

## How Community Lives Together

- Which food product has a cockerel on it?
- Which football club has a cannon on it?
- Which sweet helps you work, rest and play?

### Philippians 2:1-18

Chapter 2 of Paul's letter to the Philippians is a model for the way we need to live our Christian lives. And it is a challenge.

There was a soldier who was on observation duty all night but he fell asleep while sitting in his vehicle. In the morning his officer asked him if he had fallen asleep in his merc. The soldier answered that he had not but the officer said 'I think you'd better take a look in the mirror.' When he did, he saw the imprint of the badge of his car's maker which was in the middle of the steering wheel in the middle of his forehead. He had fallen asleep with his head faced on the steering wheel and the badge design was unmistakable. Promotional logos and trademarks are designed and advertised so that everyone will be able to recognise the company they belong to. We should have the mark of Jesus on us so that everyone will be able to recognise that we belong to Jesus. When people look at us, they should be able to see which way we are facing... towards the world or towards Jesus.

- What unmistakable characteristic of Jesus are you always aware of?

Chapter two of Philippians shows how Jesus came as a servant. We are challenged to show that we are like Jesus, living as servants just as He did.

How do we show that we are living like Jesus?

1. Read again verses 3-4.

These verses tell us that we should **look out for others** and not for ourselves. If we believe in Jesus we should be doing it. Our attitude and our actions should be the same as Jesus. Society tells us that we should look out for ourselves and strive to be top dog no matter who we climb over to get there. Jesus says the opposite. He has a servant heart. We see that when we see Him forgiving as He hung on the cross.

- Is there anything that we as a church are doing to show that we are putting others before ourselves?
- How might we as individuals be part of this ideal?

The Gospels talk about two wash basins. Pilate used one to wash his hands of the responsibility of sentencing and executing Jesus. Jesus used one to wash His disciples' feet. Jesus' ministry was constantly reconciling people to God.

- What would that look like today?

## 2. Read again verses 5-11

Our challenge today is to have the **same mindset as Jesus**. His mindset is the opposite to the way of society. Look at the order in which the blessing works. Make yourself nothing *then* Humble yourself *then* God will exalt you  
Not the other way around.

Humility is essential for a living and successful Christian society. It is because of His humility that Jesus has the name above all names. How often do we try to argue or justify ourselves when someone challenges us? How often do we talk and talk vehemently to get our own point across? It is not that we should not disagree but if we do then it should be done with humility and grace, not with pride and indignity.

- What annoys you most when someone criticises something you have done or said?
- How might you avoid argument or unpleasant reactions in future?

## 3. Read again verses 12-13

Paul writes that we are saved by grace not works but here he says **work out your salvation**. Is he contradicting himself? No. What he is saying is that salvation is a free gift from Jesus then having received it our only response must be to work out how to imitate Jesus. So how do we do that?

Read again verses 14-16

There must be no arguing or grumbling. This will then enable us to become blameless and pure in a warped generation. It's the opposite to the way of the world.

- What do you grumble or argue about most?
- What might you do to stop yourself from grumbling in future?

We will work for a corporate discipline when we realise and respond to the grace of Christ's love in us.

Imagine what we, as a group of Christians working and worshipping together here, would look like to the world if we did all this. We would shine forth like stars as we declare His glory.