



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Philippians 2: 1-11

2013

"Family Unity"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Mark, and good morning. We are continuing our studies in the Book of Philippians and we are going to begin chapter 2 this morning, a very significant, important chapter. It's hard to quantify, qualify, passages of the Bible because this is God's inerrant Word. But certainly some stand out above others, and this is one of the great texts of Scripture. Philippians chapter 2. We'll look at verses 1 through 11.

2 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. **5** 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.

Philippians 2: 1-11

Let's bow in prayer.

Father, we do thank You for this great text of Scripture and our opportunity to read and study it this morning. All of Your Word is inerrant and is authoritative, and we are blessed to possess it. We thank You for that. We thank you for a text such as this that revealed the person and work of Your Son, that set Him forth as the great example that we're to follow. And as we look at that and contemplate it, really giving it some serious thought, we realize that is an impossible task to imitate Him as a servant. And yet, that's what we're called to do. But, we know that we're not told to do such things without ability.

And we do have ability; You've given us a new nature. Everyone in Christ has a new heart; has a new mind—has the mind of Christ. We have within us the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, to enable us to do the things that we're to do—to understand this text, to understand Your Word. We have eyes to see and ears to hear spiritual things, and You've given us the ability to do those things in the power of the Spirit. And so, LORD, I pray for His ministry, that He would open our eyes, guide us in our thinking, and enable us to live the kind of lives that Paul was urging the Philippians to live—and that's a life of humility and service to others.

So LORD, we look to You to bless, bless us with an understanding of the things that we've read and what we'll study, and the incentive and the ability to act upon it. May the Spirit of God teach us and build us up in the faith. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) The name, *Rothschild*, represents riches. The family rose from poverty in the Frankfurt ghetto to legendary wealth. Its rise to riches began with its patriarch, Mayer Rothschild. But the secret of the family's success in the generations that followed is found in the last advice that Mayer gave to his five sons. He was on his deathbed when he told his oldest son, "Amschel, keep your brothers together and you will become the richest people in Germany." One historian called that, 'Rothschild's last commandment: His order for family unity.' His five sons kept the commandment and became the richest people in Germany—and the entire world.

Unity is necessary for success. But there is an enemy to unity, what has been called 'the enemy within.' It is love, self-love—which is pride, selfish ambition. That's what Rothschild was warning his sons against: pride, putting self before their brothers. He was a wise man. He was a man who not only understood the path to riches, he understood human nature.

But Paul was way ahead of the old Rothschild. He gave the same advice to the church at Philippi—instruction on family unity and a warning against pride. Pride divides us. It destroys self and the unity of the church, which is Paul's great concern in this book. He has urged the Philippians to conduct themselves "...in a manner worthy of the gospel,..." and, 'stand firm against the opponents.' (Phi 1:27). But they can do that only if they are united in one spirit.

So to encourage that, Paul begins chapter 2 by urging the Philippians to not give ground to pride—to fight 'the enemy within'. He reminds them of four facts for every Christian. "Therefore," he says, "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, make my joy complete..." (vs1-2a).

The 'if' statements are not to be understood, or not intended to, suggest uncertainty. We sometimes read an 'if' and wonder 'if this happens, maybe' ... but that's not the sense of this at all; the grammar doesn't give that. The idea is, "...if there is

encouragement in Christ...", (and there certainly is, then), "...make my joy complete", 'make me happy by being united in it.' (vs1-2).

There is great "encouragement in Christ". "There is consolation of love", the consolation of knowing that God has the greatest, unconditional, infinite love for us. Both *encouragement* and *consolation* are significant words as they apply to us because they mean something like 'Come alongside and give help.' The LORD does that; the Lord God almighty does that for His people. He is, as Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 1, in verse 3, the "God of all comfort." The Holy Spirit has brought us into fellowship with the Father and the Son, and the LORD has great affection and compassion for us.

All of that being so, we should be encouraging one another; we should give consolation and comfort to the discouraged and the sad; for this is what God does for us. He comes alongside of us; He encourages us in this way; the Holy Spirit is "The Comforter." (Jn 16:7). And we're to do the same: We're to do the same with each other; we're to get alongside our brother, our sister; we're to give help to them in the way that it is needed.

Since the Holy Spirit has bound us all in fellowship with God, we are bound to one another. That's the reality; we are one body. And so, we are to have affection and compassion for each other. That's really what unity is.

And that's what Paul was urging. He tells the Philippians in verse 2 to take action that will unify them, and unify them in four ways: "Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose." 'Think the same way. Have the same mind.' Not share the same opinions on everything, that's impossible. We won't do that. We're not all Republicans; we're not all people who love the same things, have the same tastes. We don't all love the color blue. We don't all root for the Rangers, (I suppose). We have different opinions on a lot of things.

But not the essential things, not the fundamental things. As believers in Jesus Christ, as children of God, as people who have been born again, we have a new mind, we have a new understanding, and we are all united on the fundamentals of the faith:

On the Trinity—we believe in that. We believe in the deity of Christ; believe in God's grace and salvation through faith, and faith alone in Christ alone; believe in the Word of God as the inerrant authority of our lives, of faith and practice. These are fundamentals of the faith. We are united in them and we're to make them the center of our relationship. Not petty things, (and things other than that, really are petty—they're temporal).

But we who share these convictions, this knowledge, these beliefs, are to be united together. We're to love each other. We're to love all of God's people. That means have some patience and not be participating in 'party spirit', (or, 'a cliquish attitude'). We certainly shouldn't divide over non-essential issues.

And since, as believers, we are pilgrims in this world, passing through, (and it is a hostile region, hostile territory that we are in and therefore we have a common enemy), we should be united in dealing with that, united in our spirit and purpose —we're together in this. 'We're on the same team' to put it in a kind of colloquial way. 'We are of the same family', to be more biblical. We have a common destiny, so let's be together on that and support each other in it; support each other in this journey through this world to a greater destination that we all have. That's what Paul's urging here.

And he's not the only one to urge that. You remember, perhaps, from our studies not all that long ago from the Book of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 12, in verse 12, where the author urges us to, "...strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble." What a great passage and exhortation that is—and how vivid that is. We are to help each other along in life. There, the image seems to be: 'In the race, the marathon of life'. It's long, it's grueling, and we lose our strength and our energy along the way. We can become discouraged by the obstacles in life—and we need help.

Or, the author of Hebrews has also drawn upon the image of the pilgrim, passing through this life as Abraham was: 'Pitching his tents'. He didn't build cities; he was 'passing through'. And again, it's hostile territory we're in. We need to be helping one another. And that's what the author is saying, "Strengthen the hands that are weak and

the knees that are feeble," (Heb 12:12). Help each other along in this 'race of faith', so that we all cross the finish line well...and don't be self-absorbed.

Well that's verse 3: Don't feed the enemy within. Starve him. Be the opposite; "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit." Which is just what people do. That's the natural man. Martin Luther described the heart of man quite well when he said of the natural man, that the mind of the natural man is "curved in on itself." Man by nature, apart from life changing grace, is concerned only about himself. That's all he sees.

Ultimately he has other concerns. He may even engage in some philanthropy, but ultimately it's all about self. The heart of man, the mind of man is curved in on itself. He or she doesn't look upward to God, and outward to his neighbor—he looks inward. He thinks first of himself, and how he can take care of number one. "Skin for skin!", the devil said, "Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life." (Job 2:4).

Satan is a theologian; he understands a lot. And he's certainly correct there, (for the most part). That's the natural man; that's what we naturally see.

But we are not natural; children of God have been born again. So we are supernatural; we are a new creation. Paul told the Romans, in Romans chapter 6, verse 2, that we have "died to sin". We have new power. "He breaks the power of canceled sin; He sets the prisoner free;" that's what we just sang, not but a few moments ago. (*"O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing"*, verse 5). And Wesley had it right. That's true; that's our condition. We are new creatures in Christ. We have new power. The Christian life is a supernatural life. We can live differently; and we are to live differently.

So instead of glorifying self—exalt others. Lift them up, Paul says, "...with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves." (vs3). Be as concerned about the needs and interests of others as you are about your own needs and interests.

Now, that's the stuff of sermons, isn't it; 'Tell people not to be egotistical. Tell people to stop glorifying self, and promote the other guy. Look after him with as much interest as you look after yourselves.' That really preaches! 'Don't be vain. Be humble. Care for others.' That preaches! —and that's very easy to preach.

But the reality is, that's very, very, very difficult to practice. 'You mean I have to sacrifice my time for you? You have to sacrifice your time and your stuff for me?' So, how do we do that? We can talk about it and I can preach about it, but how do we actually implement it? How do we do it?

Well, Paul has the answer.; he gives it in the next verse. It's not by engaging in some kind of self-motivation; 'We sort of gin ourselves up to do these things'. Or through self-reproach; 'Castigating ourselves for our failures.' Or even recalling our responsibilities and, 'Urging ourselves to be better.'

Now I'm not discounting any of that, necessarily. We need to remind ourselves of our duties in the Christian life. We have responsibilities to each other, certainly brought out in this passage, and we need to remind ourselves of that. We need to examine ourselves in light of Scripture and engage in some self-correction. —That's proper.

It's been said, not by me, (I've said it, but it's not original with me), that, 'All Christians are preachers.' Every one of you is a preacher and you're to be preaching to yourself; continually taking in the Word of God, the promises of God, the exhortations of God, the admonitions of Scripture and applying them to your heart; and then urging yourself to be obedient. We're to do that.

But the answer that Paul gives here is not looking within ourselves and giving ourselves some exhortations or admonitions—but it's looking beyond ourselves. It's looking at Christ; He's the example Paul gives of what he is teaching here; for He humbled Himself to serve us.

When we reflect on that, when we understand who Christ is and what He did for us, when we really understand that, it will motivate us to imitate Him. That's the purpose of His example—to produce incentive for humility and service. It is very

practical, and yet very theological. In fact, Philippians chapter 2, verses 6 through 11, is the most theological illustration, or example, in all of the Bible. It must be, because it's one of the most theological passages in all the Bible.

In six verses, Paul moves from eternity past to eternity future. He enters the heavenly counsel where the plan of salvation was laid and he explains the reason that God became man. In a few phrases, Paul explains the person and work of Christ: who He is and what He did; His deity; His humanity; and His atonement. That's a lot; and Paul did all of that for the purpose of moving the Philippians to selfless service.

Theology, correct theology, right doctrine, is practical. It affects real change in the hearts of God's people when they listen to it, when they give their attention to it. It affects our thoughts—and therefore it affects our deeds.

But also, this passage makes it very clear that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity who is equal with the Father in power and glory—but who lowered Himself to save us. In fact, we won't understand the illustration if we don't understand that: That He is equal with the Father, that He is the Son of God, the eternal Son of God who became a man to serve us.

It's that way of thinking, what we see in Christ, that Paul wanted to instill in the Philippians: The same mind, the same outlook, the same perspective, and the same attitude that Jesus had. He tells them to have the attitude Christ had. Verse 6, "Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped."

Now, that raises the question: What is "the form of God?" "God is Spirit", Jesus said in John chapter 4, verse 24. How could a spirit have a form? And, very simply, God does not have a physical form or structure—God is Spirit. What this means is that Christ, the Son, had the essential nature of the Father: had it, has it, will have it, and always has it.

The form of something shows what it is. It distinguishes it from something else. We know an object is a tree, or a flower, or a mountain by its shape—by its form. The

form reveals what the thing is. And so when Paul writes of "the form of God", he means what God *essentially* is. And Jesus was that, from all eternity. In other words, Jesus had the divine nature.

And to avoid confusion, that's exactly how the New International Version translates this. If you have that version it reads, as you know, "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped." In other words, because Jesus Christ is God, eternally the Son of God, He is equal with the Father in every way equal: in the sense that He is eternal, He's equally eternal; He's equally powerful; He's equally glorious. What we can say about God the Father, we can say about God the Son. They are co-eternal, co-powerful, co-glorious.

But He's distinct from the Father in person. He's not the person of the Father, He's the person of the Son—but He has the same essence of the Father. He is one with the Father. And eternally from the Father, the only begotten Son, the unique Son, very God of very God—He is that. That's what Paul is saying.

Nevertheless, He did not consider that form and position something to hold on to, something to grasp, and to not let go of. He took another form, a less glorious one; He took the form of a bond-servant. Verse 7, "...but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men."

He emptied Himself of what? That's been discussed quite a bit. He let go of what? Did He pour out His deity and become a mere mortal? Or did He empty Himself of some of His attributes: His omniscience or omnipotence? No, that certainly is not what Paul means; for that is an impossibility—God is immutable; He doesn't change.

Hebrews chapter 13, verse 8, "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever." Go back yesterday, as far as you can, into all eternity, He's the same as He is today and will be forever. He cannot change, "He cannot deny Himself", Paul says in 2 Timothy 2, verse 13. So He cannot cease to be who and what He is.

But He could add to what He is—and He did that by taking on a human nature to become both God and man. All through the Gospels, Jesus is clearly seen to be fully God.

You see that in some interesting places. In John chapter 5, in verse 18, the Jewish leaders make that very point. It comes from the enemies themselves for they affirm the fact that He is making Himself out to be equal with God. That's what they say. That's their complaint; He's "making himself equal with God." How could He do that? He doesn't deny that He was doing that. In fact, that's John's point; he writes this Gospel such that it shows that He is the Son of God.

Well, He could make Himself to be equal with God; or present Himself in that way because—He is. And He didn't empty Himself of His nature, or deity, or any of His attributes. So what did He empty?

Well, Paul doesn't tell us. If you read verse 7 he doesn't say what He emptied Himself of—He just "emptied Himself"—and so probably this is a figurative way of describing His self-humiliation.

Paul uses this word, *empty*, in other passages in a non-literal, figurative way. In Romans chapter 4, in verse 14 for example, he states that, 'Those who teach salvation by Law, make faith *empty* (or *void*).' In other words, 'The effect of their teaching and the effect of that belief that we're justified, we're saved by Law, in effect makes faith unimportant, makes it insignificant—of no value.'

The King James Version translates this, He "made Himself of no reputation."—and I think that really gets to the idea that Paul is communicating here: 'He made Himself of no account; He made Himself of no importance, compared to others.'

And when Christ became a man, He became like that. He is important. He's infinitely important—but He appeared not to be. The eternal God, the Son of God who created all things, became a creature—a man. But He didn't become a rich man; He didn't become a powerful man or a nobleman—but a servant of man. The Lord of all became servant of all. He made Himself unimportant in the eyes of men. He made Himself insignificant, of no value, in the eyes of men—and He did that by taking the form

of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. He became like you and me, a real man with a true body and a reasonable soul—and lived, body and soul, perfectly; “...by becoming obedient to the point of death”, Paul says, “even death on a cross.” (vs8).

There's an emphasis that's placed upon that last statement, “even death on a cross”, that we probably don't appreciate—at least not the way the Philippians would have appreciated that, (or the Jews would have appreciated.) We can appreciate the pain that was inflicted in crucifixion; with the iron nails driven into the hands and the feet; the hours, often days, that it took the victim to die; that was excruciating.

But beyond even that, the cross was the epitome of shame. According to the Law, everyone who ‘hung on a tree was cursed.’ That's Deuteronomy chapter 21, verse 22. The Jews knew that very well. The crucified were cursed people.

Romans, Roman people, considered crucifixion such a disgrace that citizens were exempt from it. It was a great privilege to have Roman citizenship and so one of the advantages was if you were going to be executed, (and they were executed), they wouldn't be executed in that way—that was too demeaning for one who had Roman citizenship. That was reserved for slaves and criminals, for the worst of men—what the Romans considered the dregs of humanity.

Cicero said, "Let the very name of the cross be far removed, not only from the body of a Roman citizen, but even from his thoughts, his eyes, his ears." A Roman citizen shouldn't have to look on that sight. The thought of crucifixion shouldn't even enter his mind, it's such a shameful, disgusting thing. And these people understood that. The Philippians would have, the Jews would have.

In fact, the author of Hebrews has that idea in mind when he writes of our Lord and says, "For the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb 12:2). What joy was that that was set before Him? Well, it was the joy of saving His people from damnation. It was the joy of saving you. He willingly underwent the pain and the shame of the cross for your sake. Now that's love.

And that reveals what our God is, that He would do even that for us. And remember, when He did that for us, we were enemies, implacable enemies. And yet He went to the cross for us, He humbled Himself to die for us—even die a shameful, painful death like that for us.

We can look around at nature and learn a lot about God and get a sense about the greatness of God. We understand power. We feel power and the fear of great power when we're caught in a storm or an earthquake. I've never been in an earthquake, but I know people who have been, and I can sense what that must be like. And you sense the greatness of power—and have a great respect for power. And in that sense, thinking of God as power like that, we have great fear of God as absolute and almighty.

But it's through the incarnation that we really come to understand who the Lord God is. It's through the incarnation and the cross that we learn God is more than brute force. He loves—and is One whom we can love and we can trust. If He were just power, we'd be in terror of Him, because we're sinners. If He's just power, we would respect that but we couldn't love that God. But the God that loves us like this is a God that we can draw close to and love ourselves.

And the point in all of this, what Paul is teaching the Philippians, is if we do love Him and trust Him, should we not love those whom He loves and those for whom He died? Since Christ emptied Himself, humbled Himself to serve us unto death, even such a death—a shameful, painful death of the cross, should we not humble ourselves and serve one another? Yes!

And there's great blessing for doing that; blessing for the church with the unity that it presents and the effectiveness that comes as a result of a church being unified. Effective for the church itself in ministering to itself but ministering to the world around it and being Light. —There's great blessing in that.

There's great personal blessing now, in the present, for the child of God that lives this way because that's the way God made us to be. And so we're only going to grow in that sense if we live in this way—in obedience to His instruction. And of course, then

there's eternal blessing for that: Eternal reward that's beyond our comprehension! How great and wonderful it is.

The result of Christ's humility and obedience was honor and glory. God rewarded it. "God highly exalted Him", Paul writes in verse 9, "and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name." Jesus was lifted from the cross and the grave, to heaven and the throne. He was raised from shame to glory, to the highest station where He now rules over all things.

What His resurrection and ascension demonstrated is that His work on the cross was successful. You will never understand the resurrection if you don't understand that. Why was Christ raised? What was the purpose of that? The purpose of that was to demonstrate historically, visibly, tangibly, to give the proof that our sins have been paid for—and that when Christ said, "It is finished" —it is finished! God has accepted His sacrifice and it has satisfied His infinite, holy justice.

There's nothing more that you or I can do. (And there's nothing that we could have done to begin with.) He's done it all. It is finished. And how do you know that? God raised Him from the dead and brought Him up. He ascended into heaven and He's been seated at His right hand. That's the proof: The ascension, the resurrection is the proof, the proof that every believer in Jesus Christ is forgiven, forgiven at the moment of faith, and forgiven forever. Now that's what the resurrection teaches us.

That's not all, though, and that's not even Paul's point here. His point is a bit different. His emphasis here on the resurrection and the exaltation of Christ is, 'This is the reward for humility and service.' God rewards that. That's what Christ received from the Father. He exalted Him; He highly exalted Him. No one can be higher than Christ. Literally, it is "*hyper-exalted*", "*super-exalted*". Jesus has the highest place; He is over the heavens; and He has the highest honor.

He was restored to the position and the place that was His from all eternity—what He rightfully could have held onto, but left, in order to save us and obey His Father.

Now that position is again His. It's been restored to Him. But it's been restored with a difference. He brought back to heaven a human nature. He is now and forever, both God and man in one person.

And it's in His humanity that He has been exalted. His deity was always His deity. His deity was veiled in flesh; but never lost or diminished. His humanity, (which had the appearance of our humanity), while it was without sin, bore the appearance of the human nature—the bodies that we have in this fallen world. That has now been changed: He's been glorified. He is now the glorified God-man —which is the sign to us of what we shall someday be; and the reward that God will bless us with.

All of that is a reward, as I say. That's how it's presented here. Reward of His submission to the Father, and His obedience, and His service. The Father exalted Him to a place that is above every place, and gave Him the name which is above every name. Now Paul doesn't tell us what that name is, but I think from the context from verse 11, he indicates that it's the name LORD.

That is a way of saying that Jesus is God, God the Son, because LORD is the equivalent of Jehovah, or Yahweh. And so all the creation will someday worship Him as LORD, as God. That's the prophesy of verse 10, 'At that name', "every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

Now that would have been very meaningful to those Philippians, (who, again, were Roman citizens), because one of the claims of the Roman emperor was that he was 'Lord of Lords'. —And that was a title of divinity and men were required to worship him; probably even there in Philippi. They had emperor worship and a temple for the emperor—and they were to go there, to that temple, and they were to offer a pinch of incense and confess that 'Caesar is Lord, Caesar is god.'

But Paul was reassuring the Philippians, reassuring all Christians down through the ages, reassuring us, that 'No, no! Only one is Lord, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ!' And some day all creation, all people, dead and living; all angels, good and evil; will

confess it. All the skeptics of the ages, the skeptics of today, will be raised up, and they will all "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." (vs11). They will do it willingly, (or reluctantly), but all will bow in worship to Christ.

That's future. It's at the end of history. And I don't know where we are in the scheme of history. We may be very close to the end, but in the meantime, where we are right now, we have the comfort of knowing that the one we worship as Lord, is ruling over all things. He's ruling right now. He's not only the Jesus of history, (He is certainly that), He is the Lord of history. And some day He will come according to His plan, according to the plan of the Triune God, and He will return and He will sweep away all of the powers of this earth, all of the prevailing philosophies of this world and this age, and He will rule forever.

And we with Him. That's what Jesus Christ has obtained for everyone for whom He died, everyone who has believed in Him. He has gained for us salvation, eternal life, and everlasting glory.

Now, does that not demand a response of love and obedience to Him? If Christ has loved His church enough to humble Himself and die for it, should we not be willing to do the same for one another? Yes, of course we should.

And that's the lesson of this great text. That is, again, completely contrary to what people do naturally, which is put themselves first. We are by nature sinners. We seek self-glory by struggling to reach the top, often at the expense of others. And even if a person's not aggressive like that, doesn't have that kind of ambition, that's certainly within the heart of everyone. We want to be admired. We want to be thought well of. We want to be number one in the thoughts of others. That's the natural man.

Princeton theologian Benjamin B. Warfield commented on this and he described what self-sacrifice means. He wrote, "Wherever men suffer, there will we be to comfort. Wherever men strive, there will we be to help. Wherever men fail, there will we be to uplift. Wherever men succeed, there will we be to rejoice."

That's the life that Christ invites us to follow. Not the self-centered life, but the path that He took, which is the path of self-sacrifice, of emptying self and becoming a servant, forgetting ourselves and putting the welfare of others first. We will be there with those 'who succeed and rejoice in their successes', as Warfield put it.

He goes on. He says that, "This life means forgetfulness of self in others." But then added, "It means richness of development." Now that's significant, what he's saying there. And I think he's correct: Self-sacrifice and service is the path of the highest possible development of self.

We hear a lot about self-development, of self-fulfillment, of reaching our potential of being the person we should be...whatever. That's not done by putting ourselves first and seeking our own interest first. That's done by putting the interests of everyone else first, the interests of fellow believers.

And what Warfield is saying, and I think he's absolutely correct, is as we live that way, then we really do develop as individuals and are a blessing to others. But again, how different that is from the world we see around us. How different. It's all about self. It's all about self-love. It is a narcissistic world we live in, a self-absorbed world.

We're all familiar with that term, that word *narcissism*, and *narcissistic*. It's used a lot in our day. It comes from an ancient story; and maybe you know the story about a handsome boy named Narcissus, who cared for no one. One day he came to a spring of water and he bent down to drink from it. And when he saw his reflection in the pool, he was amazed. He had never seen anything so beautiful. It was love at first sight. In fact, he became so enamored of himself he wouldn't leave the pool. He wouldn't eat or drink. He spent all day every day just staring at his reflection—until he wasted away and died. And the moral of the story is, 'Self-love kills'.

God didn't make us to be 'curved in on ourselves'. He made us to look out for others. Sin came in and turned everything around. That's why Genesis chapter 3 is such a significant, important chapter, (and I don't doubt that's the reason Satan attacks that book so much). That book explains it all: explains why the world is the way it is and why you and I are the way we are. Sin came in and marred God's perfect creation. And so

now, we're turned in on ourselves, (our souls are, our hearts are), rather than turned to others and up to God.

Well Warfield, again, went on to say that 'We're not to live like that.' Rather, "We are to be binding ourselves to a thousand souls with such sympathy and love that their lives become ours." That is what pleases God. He blesses it; and blesses us in this life. He blesses us in our personal life, in our character now, and He will certainly bless us in heaven, and for all eternity with riches that the Rothschilds never dreamed of.

That's the Christian life. It is a selfless life. It's a servant's life with the promise of present blessing and future glory. It's what only Christ can give. So if you're here without Him, we invite you to come to Him, to believe in Him. He is the eternal Son of God who left heaven, became a man, and did so to die for sinners. He took our sins on the cross; and when He was resurrected, He left them all in the grave where they are buried and can accuse us no more.

Now that's the promise for all who turn to Christ, all who trust in Him, all who bow the knee to Christ Jesus now. All will bow to Christ someday, either willingly now, or reluctantly later. How much better to willingly bow to Him now. It means life—and life everlasting. May God help you to do that, to bow in faith to Jesus Christ—and help all of us to rest in Him and rejoice in Him. Let's pray.

Father, we do give You praise and thanks for the gift of Your Son. We thank You, Lord Jesus for coming, for dying for us, and for those wounds that paid our ransom. We thank You for what we are in Christ; it's all by grace. We thank You for what we are now, and what we shall be. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

(End of Audio)