

**Pastor Tom Mortenson**

**Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York**

**November 15, 2020**

**The Servant Mind of Jesus**

**Philippians 2:1-11**

**Prayer:** *Father, again I thank you for your grace, I thank you for the gift of your Son. I thank you, Lord, that in a world that has so much uncertainty and so many questions, we have the unquestionable truth of who you are and we are just so grateful for that and we are just so thankful. And Lord this morning we again are going to be opening up your book and again we pray the same prayer that we would have the presence of your Holy Spirit, who makes the book make sense. Give us the ability to not only make it sense but to make it of permanent value, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, we've been looking at the book of Philippians and last week we looked into the book and we encountered Paul's search for joy in circumstances that were anything but joyful. Paul found joy in the Philippian church's founding, in its growth and in the love that they were expressing. This is a love that was bounded though by discernment and wisdom. Paul also found a way to experience joy in the fact that others were praising Christ in his absence.

Amazingly it mattered little to Paul, whether they were preaching from a sincere motive to advance the gospel or as some means to advance their career while Paul sat in a prison cell, and yet still Paul was able to be joyful. What he now asks of the Philippians is something that would fulfill his joy. From his prison cell he pours out one basic plea for the church and this is what he says in *Philippians 2:1-2*. He says: *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

Paul lists six different benefits that come with being a child of God. There's consolation, there's comfort, there's love, there's fellowship, there's affection and there's mercy, all of which flows into the life of a believer in Christ. Paul says with all of that on the input side, please complete my joy on the output side by having the one thing that matters most and that's love. But again, it's not just any kind of love but a love that produces unity.

Paul says fulfill my joy being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. And what Paul desperately wants is an expression of love like the Philippians have but again this is love that is not unbounded. It's love bound and it's bound by discernment, by wisdom, by like-mindedness. See, love unbounded is basically a disaster waiting to happen especially when it comes to

like-minded groups. You know when I lived in San Francisco in the 70's I was approached on more than one occasion by members of The People's Temple. They were all like-minded and they all had the same love and they all had one mind but it was the mind of Jim Jones' cult; the mind that committed mass suicide. Then there were the Branch Davidians who followed their leader's mind to their doom or heaven's gate. That was a group that all committed suicide expecting to be transported to another planet. These folks were all like-minded and they all had the same love. It all happened to be rooted and grounded in someone who was insane. Now the love that Paul is speaking of is love that is aimed at and grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ. It's the genuine love for Christ that marks out a believer as one of his sheep.

You know speaking of love I have a dear friend who refuses to get into the semantics of sectarianism when it comes to faith in Christ. He doesn't ever use words like Catholic or Protestant or Baptist or Episcopalian, any other denominational type of way of separating people into groups. He identifies a person as a Christian by simply saying he or she loves the Lord. That says a great deal. You see, if you truly love the Lord, well then you want to serve and obey him. You're going to want to study his word to see what mattered most to him because what we learn about Jesus, we also find out what matters most to God, because Jesus was God in

the flesh. And Jesus was very clear about what mattered most to him and therefore what mattered most to God. This is what Jesus said in *John 13*. He said: *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* This is what mattered to Jesus. And when we look at this, the first thing we notice is that Jesus did not make this optional. This is a command. We are under orders to love one another, but I don't think we fully grasp what that means. I mean I've said it many times, we so thoroughly identify with love only as an emotion that we think we have the option of loving those that we find loveable and avoiding those that we don't. You know, people that frighten us, people that annoy us, people that we simply can't stand. Surely we don't really have to love them. Well Jesus says they're precisely who he's referring to. Jesus said this in *Matthew 5*, he said: *"For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"* In *Luke 6:32* he said: *"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same."* See, the true mark of a loving church is not how well she loves the lovely and the

loveable, I mean, Jesus is absolutely unimpressed with that. It's how well she loves those who cannot or will not love her back. And this applies to those outside the church and it applies especially to those inside. Love the brethren is not an option. It is a command. And one of the most important functions of the local body of Christ is to compel folks to learn how to make every effort to love. And God does that by taking people with great differences and kind of throwing them together to prove that Jesus Christ and his power can conquer those differences and demonstrate the true power of God and that power is love. The local body is supposed to showcase that love by demonstrating a supernatural ability to love folks who don't love them back. The part that we don't really get is that this love is compulsory. It's not optional. Christ said you must love one another. And again, I think our problem comes from the fact that we have this confused idea of what that love is. I mean we think of love as an emotion, something that comes out of our gut and we wonder how in the world can God demand a gut-reaction if I just can't muster it? Well, fact is that's not what God demands of us in the first place. I mean it's become a cliché but it's true. Love is not something you feel. Love is something you do. It's not a matter as much of emotion as it is a matter of obedience. We think of love as the end product of a process that starts with acquaintance and then it goes on and on to friendship and then eventually it ends in love, and we wonder how

in the world am I supposed to love somebody like that when I don't even like them? But nothing is farther from God's idea. When Paul says in *Philippians 2: Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind*, he's expecting us to love people we don't necessarily like. And we have an great example of that.

The best example of that kind of love in the New Testament is of course the good Samaritan. Let me just read it to you. This is *Luke 10*. It says: *And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him -- that's Jesus -- saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND,' and 'YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a*

*certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

Well, Jesus is actually defining two very important things here. The very first thing that he defines is love, and he defines it not by what you feel but by what you do. And secondly he defines what a neighbor is. He points out that a neighbor is not somebody who just lives in close proximity to you but that a neighbor is someone who is identified to you as someone in need. I mean Jesus said to the lawyer, "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" I mean your neighbor can live right down the street or can live on the other side of the world. What makes him a neighbor is not his location, it's his need. And when God puts someone with a need on your heart or into your life, he's asking you, are you willing to become his neighbor? In other words Mr. Rogers was on to something when he said, "Won't you be my

neighbor?" And notice the way that the Samaritan loves his neighbor. It's not at all what he felt. Instead it's what he did. I mean there's absolutely no place in this parable for love to have anything to do with feeling or emotion. In fact how the Samaritan or the victim felt was completely immaterial. A modern equivalent to this story might be a volunteer EMT treating an accident victim who's drunk and belligerent. Does he like that person who's cursing and screaming at him? No. Is he loving that person he's not liking? Absolutely. How does he love him? Does he love him by drumming up warm fuzzies or by binding his wound in spite of his abuse? Because love is not what you feel, it's what you do. And when Jesus demands of us to love one another, he's demanding action, he's not demanding feelings. And furthermore God says when feelings allow us to confine our love to those people that we find lovely, we're no different than pagans. God says big deal. But I can't overemphasize how important it is to God and how much of this is presented as a non-optional commandment. I mean listen to what Jesus says in *John 15*.

He says: *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called*



*you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another."* Again, this is not Christ's suggestion for his people, it's an absolutely non-negotiable command. And God has given us a place where people themselves become God's primary resource for developing our ability to love people we might not like. And that place is called the church and that ability usually grows through conflict and struggle. After all, if you only love those who love you, what credit is that to you? If you only pursue those relationships that are safe and mutually protective, well don't expect to grow. God says, hey, pagans do that. If you're willing to let God grow your capacity to love, well then the church is the perfect place for that to happen and you will find that God will be right there in the center of those conflicts if you let him, because that's where real growth takes place.

I've often said the very worst reason to leave a church is that you are engaged in a conflict with a fellow believer. That's one of the main reasons why people leave churches. And God knows that sometimes conflicts within the church are unavoidable. But God causes all things, even conflicts, to work together for good to

those who love him. I mean *Romans 12* tells us this, it says: *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* Someone pointed out that living peaceably with all is not an easy task. The fact is God recognizes that it's not an easy task because his command has not one but two different qualifiers. I mean Paul says first of all *"if it is at all possible"*, meaning that sometimes it is not possible. And that means sometimes there will be conflicts that are legitimate. Conflicts over doctrine, conflicts over truth, conflicts over character, there's going to be times where people have to take sides. And the command also lists a second qualifier, it says *"so far as it depends on you."* What God was saying there, he's only going to hold being responsible for my side of the street. He's not going to hold me responsible for what takes place on the other side. That's someone else's responsibility. God clearly recognizes that people are messy and relationships are messy, therefore churches are messy as well. And more often than not people leave churches because they have this wrong idea that the church is supposed to be a place where no conflict takes place when in fact the church should be a place where no conflict goes unresolved. Well, that's theory. I mean anyone who's been in church for a while understands that practice is a lot more difficult.

And the Philippian church, it turns out, was just like any other

church made up of human beings, it too could get messy. And what Paul wants for the Philippian church and all churches is that the church understands that it's really much bigger than many people think that it is. There are three things that Paul points out about the church at Philippi that applies to every church including ours, and it's number one, the church is sacred; number two, it is sanctified; and number three, its purpose is to serve.

Number one, the church is sacred and it's sacred because Christ gave himself up for her. I mean it's so precious to Christ that scripture says he literally died for it. I mean usually we only speak about the passage of scripture where that speaks of it in the context of weddings but when you understand it in terms of how precious the church is to Christ, you realize what a big deal it is when a church splits, when a church fails. Listen to what God says in *Ephesians 5*. He says: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.* Christ loved the church enough to give himself up for her and that makes the church sacred. The church is also the primary institution created by God to advance his kingdom, and that too makes it sacred; and that advance is always by force.

If I said it once, I've said it a hundred times, we are at war. There's a war going on. The kingdom of darkness will never sit by and allow the kingdom of light to advance without a battle. And Jesus himself said in *Matthew 16*: "*I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" And what Jesus is telling us is we are the advancers, we are the attackers. I mean we're not the ones that are getting attacked by some gates that are trying to prevail against us. That's not the image that Jesus is projecting. What he is saying is that we are the ones who are attacking the very gates of hell as we attempt to advance his kingdom, and the primary weapon that Christ uses to do that is right here, the church. And because it's so strategic and so precious to Christ, it is the number one target of Christ's enemy Satan. Because of that, the church is sanctified, that is it's set apart because God has set the church apart. It's like no other institution on earth, and like no other institution, it is a target. Satan doesn't much care whether the elks or the rotary or the firehouse gets along. I mean to him they're not that great a prize. But a church, the bride of Christ, the one institution directly involved in attacking the very gates of hell? I mean any time Satan can take down one of those, it's considered a major victory for their side. And we know he's had quite a few victories. See, the pressure on churches is relentless. The stories of church splits are legendary. From disagreements over

the color of the carpet to power plays among competing groups, to moral failures in leaders, the battlefield is strewn with the corpses of churches that have fallen, and no one understood that better than Paul. And he makes this plea for the Philippian church and he makes it within the context of knowing that any and all churches are targets, sanctified and set apart by Christ himself. He understood the church in Philippi was no exception. In fact if we look to the very end of the book of the Philippians, we're going to find a reference there by Paul to an ongoing fight that was taking place inside that church. *Philippians 4:2* says: *I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.* Paul's making the same plea that he's making to us, to be of one mind about who and how we love one another. Euodia and Syntyche were two women who worked very effectively with Paul that were now in at point engaged in some kind of flight. They were engaged in some kind of conflict in the Philippian church and Paul emphasizes how critical it is that they resolve this by saying, *I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche.* I mean he's saying, I beg you folks get your act together, please.

Things haven't changed much in 2,000 years. I mean most people who have been part of a church know all about the idea of church splits. Churches blow apart. They blow apart for all kinds of reasons, some of which are legitimate, some of which are

ridiculous. I mean a legitimate reason for a church split would be a change in doctrine. There are lots of churches today who no longer believe that the Bible is without error. Perhaps they believe in homosexual marriage or some other doctrinal issue that is severe enough to warrant a split. And guess what? Paul is okay with that. In *1 Corinthians 11* he says: *For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.* I mean if God forbid in the future the leadership of this church ever abandons its orthodoxy, I would hope, I would hope that there would be those within it who are genuine and would seek to correct it, and if that doesn't happen, we just get up and leave.

There's also many illegitimate reasons for church splits, and they go primarily to the issue of conflicts between people which brings us right back to the command we are under to love people we just might be inclined to conflict with. And the solution to that, according to Paul, is to be single-minded in your pursuit of pleasing Christ. And it's the idea of loving unity that Paul speaks directly saying again in verse 1: *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being*

*of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.* Paul starts off by telling us how incredibly important it is to be of one mind and to have a unity of spirit but then he goes on to tell us exactly what the key to finding that is all about. This is what he says, very critical at this point, verse 3: *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

One of the reasons why we as a church have remained intact for almost 30 years is because God has blessed us particularly with leadership that does not operate from ambition or conceit. I mean you recently honored Steve and me as pastors but I can tell you that the elders and the deacons in this church are just as responsible if not more so for keeping us all in full accordance with one mind. We have issues just like every other human beings have issues but we deal with them, hopefully. And not having to deal with selfish ambition or conceit is a huge plus for a church because it enables us to focus on the primary task at hand for the church, understanding that the church is sacred because Christ died for it, it's sanctified because he has set us apart for the tasks he has for us, and serving because that's what Jesus modeled for us to do, and that's what Paul's focusing on here for the church in Philippi. What Paul is really doing here, he's giving us instructions for how to serve by eliminating selfish ambition and

conceit. Now according to Jesus it's actually quite simple. Listen to what he says. This is *Mark 10*. Jesus is speaking to his disciples. He says: *And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* See, servants recognize their own insignificance. They are, after all, just what the word implies, they are servants. You know somebody came up with a servant heart test and they said do you want to know if you have a servant's heart? Just check how you respond when somebody treats you like one. Paul says act as if others are more significant than you. It's not so hard if you develop the right mindset, and developing the right mindset is all a matter of looking at the big picture. And the big picture is exactly what Paul gives us in the verses that follow. This is what he says. He says: *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*

See, the secret of being a servant is really the secret of emptying



yourself, and Jesus is our prime example. But it was very different for Jesus than it is for us. I spoke of this whole notion of emptying in the study that we did in Isaiah's servant songs. You see some translations quote the term "emptied himself" as "having made himself nothing" and that I think is a more accurate way of describing it. See, Jesus arrived at this planet in the town of Bethlehem in a feeding trough in a barn, having made himself nothing. There's a popular theory right now about Christ making himself nothing that suggests that he emptied himself of all of his prerogatives of the Godhead in order to become fully human. It's called the Kenosis theory after the Greek word for emptying. And what it suggests is that Jesus so emptied himself of all of his attributes that he was only able to work miracles because he utilized the power of the Holy Spirit like you and I could. But it's a flawed theory. See, such a theory fundamentally misunderstands that Jesus was fully man and fully God, and as God in the flesh he couldn't be fully God if he had emptied himself of all of his attributes, of his omnipotence, of his omniscience because those are attributes that define who God is. Strip them from God and God ceases to be God. And we know that Jesus was fully and completely God. *Colossians 1:19* says: *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.* It is far better instead to understand Jesus as simultaneously and voluntarily veiling those aspects of his incarnate deity in order to fully realize what it

means to be human. The scripture doesn't specifically say he emptied himself, it says he made himself nothing, that is he embraced the profound humiliation of flesh to become one of us. The King James puts it this way, it says *he made himself of no reputation*. So moment by moment Jesus chose to make himself nothing by veiling his human nature, by veiling from his human nature those aspects of his divinity that would have denied him the ability to live just like we live. I mean Jesus could have lived among us with all of his attributes. He would have been like some kind of Superman but then he wouldn't have experienced life like we experience life. *Hebrews 4* says: *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin*. Now to be tempted in every respect as we are tempted is to live life like we have to live it. And to do that Jesus had to cover his divine attributes. John Calvin said that Jesus -- quote -- "suffered his divinity to be concealed under the veil of flesh." And he didn't do that by emptying himself of himself but instead by embracing what it meant to live life on earth like we have to live it. Augustine was once asked how did he empty himself. He said, "By taking that which He was not, not by losing that which He was." Say I'm going to take one of my hands and tie it behind my back just to make things even. That's almost the idea here, you know, we voluntarily cripple one hand to make things even. Jesus

voluntarily crippled his divinity on an ongoing basis to make things even with us, to live a thoroughly human life. But he didn't forsake his divinity. For instance, Jesus never emptied himself of his divine ability to uphold the entire universe. Listen to what *Colossians 1:15* says of Jesus. It says:

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities -- all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.* That's cosmic glue. And the cosmic glue is Christ himself, in him all things hold together. Well he didn't empty himself of that when he took on flesh and he didn't just ask the universe or planet earth to hit a 33-year pause button while he lived out his human life. I mean to put it another way, while Jesus the baby was squalling, powerless in a feeding trough in a barn unable to lift his head or articulate his need for food or warmth or comfort, that very same Jesus as God fully divine was holding the entire universe together. Try meditating on that for a while.

In short, the mystery of Christ's incarnation is far more profound than our puny little human minds can even begin to grasp. The glory of God in Christ lies at the heart of this profound mystery

that we can only scratch the surface of. Again Colossians says: *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.* I mean if you want to sum up everything the scripture is trying to tell us here, you can say it simply by saying the epicenter of the universe is not man and his desires, it's God and the preeminence of his Son. That is his glory. And Jesus never emptied himself of his glory. Instead basically he actively veiled and clothed it. Think about what happened on the mount of transformation in Mark 9. You know Peter, James and John, they accompanied Jesus up the mountain and as he gets up to the top of the mountain, he begins to take on some of the glory that actually belongs to him that he's been keeping veiled. Listen to the story. This is Mark 9. It says: *And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.*

Peter had every reason to be terrified because God in Christ was fully revealing himself. Well, he was approaching revealing himself but even that revelation Jesus had to limit. God once told Moses way back in Exodus that if he was to fully reveal himself to him, then Moses would die. Had Jesus fully revealed himself, I have no doubt that Peter, James and John would have died instantly right then and there. That's just how much Jesus had to veil his glory to interact with us as humans. Proverbs says: *It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.* God says part of his glory is concealing such things and we can grasp only a tiny, tiny fraction of what it is that Christ actually did and it is those parts that we can get that have to do with living the life of a servant. Think about Paul's admonition in relation to what Christ did. This is what Paul says. He says: *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.* The most significant person in the entire universe was obviously God himself. The very idea that he would in humility count others as more significant than himself not just by taking on any human form like a king or a prince but of all things a servant, that's almost incomprehensible, but he did. But then Paul pulls out all of the stops. He says: *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in*

*the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. But Jesus didn't stop at stooping to the level of servant. He went far, far lower than that. Jesus went all the way from God to man to worm on our behalf. At the cross Jesus said through the psalmist in Psalm 22: But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. Worms are what you put on hooks to catch fish. Worms are things that you trample you underfoot without giving it a second thought. They're the lowliest of creatures. I mean for Jesus to assume human form even as the vaulted king of everything, human would have been a tremendous loss for him. But he never stooped just to human greatness. He fully embraced human nothingness for us on the cross. I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. The highest height the universe will ever know willingly accepted the lowest low humanity will ever know to pay the price of our sin. And because of that humiliation he can minister to each and every one of us from the perspective of a fellow traveler. Again Hebrews 4, this is what it says: Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

I just want to you take a moment to think of the implications of that statement. I mean for Jesus to be one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin, well that means that no one who has ever lived could possibly have suffered more or endured more than Jesus did. I mean if he or she ever did, then they can say to Jesus, you're not my high priest. You don't know what I went through. For Jesus to make the claim that in every respect he has been tempted as we are, means that he wasn't just, as Isaiah put it, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief but instead he was the king of sorrows, more intimately acquainted with grief than any human will ever, ever know. And he's the one that Paul is pointing to as our model, as our mindset of servanthood. *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.* I mean there's some parts of the mind of Jesus that I will never be privy to. I don't think I'll ever have any idea how to hold the universe together or how atoms and black holes work and I don't know how DNA stores and replicates entire human beings from plans that are stuck inside their cells. And there's a great deal about the majesty of Christ I have no knowledge of, but there's one part of the mind of Christ that's available to all of us, and that is the mind of a servant. And that's what Paul is pointing us towards this morning. It's what Jesus modeled for us. It's also what he expects of us. So I'll close by repeating it. He says: *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any*

*participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Let's pray.*

*Father, I open this up by thanking you for your gift, and every time I look into this gift it gets deeper and broader and wider and more and more amazing. And Lord, we will spend eternity unpacking the depths of what you've given to us. We so grateful; we are so thankful. And Lord, we want to look at your life and look at your servanthood and we want to model our lives after that. We pray for the grace, the insight and the wisdom to be able to do just that, and we pray that in Jesus' name. Amen.*