

- A. Opening Greetings (1:1-2)
- B. Thanksgiving & Prayer (1:3-11)
- C. Proclaiming Christ Amidst Opposition (1:12-18)
- D. Magnifying Christ (1:19-26)
- E. Striving & Suffering for Christ (1:27-30)
- F. Godly Ambition in Christ (2:1-11)
- G. Work out Your Salvation (2:12-16)
- F'. Godly Ambition in Christ (2:17-30)
- E'. All things for Christ (3:1-11)
- D'. Pressing toward the Goal in Christ (3:12-16)
- C'. Standing Firm Amidst Opposition (3:17-4:7)
- B'. Exhortation & Thanksgiving (4:8-20)
- A'. Closing Greetings (4:21-23)

Imitating Excellence

Philippians, Part VI

Philippians 2:1-11 & 2:17-30

Stuart W. Bryan

I. Excel Still More

II. A Chiastic Outline

Our two sections focus on the theme of _____.

Paul sets before the Philippians models of excellence. What does godliness look like lived out?

III. Models of Excellence

- A. Christ, the Foundation of Excellence (cf. Mk 10:45; Jn 13:12-17)

The fundamental meaning of excellence is to *develop an other-centered heart of service and sacrifice*. Jesus Himself reminded His disciples: *The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many*. The Apostle John records:

So when [Jesus] had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 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. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

1. The Exhortation

2. The Model (cf. 2 Cor 8:9; Is 45:20-23)

So why should we act this way toward one another? Because this is what Jesus is like and to be like Him is the goal of our sanctification! This Person who became incarnate as the Man Jesus and whom God exalted as Messiah did not selfishly cling to His station and privileges and glory. He willingly relinquished them. Jesus *possessed an other-centered heart of service and sacrifice*.

B. Faithful Men, Models of Excellence

1. Paul (2:17-18)
2. Timothy (2:19-24 cf. Acts 16:1-5)
3. Epaphroditus (2:25-30)

IV. Application

A. God Reveals Himself in Christ to be Other-Centered (cf. Jn 13:1-5)

Paul's words here in Philippians 2 are remarkable in what they reveal about the nature of God. The 2nd Person of the Godhead did not regard His equality with God as something to be grasped, to be held onto, to be selfishly preserved, but instead chose to use His power and privileges to deliver His people from destruction.

The Apostle John writes (13:1-5):

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

B. God Calls us in Christ to be Other-Centered

What does it mean to *excel still more by the grace of God*? It means to develop an *other-centered heart of service and sacrifice*.

C. God Promises to Reward us in Christ for being Other-Centered (cf. Mk 10:29ff)

“So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”” (Mk 10:29–31)

V. Conclusion