

Press Toward

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:14

A Newsletter of Lewisville Primitive Baptist Church 1590 Glencairn Ln. Lewisville, Texas 75067

September 2009

To our Readers,

Perhaps you noticed we did not publish an August edition of Press Toward. This was due to several factors that prevented timely publication. Instead of putting out a late edition we have opted to skip the August edition altogether and continue with our September publication. We apologize for any inconvenience our limitations have caused.

From Your Pastor

"Have the Mind of Christ"

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:5-11

To think like Christ Jesus is truly a lofty goal. And although we will never fully conform our thinking to that of our Savior, thinking like Jesus is nevertheless, an aspiration the Apostle Paul clearly instructs us to pursue. The language and grammar of the text indicate Paul's statement is more than a suggestion. The voice and mood of the Greek verb *phroneo* (let mind be) in the adverbial phrase "let this mind be in you" is passive, imperative.¹ The passive voice indicates the subject, Paul's audience, is the recipient of whatever action the verb denotes. The action originates elsewhere and is received by the subject. In this case, the mind of Christ, the pattern and power of how He thinks and the values demonstrated from His thoughts, proceeds from Christ to others. The verb mood is

imperative, meaning Paul delivered a command. The command is for his audience to embrace the values, pattern and power of thinking that originates with and proceeds from Christ as their way of thinking.

At first glance the combination of passive voice, imperative mood presents an intriguing paradox. Paul issued an imperative, a command to his audience. The command was to let the mind of Christ be in them, permit it to reside and have function in them; allow the mindset of Christ to be the governing factor for their thinking. However, the passive voice, which denotes the subject of the action is passive, infers one is unable to generate the mindset of Christ by some combination of his own will and cognitive skills/abilities. One cannot make a decision to think like Christ and then summon the necessary knowledge and values to establish and employ the Christ mindset. If Paul's audience was composed of people who were not yet born again it could be inferred willful acceptance (presumably through the gospel) of the Christ mindset, which obviously includes belief in Him, is a functional component of the new birth. However, the imperative is given to members of the church at Philippi, to whom the letter is addressed, people who presumably were already born again. Therefore, this passage does not support the notion that one must meet the condition of making a decision to permit the mindset of Christ to reside within one's self in order to be born again. It does, however, suggest those who are already born again have a role, must fulfill a condition, must make a decision and act upon it in order for the Christ mindset to function in them. The condition/decision is -to let be- allow the mindset of Christ, which proceeds from Christ, to have function within them. The fact that Paul made this statement imperative, a command, indicates allowing the mindset of Christ to have function in one's own mind is a condition that must be met in order for the desired outcome to occur, which is to think like Jesus. This passage not only eliminates the possibility that man plays an active part in bringing about his new birth, it also negates the fatalistic notion of passive obedience, that new birth so effects the psyche of man that unless God leaves him to himself, he will passively obey God's will. Rather, the text implies that although born again man is passive in making the mindset of Christ available to himself, he must actively decide to meet the condition to -let it be- let the mindset of Christ function in

his mind in order to employ its values and behaviors in obedience to God; and also to receive the benefits and blessings derived from thinking like Christ.

In **The Complete Word Study Dictionary, Electronic Edition**, Spiros Zidhates provides an explanation of the grammar and language for the phrase “Let this mind be in you” that involves man’s mental faculties of will, affections and conscience. His definitions and interpretation suggest Paul commanded his audience; -to let it be- to let the mind of Christ be the governing influence in establishing and maintaining a mindset for our own thinking.

5426. φρονέω φρονέο; contracted φρονό , fut. φρονέ so, from φρέ n (5424), mind. To think, have a mindset, be minded. The activity represented by this word involves the will, affections, and conscience

(I) Generally, to be of an opinion. Followed by the accusative of thing (Acts 28:22; Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 5:10; Phil. 1:7). With an adverb or adverbial phrase (Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 13:11). Of time, to regard, keep (Rom. 14:6 [cf. Gal. 4:10]).

(II) To think, to sense mentally, followed by the accusative

(A) Generally (Phil. 2:5, “let the same mind be in you as in Christ” [a.t.]; Phil. 3:15). In Rom. 12:16, not to think of “high things” (hupselá [5308]) means not to be proud. In the phrase τό αὐτό ([846], the same thing) φρονέο it means to be of one mind, one accord, to think the same thing. Τό αὐτό is the same as τό hén (neut. of héis [1520], one), to think one and the same thing (Rom. 15:5; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; 3:16; 4:2).

Thinking like Jesus provides followers with blessings from God. It supplies temporal deliverance (time salvations) from fear, the cares, disappointments, stress and sense of hopelessness and futility that we experience when we place “confidence in the flesh” and rely on the sensibilities of our fallen nature to cope with the sinfulness and frailties of our humanity. When we have the mindset of Christ our focus is Christ-centered rather than self-centered. One effect of Christ-centered thinking is to regard all our afflictions, tribulations, persecutions and temptations in the light of Christ’s victory over sin at Calvary. When we do this, rather than responding as victims of a fallen nature, we are empowered by the Spirit of God to confront the trying of our faith, as **“more than conquerors through him that loved us.” (See Romans 8:37)**

Christ-centered thinking, having the mindset of Christ, is more than merely thinking about him. It is a philosophy, or logical way of thinking that adopts as one’s own the values, power and pattern of thinking the Savior demonstrated during his time on earth. The wicked men who defamed the Savior with lies, insults and slander, along with those who crucified him were all thinking about

Jesus. Agrippa was thinking about Jesus when he told the Apostle Paul, **“Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” (Acts 26:28)** Saul of Tarsus thought about Christ when he oversaw the murder of Stephen and was **“breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples.”** But their thoughts were not Christ-centered. They did not have the mindset of Christ because, far from embracing and exercising the values of the Savior, they opposed Him. Having the mind of Christ implies thinking and acting according to His values, according to God’s will as embodied in all the Savior thought, said and did. Simply stated “Let this mind be in you” is a divinely inspired imperative that we use the example of Christ presented in the gospel along the witness of His Spirit to think like Jesus.

In Philippians the Apostle Paul tells us something of how Jesus’ mind worked during his incarnation. **“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God”** Although he was God in form (*Strong’s dictionary: 3444. morphe mor-fay’; perhaps from the base of 3313 (through the idea of adjustment of parts); shape; figuratively, nature:— form*) our Savior did not think himself robbed, or deprived and denied the rightful majesty, sovereignty, power and glory, His equality with God, by being fashioned in function, senses, bearing, etc., as a man. **“But made himself of no reputation”** Jesus did not make a reputation for himself as God incarnate. By this we mean although He was God fashioned as man, Jesus did not seek fame or notoriety as God in the flesh. He did not engage in discourse or behavior designed to establish a reputation for Himself as God manifest in the flesh. **‘And took upon him the form of a servant.’** The Savior took the form of a servant by molding His attitudes and behaviors to the demeanor of a servant of God. By extension, Jesus was the servant of God’s children in that the purpose of His servitude was to be a sacrificial offering to atone for their sins, according to the Father’s will. **“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”** His submission to the Father’s will required perfect obedience. Paul identifies Jesus’ obedience as humility. As a servant, Jesus humbled himself by obeying the Father’s will both in dying and the dishonorable manner of his death, by crucifixion, in order to atone for the sins of the Elect.

Christ’s condescension from the throne room of heaven to Calvary and the grave does not close the chapter. If it did then the Christ mindset would be one of disappointment and pessimism. But rather than defeat and disappointment, Paul presents the Philippians with a picture of a victorious Savior in all his glory. His condescension to the humiliation of being fashioned as a man, taking the form of a servant, and a demeaning death on the cross in obedience to the Father is capped by exaltation. **“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of**

God the Father.” At Calvary, by the righteousness of His perfect obedience, the Savior broke the bars of death destroying the power of Satan (See **Hebrews 2:14**) and the power of sin, which is death (See **Romans 8:2, James 1:15**).

The Lord’s victory over Satan, sin and death is victory for all God’s children. To date, it is the crowning achievement of redemptive history and will remain so until God the Father receives all glory in the resurrection when every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord. That will be the most glorious event for God and also for all His redeemed.

The Savior’s mind is set on complete and final victory when He returns for all for whom He died. No less than angels from heaven were sent by God to pronounce His intention to return for us: **“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).** The reality of Christ’s resurrection from the dead along with His unwavering promise to return for God’s children gives us a higher perspective, the Christ mindset, with which to think about present circumstances. It frames our minds with the mind of Christ and manifests its presence as hope, optimism, power and joy. We look forward to the Savior’s return with confident expectation inasmuch as he demonstrated victory over sin and death by His own resurrection and has promised to return for us. The mindset is optimistic because Christ’s victory at Calvary is proof of our eternal preservation despite what may befall us in this life. It proves that that nothing **“shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:39)** Thinking like Christ empowers us to throw off the victim mindset of our fallen nature that is accompanied by fear, dread and disappointment in every trial, tribulation, and affliction. We can do so because the Savior gave us the rewards of His victory and thereby made us **“more than conquerors.” (See Romans 8:36-37)** It gives place for joy no matter what trouble, trial or affliction we face because the sacrifice of Christ and promise of His return assures us that whatever tribulations we endure in this life, they will not last. They are not forever. The Christ mindset gives us a resurrection perspective of contentment because we are assured all our troubles and cares will pass when we are forever with the Lord.

(To be continued)

Elder Mike Ivey

5744 TVN: Tense — Present See 5774, Voice — Passive See 5786, Mood — Imperative See 5794

¹Larry Pierce, *Tense Voice Mood*. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.), TVM5744.

Ant Impostor Glorifies God's Creativity

O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. Psalm 104:24

Deep inside an ant colony, perhaps in a decaying log in northern Idaho or even the north woods of Minnesota, there are ants who think they are taking care of their only pupae. In addition to attending to their young, however, they are providing a dangerous ant predator with food and protection as it matures. The predator, called Microdon, matures into a fly like creature that lives only long enough to mate and lay eggs.

How does Microdon get welcomed into the ant's nest? It folds itself in half and ends up looking just like an ant larva. When researchers exposed some of the fly larvae in an ant nest, the ants quickly rescued the folded-over Microdon as if they were ant larvae. During its first of three larval stages, Microdon enters an ant cocoon and eats the contents. During its two later stages, Microdon moves unchallenged about the nest, eating more ant larvae. This fact at first puzzled researchers, since ants communicate and identify each other through specialized chemical signals. Further research revealed that Microdon are actually able to perfectly mimic this chemical communication!

But perhaps the most fascinating features of Microdon are the odd structures found on the outside of its third stage. These vary from individual to individual and may look like toadstools or flowers. Scientists are unsure of their purpose. But they do marvel over the rich variety of the shapes, which seem unnecessary. While such variety may be unnecessary, they and the other features of Microdon testify to the rich creativity of our Creator God.

References: Gregory Paulson and Roger D. Akre, “A Fly in Ant's Clothing,” *Natural History*, 1/94, p.56

(Courtesy of Creation Moments)

Prayer and Praise

A prayer of thanksgiving for the approval of Bro. Martin Onyani’s Visa application and upcoming visit to the USA.

Brother Kevin McAnally’s tests came back from the doctor, who reported seeing nothing on his lungs. Hallelujah!

Sister Claire's friend, Meagan, had back surgery and is recovering.

Brother Justin and Sister Angie are expecting another child...!

Brother Johnnie Robertson, from Graham, TX, is at home recovering from a stroke suffered earlier this year.

Brother Dan and Sister Caitlin have a contract on a new home.

Sister Peggy Wall from CA had a stroke recently and is in rehab.

All four children of the Weyel family in Cambodia contracted the flu earlier this month.

Brother Kevin has a cousin in Louisiana that overdosed on medicine; she is in ICU.

Sister Carolyn Moore's brother is in poor health.

Brother Dennis' niece recently gave birth. There were many complications and she is not doing well.

Brother Dan's father Kiefer will lose his job in October.

2 - Services @ 7:00 pm

6 - Services @ 10:30 am

9 - Services @ 7:00 pm

9 - Birthday: Erica Lohrke

10 - Birthday: Amanda Herbert

13 - Services @ 10:30 am

16 - Services @ 7:00 pm

20 - Services @ 10:30 am

23 - Services @ 7:00 pm

24 - Birthday: Allison Barr

25 - Birthday: Ivey Barr

27 - Services @ 10:30 am

30 - Services @ 7:00 pm

Sept. Calendar

Meeting Announcements

Elder Arvel Charles of Lancaster, CA will be with us for a special appointment on Wednesday evening, September 16. Services will begin at 7:00PM. We ask you all to be in prayer for the service. We invite visitors and encourage our membership to make a special effort to attend this Wednesday night service.

Our semi-annual communion is scheduled for Sunday, September 27th.

Pastor Mike

2nd weekend – Saturday Services @ Grace PBC in Houston Texas w/ Eld. Hulan Bass

3rd weekend – Annual Meeting @ Snyder PBC in Snyder Texas

3rd weekend – Annual Communion Meeting @ Bethel PBC in McMahan Texas

4th weekend – Annual Meeting @ First BBC Dallas Texas

4th weekend – Eld. Ed Kirkpatrick will be @ Columbia PBC in Burtonsville Maryland

Important Dates to Remember

Quarterly Conference – 2nd Sunday in Jan, April, July, and Oct
Annual Meeting – **Friday before 4th Sunday in March**
Communion – **2nd Sunday in March** & 4th Sunday in Sept
Call for Pastor, Assistant Pastor & Clerk – 2nd Sunday in Jan
Read Articles of Faith / Church Covenant – 1st Sunday in Feb

Electronic version of “Press Toward” available

If you currently receive a hard copy of the newsletter either at Church or through the U.S. mail and would prefer to have an electronic copy instead, please visit www.lewisvillepbc.org, as we have recently begun posting issues there.

Ministering Servants

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