**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 5**

**Philippians 2:3-8**

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross

*Questions for Personal Reflection:*

1. Do you have a tendency to be competitive with other disciples? In what way?
2. How do you value others above yourself? What are some practical things you can do?
3. How can you focus on the interests of others and not just yourself?
4. How do you feel about being treated less than what you deserve?
5. In what ways do you need to change to have the mindset of Jesus?

*Insight:*

The whole passage of scripture you just read talks about the right attitude. This means it’s not enough to do the right things. Righteousness requires that we do the right things with the right attitude. When we do things out of a competitive spirit, trying to show that we are the better disciple or the better leader or so that we could be lifted up – we totally miss the point. We need to ask ourselves probing questions.

What is my motivation for my acts of Christian service? Why do I want to lead? Why do I want to be fruitful? Why do I want to bring friends to church? Why do I want to have a Bible talk in my workplace or in my school? Why do I want to give more than my special missions contribution? Why do I do Bible studies? Why do I attend meetings? All of these things are good, but if our motivation is selfish ambition or vain conceit, then all our efforts mean nothing.

Humility is valuing others more than yourself. This is hard for many of us. How can other people be more valuable than you, to you? It begins with finding what is valuable in other people. With every person we interact with, we should ask: What could I learn from this person? What good trait of this person could I imitate? What has this person experienced which I can gain insight from? What makes this person special in the eyes of God? Once we have understood the value of other people, we can then make the decision to make their value greater than our own. In this way, humility is not so much a static trait that we have but a dynamic decision we make with every person. We decide to be humble.

Jesus did that when he made himself nothing, he emptied himself of his divinity and chose to be human. He gave up his throne in heaven in order to be born in a manger. He humbled himself to be a man, “taking the very nature of a servant.” He decided to be humble.

Paul writes that we should have the same mindset. We should humble ourselves in our relationships in the same way Jesus humbled himself, became a man, a servant and died on the cross. So being a disciple is not just about being “nice.”

“Being a disciple means looking into Jesus’ mind and seeing his attitude, then striving with all that is within us to have the same mind and attitude.” (Thomas Jones)

Paul seems to be saying that whatever was in Jesus’ mind must be in our mind. It is not enough that we have Jesus’ *deeds* (which is hard as it is) we also need to think Jesus’ *thoughts.* We need to think as Jesus thought.

Do we have Jesus’ mindset in our relationships? Are we willing to be treated less than we deserve? Are we willing to serve without appreciation? Are we willing to suffer so that others might be saved?

It’s hard to have Jesus’ mindset. It’s even harder to have it when you feel that people don’t deserve our humility. During this lockdown we have seen people commit irresponsible acts or speak in hurtful ways. It is easy to get angered, offended or irritated by other people. It is easy to look down on other people or to insist on our rights. But it is precisely in these situations that we need to have the mindset of Jesus.

During this lockdown, what would Jesus do and think? We should go and do likewise.