

***Paul's Appeal to Have the Mind of Christ (2:1-30)******Exhortation To Humility***

*Philippians 2:1-4: 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. NASU*

In chapter 2 Paul focuses on Christian humility, he begins by exhorting the Philippians to live in humility towards others and then gives four Examples of Humility: Christ (5-11), Paul (12-18), Timothy (19-24), and Epaphroditus (25-30).

Paul gives four conditional clauses as motives for living in humility towards others, which assume the premise to be true, and the *'if'* may often be translated *'since'* (not conditional, but argumentative):

- *Encouragement in Christ*
- *Consolation of love*
- *Fellowship of the Spirit*
- *Affection and compassion*

Being *in Christ* is the grounds for Paul's appeal, and should be our *encouragement* to live in humility/harmony. Our bond of love is our incentive to live with a *consolation of love*. Having *fellowship of the Spirit* looks to our mutual concern for one-another, effected by God's Spirit. *Affection and compassion* for others is an appeal to human kindness. ***Colossians 3:12-17***

***Colossians 3:12-17: So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.***

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Paul earnestly desires the Philippians to continue to live/walk in harmony of thought and disposition, which Paul emphasizes by repeating and enlarging his four conditional clauses. *Romans 12:16-18; Philippians 4:2-3*

*Romans 12:16-18: Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. 17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.*

*Philippians 4:2-3: I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

Since the inception of the Church, selfish ambition and vain conceit have been the ever-present foes of the Church. These attitudes must give way to lowliness of mind, which was the Lord Jesus Christ exemplified. The Greeks took self-assertion for granted. Paul was confronting the culture of his day when he called on the Philippians to give way to lowliness of mind and consider others better than oneself (*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit*). Paul's call for believers to "regard one another as more important than yourselves" is to say believers are to have a mindset or to treat others preferentially; put others first, before oneself. *Galatians 5:22-6:5; Romans 12:10-13*

*Galatians 5:22-6:5: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another. 6:1: Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one will bear his own load.*

*Romans 12:10-13: Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.*

As humility is the antithesis of vain conceit, consideration for others is the antithesis of selfish ambition. "Lowliness of mind" and consideration of others will produce harmonious relationships. "Others" is the key to the entire passage as the motivation of Christian conduct. *1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Romans 15:1-6*

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8: Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.*

*Romans 15:1-6: Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. 2 Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. 3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME." 4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

### ***Christ's Examples of Humility***

*Philippians 2:5-11: 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. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. NASU*

### ***Mind of Christ – humility of Christ***

Believers are told to have the same attitude or mindset which Christ displayed in coming to earth as a man. It is a mindset of humility; a conscience a decision to do the Father's will. Likewise, believers must make a similar decision to be obedient to the will of the Father and subjugate their will to His. Having the mind or *attitude* of Christ only can come from the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer, not from imitating Christ.

As difficult as humiliating or humbling oneself is, Christ's humiliation or humbling was far greater than anything to which we are called. Christ took seven steps of humiliation in coming to Earth to save humanity:

- 1) He is God and not in danger of losing His position – Jesus humbled Himself. ***Matthew 3:14-15; Romans 15:3***
- 2) He emptied Himself (*kenosis*), not of His deity, but His glory. ***John 17:5***
- 3) Although of the royal family of Israel, He came as a peasant. ***Luke 2:15-16; 3:31-32***
- 4) Besides emptying Himself of His deity, Jesus Christ came as a man. ***Hebrews 2:9-18***
- 5) Jesus humbled Himself, willingly and gladly, not by others. ***1 Peter 5:6***

- 6) Sin brings death and is a judgment upon man, but He bore the penalty of our sin. *Ezekiel 18:20; 1 Peter 2:12-25; 3:18*
- 7) The cross was a death of humiliation. *Hebrews 12:2*

Verse 6: Jesus viewed the Father's will greater than His position; He is God and not in danger of losing His position – Jesus humbled Himself. *Matthew 3:14-15; Romans 15:3*  
*Matthew 3:14-15: But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" 15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.*

*Romans 15:3: For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME."*

Verse 7: He emptied Himself (*kenosis*), not of His deity, but His glory in coming in the form of a man. In coming as a man, Jesus came as a man of humble means, a peasant, although of the royal family of Israel. *Luke 2:15-16; 3:31-32; John 17:5; Hebrews 2:14-18*  
*John 17:5: "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

*Hebrews 2:14-18: Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. 17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.*

Verse 8: Jesus willingly and gladly humbled Himself; He was not humbled by others but by His own choice. To please the Father, he was *obedient to the point of death ... on the cross*. Jesus became sin for us as He had no sin; sin brings death and is a judgment upon man, but He willingly and gladly bore the penalty of our sin in shame and humiliation on the cross. *Ezekiel 18:20; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 2:12-25, 3:18, 5:6*

*Ezekiel 18:20: "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.*

*2 Corinthians 5:21: He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

*Hebrews 12:1-2: Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*1 Peter 2:21-24: For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*

*1 Peter 3:18: For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;*

*1 Peter 5:6: Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time*

#### *Mind of God – exaltation of Christ*

In verse 9 through 11, we are given that which is the mind of God; what God thinks of Christ. He will to glorify/exalt Christ, for His obedience, having suffered the humiliation in coming to Earth to save humanity. The Father has and will exalt Jesus in seven steps:

- 1) God has highly exalted Him *John 3:35-26; Revelation 5:12-14*
- 2) God has given Him a name above every name. *Hebrews 1:1-4*
- 3) The name of Jesus. *Acts 4:8-12; Psalms 45:17; 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:13*
- 4) Every knee in heaven shall bow. *Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 4:10*
- 5) Every knee in earth shall bow. *Romans 14:10-11*
- 6) Every knee under the earth shall bow. *John 5:28-29*
- 7) Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. *John 5:22-27; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 John 4:2-3*

Verse 9: God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name. *John 3:25-30; Hebrews 1:1-4; Revelation 5:12-14*

*John 3:25-30: Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him." 27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. 28 "You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, "I am not the Christ," but, "I have been sent ahead of Him." 29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. 30 "He must increase, but I must decrease.*

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**Hebrews 1:1-4:** *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.*

**Revelation 5:12-14:** *saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell-down and worshiped.*

Verse 10, God gave Him the name Jesus, to which every knee in heaven, on earth and under the earth shall bow. All of creation, everywhere and anywhere will pay homage to Christ. **Psalms 45:17; Matthew 1:21; John 5:28-29; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 14:11; 1 John 5:13; Revelation 4:9-10**

**Psalms 45:17:** *I will cause Your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore, the peoples will give You thanks forever and ever.*

**Matthew 1:21:** *"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*

**John 5:28-29:** *"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.*

**Acts 4:10-12:** *let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead -- by this name this man stands here before you in good health. 11 "He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone. 12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*

**Romans 14:11:** *For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."*

**1 John 5:13:** *These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

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***Revelation 4:9-10: And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying***

Verse 11: All will bow to Christ and all will also confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (*every tongue*), to the glory of God the Father. ***John 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 John 4:2-3***

***John 5:22-23: "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.***

***Ephesians 1:20-22: which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,***

***1 John 4:2-3: By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.***

***Mind of Paul – things of Christ***

*Philippians 2:12-18: So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. 14 Do all things without **grumbling or disputing**; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. 17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the **sacrifice and service** of your faith, I rejoice and share **my joy** with you all. 18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share **your joy** with me. NASU*

Verse 12 opens with “*So then*”, which could also be “Therefore” and points us back to what we have just read of the mind of Christ and is to direct us to what comes next. As the Philippians had obeyed Paul’s instructions when he was with them, he calls on them, now in his absence, to continue in their obedience to the things of Christ, i.e., to “*work out your own salvation.*” This is to work out what God has worked in, and does not mean to attempt to deserve salvation on the ground of merit or make atonement for past sins, which is equally impossible and unnecessary.

What it does mean is to accept salvation in the manner and through the means that God has provided for salvation; believe in the Savior, and honestly put our trust in him. In trusting in Christ as one’s only means of salvation, we are to break off from our sins by true repentance, give up all that we have to God; to have the mind of Christ we must break away from all evil companions and evil plans of life and resist the allurements and temptations of the world. ***John 1:12-13, 6:28-29; Acts 16:27-32***

***John 1:12-13: But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.***

***John 6:28-29: Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."***

***Acts 16:27-32: When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" 29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.***



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With *fear and trembling* speaks of the type of anxiety one has who feels if they were fail at an important task or miss a great opportunity; recognize the dangers and be ready for action. For the lost, there is the danger of passing opportunity for salvation, and they must be alerted to this danger.

*13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

The word rendered "*at work*" is from a verb meaning to work (*energoon*), to be active to produce effect (from which we have derived the word *energetic*). Having the mind of Christ, we will be looking for the work of God in our life and will be useful to the Master. God works out what He works in; is God working in you? God "produces a certain effect in us"; He exerts such an influence as to lead us to a certain result in our mind and our will, in accordance with His will.

*John 3:8; Ephesians 1:5-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12*

*John 3:8: "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

*Ephesians 1:5-9: He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him*

*2 Thessalonians 1:11-12: To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

There are times when the Lord has plans for our lives, or for others, that we do not understand or agree with at the time. Understanding the omnipotence of the Lord, and that He is working out His will in our lives, Paul points us back to Philippians 2:3-5: humility towards others and possessing the mind of Christ. To manifest the Holy Spirit fully in our life, he enjoins the duty of doing everything in a quiet and gentle manner, and of avoiding strife. *Ephesians 4:31-32*

*14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world*

The children of God are to be sincere, harmless, without deceit; Christians should injure no one, be without blame; without giving occasion for anyone to complain of you. *Matthew 10:16, 44-5:45; Romans 16:19; Ephesians 5:1-4*

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*Matthew 10:16: "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.*

*Matthew 5:44-45: "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

*Romans 16:19: For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.*

*Ephesians 5:1-4: Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. 3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

The crooked and perverse generation of the world, which we are in, is disposed to complain and find fault; the world will take every occasion to pervert the actions, attitudes, and statements of believers, and will seek every chance to thwart the cause of truth and righteousness. *1 Peter 2:12,*

*1 Peter 2:12: Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

When Christians live a life of humility, with the mind of Christ, they shine like as light in the darkness of the world. We do not want to give others the opportunity to accuse us of having done wrong. The charge of Paul is designed to enforce on us our duty of letting our light shine and to instill in believers a sense of duty or obligation. *Matthew 5:14-16; Ephesians 5:6-12*

*Matthew 5:14-16: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

*Ephesians 5:6-12: Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.*

It is the solemn duty and obligation of every Christian to hold forth the word of life; the Word brings life. Christians are to hold personally and stand for the truth publicly, i.e., the Word of God. *John 6:68; 2 Timothy 2:15-19*

*16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

Paul instructs believers to be mindful, or diligent, to properly handle the word of God. He was concerned to handle the Word of God correctly not only in his own life but as he taught others. He did not want to fail and be ashamed on the “*day of Christ*,” when Christ returns for how he lived or how he instructed others to live. Paul’s use of “*run*” points to an activity in a stadium – where everyone is watching and ready to applaud or criticize. **1 Peter 2:10-12; 2 John 8-9**

***1 Peter 2:11-12: Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.***

***2 John 8-9: Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. 9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.***

The gospel (*holding fast the word of life*) stands in contrast with all human religious systems, which have no ability to save, and to the law which “kills” **John 6:63; 2 Corinthians 3:5-6**

***John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.***

***2 Corinthians 3:5-6: Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.***

Christ calls for believers to live a life of truth, stand for the truth, and declare the truth, the Word of God, to the lost. Believers are called into the church that we may be witnesses for God; we are kept on the earth for the purpose of being a witness because there are no others to do it. **Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 5:13; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:13-17**

***Isaiah 43:10-11: "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. 11 "I, even I, am the LORD, and there is no savior besides Me.***

***Matthew 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.***

***Acts 4:12: "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."***

***Romans 10:13-17: for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." 14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" 16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.***

*17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. 18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me. NASU*

Paul likened himself to a drink offering, which were poured upon the other offerings, and ascended in steam, offered upon the sacrifice of Christ. The faith of a Christian, the obedience, discipline, self-denial, and all that being a Christian involves, Paul is calling their sacrifice and priestly service. *1 Corinthians 9:16; Colossians 1:24; 3 John 4; Genesis 35:14; Exodus 29:40; Leviticus 23:13*

***Exodus 29:39-40: "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; 40 and there shall be one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering with one lamb.***

***Leviticus 23:13: "Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine.***

***1 Corinthians 9:16: For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.***

***Colossians 1:24: Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.***

***3 John 4: I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.***

Note how Paul begins with the admonishment against *grumbling or disputing* and contrasts it with *sacrifice and service*, which produces joy – not only for him but for also the believers. ***Romans 12:1-2***

***Romans 12:1-2: Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.***