

PRAYER

- Thank God for Christ's perfect life and death for our salvation and redemption. Thank Him for His humility and love for us.
- Ask God for your joy to be complete and for this to be reflected in every relationship you have. Pray for strength and grace to walk in unity and serve with humility.
- Pray for specific people with whom you may have a dysfunctional relationship. Ask God to heal the brokenness and restore the relationship through His love and peace.

NOTES

WARM-UP

- Would you be willing to try a sport, hobby, or interest because a family member or friend enjoys it? Why or why not?
- What was the kindest thing someone did for you this week? How did you respond?
- How do you show someone you value him or her? What do you do or say to show this?

WORD *¹So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-3

(Read also **PHILIPPIANS 2:4-11.**)

The apostle Paul paints an ideal picture here: completed joy because believers are walking in unity and humility, following Christ's perfect example. In reality, though, our relationships with God and one another have been broken and are dysfunctional because of sin. Left to ourselves, we can't be of the same mind, have the same love, or be in full accord with each other. In fact, we would more naturally do the opposite. Paul's picture of a united and humble body of believers is only possible in Christ, through Christ, and because of Christ. Many Bible scholars believe that Paul quoted an early Christian hymn, found in Philippians 2:6-11. Through Christ's incarnation, life, death, and resurrection, our relationship with God and one another can be restored and we can experience

complete joy. In this lesson, we will look at how to apply this in our lives.

1 | Walk in unity.

¹So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-2**

In Philippi at that time, people related to one another based on their socioeconomic, ethnic, and political status. This culture would have made walking in unity difficult. How could people of differing stations in life be of the same mind or in full accord? Paul challenged the church in Philippi that this could be done because of the gospel. In Christ, riches, rank, migrant status, and family situations do not matter. We are all loved by God, saved by His grace, and brought into His kingdom. We value each other based on Christ's love and sacrifice, not our differences or disagreements. In Philippians 4:2-3, what did Paul appeal to Euodia and Syntyche to do? How important was unity and agreement to Paul?

2 | Serve with humility.

³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

Humility is considering others before ourselves. It is looking out for their interests, not our own. It is setting aside what we want for others. Jesus did this: In all His deity, He humbled Himself and became a man—slave and servant of all. Having lived a perfect life, He died for our sins and took our punishment so that we may be saved. How has Christ's example enabled you to serve others with humility?

APPLICATION

- Reflect on Philippians 2:5-11 this week. What can you learn about humility from the Lord Jesus Christ? How will you apply it in your life?
- Ask God to reveal a broken or dysfunctional relationship in your life that needs healing. What are you willing to do to walk in unity and humility with this person?
- What hinders you from being of the same mind and in full accord with the body of Christ? How can you maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3)? Why do you think Jesus prayed earnestly for the church to be united (John 17:20-21)?