
God's Standard

Philippians 2:1-11

Review: God sent Jesus as a living model of his attributes and characteristics. Though we can never attain them on our own, we are motivated to live by godly standards. In what ways have you been challenged to change any of your actions or attitudes?

"Under Dad's Shadow"

As Jon walks through the park, he is oblivious to the beautiful setting. He is preoccupied with this haunting question: Would he ever be able to fill his father's shoes? Would he ever measure up? When he is with his contemporaries he feels adequate and fulfilled. But when he imagines his father's standards, inadequacy sets in. This standard seemingly leaves him "less" no matter what he does or how hard he tries. Can this nagging measurement determine his self-concept? His self worth?

It was about two years ago that Jon teamed up with his buddies and drove to a Promise Keepers conference. When the invitation was given to go forward, Jon responded. For the first time in his life he really felt that he measured up, not because of his goodness but because of what Christ had done for him. He didn't feel sub-standard.

Reflection

What is God's standard? The answer comes by seeking God, realizing our sinfulness before a holy God, and embracing by faith the salvation Christ provided for us on the cross. In Philippians 2, we are told to have Christ's attitude and thoughts. Even though we are sinful, we have been justified by the blood of Jesus and are "children of God." All other standards of comparison seem insignificant.

Accountability and Application

Have you felt the tension that Jon feels? How have you responded? What's wrong with measuring yourself against the standards of man? Who or what is your standard?

Prayer: Lord, help me to see you as you are, and to see myself by your standards, not man's. I cannot change myself, so transform me by your power. As I look at your attributes, begin making me like you.

Philippians 2:1-11 (NIV)

Imitating Christ's Humility

¹If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

⁷but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

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

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