



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

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**Philippians: The Leverage Of Joy #7**  
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## Philippians 2:1-11

- Nothing robs us of our joy quicker than circumstances and people. Epaphroditus had brought a gift to Paul from the church in Philippi and good news of the church's concern for him, but he had also brought the bad news of division. Apparently there was double threat to the unity of the church:
  - One was from without through false teachers,(chapter 3.)
  - But the other was bickering between two women within the church (chapter 4.)
- There is a difference between unity and uniformity.
  - True spiritual unity comes from the heart and is based in a submissive mind. A submissive mind is a mindset subbed to a common mission.
  - But uniformity comes from pressure from without to all look the same.
  - In our passage Paul is appealing to our highest motives. To our heart and mindset for authentic unity based in love for God and others.

## Philippians 2:1-2

***<sup>1</sup> Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, <sup>2</sup> fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.***

- The basis of Christian unity is expressed in conditional clause: if...if...if...if , is used 4 times. But in the Greek these clauses do not convey doubt, but rather are used for emphasis. Each "if" could be translated "since."
  - Since there is encouragement in Christ.
  - Since there is the comfort of love.
  - Since there is fellowship of the Spirit.
  - Since there is affection and mercy.

- The key phrase is that we are “in Christ”—circle that, underline that!
- In Philippians 1, our joy is found by having Christ first, but in Philippians 2, our joy is found by putting others next.
  - Paul is the soul winner in chapter 1,
  - but the selfless minded in chapter 2.
- It is a mindset that brings unity and synergy and Joy!
- So what is this mindset? What is the fountainhead of unity?

## Joy Leverage #7: The Joy of Selfless Living

### The Copernicus Revolution

- In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Renaissance astronomer Nicholas Copernicus challenged the belief that the earth was the center of the universe.
  - Copernicus argued that the sun didn’t revolve around the earth but that the earth revolved around the sun.
  - The Copernicus Revolution turned the scientific world upside down by turning the universe inside out.
  - In the same way, each one of us needs to experience our own Copernicus Revolution. The paradigm shift happens when we come to terms with the fact that the world does not revolve around us.
  - Newsflash: you are not the center of the universe!
  - But Christ is. He is the center of the universe and He wants to be the center of your life!
  - The Spiritual Copernicus Revolution can turn your world right-side up by turning your heart inside out.

- You must dethrone yourself and enthrone Him.
- This is where joy is found. Joy is found in selfless living with a servant heart.

### **Philippians 2:3-4**

***<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.***

- From selfish to selfless is the Spiritual Copernicus Revolution! You and I are not the center of the universe!

### **Joy Leverage #7: The Joy of Selfless Living**

- We are seeing the Motives of Selfless Living contrasted to selfish living.
- First the negative: Satan took the first “selfie.”

### **Isaiah 14:13-14**

***For you have said in your heart:***

***‘I will ascend into heaven,***

***I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;***

***I will also sit on the mount of the congregation***

***On the farthest sides of the north;***

***<sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,***

***I will be like the Most High.’***

- “God, here I am in heaven...click”
- For example, everything is about self: self help and even a magazine SELF.
- For example, we are living in the age of selfish living, selfies: selfies can be taken in front of a mirror, with a stick. There is even a website Selfie.com...where you can master the art. The typical selfie you know is the age of selfies. For guys, it’s a dude flexing, for girls it’s one hand on the waist and then this kind of duck face, pouty face. How many selfies taken every day?

- For example, over 94 million selfies are taken every day and posted worldwide. The average millennial will take 25,700 selfies in a lifetime. Females between 16-25 spent 5 hours a week doing selfies.
- For example, this is not only selfish but it is dangerous. There were more deaths from selfies than shark attacks. I wonder if we will start having “Selfie Week” instead of “Shark Week” on TV?
- We are never more like the devil than when we practice selfish ambition and conceit.
- But the positive! We are never more like Jesus than when practice lowliness of mind and esteem others better than ourselves.
  - “Others” is the key word here.
  - Lowliness of mind does not mean we become the doormat of others but it does mean we grow in serving others.
  - **Motive 1 for Selfless Living: Esteeming others better than yourself in your Actions**
  - Paul gives us 4 examples of selfless living:
    - ♣ Christ in giving His life for us (verses 5-10)
    - ♣ Paul through discipling and leadership (verses 11-18)
    - ♣ Timothy in serving Paul (verses 19-24)
    - ♣ Epaphroditus in ministering to others (verses 25-30)
  - Jesus said that he came not to be served but to serve and give his life a ransom for many.
- It’s actually being proven that when you serve others and become more selfless in your life you are happier and live longer!

Psychology Today article in 2012 by Dr. [Thomas Plante, Ph.D., ABPP, is a professor at Santa Clara University and an adjunct clinical professor of psychiatry at Stanford University.](#)

- Found that people who serve others at least 2 hours per week over many years, reduced mortality by 40%.
- That people who served others handled stress better than those who did not.
- Especially when you serve people who have less than you or have not been as fortunate as you, the levels of compassion and empathy rises, actually making you a happier person.

“One team of sociologists tracked 2000 people over a five-year period and found that Americans who described themselves as “very happy” volunteered at least 5.8 hours per month. This heightened sense of well-being might be the byproduct of being more physically active as a result of volunteering, or because it makes us more socially active. Researchers also think that giving back might give individuals a mental boost by providing them with a neurochemical sense of reward.” (Mentalfloss.com)

Studies have shown that selfless living will:

- decrease chronic pain
- lower your blood pressure
- positive behavior in teens
- gives a sense of purpose and satisfaction

### **Philippians 2:5-6**

***<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 to be equal with God, Motive 2: Loving Jesus by Living like Jesus***

- Jesus is our most powerful example of selfless living. It was his mindset.
- Jesus willingly left heaven because of us. He left His glory and became like us to save us. This is the mind of Christ.
- To live like Jesus we must think like Jesus.

- “I cannot keep my privileges for myself, I must use them for others and to do this, will gladly lay them aside or help others with them.”
- The Jesus way is the way of love for others to the extent of giving up our privileges to help others.

### **Philippians 2:7**

***<sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.***

### **Motive 3 for the Joy of Selfless Living: Serving like Christ**

- For example, I know several men and women in this fellowship who give hours and hours each week serving here at this facility because they love Jesus—no pay, serving sacrificially because they are living out the way of Christ—AND they are happy doing it!!
- Jesus became the Forerunner of being a bondservant.
  - That is why Paul said he was a “bondservant of Christ Jesus”;
  - James names himself a “bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ”;
  - “Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ”;
  - Jude begins his short letter with “a bondservant of Jesus Christ.”
- A bondservant was a person who had chosen to stay a slave to one’s master. He could have gone free but has chosen slavery out of love.

### **Deuteronomy 15:16**

***<sup>16</sup> And if it happens that he says to you, ‘I will not go away from you,’ because he loves you and your house, since he prospers with you***

### **Philippians 2:8-11**

***<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 and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee***

***should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

- “Therefore” means it is there for something he is about to write to us.
- **Motive 4 for Selfless Living, from the life of Christ:  
God exalts the humble.**
- Here’s the formula: If you humble yourself, walk in humility and submit to one another, God is with you—He supports you; He strengthens you!
- If you walk in pride, God opposes you and resists what you do!
  - ***Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (James 4:10)***
  - ***Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5)***
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