

## **Session 6: Loving God with All Our Soul (Phil. 2:3-16)**

### **I. LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART REQUIRES LOVING HIM WITH OUR SOUL**

- A. God created us to love Him in four spheres of our life which includes our heart (affections), soul (personality), mind (thoughts), and strength (resources), because He loves us this way.  
<sup>30</sup> ***You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. (Mk. 12:30)***
- B. This session will define some of what it means to love God with our soul or personality. The primary idea is to love God, as expressed by living in humility in our attitudes and speech. What we say enhances or quenches our ability to love God by the power of God (Eph. 4:29-32; 5:4).
- C. Our costly choices to walk in humility express love for Him. Embracing humility is the theatre God chose for us to express our love to Him. Each of us has a different struggle according to our personality and circumstances. We each have a different assignment in giving our love to God.
- D. Jesus loves us with all His soul, as expressed in His humility (Phil. 2:6-8). Understanding Jesus' humility inspires and instructs us to ask for the Spirit's help to love God in the way He loves us. Meekness is power and privilege under control. It speaks of restraint in the use of power, except to promote love. Meekness is not to be confused with weakness which is the absence of strength.
- E. The life of the Godhead flows forever from meekness. Jesus put on display the riches of God's humility. How can One so strong stoop so low in such concern for us?  
<sup>29</sup> ***Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly ["humble," NIV, NAS] in heart. (Mt. 11:29)***  
<sup>45</sup> ***For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. (Mark 10:45)***
- F. The Holy Spirit functions as the support ministry within the Godhead. He is fully God, yet chooses to work behind the scenes without desire to be recognized. He is happy in humility.  
<sup>13</sup> ***He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak ...*** <sup>14</sup> ***He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (Jn. 16:13-14)***
- G. Jesus' humility is seen in His ultimate goal being fulfilled at the end of the Millennium.  
<sup>24</sup> ***Then comes the end [Millennium], when He [Jesus] delivers the kingdom to God the Father ...*** <sup>28</sup> ***When all things are made subject to Him [Jesus], then the Son will also be subject to Him [Father] who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24-28)***
- H. God's humility is expressed in all He does. Love and humility are the same.  
<sup>4</sup> ***The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens.*** <sup>5</sup> ***Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high,*** <sup>6</sup> ***Who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in the heavens and in the earth?*** <sup>7</sup> ***He raises the poor out of the dust, and lifts the needy out of the ash heap,*** <sup>8</sup> ***That He may seat him with princes—with the princes of His people. (Ps. 113:4-8)***

## II. GOD'S DEFINITION OF LOVE: THE HUMILITY OF JESUS

<sup>3</sup> *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.* <sup>4</sup> *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.* <sup>5</sup> *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,* <sup>6</sup> *who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery [something to be grasped, NIV] to be equal with God,* <sup>7</sup> *but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.* <sup>8</sup> *And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.* <sup>9</sup> *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him. (Phil. 2:3-9)*

A. The humility of Jesus made manifest in His incarnation openly displayed His abandonment in loving us. Thus, our abandonment in loving Him is also deeply rooted in humility.

B. From eternity, Jesus has been in the form of God which means He shared glory with the Father. The pre-existent Christ in the form of God was equal with, but distinguished from, the Father. Being in the form of God, Jesus eternally possessed all glory and privileges of being God.

<sup>5</sup> *Glorify Me ... with Yourself, with the glory I had with You before the world was. (Jn. 17:5)*

<sup>3</sup> *Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person. (Heb. 1:3)*

<sup>15</sup> *He is the image of the invisible God. (Col. 1:15)*

C. In the incarnation, Jesus now has two natures, being fully God and fully man. Jesus was never ever less than God but lived as if He was never more than a man. He always retained His deity.

<sup>16</sup> *Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16)*

D. Jesus refused to enjoy His unique privileges in being God because He was seeking our interests.

E. Jesus did not consider the privileges of being equal to God as something to be grasped (v. 6). He did not view the humility required in His incarnation as something that took anything essential from His core identity as a servant filled with love. In it, He denied Himself privileges. He did not deny His core identity, but rather expressed His true heart of servanthood.

F. He did not see the incarnation as a scandal of injustice—needing to lay aside His glory to eternally become a man so He could make a way to exalt us forever (Rev. 3:21). In the incarnation, He found the opportunity to give us His wealth.

G. Jesus did not empty Himself of His deity. However, He could not use His divine power for His own ends while on earth and qualify as our High Priest. Jesus was God, hidden in the obscurity of humanity. He could not draw on His own omnipresence, omnipotence, or omniscience as God. As a man, He lived dependent on the anointing of the Holy Spirit when doing a miracle.

<sup>17</sup> *In all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest ... to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (Heb. 2:17)*

- H. Jesus is God and man, with two distinct natures existing in one person. Jesus remained as the head of the universe during His earthly life. He forever is the creative Word who sustains and holds all things together (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17). Christ emptied Himself (Phil 2:7) and made Himself poor (2 Cor. 8:9). He possessed all the majesty of deity, performed all its functions, and enjoyed all its prerogatives. Yet, He was vulnerable to pain, frustration, and embarrassment.
- I. God's core identity is love expressed in humility. Jesus' main identity is not in His power and uniqueness. Satan sought to tempt Jesus with this, because it is what moved Satan. If Jesus' core identity was in His power, then the incarnation would have been robbery or a denial of what was in His heart. Our culture values gaining our identity from emphasizing our uniqueness.
- J. Jesus did not insist on His rights to live free from rejection, pain, and humiliation. He came incognito instead of in the glory He possesses, as seen in the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17).
- K. It was precisely because Jesus was in the form of God that He sought to give and serve. What most expresses His glory is love and humility. He saw nothing un-Godlike in washing the feet of people. It expressed His true Godlike self. He saw lowly tasks as an opportunity to show who He was as a humble God. To serve is at the core of who God is.  
<sup>35</sup> *Love your enemies ... For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. (Lk. 6:35)*
- L. Jesus is love that is not self-absorbed but absorbed in the good of others. He is not preoccupied with His own preeminence but consumed with the good of others.
- M. Jesus possesses the glory in Revelation 5:12 for our good. He was already rich from all eternity.  
<sup>9</sup> *Our Lord Jesus Christ ... though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. (2 Cor. 8:9)*  
<sup>12</sup> *Worthy is the Lamb ... to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength. (Rev. 5:12)*
- N. Jesus made himself of no reputation. He embraced shame and disgrace in coming as a *doulos* servant. This was a new dimension for Jesus, who came as a servant without rights to honor. Jesus concealed His divine glory. This is the most profound incognito imaginable while maintaining the full power of God. Jesus hid His glory under the veil of humanity.
- O. Jesus embraced a life of weakness, rejection, homelessness, poverty, weariness, shame, and pain. If Jesus faltered for even for one moment, it would have affected our eternal destiny.
- P. Jesus did not come as the God of "jasper glory" (Rev. 4:3) but as a man. He wanted to identify with man, not just dazzle us. He could not do this without becoming man.
- Q. We are by nature preoccupied with our image and being recognized for our good traits. Jesus embraces a position where everyone totally underestimated Him and His abilities. When they saw Him, they saw nothing to distinguish Him. He was totally ordinary in every sense.

- R. Jesus embraced death on the cross (v. 8). In His eternal form, He was immune to death. Now He would be its victim. He embraced a type of death that involved indescribable physical pain and emotional shame. Dying on the cross was viewed as being under God's curse (Gal. 3:10, 13).
- S. God is love. The core definition of love is that love gives. Love by definition is what is given, not what is gained. We are the reward of His suffering. His passion for God and people are first to Him.
- <sup>16</sup> ***God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God ... <sup>21</sup> This commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. (1 Jn. 4:16-21)***
- <sup>16</sup> ***By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 Jn. 3:16)***
- T. Jesus existed eternally as a servant. He did not become something that He was not.
- <sup>3</sup> ***Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself ... <sup>5</sup> and began to wash the disciples' feet ... <sup>14</sup> "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." (Jn. 13:3-17)***
- U. Jesus comes as a servant, whether in coming the first time to die or coming back to be King. The eternal government of God is servanthood. When He takes the scroll, He pledges the leadership of the earth forever to servant rulers who will perpetually wash the feet of others. When Jesus returns at the second coming, it will be all about love. He will gird Himself to serve His creation forever. As the reigning King, He loves to use His power to enrich the ones He loves.
- <sup>37</sup> ***Blessed are those servants whom the Master, when He comes, will find watching ... He will gird Himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. (Lk. 12:37)***

### III. JESUS TELLS THE FATHER'S STORY OF LOVE

- A. Jesus wants to tell the Father's story, or to make the Father known. Jesus is God's self-exposure. Jesus is God in telling the Father's story. This is one of the grand reasons for the incarnation. Jesus is the expression of the Father. He said to see Him was to see the Father (Jn. 14:7-9).
- <sup>26</sup> ***And I [Jesus] have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them. (Jn. 17:26)***
- B. We would not have known about God's kindness without Jesus going to the cross. God is love and wanted a people to express His love to forever.
- <sup>4</sup> ***God ... because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ ... <sup>6</sup> and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:4-7)***

- C. Jesus is God expressing Himself. Each Person in the Godhead expresses Himself through the other. The Spirit is behind the scenes manifesting power at the word of the Son under the Father's authority. Jesus did not minister out of the resource of His deity, but depended on the anointing of the Spirit.
- D. The Father hides until the Son reveals Him and the Son hides until the Father reveals Him. No one within the Godhead tells Their own story. They do not talk about Themselves. Each gives Their part of this grand mystery of love. Jesus gives us the Spirit, who is the great Friend of the Bridegroom preparing us for the wedding. The Father gives us to the Son. Then the Son gives everything back to the Father. Jesus trusts and depends on the Father and the Father the Son.

#### IV. LOVE FOR JESUS: HUMILITY IS EXPRESSED THROUGH OUR SPEECH

- A. When Paul applies his exhortation from verses 3-5 that they walk in humility, he focuses on their need to speak with humility. This is one of the most practical applications of loving Jesus. We must not hide our complaining under the guise of just being honest.  
*<sup>12</sup> Therefore ... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ... <sup>14</sup> Do all things without complaining and disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may become blameless ... children of God without fault ... <sup>16</sup> holding fast the word of life. (Phil. 2:12-16)*
- B. Love grows in us as we are moved by Jesus' humility as we see the story of how He treats us.  
*<sup>19</sup> Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath ... <sup>21</sup> Lay aside all filthiness ... receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. (Jas 1:19-21)*
- C. To love God with all our soul speaks of loving with our personality in deep humility. This is expressed most dynamically by our speech. We set our heart to express ourselves and to communicate in a way that enhances, not diminishes, love. When the Spirit is grieved, we do not receive from Him in the same measure (Eph. 4:29-32; 5:1-6). What we say enhances or quenches our ability to love Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:29-32; 5:1-6).  
*<sup>29</sup> Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup> Do not grieve the Spirit of God. (Eph. 4:29-30)*
- D. Love is diminished by the fire released in wrong speech that affects our inner man. We renounce grumbling and speaking against one another, knowing it hinders our ability to love Jesus.  
*<sup>6</sup> The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell ... <sup>8</sup> The tongue ... is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (Jas 3:6-8)*  
*<sup>34</sup> For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (Matthew 12:34)*

## V. SHOWING LOVE FOR JESUS IN HUMILITY WHEN WE ARE MISTREATED

- A. In the case of our being mistreated or enduring disappointments, we must interpret them according to truth as seen through Christ's eyes. Offense from disappointment can paralyze our spiritual life, causing us to blame and accuse others, which hinders our walk with God. The past attacks our confidence and therefore our love for God, as well as our destiny in God. We must face disappointment God's way in order to be free to grow in love for God.
- 21 Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps ... 23 Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously. (1 Pet. 2:21-23)***
- B. We must entrust our enemies into the hands of Jesus' power and wise and loving leadership. To neglect this is to be diminished in our ability to respond to Jesus in love.
- 5 Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. (Ps. 31:5)***
- 23 When He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him [the Father] who judges righteously. (1 Pet. 2:23)***
- 19 Do not avenge yourselves ... "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. (Rom. 12:19)***
- C. We forget our noble sacrifices, which may tempt us to pride or to feel we deserve better treatment from God in our ministry and circumstances, thus undermining our gratitude for His goodness. We were once lost in the state of darkness (Eph. 2:1-12). Jesus pointed out the danger of relating to Him on the basis of how much we feel we deserve instead of with gratitude.
- 7 Which of you, having a servant plowing ... will say to him when he has come in from the field, "Come at once and sit down to eat"? 8 But will he not rather say to him, "Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me ... and afterward you will eat and drink"? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, "We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do." (Lk. 17:7-10)***