

The Attitude Christ Had

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having the attitude of Christ, which involves helpless dependence on God and serving others without seeking personal gain.

Duration: 57:37

Scripture: Luke 22:27, John 7:37, Philippians 2:5, Philippians 2:25

Topics: "Christian Humility", "Sacrificial Service"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the true attitude of Christ and why He came to earth, focusing on selflessness, humility, and sacrificial service. It challenges believers to live in helpless dependence on God, to serve others without seeking recognition or advantage, and to prioritize eternal life and the welfare of others above personal gain.

Transcript

I want to turn to Philippians and chapter 2, Philippians 2. You know that around the world everybody's talking about Christmas and imagining it's the birth of Christ. I personally don't believe Jesus was born in December, as many of you know. And one of the clearest proofs is that shepherds don't stay outside in Israel after October.

So I believe Jesus was born in September. But Christmas came because before people became Christians, they worshipped the sun, and the sun came back from the southern hemisphere around this time. And it was the birthday of the sun god, which they converted to Christmas.

But anyway, the important thing is to understand why did Christ come to this earth, and what is the attitude of the Christian. And if somebody does want to celebrate the birth of Christ, it should produce in him an attitude throughout the year, throughout his life, fulfilling the purpose for which Christ came and was born on this earth. And that's what we see here in Philippians 2. Have this attitude in yourselves, verse 5, which was in Christ Jesus, who although he existed in the form of God, that's when he was in heaven, did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped.

Now this is his birth. But emptied himself, taking the form of a bondservant, made in the likeness of men. And I see many things in the way Jesus came to earth.

You know, for example, the helpless way in which he came. I think of how Herod, when he heard that the king of the Jews was born, wanted to kill him. It's one of those mysteries to me, because God's ways are not our ways.

There are many things in Scripture, and I tell you honestly, I would not have done it that way, the way God did it. But I bow my, what I call my human stupidity, to the wisdom of God. I mean, ask yourself, if God knew as God did, that Herod is planning to kill the baby Jesus, what is the best thing for God to do? I mean, if I had control over the situation, I wouldn't make the baby Jesus and Joseph and Mary flee through that long desert from Bethlehem to Egypt.

I don't know how many days it took for them to cross that Sinai desert to get into Egypt. And then all the soldiers come in and look for that baby and kill all the babies under the age of two. I would say, give Herod a heart attack.

Problem solved. No babies killed. Jesus doesn't have to flee.

That's what I say. I bow my human, what I call wisdom, which is foolishness, to the wisdom of God. One day when we stand before Him, we will say, Lord, Your ways were perfect.

And the many things we couldn't understand, and we will say that God did everything well. So, what I want to show you, see here is, I think the Lord wanted us to see the helplessness with which He sent His Son to earth. He was born in a cow shed.

None of us here were born in a cow shed. Not even the poorest person sitting here was born in a cow shed. Your mother was not so poor that she had to give birth to you in a cow shed.

Why did Almighty God, who had all eternity to plan the birth of Jesus, allow Him to be born in a cow shed? Why did He allow all the rooms in Bethlehem to be occupied before Jesus, before Mary and Joseph arrived there? I think it was difficult for God to keep at least one room vacant. But I feel that God planned this, just like we plan, you know, the birth of a baby, where it should be, which hospital God planned from heaven, the birth of His Son, and made sure there was a cow shed available. And if there were still some rooms free in Bethlehem, then God made sure that the donkey carrying Mary would walk a little slower so that the rooms would be occupied by the time she reached there.

So many of us have complaints about why God hasn't done this for me? Why God hasn't done that for me? Is this the way to celebrate the birth of Jesus? Have this attitude in you which is in Christ. Remember, He planned His own birth from heaven. You and I could not plan our birth.

It was Jesus planning His own birth from heaven. And He decided, I'm going to come to earth as a helpless person who has no one to help me but God. And that's what it means when it says He emptied Himself of that equality where He could be powerful.

And that's why the most spiritual Christian is the one who doesn't assert himself. We have so many preachers and elders and pastors who assert themselves, who have authority over people. They haven't understood the Spirit of Christ.

They haven't understood the birth of Jesus. The world celebrates the birth of Jesus. They haven't understood the first thing about what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

It means to take the place of helplessness, of no resource but God. We think in order to live on earth we need people around us to help us. You know, you can find your comfort in knowing influential people, or having a good resource of a huge bank account or something like that to fall back upon.

Or a good church, perhaps. You know that if we are in trouble or in need, brothers and sisters will rally around us. The more we have these things at the back of our mind, the more we will not understand the Spirit of Christ.

That could be the reason why, see we've come to the end of another year, it's good to ask ourselves, have we progressed? It could be the reason why we're not progressing. We have resources other than God. God wants us to live in helpless dependence upon Him.

He who was God gave up that equality and came in a helpless way. And I'm supposed to live on this earth in that same way. And the more I lean only upon God, the more I've understood the Spirit of Christ.

I mean, if people help me, that's fine, but I don't depend on them. If I have money, that's fine, but I don't depend on it. My resource must be God.

It's one of the first things we need to understand in Jesus coming down to this earth. And throughout His life, He took that position. See, right at the end of His life, when Peter tried to defend Him, He said, No Peter, don't defend me.

If I want to defend myself, I don't need your help. One word and 72,000 angels will come down to fight for me. None of these soldiers will be alive.

He said, I won't do it. You know, it's one thing to be helpless without any power, but it's quite another thing to have tremendous power and not use it. That is the mark of a man of God.

I'll tell you one thing. In my life, as I've moved around Christianity and seen people in different lands, it's very rare, very rare to find Christian leaders of that quality, who will never take advantage of you, who will never impose themselves on you, who will never tell you what you should do. Even when you ask them for advice, they give you advice and say, Seek God, that He will tell you what to do.

We're not supposed to have authority over people. Jesus once said, the only authority that He took from God, let me show you that verse in John 17. John chapter 17, you read here, Now you have given me authority.

Verse 2. Father, you gave me authority to give eternal life to people. Even as a father of children at home, I need to see like that. You know, we're big fathers.

Children are small. You can bully them. A lot of fathers are bullies.

A lot of mothers are bullies. They bully their children. And no wonder those children go away from God.

Because they've seen in their father someone totally unlike God. And they say, If this is God, I don't want Him. If God's like my father, I don't want Him.

God's not a bully. Can you imagine what our condition would be if God was a bully? All preachers who urge people to give their money so that the preacher can live comfortably, they're bullies. They haven't understood the Spirit of Christ who came with empty hands.

They haven't understood that the only authority God gives us, when we stand in a pulpit or when we counsel people, only authority is to lead them to eternal life. Can I lead them to greater godliness, to become more like Christ? And that's why Jesus came to earth with empty hands and said, and He told Peter, He told Pilate, My kingdom is not of this world, otherwise my servants would fight. Dear brothers and sisters, that doesn't come easily to us, because as the children of Adam, we are born fighters.

Look at little children, you don't have to teach them to fight. Right from the beginning, as soon as they have a little ability, they're fighting with their siblings. When we grow up, we don't fight in such rude ways, but it's like that, because we haven't understood true Christianity, to have the attitude of Christ.

So I want to encourage you, as we come to the end of another year, to think of this phrase throughout the coming year. Verse 5, Have this, and Philippians 2, 5, Have this attitude in yourselves, which is in Christ Jesus, who though He had everything, gave it all up. For two reasons.

One, He wanted to demonstrate on earth, how God wanted man to live. How was man supposed to live? You know, we don't have any evidence in Genesis how God wanted Adam, how Adam was supposed to live. Just as God said, I've made you in my image.

How was he supposed to live? Then Jesus came and demonstrated how Adam was supposed to live. And that is a life of helpless dependence upon God. I want to say that that has become more and more my understanding of faith.

There's a lot of talk about faith in the world today. Most of it is faith for making money, or getting a bigger house, or a car, or faith for healing. My definition of faith is helpless dependence upon a God who will never let me down.

Who will never disappoint me. And who will accept me no matter how rotten I am, or how much I have fallen. This is faith, my understanding.

And to believe that this God is more interested in blessing me than I am to receive His blessing. It's a wonderful thing. I tell you, my brothers and sisters, this is the way we're supposed to live.

We're supposed to live a relaxed life on earth. And if you have this type of faith, we will be able to live that life. Let me show you a verse in Hebrews in chapter 4. In Hebrews chapter 4, it says, verse 9, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

What does that mean? A lot of Christians in the world who have not understood what that Sabbath rest means. Some people think it's not doing any work on Saturday. Not going to work, not doing any examinations, nothing on Saturday.

Some people transfer it to Sunday and say, on Sunday I don't do any secular work. I read only the Bible. I respect them, appreciate them.

God bless them. So long as they don't force it on others. I mean, you can see in the Gulf countries, they stop work on Friday.

I don't have any quarrel with them either. They meet on Fridays. So whether you meet on a Friday or a Saturday or Sunday, besides the point.

The point is, have you understood the Sabbath rest for the people of God? And that's not that type of Friday, Saturday or Sunday. It's an inner rest of total freedom from fear of the future, from anxiety, tension, from bad moods because I say, I have no resource but God and he will never let me down. He will never let me down.

It is impossible for God to let his helpless child down. Would you, as a loving father, ignore a little child of yours? You would rather starve than let him go hungry. My father in heaven is better than that.

He would rather starve than let me go hungry. He would rather see my need met than his own need met. That is what I see in the spirit of Christ coming to earth.

He didn't come here to meet his own need. Let this mind be in you which is in Christ Jesus. He came here to meet my need and that's because he was so much at rest that his father would take care of all his own needs.

He could give himself totally to serve others. That's why his whole life on earth, when we talk about sacrifice, sacrifice means I am willing to give up something which I have every right to have. It could be a life of comfort, it could be money, it could be position and I am willing to give it up.

Deny myself that for the sake of God and his people and others. That's the spirit of Christ. If the angels were to ask Jesus, why are you going down to earth? Because there are needy people there.

What are you going to get out of it? Nothing. But others will get something if I go down and serve them. Aren't you going to suffer? Yeah, I'm going to suffer.

That's worth it. To please my Father and to help others. That is the spirit of Christ.

What are you going to get out of doing that thing? What are you going to get out of going to church, for example? Being a part of CFC. Ask yourself, what are you going to get out of it? If your thought is, well, it's a good place to go. My children will grow up in a God-fearing way.

The Sunday school is good. It does good to my children. It does me good, too.

We're good friends and fellowship. Good. That's the baby stage of the Christian life.

There's nothing wrong in that. In the beginning, we come like that. Why did the prodigal son come home? He didn't come home to honor his father.

He came home because he was hungry. That's the only reason he came. Did the Father receive him? He welcomed him with wide open arms.

He came right in and celebrated with a feast, a son who was coming home only because he was hungry. It was his hunger that brought him back home. When people came to Jesus for healing, he healed them.

He didn't say to them, hey, first, do you want to give up your sins? No. Whether you want to give up your sins or not, you're needy. I have the power to heal you.

I'll heal you. In the baby stage, we come to become a part of a church to get some benefit for ourselves. If that remains in the back of my mind always, it's a good place for my children.

My children, as they grow up, will find good marriage partners. If I'm in need financially, CFC has a reputation of helping people financially when they're in medical needs, etc. Well, you've got to grow up, brother, sister.

That's all I say. And if that's always our attitude, what I can receive from others, what I can receive from others, we haven't understood the ABC of the Spirit of Christ. Do you think the world has understood it? Celebrating Christmas, the birthday of Christ, as they call it.

Why did he come? He came seeking nothing for himself. Nothing for himself. He came to bless other people.

And we know that we have grown up spiritually when we are part of a church and we seek nothing for ourselves. I don't want anything here. I want to serve others.

I want to see how I can bless other people, not how they can bless me. And you say, who will take care of my needs? Seek the Kingdom of God first. His righteousness.

God in Heaven will take care of all your needs. Who took care of Jesus? Nobody could lay a hand on Him to kill Him, even though He wanted to. Because His Father was always there to protect Him, to whisk Him away.

He had more protection than all the big Presidents and Kings of Earth with all their security services guarding them. Jesus could walk freely because He had angels, invisible angels who would ensure that nobody would touch Him before this time came. And if you live like that in helpless dependence on God, my brother, sister, I believe that we'll have angels, invisible angels surrounding us.

I certainly believe that for myself. Because I can say before God, I have no ambition on Earth. I can stand before God and say, God, You know my heart.

I have zero ambition on Earth to do anything but Your will every single day of my life. Every moment. Zero desire for honor.

Zero desire for money. Zero desire for the empty praise of men. You say that to God.

It would be amazing to see how He stands by you. He'll heal your diseases. He'll provide your need.

This is the spirit of Christ, to empty ourselves completely. Paul speaks about one of his co-workers who had this spirit, who absorbed the spirit. I mean, Timothy, he saw it in Paul.

Paul saw it in Christ and decided to follow that. And Timothy saw it in Paul and imbibed the same spirit. You read about that further down in this chapter in Philippians 2.19. He says, I want to send Timothy to you shortly so that I may be encouraged when I learn of your condition because I have nobody else of the same spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare because everybody seeks after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.

You know, when he says all, he's not talking about all the unbelievers in the world, which is, of course, true. He's not even talking about all believers. He's talking about what's he thinking about in verse 19? Whom shall I send to Philippi to encourage the brothers there in the church? He's thinking of his co-workers.

He had a number of co-workers and he looks around them and says, whom shall I send to encourage that church in Philippi? And he says, not that one, not that one, that one, no, not that one. You know, these are all good brothers. Many of them ten times better than most of us.

But he looks at them and says, no, I can't send them. That guy will go there and he'll try to act like a boss and try to tell other people how they should run their lives. Sometimes when CFC brothers go to visit other churches, that happens.

Because people from there say, oh, you're from CFC. Oh, he must be a great saint. And they act like great saints and try to tell people how to run their lives.

I tell people, brother, go as a learner. Go as a learner. So Paul couldn't send many of those people.

But he said, Timothy, he's different. And Paul was a great discerner of people. As you walk with God more and more, you're able to discern people.

A lot of people who appear very spiritual are not so spiritual, really. Paul knew that, but he says, Timothy, I can see that that guy does not seek his own in anything. He is not only that, I mean, that's a negative thing, I don't seek my own, but he's so genuinely concerned, verse 20, for the welfare of other people.

Think of that expression in verse 20. Genuinely concerned for the welfare of other people. How other people can be blessed.

That's the spirit of Christ. Let this mind be in you which is in Christ Jesus. He came to earth because he was genuinely concerned about the welfare of other people.

Himself, he never came to earth to get a single thing for himself. Let me repeat that. When we come to Christ initially, it's like the prodigal son becomes seeking something for ourselves.

There are many people who come to this church seeking a good place to go to on Sunday, seeking a good place where their children can grow up. Nothing wrong in it. Welcome.

But if after many years here, that's all you can say. Oh, this is a lovely place for my teenage boys and girls to grow up. Good fellowship.

Then you've missed something, brothers and sisters. You haven't grown up. You're like a retarded child who's been here 15 years and still like a baby.

If you want to know whether you've grown up spiritually, ask yourself, can it be written about you that you're genuinely concerned about the welfare of others to lead them to eternal lives to the extent where you're willing to part with what God has given you. Your time, your money, for the glory of God. I mention those things because those are things we value.

We value time and money. And when you part with that to bless others and get nothing for yourself out of it, that's got to be... And if it's for the glory of Jesus Christ, that's the person who's growing up because he's getting the Spirit of Christ. Jesus was willing to part with... And we think we give a little bit of money for God's work and we've made a great sacrifice.

That's how crazy we are. Jesus gave up being equal with God. Even if you give all your money away for God's work, could you equal that? Can you equal that, giving up being equal with God? Even if you give

up a lot of your convenience and comfort in order to serve others in Christ's name and lead them to God, can you equal that with giving up being God himself in order to become a man? That's why I say this world and all of it that celebrates Christmas has got no clue about what it means that Jesus was born on this earth.

They don't have a clue. It's an empty celebration. They have trees and stars and Christmas carols and continue year after year seeking their own, whereas he did not seek his own in anything.

And that's the spirit with which Jesus laid the foundation for the church. And if we want to build the true church of Jesus Christ, it must be built on this foundation where people have that same spirit. And that's why I tell you there are very, very few people on earth who are really building that true church of Jesus Christ against which the gates of hell will not prevail.

Because even among Christians, everybody's concern is I, me, and my family. That's three people, right? I, me, and my family. And before we judge others, ask yourself, my brothers and sisters, is that your primary concern? I, me, and my family? They must be taken care of.

And God's work, if I have a little time left over, Jesus would never have come to earth if he had that attitude. It says here in relation to this in Philippians 2, verse 3, Don't do anything from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than yourselves. Not more spiritual than yourselves.

The Bible never tells us to, some people have that false humility, false humility. It says, oh, I'm not so spiritual, brother, you're more spiritual. That's rubbish.

If you're saying that artificially, Paul did not consider the Corinthian Christians as more spiritual than himself. He said, you're carnal, we're spiritual. Jesus did not consider his disciples as more spiritual than himself.

What does it mean to have the same attitude as Christ? It says, more important than yourself. More important. In the Jewish homes, they didn't sit at tables and chairs.

They would recline and eat their food. And they would come walking with sandals like we do in India, with dirty feet, entering a house that'd be a slave. In rich homes, with a bucket of water to wash the feet as we took off our sandals.

So in that last supper, since Jesus did not want any outsiders, the man who gave them a room, kept the bucket of water and the towel, but no slave. I mean, he'd have gladly kept a slave as well, but Jesus said we don't want any outsiders. Because it was a private meeting with his disciples.

Breaking a bread is always a private meeting with the disciples, even today. Most churches don't understand that, but that is the way Jesus did it. But now all these disciples have come with dirty feet.

They're all sitting around thinking, who's going to wash feet? Nobody here to wash their feet. Look around, who's going to serve me? Everybody's a big man. And Jesus says, I suppose I'm the only one who's a slave here, so I'll wash their feet.

He considered others as more important than himself. That's where we see it. On his last day on earth, he considered others more important than himself.

Not only that, we read here in Luke chapter 22. See, let this mind be in you which is in Christ Jesus. This is how he was born in a cow shed, because he wanted to be lower than everybody else on earth.

And he washed his disciples' feet on his last day of his life on earth to show, listen fellas, I'm lower than all of you. In a world where everybody is trying to show that I'm bigger and better than you, I'm smarter than you, I'm prettier than you, I'm handsomer than you. And in a Christendom where preachers try to show that I'm better than you, my church is better than yours, my church is bigger than yours, and all this rubbish.

You find Jesus coming with another spirit and saying, you guys are more important than me. Luke 22 On the last day of his life on earth, he had taught his disciples for three and a half years. He had even picked up a child and said to them, the greatest in God's kingdom is the one who humbles himself like this little child.

In spite of all that teaching, Luke 22, 24, it says, on the last day, there was a dispute among them as to who will be the greatest. Imagine, they know that Jesus is going to die. He just said that.

This is my body, verse 19, broken for you. This is my cup, verse 20. My blood, which is going to be poured out, the hand of one who is betraying me, verse 21, is on the table.

The Son of Man is going to go as he's determined. Imagine sitting there with Jesus saying, I'm going to die soon. And he's discussing, okay, who's going to take over the leadership? This lust for leadership, to be an elder.

It has come down through 2,000 years. I see it everywhere. I've seen it in our CFC churches.

Brothers who want prominence, who want to stand in the pulpit and are proud that they stand in the pulpit and are seen and recognized and known. It's the same spirit. Who is the greatest here? Who is the one who is admired the most? Who is the one who is recognized? Well, whatever.

It may not be the pulpit. It may be for some other ministry or whatever it is. Such people need to either be born again properly or they are born again to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Everything changed when these people were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. I wish we would take some of these things as a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Great controversy in Christendom is speaking in tongues the sign of being filled with the Spirit.

I say no. Being filled with the Spirit means you'll never want to be great in the eyes of others anymore. You'll take the lowest place.

That's a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit because it's the Spirit of Christ. If it is the Spirit of Christ, you'll want to take the lowest place. Then you're filled with the Spirit of Christ.

But if you're still seeking the highest place, that's the Spirit of Lucifer, the devil. He can make you speak in tongues, but he'll make you want the highest place. Let this attitude be in you which is in Christ Jesus.

He came to earth in a cow shed and always taking the low place. He was born in a... He grew up in a town called Nazareth. Why was that? That was also planned from heaven.

Thirty years in Nazareth. Do you know that Nazareth had such a bad reputation that Nathaniel said in John 1, can any good thing come out of Nazareth? That was the reputation that small little town had in Israel. Okay, something good can come out of Jerusalem or other places.

Nazareth. Nothing good can come from there. Why did Jesus plan that he'll grow up in such a town? Why did Jesus plan that all through his life he'd be considered among the lowest of society? You know how there's a great desire among human beings to be considered big.

In Kerala, people have the habit of having their house name as part of their name. Almost all Kerala people, the first letter of their initial will be a house name. Usually some unpronounceable name.

But that is because that's supposed to be some big family or something like that. People ask me sometimes, you know, I'm from Kerala too. My family.

I said, I'm from the family that got thrown out of Eden for sinning. I belong to that family. But Jesus came for people like us and saved me.

Now I belong to his family. I don't have any family name after, before my name. Got rid of all that.

I have nothing to boast about. Like that song says, I'm only a sinner saved by grace. This is my story till the end of my life.

To God be the glory. I'm only a sinner saved by grace. I often sing that to myself, you know.

Many, many times. It's one of my favorite little choruses. Only a sinner saved by grace.

This is my story. To God be the glory. I'm only a sinner saved by grace.

I hope you sing that all your life. I'm not a sinner. I'm a sinner saved by grace and I've been saved from amazing number of sins by grace.

So there's a difference between that and being just a sinner. So he says here to them in Luke chapter 22 verse 27 Who is greater? The one who sits at the table or the one who serves? You know, if you ask anywhere in any country in the world Who is greater? The one who's sitting at the table or the one who's serving? You know the answer. The one who's sitting at the table.

But he says, as for me I'm the servant. Verse 27 I say, Lord, make me like you. Make me more like you that I'll have that spirit all my life till my last day on earth.

Who is greater? All the brothers and sisters. And I'm a servant. Dear brothers and sisters, are you growing up? You see how empty all this celebration of Christmas is without understanding the spirit with which Jesus came to earth.

Always thinking about the others and I don't want to inconvenience the others. I don't want to take advantage of the others. Paul once said this to the Corinthians.

In 2 Corinthians 7 and verse 2 2 Corinthians 7 verse 2 Make room for us in your hearts. We wronged no one. We corrupted no one.

We took advantage of no one. I hope you can have that testimony. We never wronged anybody.

Maybe in our old unconverted days, okay we have wronged so many people. Oh God, have mercy on us. Thank you.

You've got to remember all that. But now can we say we don't wrong anybody? We don't corrupt anybody with not only we don't corrupt anybody with dirty jokes. We don't corrupt anybody by encouraging them to see certain movies which may have 99% a lot of good stuff in it.

And just that 1% that corrupts their mind. Do you ever do that? See, that's not a dirty movie. That's a good one.

It's only 1% corrupt. Would you take a glass in which I see there's only 1% poison in it? Why are we so careful to drink bottled water and not tap water? And you can watch movies which have got just some teeny bit of pollution in that movie. Do you know how many, what's the size of the germs in tap water that make it unfit for drinking? So small.

It's much smaller in percentage in that glass of water. The germs in it that can give you hepatitis, jaundice. Much smaller percentage than the percentage of that sex scene in some movie.

We corrupt no one. We took advantage of no one. Oh boy, what a wonderful thing it is.

It can be said about you. We never took advantage of anybody. I want to live like that every day.

It's the Spirit of Christ. We never took advantage of anyone. You know, I love that.

I often refer to that passage, that example in John chapter 7. John chapter 7 is one of those chapters where Jesus preached some powerful sermons. It's one of the only places where it says Jesus raised his voice and preached. He hardly ever raised his voice.

But here it says in John 7, 37, on the last day, John 7, 37, he cried out, you guys need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's what he cried out. And he would cry that out in the church today as well.

You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Christ. The attitude he had when he came to this earth.

You need to be filled with that. He spoke of the Spirit, verse 39. And when people heard this powerful message, they said, this is certainly, verse 40, the prophet.

This is the Christ, others said, 41. They were convinced. Of course, there was an argument, as there always is.

There'll be a division, verse 43, in the crowd because of him. And I've seen this, like it says in verse 43, there's a division among the people because of him. Wherever God raises up a true servant of his, in any century, in any land, there will always be a division among the people because of him.

Some will say, this is a prophet of God. Some will say he's a bilgeable false teacher. If that doesn't happen, he's not a true servant of God.

He's not following in the footsteps of Christ, the exemplary servant of the Father. But then, at the end of this powerful message, and all these people admiring him, some of them, it says in verse 53, everybody went to their own home. Jesus' home is in Capernaum.

100 or maybe 200 kilometers away, I don't know. Long distance from Jerusalem, where he was preaching. And imagine, all these guys who called him a prophet and Messiah, nobody went up to him and said, Lord Jesus, where are you staying tonight? Would you like to come to our home? Nobody.

Everybody went to their own home. They all thought of themselves. So, Jesus looks around and says, well it's a clear day, thank God it's not raining.

I can go and sleep under the trees. So it says in verse 1, next verse, chapter 8, verse 1, he went to the Mount of Olives and slept there the night. Yes.

I love that. Do you ever have a complaint when you have served somebody and you think they should provide or be concerned for you in some way and they don't seem to be. Do you have a complaint? In other words, do you have an expectation from people? This is what I learned from this passage.

Jesus had no expectation. Not only he didn't corrupt or take advantage of others, he had no expectation. Hey, I'm the great preacher.

People should at least come and thank me or people should at least ask where am I going to stay tonight? No expectation. I say, Lord, make me like you. I want to grow up.

I don't want to be a baby expecting, expecting. People should care for me. Ask me, how are you getting on? Next morning, chapter 8, verse 2, he came to the temple and he began to teach them.

Verse 2. And nobody asked him, By the way, Lord, where did you sleep last night? Imagine that. I want to say, I've never been treated like that. People are very good to me.

But my Lord, he lived on an earth in such a wonderful way. I'll never cease to admire him. I say, Lord, I want to be like you.

And if such a situation ever arises in my life, I want to follow his example. Even if I'm 72 years old, I can sleep outside. No problem.

But it's a wonderful way to live. No expectations. No taking advantage of others.

Emptying himself with empty hands to serve and serve. To sacrifice for the good of others. Dear brothers and sisters, you think Christians have understood this? That this is why Christ came to earth? Here's another man who understood it.

In Philippians chapter 2 is a great example. Begins with Jesus Christ. Paul himself is a great example.

We saw Timothy. And in Philippians 2 we see one more example of a man who has the same attitude as Christ. We see there about a man called Ephaphroditus.

Verse 25. Philippians 2, 25. I thought of sending you Ephaphroditus, my brother, my fellow worker, my fellow soldier.

He had the same spirit as Timothy. You say, why didn't Paul think of sending him to Philippi? He was actually in Philippi. He's coming from Philippi.

He's a member of the church in Philippi. The church in Philippi sent this wonderful brother to serve Paul when Paul was in a prison. Paul was in prison when he wrote Philippians.

He was in a jail and those jails were full of cockroaches and rats and it was a dungeon where he was chained to a wall and cold and he would shiver there and they sent Ephaphroditus because they thought he's the best brother to serve our apostle Paul. And he's my brother, my fellow worker, my fellow soldier who is your messenger, verse 25, who you sent to minister to my need in prison. And he came here, came to this cold dungeon day after day after day and he got sick.

He got sick serving the apostle. That's the spirit of Christ. Indeed he was sick to the point of death and he didn't give up.

He just kept on serving. But God had mercy on him and not only on him, God had mercy on me also so that I wouldn't have sorrow upon sorrow. You know all these glib teaching today, just lay your hands on him brother Paul and heal him in Jesus name.

So many Christians are deceived with this. Why couldn't Paul lay his hands on Ephaphroditus, heal him in Jesus name to the point of death? God's ways are not our ways. He demonstrates something through Ephaphroditus serving Paul in sickness which he cannot demonstrate if Ephaphroditus serves Paul in great health.

It's the spirit of Christ I see there. And the amazing thing about him is you know what bothered him? When you're sick, what is it that bothers you? What's the thing you look for? I know when all of us are sick, we want somebody to pamper us and especially your wife or husband pamper you and care for you and whisper sweet nothings to you and all that type of stuff. And make you feel nice and you feel that oh the brothers and sisters will come and visit me and pray for me and let everybody know that I'm sick and get all their sympathy.

And are you a bit disturbed that somebody did not hear that you were sick and did not come to visit you or did not call you up and say brother how are you keeping? Have you recovered from that cough and cold you had yesterday? Ephaphroditus was so different. It says he was so distressed in verse 26. Why? Oh no these people heard I was sick.

Now they'll be worried. I like a brother like that. He's distressed because other people heard he was sick.

I said don't you want these fellows to know you're sick and pray for you and make fuss over you? No. He says I don't want any of that. He says I'm so distressed.

What a word that is. Distressed because the Philippians heard that he was sick. There was a guy who had got the spirit of Christ.

Never sought his own, just sought the good of others. What a church we'd have. What a church CFC will be.

Everybody is gripped by the spirit. That is why Jesus came to earth. To demonstrate how man should live.

Helpless dependence upon God. God will protect me. Let Herod try to do what he likes.

He can't touch me. My protection is in God. God is my helper.

He's my refuge and strength. Present help in time of need. Therefore we will not fear that there be earthquakes and calamities and whatever it is.

We will not fear. And we will spend our life seeking to serve and to lead people to eternal life. To use all the authority and power and time and energy and money and everything God's given us to bless others, lead them to eternal life.

I often say a lot of you sitting here are very intelligent. Some of you have got big degrees. Your masters in your field of work.

Whatever science that is. I want to ask you. You who have used your brilliant mind to advance in your profession on earth.

Why don't you use a little bit of that brilliant mind to study the scriptures. To bless other people. With a word it takes time.

You think it didn't take time for you to advance in your profession? And study whatever? I'm not against it. You need to earn your living. God gave me a good mind when I joined the Navy.

I said I'm going to also. I didn't neglect my job in the Navy. But I'm going to use it to study God's word.

And I'm so thankful that I did. Because it's helped me so much to be able to help so many needy people in the world. Why don't you use your mind brother for God? Why don't you at least devote a little time to say Lord.

It involves sacrifice. Sure it involves sacrifice. It may mean going to bed a little later or getting up a little earlier.

Something. You do that for your profession right? Isn't it worth doing it for God? When people tell me oh brother I didn't get time to read the Bible. Did you get time to advance in your profession? Yeah yeah that I did.

Have you understood why Christ came to this earth at all? What have you learned in CFC of the spirit of Christ in all these years? Good question. I'm not trying to send anybody on a guilt trip. I'm trying to challenge you to grow up.

Let's pray. Let's bow our heads in prayer. We're going to enter a new year in another few days.

Let's think about what we have heard. Say Lord I want to grow in the having the attitude of Christ in every area of my life. Help me.

In Jesus name. Amen. Thank you.

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