



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL MARCH 20, 2016

SCRIPTURE

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

7 but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,
8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

DEVOTIONAL

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." The Apostle Paul sets a pretty high standard for the Philippians and us in this passage of his letter. Most of us try very hard to be like Jesus, but we fail miserably! I think of the number of times I've woken up determined to be more like Jesus throughout the day but usually find I've failed before lunch. Do you ever feel that sort of failure?

I want to be like Jesus; I try to be like Jesus; but the reality is I will never be Jesus. It doesn't mean I don't try to live the characteristics Jesus modeled in his life on earth. It doesn't mean that I don't try to love the least of these or have compassion toward those who grieve, or offer grace to those in need of forgiveness. I try very hard to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in my life, but I remember to extend grace to myself when I mess up.

And then I give thanks to God for the beautiful gift of his Son, Jesus Christ, who was born Emmanuel, God-with-us, and as Paul reminds us was "obedient to death, even death on a cross." Paul helps to remind us that during this Lenten season we should turn to gratitude for eternal life given to us through the death of Jesus Christ. We thank God and proclaim, "Jesus Christ is Lord!" And remember that tomorrow is a new day to be more like Jesus.

PRAYER

Dear God, we give you thanks this day that in the life, death, and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, we have received eternal life. Help us to be more like Jesus in our daily lives, but remind us to extend the same grace to ourselves that you give to us when we fail. In the name of your Son, we pray, Amen.

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