

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS

One God, By Your Love, Oh How Great, Man of Sorrows, Your Great Name

WELCOME

When you think of “church,” what image comes to mind? Or what one word would you use to describe the church?

WORD

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-8

1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, **2** make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. **3** Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; **4** do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. **5** Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. **8** Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Are we acting like true followers of Christ? Or are we un-Christian in our behavior towards one another? As believers in Christ, we are to LIVE OUT LOVE AND JOY. Do we make that conscious decision to do or to say what is best for the other person? Is that the kind of love that is on display in our lives? A.W. Tozer said, “The Christian owes it to the world to be supernaturally joyful”; we are to be good stewards of the joy that has been entrusted to us by God. It is not meant just for our own satisfaction; it is meant to glorify God, and it is meant to point other people to Jesus. Like a chemical reaction, when we put love and joy together, amazing things happen!

1. UNITY

Paul was in prison when he wrote to the Philippians, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (**Philippians 1:21**). He was telling them, “I don’t know if I’ll survive this or if I’ll see you again.” With that context, he tells them to live in a way that’s worthy of the gospel of Christ so that he will hear about how they are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving together for the sake of the gospel (**Philippians 1:27-28**). The literal meaning of “conduct” is to “live as a citizen”; if we are citizens of heaven, how should we conduct ourselves? We are to be united!

The church is more than just a place to rest and relax (country club) or a place to heal from our problems (hospital); the church is God’s army standing firm and we are on a mission (**Philippians 1:27**). We are not to be alarmed (*Gk: to panic, like horses on a stampede*) when we encounter opposition because it just proves that we are

doing something that pleases God but displeases the enemy (**Philippians 1:28**)!

An amazing picture of unity is seen when fishes swim close together to give the impression that they are a much bigger fish, discouraging their predators from attacking them. But imagine a solitary fish who swims toward this school of fish for protection, only to discover that the fishes are eating one another! That group will no longer be a safe space for the fish. Christians, though, instead of operating like a school of fish, keep biting each other --- we are each other’s predators! The reason why God’s Word tells us to do something (like being united) is because we tend to do the opposite.

In conclusion, as indicated by Paul’s use of “therefore” (**Philippians 2:1**), since the Philippians have received encouragement, experienced compassion and consolation through the church, and if they want to make him happy, then they are to be united in spirit, intent on one purpose (**Philippians 2:2**). Because we have been blessed this way, let us be united, for this pleases God.

We are not unaware of Satan’s schemes; his deadliest weapons are division and deception. When we participate in divisions within the church, when we fight with each other, we are doing Satan’s work. We are to be united, intent on one purpose, as Paul said, and that brings us joy because we know we’re doing it for Jesus!

2. HUMILITY

When you live out love and joy, another amazing result is humility. Humility for the Christian is not an option; it is not a specialty for a

few people only. The Lord requires it of us --- to walk humbly before Him and other people (**Micah 6:8**). That's why Paul said to do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider others as more important than yourself and make sure that you also look out for the interests of others (**Philippians 2:3-4**).

Pride is the hallmark of Satan (**Isaiah 14:12-14**). But Jesus is the perfect picture of humility. We are to have His humble attitude (perspective) (**Philippians 2:5-8**). Jesus is the essential, unchanging form (*morphe*), the essence of God Himself, yet He did not cling to the prerogatives or privileges of being God, although He never stopped being God. Most people live to make something of themselves, but Jesus made Himself nothing (emptied Himself). Let this truth touch our hearts such that we would want to be humble like Jesus!

Jesus took the form of a slave who serves voluntarily for life, subservient to and entirely at the disposal of his master (bondservant). Roman citizens, like the Philippians, were exempt from crucifixion. Yet Jesus did not exempt Himself from such a cruel death --- and He did it all for you.

Living out love and joy results in humility; it breaks out into selflessness, kindness, compassion, and generosity. King David showed an example of how this looks when he showed undeserved kindness to Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan. David was so humbled by the kindness and grace of God that he wanted to pay it forward (**2 Samuel 7:18, 9:1, 6-7**). Isn't this what Jesus did for us who were spiritual cripples? Jesus said, "Let's have a relationship, open the door and I will come in and we will eat together, and you

will be with me for the rest of your life". Genuine humility compels us to show God's kindness!

3. GOD'S GLORY

RC Sproul said, "We do not segment our lives giving some time to God, some to our business or schooling while keeping parts to ourselves. The idea is to live all of our lives in the Presence of God, under the authority of God, and for the honor and glory of God. That is what the Christian life is all about."

God exalted Jesus and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God (**Philippians 2:9-11**). The core purpose of the Christian life is to give glory to our Lord Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Why is it important for Christians to live in unity, especially for the spread of the gospel? How can you contribute to this purpose?
2. In what specific way can you best imitate the humility of Jesus in your life today?
3. Name one thing Jesus would want you to do for His glory. What will you do about it, and when?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people in your life who do not yet know Jesus as Savior and Lord. Live out love and joy as you interact with them so that they may see what Jesus is like. Share the gospel with them and teach them how to live for Jesus!

MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 1:27

27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- For the rest of the Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the civil war in Syria to end peacefully, protection for Christians and other minorities, freedom from oppression for Syrians. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout the country.

- Pray for the Sudanese people and the persecuted Christians there; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, leaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.