



## **Show Me Your Ways Through The Cross (Philippians 2: 5-11)**

How many of us have said to the children in our lives, “You need to adjust your attitude!” As a mother of a pre-teen, an about to be pre-teen, and a small child who thinks she can skip all that teenager stuff and go ahead and be a grown-up, I probably say that more times in one day than the average person says in a week! I wonder how many times our Heavenly Father thinks that in a day about us and our attitudes?

In the letter to the Philippians, Paul is writing to a church that has experienced and shared much joy. It was a successful church that had given Paul much support in his ministry. As all churches do at one time or another, the church at Philippi was dealing with a few issues and Paul offered them some encouraging words. The church had become distracted in its witness by discord from within, individualism, and behavior that erred on the side of self-serving rather than serving others. Paul urged the church to “be like-minded” (v.2). This is not a call for all those in the church to be on the same page where all issues are concerned. Rather, Paul is urging Christians to have attitudes like the attitude of Christ - an attitude of love and acceptance, and an attitude of service to others.

Paul reminds the church at Philippi, and us, that Christ laid aside his glory, “making himself nothing” (v.7) and became a man. Christ willingly and out of love for His heavenly Father laid aside His divine rights and privileges and walked among us here on earth, serving and caring for others, showing us God’s loving nature, even to His death upon the cross for our sins so that we may have eternal life. Paul reminds the church that this is the very attitude that created and defined their life together. This is the attitude that should govern the way they think, the way that they act, and the way that they serve all those with whom they come in contact.

Jesus is our example, not only through the words that He spoke, but also through the life that he lived. We are not called to imitate Him, for no matter how hard we try, we can never love so completely as he loves. But we are called to be what we already are “in Him.” We are called to serve Him and one another because we love God. We desire for others to know that love so we must choose our attitude to be one that reflects God’s love for us.

## Discussion Questions and Reflection Activities

1. What kind of attitude are we portraying to those around us – an attitude of service or an attitude of being served?
2. What are some ways that we can “adjust our attitude” in order to live a more Christ-like life?
3. Read verses 5-8 again. What difference would it make if these verses were lived out in your work life? In your church life? In your family life?

As a group, think of new ways that your circle or group can show to the church and community that your “attitude is the same as that of Christ Jesus” (v. 5). Maybe you can reach out to the youth of your church and help them with a project. Reach out to your local food bank or homeless shelter and volunteer your time as a group. Brainstorm about ideas where you can “adjust your attitude” and be of service to others in Christ’s name.

Using the words **THE CROSS**, write an acrostic poem that helps define the word in the context of our lesson today.

### **Prayer:**

*Close with a prayer, expressing gratitude and thanksgiving that Jesus came to dwell among us, showing us God’s deep love for us. Pray for God to give us a servant’s heart so that our lives may reflect God’s love for all.*