**Philippians 2:1-11**

**“Others First!”**

**Scripture:** Philippians 2:1-11

**Memory Verse:** “*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.”* Philippians 2:3

**Lesson Focus:** I am worthy of the Gospel when I put others first.

**Activities and Craft:** 1st and 2nd Grade: Coloring Page and Craft: Others First Necklace

Give each of the kids 3 hearts – each with one word (Jesus, Others, Myself)

Tell the kids to put their three hearts on their yarn. Tell them to put them in the order of Jesus (1st) Others (2nd) and Myself (3rd). Talk to them that this is the way Jesus wants us to live our lives. They may put beads in between and at the end of each side of the hearts.

3rd- 5th Grades: The Student Sheet that you will finish back in the classroom after the large group teaching

**Introduction:** Collect two pairs of 3 types of items; have one of the pair be new and the other used, or

worthless (I used socks, pencils, and cookies. One cookie had a bite taken out of it!) Object Lesson on Respecting the Rights of Others:

**{Have all of your items in a bag so the children cannot see them. Choose one child to help you. Be sure to choose a child who is a good sport, who has a personality that can handle silliness, and who is respectful.}**

**{To the child, say}** There are some items in this bag that I want to share with you. **{Pull out the two pencils.}** I really like pencils. Some can be so neat with pretty colors! I want to share a pencil with you. **{Aloud, go through the decision process for giving away the pencil.}** Which pencil should I give you? I really like this one. It hasn’t been sharpened yet. It has a new eraser. This other pencil has been used and sharpened. it even has something sticky on it. There is no eraser. Hmm…I think I’ll keep the nice pencil. You can have the one that’s already sharpened. It’s a nice green color. **{Give the child the used pencil.}**

**{Pull out the pairs of socks.}** I have some socks to share! This pair is new and never has been worn. This pair is kind of grungy. **{Smell the socks.}** They are clean, but they look dirty. You know what? Both pairs of socks will keep feet warm and that’s the point for wearing socks, so you can have this old pair and I’ll keep the soft new pair. **{Give the child the old socks.}**

**{By this time, the child (and probably any others!) will be disgusted with you for giving away the older items. Act as if you don’t understand and continue with the final item.}**

**{Pull out one whole cookie and one broken cookie (or with a bite taken out of it.)}** Ooooo! I love cookies! I’ll share a cookie with you! Um…**{Look at both cookies as if this is a difficult decision and then give the broken cookie to the child.}** Here. You probably don’t like these cookies as much as I do, so you can have the broken one.

**{The kids will probably be rowdy. Calm then down by asking these questions. Accept answers. Hopefully the children will recognize that even though sharing occurred, it was selfishly done. }**

How come you are so upset?
What’s the big deal? I gave away a perfectly good pencil, some socks, and a cookie.

Interesting. Did I deserve to keep the nicer items? Did the other person deserve to have the nicer items? How do we make decisions figuring out “who gets what”?

We are going to see today in our Bible lesson that God wants us to put others first. Let’s take a look!

**Bible Study:**

 **Philippians 2:1-2;** “*Likeminded Encouragement”*

Reminder: Paul is writing to this Philippians church that is suffering because they believe in Jesus. Paul, himself is in prison.

1. **4 Motivations from Jesus**

The word “consolation” means encouragement.

√ What does the word “encouragement” mean? Do you like to be encouraged? Why or why not? Do you encourage others? Paul is talking about the encouragement that we get when we accept Jesus as our Savior. This is not a “atta boy” encouragement – it is knowing beyond a shadow of doubt that Christ is in me and I am encouraged and comforted.

Paul not only talks about encouragement, but also:

 Comfort of love (comforted with the unconditional love of God)

 Fellowship in the Spirit (all baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ)

 Affection and mercy (we have received these from Jesus and they should

 flow out of us to other.)

All of these words show the love and concern that we should have for one another. All of these words are things that we should have as Christians when we are together.

1. **A Single Goal!**
2. Likeminded

Focus on

Jesus

1. Same love
2. One accord
3. One mind

**Illustration:** Try this simple object lesson to teach children the importance of the church community in their lives.

**Main Idea**: We are stronger together, the church is a group of friends who help each other follow Jesus.

**Items Needed**: Several heavy books. We used unwrapped story Bibles.

**Directions**: This object lesson involved a few children as volunteers at the front of the class.

1. Begin by calling an older child to the front. Ask them to hold a single book above their head with flat palms. (See picture below).
2. Give them a few seconds to feel the weight and ask them if this is getting hard. The delay is key to making the task harder with fewer books. If they are ready for more, carefully place another book on the stack. Repeat this process until the books slide off. Be sure to catch the books to prevent injury. Most kids will lose the balance of the books and they will slide off.
3. Invite several children to try this “strong” test. Always congratulate them for the effort, but remark how hard it must be to keep adding weight.
4. Explain the point, “This is something like following Jesus. It may feel easy at first but over time it can feel heavy. The world we live in, plus our own hearts, is like a constant force making it hard to follow God’s plan. But God gave us a wonderful gift. It’s a group of friends who are all working together to learn how to love God & love other people. It’s called the church. Let’s get some helpers to try our hard task together.”
5. Invite 2-4 kids to try the books at a time. As you add more books, remark how it’s still hard but much easier than doing it alone. After several children get a chance to work together, restate the point.

This object lesson deals with a common error kids make when thinking about the church. They often imagine it as another place they go (like school or the movies) rather than a group of people. For this lesson, emphasize how the church is a group of friends who we spend time with and learn how to follow Jesus together. In my teaching, I even talked some about their own choice of a church when they become grown-ups. That’s my little hint toward their future ownership of their own faith and discipleship.

**Philippians 2:3-4;** “

1. ***Others Focused”***

 “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition….”

 √ What does “nothing” mean? Does it mean “sometimes.”

Nothing means nothing with no exceptions. The problem we have is that we always have an excuse for our selfishness.

√ What is selfishness? Do we all have it? Is it a problem in our lives? Why or why not? Selfishness means it is all about me. This is the sin that we are born with. Look at a little toddler. They don’t understand yet that they don’t get everything that they want. How good is a toddler at sharing?

God says that it is NOT all about me!

God says:

 Nothing be done by selfishness or conceit (pride)

 INSTEAD

 In lowliness of mind think of others as more important than yourself &

 Look out for the interests of others

WOW! How hard is that? Is it natural to think of someone else before yourself?

No, just like that illustration at the first part of our lesson – we want the biggest piece or the nicest thing.

**SO HOW CAN WE DO THIS?**

 **Philippians 2:5-8;** *“The Mind of Jesus”*

How do we get the “mind of Christ?” Brain surgery???

No, we have to get to know Christ better and when we do we will see how He lived and the unselfishness of His life. God will do the work in us as we ask Him to. (Remember Philippians 1:6.)

What was the mind of Christ?

1. Jesus was God and is equal to God
2. Jesus left heaven and became a man (the thing He created)
3. Jesus was obedient to the Father and came to die for us

What this means is that Jesus Christ is God, He has always been God and from all eternity shares glory with the Father. Yet He unselfishly left heaven and became a man. He put on flesh and lived a sinless life in the power of the Holy Spirit. The act of leaving heaven alone – is a supreme act of unselfishness and putting others first. There are no words for the unselfishness of Jesus dying on the cross for us.

 **Philippians 2:9-11:** *“Jesus’ obedience for the Glory of God”*

 √ Because of Jesus’ obedience what does God do?

1. Highly exalts Jesus (The phrase “highly exalted” is used nowhere else in the Bible. It means that God “super-exalted him.”)
2. Given Jesus a name that is above every other name (Jesus is Lord)
3. Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus (every knee in the universe)
4. Every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (every tongue in the universe)

In the future whether they believe or not – every tongue will confess and every knee will bow that Jesus is Lord. Some will be full of the wonder of who Jesus is and many will be in anguish for what they ignored in this life.

**Conclusion:** Let’s take some time to pray together and thank God for Jesus. I will make a statement and then you take some time to thank God (In our head) for the quality of Jesus that I state:

1. Jesus, we declare that you are Lord
2. Jesus, thank you for humbling yourself to come to earth and be a man.
3. Jesus, thank you for knowing what it is like to be me.
4. Jesus, thank you that you show me how to put others first.

Amen!

**MYSELF**

**OTHERS**

**JESUS**