



Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

Let This Mind Be in You

November, 2013

Dear Friend of Mary Craig Ministries,

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said that “we must allow ourselves to be interrupted by God.”

This is exactly what happened to Saul, who became the Apostle Paul; though I do not know whether he allowed such an interruption. According to him, he was “apprehended,” but Paul does want believers to be open to change, to be open to God renewing the mind. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:5)

In his letter to the Philippians Paul thanks God every time he remembers them. He wrote to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi. The church that he established there is thought to be the first in all of Europe. His letter to them was written during his first imprisonment, around A.D. 60-62.

Paul had received a money contribution sent to him while he was a prisoner in Rome. The Philippians had formerly sent once and again to his necessity. (Phil. 4:10, 15) Paul writes to them to relieve their anxiety. He enters into details as to his history, uses the occasion to warn them against the Judaizers, and exhorts them to get along with each other, have joy in the Lord, and prepare themselves for the Lord’s coming.

Paul gloried in his affliction, saying that for him to live is Christ, and to die is gain. He exhorted believers in Philippi to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, “for it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (Phil. 2:13) He knew how precious the gift of fellowship with other believers really is. He was full of hopes and longings. He put no confidence in the flesh, though his background was impressive, as he provides in Phil. Chapter 3. He’s after the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He encourages believers to rejoice in the Lord, telling them under the superintending influence of the Holy Spirit, “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Philippians is a very practical letter. There are a few allusions to the Atonement, as when Paul designates certain men enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18). Having a right understanding of the atonement is crucial. The Judaizers were dangerous, because they subverted salvation by the cross, wanting to go back under the Law by adding works of the Law to the finished work of Christ as the way of salvation. Paul says he counted all things but loss to win Christ, and desired to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Phil. 3:9). Paul was clinging to the atonement and righteousness of God in Christ alone for salvation.

Paul writes about suffering. To live is Christ. Let your conduct be worthy, for you will be suffering. It has been granted to believe and to suffer. (Phil. 1:27-29) If Christ’s love consoles and comforts you, and if you have a close mutual relationship with the Holy Spirit, and if you feel God’s affection and compassion towards you, then be disposed to the same attitudes Paul has towards events and others in your daily life. (Phil. 2:1, 2) In other words, love as Jesus

loves. Live out the same kind of love that Jesus HAS. Why? Because believers are one together in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ.

Fulfill my joy, that you be likeminded, having the same love,

Being of one accord, of one mind. Philippians 1. 2:2

Love like this is not motivated by selfishness, selfish ambition, resentment, rivalry, or wanting to be better than someone else. Love manifests in humility in leading and guiding. The essence of this is service. If God has given abilities, talents, gifts, etc., it is so that we can be of service to others. Put effort into this, Paul exhorts. Don't just consider yourself; consider others also.

*“When all is said and done, the life of faith is nothing if not an unending struggle of the spirit with every available weapon against the flesh.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship**

Today's attitude is more like this: I look out for myself and I expect you to look out for yourself. If you are not looking out for yourself, oh well. I'm not looking out for you, but hey, if you want to look out for me, that's just better for me. Me, me, me. I am the center of my universe.

That's not Jesus; and that's not to be the mindset of the people of God.

Paul exhorted believers to love and to a mutual loving of one another. The atonement undergirds ethical behavior. (Ephesians 5; 1 Peter 3:18) In Philippians 2:1-9 we see the humiliation and exaltation of Christ pointing to the atonement and its reward.

Paul exhorts believers to have the same mind or attitude as the mind and attitude we find in Christ Jesus. This is Jesus' attitude, not just on earth, but in His Person. It is who He is. This attitude and mindset is one of love and humility. Jesus exists as God in His essential nature. He is equal to God. He is God. He wasn't/isn't robbing or taking anything away from God the Father by being God the Son. We cannot separate the pre-incarnate Christ from the incarnate Christ to Christ post-resurrection as to this mindset. It is who Christ Jesus is. The attributes and their manifestation are united. God is love; He loves and manifests love in His actions. Jesus didn't do loving things in a hypocritical way. He wasn't putting on a mask; acting like He loved but inside being something different. God is loving because love is essential to His being.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past

Unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son,

Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person,

And upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by

Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the

Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

Jesus did not think it robbery to be equal with God. Jesus was conscious of entire equality with God and did not think of that equality as encroaching the boundaries or off-limits or invading another's rights. The word for "robbery" here denotes the act of seizing. Jesus did not usurp or

seek to usurp the position of God. He said, "I and the Father are one." This speaks to the divine dignity of the Son of God.

Today, many people diminish who Jesus Christ is. They think He is more like them, human, and that they are more like God, divine. Jesus is God; a divine person with a divine nature who took on a human nature in a human body. He had no iniquity and committed no sin. He was sinless as to Himself personally; but as to His office of Surety of the Covenant, as Mediator and Messiah, He carried our sins and bore our sorrows. He was sin-bearer and curse-bearer His entire time as the Incarnate Christ. He made Himself of no reputation. He emptied Himself of the privileges of divinity and took the form of a servant. Being made in the likeness of a human being, He humbled Himself.

"Jesus Christ possessed the essential attributes of being God-kind and so appeared to those in heaven who saw Him, and He did not, after weighing the facts for Himself, consider the status of being equality with deity a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards, but on the contrary when actively taking hold of the essential attributes of being a bond-slave, He laid aside the rightful possession of status Himself, when acquiring in His own behalf a new state of existence, that of man-kind; and although when He was discovered by others as being deity yet appearing in outward guise as man, when acquiring in His own behalf a new state, that of an obedient man, He brought Himself very low, and obedient to the extent of death, namely even of a death of a cross-kind." (Rev. Jim Craig)

Jesus is not high-minded, haughty, or high-handed. We are to have the same attitude as Jesus, the attitude Paul writes about, a particular attitude toward those sharing with us the grace of God. The outworking of our hearts and minds is important and should be yielded to the grace of God.

This attitude needs to become part of our identity. It should motivate us to action. A sacrificial attitude of love does not ignore self, but ADDS to it. It takes on the responsibility of looking to the needs of others.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind

Let each esteem others better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Philippians 2:3, 4

Jesus is God. He didn't think it robbery to be equal with God. He didn't think His being God something to be exploited. Christ Jesus' equality with God is something which He rightfully possessed, and thus something with which He could do as He wills.

After Jesus took hold of the essential nature of a servant, He laid aside Himself. He brought Himself within a class of likeness of man-kind and after He was discovered by others as being deity yet appearing in outward guise/form [schema] just like a man, Jesus acquired in His own behalf a new state or status, that of being an obedient man. Jesus' goodness rightfully belonged to Him. He humbled Himself. It was a big surprise for others to discover Jesus was always God. He is in charge of what is going on. He is knowledgeable. He did not give up His deity, as some teach today. But He did give up privileges of deity, for example, His environment of glory. He took upon himself limitations of place and of knowledge and of power, though still on earth retaining His essential nature of deity. He was not a mere man, man-kind. He was/is God-Man, of the God-kind and of the man-kind.

What things happened to Jesus were voluntary, and not surprises. Jesus always had the mind of God. The will of Jesus is always to do the will of the Father. Jesus did something not normally expected of a god. He took on the essential being and nature of a man. He willingly and voluntarily took on the burdens of man and kept this same attitude in His incarnate state in ministry and in His post-incarnate state, just as in His pre-incarnate state. Why? Because this is the attitude of love and it is the attitude of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

How did this attitude of love manifest? Philippians 2 speaks of two humiliations.

The first refers to the Incarnation. Jesus emptied Himself. He had rights, and privileges. He came here, not looking for personal glory. Paul exhorted against vainglory in Phil. 2:3. Christ's condescending love brought Him here. Jesus made Himself of no reputation. Something was added. He took on human nature in a human body. He took on man-kind. He fulfilled man's duty to the Creator by becoming the obedient servant we are to be as worshippers of God. He divested Himself of outward glory; He gave up the external glory of His riches, but NOT OWNERSHIP. Jesus did not give up His essential holiness; He ADDED taking on the burden of our sin. If the person who died on the cross was not the God-Man, fully God and fully man, then the integrity of the atonement is destroyed. We have to remember who Jesus is. The two natures of Christ were not mixed, not fused, and not split. The person of Christ is without confusion, without mixture, without change, without division. Jesus Christ is a whole person. Think about it.

The humiliation of Christ Incarnate contrasts with Adam, who sought to usurp the place of God in order to enjoy the privileges of God. Adam aspired to be as God. Jesus, the second man and last Adam, by inherent right was above all service but descended to a servant's position in order to expiate sin. Jesus was not some phantom man but was very man with a true humanity, but He came to save His own.

The second humiliation is, then, that Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. He voluntarily subjected Himself to the service of standing in the place of sinners, though He had no personal sin. He did not assume any of the glory that properly belongs to Him. He adapted Himself to the position of sin-bearer and curse-bearer. In the position of servant, He obeyed. The obedience was to God. When Jesus as a divine person took the form of a servant, He took it into the unity of His person; and consequently, as the creator and preserver of His own humanity, He could not but be its master. He undertook for others. He did it out of love. He did it by His own free choice.

The obedience was one from Jesus' birth to His death, even the death of the cross. It was both active and passive. It was not just the death. It was Jesus' whole life. It was what He was sent to do and what He willingly came to do. (Hebrews 5:8, 9)

Christ relinquished His glory which He had due to the fact that He is deity. He had a glory before the world was created (John 17:5). The big surprise to folks was that Jesus walked around looking like any other man, but He is God. The fact that Jesus came as a human being did not remove His position in heaven, but allowed Him to carry out the Father's will. Even on the cross dying, Jesus was still equal with God. He had all the feelings that can exist in the human body, yet He never strayed from His mindset of love. Jesus set aside the glory of being fully God in order to accomplish God's will, which was also His will.

Jesus Christ humbled Himself. The lowness Christ was to reach was limited to something this side of the dust of corruption. Man returns to dust. Man decays, decomposes, and breaks down. The world values gold dust more than household dust. People value the ashes of those who have

died more valuable than gold dust. Jesus Christ voluntarily became of less value in the eyes of all creation, but never lost the true value of His essential being of equality with God.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name

Which is above every name, 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,

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

To the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9)

God highly exalted Jesus Christ. He has a name above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is LORD. Jesus was Son from eternity (Hebrews 1:5). He merited the reward of eternal life for His people, fulfilling the Law. Do this and you will live, says the Law. Jesus came to replace the old covenant with something better, a new covenant in His Blood. Believe in Jesus and you will live, says the way of Grace. Jesus is worthy of adoration by all that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth.



We are likewise to have the same mindset, the same attitude, setting aside vainglory and making ourselves of no reputation by taking the status of obedient servants in all humility, that God may exalt us in due time. (James 4:10; Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11; Luke 18:14; 1 Peter 5:1-6)

Let's be thankful for Christ and for the fellowship of one another in Christ. Let's serve Christ and one another in love.

It is one thing to experience a season of great humbling and brokenness.

It is another thing entirely to have a humble spirit, to be clothed in humility,

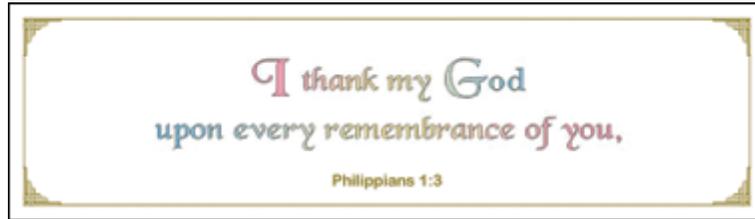
To have the mind of Christ that considers self to be the servant of all.

Andrew Murray

For His glory,

Mary Craig, D.P.M.

Mary Craig



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