

## Look at Jesus

### A Story of Division

There was a time when these two women got along. They used to work together at church with energy and joy. Can you picture it? There was a time they worked side by side with their pastor fighting to help more people know Jesus. There was a time, but not anymore. Something happened. Nobody even remembers what started it, but something happened that drove a wedge between two sisters in Christ, and it broke their pastor's heart.

Pastor knew the real problem wasn't the thing that happened that nobody remembers. It was not about what she said or what she said. It wasn't even about who was right and who was wrong. The problem was their mindset, what was going on in here or in here. When I say mindset I mean their thoughts, their attitudes, and the way they interpret every little thing in their lives. Forget who started their little fight, right now you need to use some common sense. Have you ever seen someone who can't think an issue through because they're too upset? Their bad mindset included their attitudes. Have you ever told a little kid that they need an attitude adjustment? I've seen some adults I wish I could say that to and someone's probably saying that about me. And mindset included their worldview. I mean the way they interpreted every little thing. Like if someone doesn't talk to you after worship, you could interpret that to mean that they secretly hate you, or maybe they're busy. Depends on you're the way you view the world. Your thoughts, attitude, and worldview that's your mindset, and the pastor, brilliant guy, said, "Sisters, the problem right now is your mindset about each other."

You know this brilliant pastor. It was the Apostle Paul. The two women he was working with were named Euodia and Syntyche. Euodia and Syntyche were members of the church in Philippi, and Paul wrote in Philippians 4, "**I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord.**"

Have you ever had a mindset issue? I know I have. It happens all the time where my thoughts about somebody are screwed up. My attitude is inappropriate at times. My view of the world is that everything is about me. Does that happen to you? One way to check is to ask, "Do you have some

Syntyche, some person that you struggle to get along with here at church, in your family, at school?” Well I might not be the world’s most brilliant pastor but the Apostle Paul might be, and we have his words, inspired by the Holy Spirit, written to Euodia and Syntyche.

Can you guess the Holy Spirit’s advice for us about our mindset? He says:

## Look At Jesus.

That’s what Euodia and Syntyche needed, and that’s what you and I need.

### Look At Jesus.

We read the names Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians chapter 4, but the whole book is about how looking at Jesus can help our mindsets. The most glorious example is in chapter 2. Here’s what God wrote for you:

**In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:” (Philippians 2:5)** What a fascinating thing to think about! Jesus’ mindset. On Palm Sunday, when Jesus was riding that donkey, people are waving palm branches, shouting “This is the son of David, this is our King!”, what is going on in Jesus’ brain? What is his attitude? How is he interpreting these things? In my words, “Generous Service No Matter What.” In God’s words:

**“Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:**

**Who, being in very nature God,**

**did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;” (Philippians 2:5-6).**

## **Generous**

Jesus’ mindset was *generous*. He was not about getting he was about giving—even when had every right to get! When people were calling out, “This is the Son of David, the King!” Jesus had every right to say, “That’s right! Can I get an Amen? I’m the King! I am God!” If you or I do that, it would be blasphemy. But Jesus had every right. Philippians says he is in very nature God. But Jesus mindset was not to get praise or get a throne. It was to give. He did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. He’s generous, and a servant.

## **Service**

**Rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness (Philippians 2:7).**

Jesus's mindset was generous *service*. Remember the night before he died he got down and washed his disciples' feet? They were shocked because that is a servant's job! But Jesus said, "**The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve,**" (Matthew 20:28). And so true God washed the feet of dirty sinners as a servant.

Jesus mindset was generous service, but what about when serving others cost him? It would cost him. Jesus said, "**The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many,**" (Matthew 20:28). Jesus' mindset was generous service, even if it cost him his life.

## **No Matter What**

**And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:8).**

Jesus' mindset was generous service *no matter what*. The city of Philippi, where Paul was writing this letter, was populated by retired Roman soldiers. When they knew what happened on crosses: pain, death, public humiliation. They knew what happened on Jesus' cross too. It cost Jesus him physically, emotionally, and even spiritually—God the Father abandoned Jesus on the cross. But what was Jesus' mindset? Generous service no matter what. Just let your jaw drop for a moment as you think about that.

## **The Result of Jesus' Mindset**

What was the result of Jesus' mindset? God exalted him.

**Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father, (Philippians 2:9-11)**

When Jesus let God exalt him, he did the opposite of what most people do. Most people try to exalt themselves. They try to prove they are right. They make sure nobody takes what is theirs. They look out for their reputation. They exalt themselves. The result: usually they are the only one who thinks they are that good. Jesus did not exalt himself. He humbled himself and let God exalt him. The result, everyone recognizes Jesus as Lord, if not now then on the last day. Everyone has to admit that what he did on the cross, whether you love it or hate it, eventually everyone will agree that it is the greatest accomplishment in the history of the world. God be praised!

## **What's Your Mindset?**

Generous service no matter what, and let God worry about exalting. That was Jesus' mindset. Is that your mindset? It's really hard to think that way. Human being's default setting, our default mind setting, is "gimme-gimme selfishness, no matter what." Have you seen that attitude messing with your relationships? Someone says "give me my rights." Give me the credit I've earned." "Give me some praise, and if you don't we may not get along." That's the kind of attitude that Euodia and Syntyche had, and it's the kind of attitude that breaks a pastor's heart. And when I have that attitude it breaks Jesus' heart.

## **Look at Jesus**

Do you know what God's solution is? It's not, "Try harder!" It's not, "Be better!" It's not, "Be more humble!" It's "Look at Jesus." There is exactly one thing that can change your mindset—Jesus. You see, Jesus didn't just humble himself and become a servant and become obedient to death on a cross as you example—he did it as your Savior. Because he was humble you have the hope of eternal life in heaven. When you have had a taste of how good it is that Jesus humbled himself for you, that and that alone can make you want to humble yourself for Syntyche, for your sister, your co-worker, your roommate, your spouse. Look at Jesus.

## **Find a Carmen Christi**

Want to know how Pastor Paul helped Euodia and Syntyche look at Jesus? He used a hymn. Did you notice how the formatting of this Bible passage is not in paragraphs? It's got strange indentations and line breaks like a poem because

guess what it is—a poem. Bible scholars call Philippians 2 the *Carmen Christi*, that's Latin for The Song of Christ. In all likelihood, this was a hymn that the Philippian congregation sang at worship gatherings and Pastor Paul is saying, "You know that hymn you love about Jesus humbling himself? Use that hymn you love to change your mindset."

So what's your *Carmen Christi*? What's your way to look at Jesus? Is it a favorite hymn? Is it a Bible passage? Is it a painting that reminds you how much God loves you? What's your *Carmen Christi* that sings into your heart Jesus' generous service for you no matter what? The next time someone at church is getting under your skin, the next time your brother is annoying you, the next time you could use an adjustment to your mindset, the use your *Carmen Christi* to look at Jesus.

Amen.