2 verse 2 (900)

- agreeing wholeheartedly: a choice to exercise your mind, to force yourself to be reminded of, to force yourself to focus on

Focus on what? The really important stuff!

- Jesus is the only way to heaven - *John chapter 14 verse 6 (823)*
- As a Christ-follower, all political & racial & political & economic differences are done away with in Jesus Christ - *Ephesians chapter 2 verses 13 - 21 (896)*
- Jesus prayed that all Christ-followers would be unified
John chapter 17 verses 20 & 21 (825)
- Love is the greatest virtue - *1 Corinthians chapter 13 verse 13 (878)*

THEN I CAN...

- love one another: Really choose to love those who are different around me...because love is a choice, not a feeling -- *see 1 Corinthians chapter 13 verses 4 - 7 (878)*
- working together: I make the choice to be unified in Jesus with those Christ-followers that I am so different!!! How? By choosing to focus on Jesus instead of choosing to focus on the differences

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Philippians chapter 2 verse 3 (900)

A selfish person...

- thinks mostly about himself, his preferences, his needs, his comfort
- tends to be surrounded by conflict & strife because his needs / preferences / comfort don't allow him to serve others, see the needs of others
- tends to cause factions (*root word of selfishness!*) instead of promoting unity
- tends not to know how to peaceably disagree with others
- rarely serves others because his views / needs are more important
- tries to impress others because he's more concerned about what others think of him than he is about serving them, meeting their needs or putting their preferences before his

Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Philippians chapter 2 verse 3 (900)

Be humble:

- literally, to rein in my mind
- to pull it back, keep it from advancing
- I naturally think my needs are most important. The only way to build true humility into my life is to constantly keep reining my mind in when it comes to my preferences, my likes, my politics, my wants, etc.
- The goal? To get to a place where I give preference (*think of others as better*) to others & their needs & their preferences

(over)

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

Philippians chapter 2 verse 4 (900)

- As a Christ-follower, I'm supposed to take a genuine interest in others
- God doesn't want me to fake this!
- He wants honesty. This doesn't come naturally, rather it's something I get better at because of practice
- My goal? To be like Jesus!

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 - 8 (900)

Jesus said, "If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake, you will save it." *Matthew chapter 16 verse 25 (748)*

More:

- How does Micah 6:8 fit into this discussion? How does it fit into your life?
- How do Jesus' words in Matthew 11:29 fit into this discussion & into your life?
- How much does Colossians 3:12 describe you as a Christ-follower? What are the biggest obstacles currently preventing you from living with more humility in your life?
- How much do Jesus' words in Matthew 20:28 describe your life as a Christ-follower?
- What are the areas in your life that God is asking you to grow as a servant? What's stopping you from doing this?