

Patterns for Living in Christ

Chapter 8

Audio Lesson: New Testament #62



Objective: To learn from example how to live in Christ.



Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! 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 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

– Philippians 2:1-11

The theme of Philippians is Christian living. Paul had a special bond of fellowship with the Philippian church. This church helped him spread the Gospel of Christ to the Gentile world. In Philippians 2:3, Paul instructs believers to be lowly-minded or humble. He urged us to be love-minded, which means thinking of others' well-being before our own. He also emphasizes being like-minded, which means having the same mind as Christ. Next Paul mentioned several examples of Christian living, starting with Christ who was the perfect example. He then wrote about himself, Timothy, and Epaphroditus.

In chapter 3, Paul described the purpose and prize for living in Christ. His own purpose was to do what Jesus Christ had called him to do. Jesus has a purpose for every Christian. The prize of Christian living is what Paul called the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, or the will of God. "Press on to the prize," Paul urged. Forget the past and move ahead as far as you can see into the will of God today.

1. True or False? Epaphroditus' Christian philosophy was like Paul's: to live is Christ and to die is better.
2. True or False? Paul urged the Philippians not to consider him an example worthy of being followed.



3. True or False? When Christians are lowly-minded, love-minded, and like-minded, conflicts in the Church will cease.

4. True or False? Paul says that Timothy is the best example of Christian living.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Why did Paul urge the Philippians to look to him as an example of godly living? (Choose all that apply)

- a. He wanted them see what godly living looked like.
- b. He was boasting about his life.
- c. He was proud of his accomplishments as a missionary.
- d. He lived what he taught and preached.

6. Chapter 2 gives a general pattern for Christian living. What did Paul *not* urge the Philippian church to do?

- a. Be humble
- b. Be loving
- c. Be unified
- d. Be proud

7. Why did Paul say he considered Timothy a good example? (Choose all that apply)

- a. He took a genuine interest in the welfare of the Philippians.
- b. He was a good soldier for the Lord.
- c. He had proven himself in the work of the Gospel.
- d. He was like a son to Paul.

8. What were some traits or characteristics of Epaphroditus that made him a good example? (Choose all that apply)

- a. He was in Christ.
- b. He was a good evangelist.
- c. He was Paul's fellow worker.
- d. He was willing to risk his life for Christ.

9. What did Paul consider the prize? (Choose all that apply)
- a. Recognition for writing letters to believers everywhere
 - b. Showing Jewish people how to live like Christians
 - c. God's will for his life
 - d. Being a good witness to nonbelievers

10. Why do Christians have conflicts with each other? (Choose all that apply)
- a. Love
 - b. Pride
 - c. Gentleness
 - d. Selfishness



Why is Christ the best example to follow?

Do you know God's purpose for your life? Chapter 3 says that Jesus has a plan for your life now, not just in eternity. Write down what you believe is God's purpose or high calling for your life. If you do not know, spend time in prayer asking God to show it to you.



Praise God for godly examples for living in Christ. Ask Him to help you to put into practice what you have learned about living in Christ and to help you become a good example for others. Ask God to help you and your church to be lowly-minded, love-minded, and like-minded. Praise Him for having a purpose for your life. Ask Him to give you the desire and the strength to move ahead toward the prize and goal.



Going Deeper

1. How would you describe and apply in your life and ministry these different levels of fellowship: brother, companion in labor, fellow soldier, messenger, and minister? _____

2. How would you describe and apply the example of the life of Christ as profiled by Paul (in 2: 5-11), to your life and ministry as a true follower of Jesus Christ? _____

3. In the same way, how would you describe and apply the example of Paul to your life and ministry? _____

4. How would you apply the example of Timothy to your life and ministry? _____

5. How would you apply the example of the old man, Epaphroditus, to your life and ministry? _____

6. What is Paul's rule for finding God's will for his life? _____

7. In Philippians chapter 3, Paul shows a single-minded commitment to the purpose of his salvation. Explain how you are aware of and committed to the present purpose of your salvation.
