

Philippians 2:5-11  
"Have This Mind Among Yourselves"  
Palm Sunday – Sunday of the Passion (A)

March 29, 2026  
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
Pastor Peter Adelsen

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

***"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus"*** (Philippians 2:5).

St. Paul knows the mind of man. As the self-described "chief of sinners," St. Paul understands the mind of fallen man.

Paul knows that by nature, man is set to want things their way. By nature, man is selfish and self-centered, stubborn and rebellious. By nature, man thinks of self, first.

This has been the mind of man since Adam stood by and watched his beloved wife Eve take that first bite of the forbidden fruit as she was deceived by Satan in the Garden. Instead of protecting her, Adam retreated from his headship, as he, too, fell under Satan's spell and he also ate. All of a sudden, they realized what they had done. Instead of caring for each other unconditionally, they only thought of their own self interests.

So, Adam and Eve attempt to hide from God. They think they can hide away their sin from God. They thought: If we only hide, God will never know.

But as soon as God comes to them, Adam's conscience reveals what happened. He confessed of his nakedness, but the thing is, that was nothing new to God, but Adam and Eve's nakedness has now become fully aware by them.

And knowing what had happened, God gave them a chance to repent of their sin saying, ***"Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"*** (Genesis 3:11).

But what did they do? They play the blame game. *"The woman, whom You gave me, did it."* *"The serpent did it."* They would not admit to their guilt.

Their loving God who provided everything for them became to them a terror, because of their sin. Instead of loving God, they focused inward. They focused on their pride, their self-interests.

Like all children, we tend to follow the example of our parents, and all the way back to our first parents in the Garden. Beginning with Adam and Eve, we each have taken pleasure in talking about the faults and mistakes of our neighbor. Instead of speaking well and defending our neighbor, we would rather betray and slander them. If someone offends you, we so often return their insult with more mudslinging.

Our God is a loving God who graciously gives and gives, and our sinful nature refuses to be content, as we so often covet what is not ours.

The natural human mind refuses to fear, love and trust in God above all things, and especially refuses to love their neighbor. The natural human mind is all about self-preservation. The natural human mind believes that we do not need God to teach us how to live, since we are capable in directing our own lives. This is the mind of man.

Knowing all of this, St. Paul urges us to have a different mind. He urges us to have the mind of Christ. He writes: ***“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”*** (Philippians 2:5-8).

So, what is St. Paul here teaching us? Paul is saying that because you and I are Christians, we now have in Christ Jesus all His fullness and sufficiency both now and forever, so we should not have any thought differing from Christ, our Lord. He is calling on us to follow Christ’s same pattern by doing whatever is good and useful for your neighbor.

So, just as Christ Jesus denied Himself and sacrificed Himself for yours and my sins, we ought to follow His example of selfless love.

Now, for sure, you and I ***“cannot count equality with God a thing to be grasped”*** (Philippians 2:6). So, we cannot possibly accomplish all those things Jesus did for you and for all of mankind. Despite knowing no sin, He suffered the punishment of death that covered the guilt of all of creation as He took upon Himself yours and my sins as He hung on the tree of the cross for Adam, Eve, and you and me.

Through Jesus’ innocent shed blood, He gave salvation to all who would cling to Him as their Lord.

That is done. It is finished. So, what can we do?

By God's grace to which you receive by faith in Jesus Christ, you stand forgiven of all your sins. Being forgiven, you now possess eternal life, because Jesus paid the full price for you. God now declares you righteous. And being declared righteous, God calls on you and I have the attitude of humble service as we put the Christian faith into practice.

God calls on us to have ***“the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind”*** (Philippians 2:2). He is calling us to regard others as more important than yourself.

So, knowing that you are forgiven, and thus you have eternal life, we ought to live a life not for self, but for others.

In this day of overwhelming pride and self-love, it is always important to remember this truth that ***“whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted”*** (Matthew 23:12). The self-righteous Pharisee prayed: ***“God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get”*** (Luke 18:11-12), but he wasn't really praying to God, he was only exalting himself. And because this man exalted himself, God humbled him (Luke 18:14).

But for us, who are in Christ Jesus, we are to desire to follow His humility. And how do we, who are prone to falling into the ditches of sin, follow Christ's humility? Through the work of the Holy Spirit ***“by the washing and regeneration”*** (Titus 3:5), we look to Jesus.

Here, in this very place, Jesus forgives you day after day, week after week – *this very day* – through His Means of Grace: His Word and His Sacrament.

We come week after week, as we humble ourselves as we admit our guilt before God those sins of thought, word, and deed against Him and our neighbor. We humble ourselves knowing that we deserve God's temporal and eternal punishment, but through our repentance and faith, we know for the sake of Christ's humility through His holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death, that we have a gracious and merciful God.

On this Palm Sunday, Christ's humility is ever before us. He rides into Jerusalem not on a mighty war horse. He doesn't ride in surrounded by an army garrison. He rides in on a humble donkey, a beast of burden. He knows His humble obedience will lead to the agony of the cross in just days. He knows He will bring peace between God and man. He empties Himself, by ***“taking on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”*** (Philippians 2:8).

As He entered Jerusalem and as He hung on the cross, Jesus had you in mind, so let us also give witness to Christ's atoning sacrifice as we humble ourselves to God and in service to our neighbor. Amen.

*The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.*

**+ SOLI DEO GLORIA +**