

GIFTED, Week 2

THE GREENHOUSE OF THE GIFTS

Having the mind of Christ together is the essential foundation to rightly using our gifts. If we have the mind of Christ together, then we will stay:

- Free from pursuing the gifts to develop our sense of personal purpose or value
- Free from pursuing spiritual gifts in order to reassure ourselves of God's favor or love
- Centered on partnering together with our gifts for the sake of exhibiting Christ.

Philippians 2.1-11: Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any participation [common sharing] in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. ⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The blessings of encouragement, comfort, and access to the power of the Spirit are NOT the result of conditions we have to meet, but the **source** of life we already have (v.1). Because you're already united with Christ you have constant access to encouragement. Because you are already loved by God and nothing can separate you from His love, you have constant access to comfort. Because you are already in The Spirit, you can participate in His life. God's encouragement, God's comfort, God's ongoing power to motive us (to participate in His life), God's conviction of sin, is the source that produces the effect of being like-minded and having the same love toward each other (v.2).

Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the different practical implications between a belief that we are the cause and God responds, versus God is the cause and we respond?• What happens when you feel the pressure to produce something? Are we called to produce? If not, what are we called to do?
------------------	--

The **freedom** that God is the source and in control allows us to forsake selfish ambition and consider others instead of ourselves (v.3-4)! We don't have to obsess over ourselves when we know God has our back!

This freedom allows us in our relationships with one another to have the same **mind of Christ** Jesus; not having to grasp His identity and taking the very nature of a servant (v.5-8). God The Son was so secure in His identity as The Beloved of The Father that He did not have to grasp His identity. Jesus, so full of the Father's love, resting in His reliance on the Father, emptied Himself becoming a *bondslave* born in the likeness of men. Likewise, we let go of needing to assert our identity by becoming *servants*.

Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you ever caught yourself trying to “grasp” your identity? What insecurity or belief was motivating you at the time? (Pray over these things if they are still present.)• Jesus was so sure of who He was He could clothe Himself with the towel of a servant (John 13). Is it greater freedom to know so clearly what your gifts are and how you are wired that you only serve in your “sweet spot?” Or is it greater freedom to know so clearly what your gifts are and how you are wired that it does not bother you to serve in areas outside of your “sweet spot.” What are general healthy Biblical guidelines for when you should say yes or no to serving?
------------------	---

When we are secure in God’s love and reliant on Him as the source, we are free to empty ourselves and become servants. **This is the culture that will keep us pure as we walk in our gifts.** We are not exerting ourselves; we are all rightly responding to the head (the brains!) Jesus who is coordinating every detail to accomplish His purposes.