

The Mind of a Servant

What's on your mind? That is a pretty penetrating question. I don't mean what specific thought is going across the gray matter of your brain right now. What is your general thinking and response to life's circumstances, adversities, and situations? If you are familiar with computers, you will understand what I mean. I'm not talking about a specific program, but the operating system. If we are going to bring Glory to Christ, we must examine ourselves to see if we have the proper operating system installed into our thinking process so that we think as a servant thinks. Read Philippians 2:1-8.

Guy King has well described the mind of the Lord Jesus as containing three distinct elements. These elements are: (1) The selfless mind; (2) the sacrificial mind; and (3) the serving mind. The Lord Jesus consistently thought of others. Let's explore these three elements this morning. (1) The selfless mind: Nothing should ever be done through selfish ambition or conceit since these are two of the greatest enemies of unity among the people of God. **Selfish ambition** is the desire to be number one, no matter what the cost. **Conceit** speaks of pride or self-display. Wherever you find people who are interested in gathering a clique around themselves or in promoting their own interests, there you will find the seeds of contention and strife. The remedy is found in the latter part of verse 2 which states, A... but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.@ This does not mean that we must consider criminals as having better moral character than our own, but rather that we should live for others unselfishly, putting their interests above our own. It is easy to read an exhortation like this in the word of God, but quite another thing to appreciate what it really means, and put it into practice. To **esteem others better than ourselves** is utterly foreign to the human mind, and we cannot do it in our own strength. It is only as we are indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit that it can ever be practiced (2:4). The cure of troubles among the people of God is to be more concerned with the **interests of others** than with the things of our **own** lives. In a very real way, the word **others** forms the key of this chapter. As we give our lives in devoted service for others, we rise above the selfish strife of men.

Others, Lord, yes, others,
Let this my motto be;
Help me to live for others,
That I might live like Thee.
Charles D. Meigs

(2) The sacrificial mind (2:6): When we read that Christ Jesus was in the form of God, we learn that He existed from all eternity as God. It does not mean that He merely resembled God, but that He actually *is* God in the truest sense of the word.

Yet, He did not consider it robbery to be equal with God. Here it is of utmost importance to distinguish between personal and positional equality with God. As to His Person, Christ always *was, is, and will be* equal with God. It would be impossible for Him to give that up. But positional equality is different. From all eternity Christ

was positionally equal with His Father, enjoying the glories of heaven. He did not consider this position something that He had to hold on to at all costs. When a world of lost mankind needed to be redeemed, He was willing to relinquish His positional equality with God the comforts and joys of heaven. He did not consider them something that He had to grasp forever and under all circumstances (...but made Himself of no reputation, 2:7). The literal translation is: *But He emptied Himself.* He emptied Himself by taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. In other words, He emptied Himself by taking upon Himself something He never had before *humanity*. He did not lay aside His deity, only His place in heaven, and that only temporarily.

If He had been a mere man, this would not have been an act of emptying. We do not empty ourselves by being born into the world. For God to become Man that is the emptying of Himself. In fact, only God could do it.

(3) The serving mind; Taking the form of a servant. The Incarnation and life of the Savior may be summarized by the lovely words of John 13:4: Jesus ... laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. The towel or apron is the badge of service. It was used by slaves. It was also used by the blessed Lord Jesus because He came Not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). But let us pause to remind ourselves of the train of thought in this passage. There were contentions among the saints at Philippi. Paul exhorts them to have the mind of Christ. The argument, in brief, is that if Christians are willing to take the lowly place, to serve others, and to give their lives in sacrifice, there will be no quarrels. *People who are willing to die for others do not generally quarrel with them.* Christ always existed, but came into the world in the likeness of men, meaning As a real Man. The humanity of the Lord is as real as His deity. He is true God and true Man. But what a mystery this is! No created mind will ever be able to understand it.

So what's on your mind? I don't think any of us at leadership this year can claim the perfect mind of a servant. But that's not the question. The question is, Are you willing to face and expose the areas in which you do not think like a servant and let God change you?

Try to name at least 5 different areas in which you do not think like a servant.

List several way after each of the 5 areas of difficulty in which you believe God could help you take specific actions to correct the problem?

Pray and ask God to give you grace and strength to change these areas to be more like Christ