

KNOWING THE TRUE MIND AND HEART OF CHRIST

By Rev. Paulus Budiono
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Shalom,

When worshiping God, are we willing to give up all of our titles and positions (as company leaders, heads of organizations etc.) to have the servant's heart sought by Him? He does not see our appearances and wealth but our hearts to obtain the power of His love that can restore our lives.

We have learned that the Book of Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul when he was imprisoned. Even though he was confined with handcuffs, Apostle Paul never gave up, nor in despair. Instead, he rejoiced in faith and was convinced that he still had to live in the world to bear fruit (Phillippians 1:22). How would we (who live freely) feel and respond to his writings? Of course his advice is not always easy to be implemented as his message in Philippians 2: 5-11, ***"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!"***

Honestly, it's so easy and loud when we sing the song "A Servant's Heart" but can we practice it in our daily lives? Do we know Christ Jesus, whose mind and heart are our example and role models? He is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16). Logically, if we do not know someone well, we will not easily agree with their ideas, proposals and words. Illustration: to make a thesis or dissertation, students use many reference books written by professors, doctors and other great people because their ideas / thoughts and discoveries are brilliant and worthy of admiration; what's more, when we immitate and copy the mind and heart of Christ that is perfect and true!

The Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians (and us) as (candidates) God's Bride to remain faithful to the true Christ because there are

Knowing the True Mind and Heart of Christ

Ditayangkan: Minggu, 13 Oktober 2019 08:00
Pdt. Paulus Budiono

other jesus, other spirits and other gospels who are trying to mislead them and us (2 Corinthians 11: 3-4). In fact, we never know Jesus physically, we don't live in Palestine either, but we know Him through the preaching of His Word and His great deeds. That's why we must be careful of the preaching that we hear, fearing of the destructive heresies.

In the Tabernacle pattern, the Book of Philippians is exposed to the Gold Lampstand. To produce a bright gold lampstand, an expert lamp maker has to burn pure gold and then shapes it according to the desired model. It took only six months to finish making the complete Tabernacle utensils before the Tabernacle could finally be established. The Gold Lampstand has no function if the lamp does not have the light to illuminate the are around it. Therefore the Ephesians were strongly rebuked for having abandoned their original love (not burning) that would cause their lampstand be removed unless they repented (Revelation 2:4-5).

Introspection: Has our life shone the light of Christ's love to be seen by those around us?

Saul / Paul's mind was filled with the Old Testament books that made him a very fanatical Pharisee. But after his encounter with Jesus (the persecuted), he repented and his mind was opened - the entire Old Testament fully speaks the life of Christ Jesus with all His thoughts and feelings. That's why he encouraged us to have the thoughts and feelings of Christ. Of course we can still keep on using our own thoughts and feelings, but the perfect mind and plan of Christ should take more control of us than our own. Example: Euodia and Syntyche were counseled to be of one mind in God because they had been using their own mind, resulting in discord and divisions even though they were both warriors in spreading the Word (Philippians 4: 2-3).

Is putting others' mind into ours so degrading? Preachers of the Word of God may admire great native or international preachers but they should not copy-paste their sermons, manner and way of speech, etc. because they are just ordinary people full of weaknesses and shortcomings. Much different if we put the thoughts and feelings of Jesus - the Word - in us. The Lord will reveal all things that belong to us and will keep some secrets as His (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Let's learn more about the figure of Christ Jesus which is written in Philippians 2: 5-11, namely:

- He is of the same image of God.

At the beginning of creation, the Triune God created man in their

Knowing the True Mind and Heart of Christ

Ditayangkan: Minggu, 13 Oktober 2019 08:00
Pdt. Paulus Budiono

image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). Jesus as one of the Persons of the Triune God co-designed and created everything including man because everything is from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever (Romans 11:36). Moreover, in the beginning was the Word; the Word is with God and the Word is God (John 1:1).

Although in the form of God, Jesus did not maintain His equality with God but was willing to go down into the world to become a Man (sinless) to die on the cross. His condition was so bad and avoided by people even though all that he suffered is for the sake of sinful people (Isaiah 53:2-5). After all, He is God. So, it is not wrong if we surrender our thoughts to be controlled by the mind of God, the Creator.

Note that although Jesus is equal to God, it does not mean that there are two competing leaders. God and Jesus are of the same degree but with different roles. The Triune God has a plan and Jesus - the Word - without any arguing, came down to earth to become Man bearing the task of saving sinful people. In this case, Jesus has become a perfect example of humility and unselfishness.

Jesus acknowledged, "... the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; **for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.**" (John 5:19) He further does not consider His equality with the Father, He said, "...Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that **they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**" (John 17:1-4) Jesus completed His work on the cross by saying, "It is finished." (John 19:30).

Don't misrepresent Jesus, God the Son, as smaller/lower person than God the Father as some churches believe. Jesus was willing to take a position as a Man to gain a victory. The proof, He was then highly exalted by God the Father and given the Name above all names.

We should follow the mind and heart of Jesus totally because the verses in the Word of God cannot be separated from one another. Although the Bible consists of 66 books (39 books of Old Testament and 27 books of New Testament), all are so well arranged and canonized that they are related to one another.

Application: we are to follow Jesus not only because He is the Savior and His hands have the power to perform miracles but let's also be willing to follow His footsteps towards the cross.

- He emptied Himself and took the form of a servant.

Servants in ancient times had no rights whatsoever except to fulfill obligations to their employers. Unlike today's servants who do a lot of demonstrations to claim their rights that sometimes went too far.

Jesus warned, "... whoever **desires to become great** among you, let him be your servant. And whoever **desires to be first** among you, let him be **your slave**— just as **the Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give His life** a ransom for many." (Matthew 20: 26-28).

He rebuked His disciples who fought over their place in His Kingdom (vv. 21-24). A servant shouldn't be so demanding (of wages or acknowledgement) nor should he prepare his own meal as soon as he gets home from the field. Instead, he should prepare a meal for his master first (Luke 17:7-10).

Introspection: Would a famous pastor who is used to living in comfort, humble himself to serve willingly? Honestly, don't we often do little work / ministry but demand many blessings from Him?

Jesus willingly gave His life for our salvation and He asks us to be His servants to witness to others the salvation we have received from Him. Don't be an evil, lazy or quarrelsome servant in ministry! Remember, we serve God, not men. If we are not faithful in our ministry, we do not deal with the church but with our Lord that is God.

God the Father acknowledged His Son, " Behold! **My Servant** whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My **soul delights!** I have put My Spirit upon Him; **He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.** He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth." (Isaiah 42: 1-3).

Let's introduce Indonesia to our Heavenly Father and put our hope in Him. To know God we must know Jesus, His Son (John 8:19).

The world awaits the church of God that has the character of a servant, who willingly spends time in serving Him until he enters into the New Jerusalem. If we want to be kings in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 22: 1-5), we must be willing to be servants first. Note, the position as a servant is only temporary but to be kings is forever.

- Jesus - the Word - became the same as man.

Knowing the True Mind and Heart of Christ

Ditayangkan: Minggu, 13 Oktober 2019 08:00
Pdt. Paulus Budiono

Wasn't Adam-Eve created in the image and likeness of the Triune God? So (man) Jesus and Adam are the same; that's why Jesus is called the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45). The Gospel of John 1:14 writes that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

What is the **purpose** of God creating man? To **rule over and manage** the universe and its contents (Genesis 1: 26-28).

Unfortunately, the first Adam failed miserably and none of us are good and righteous offspring because all sinned (Romans 3: 10,12,23). Therefore, we need the last Adam who never fails even though He was the same as the first Adam who also died. This ruining world is ruled by Satan (Matthew 3: 8) and will be restored by the last Adam. If we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, (faith) we can overcome the world (1 John 5: 1-5).

Introspection: has our sinful life been restored to experience the renewal of life in God, to be able to defeat the attraction of the world?

Only God can measure one's faith and his faith growth can be seen from the words, attitudes and actions. Childlike faith is characterized by a lack of responsibility, for example: serving God while in the mood only, so he is not serious enough in carrying out his ministry by giving so many excuses. The Apostle Paul left behind his childlike character (the words and thoughts of a child) after he became an adult (1 Corinthians 13:11).

God wants us to mature spiritually, to be able to dominate the world that is to come, not the present world that is vanishing (1 John 2:17) and will be destroyed and scorched by great fire (2 Peter 3:10). Now we are waiting for the new heaven and earth where the inhabitants are people who are justified by God through Jesus.

Jesus set the perfect example by humbling Himself and being obedient to death on the cross. How about our ministry? It must be admitted we want to work to serve but do not want to "die". Apostle Paul wanted to feel the sufferings of Christ and learn how to experience His death and resurrection. Indeed this is very difficult but the cross is the only way to experience life restoration. On the cross Jesus was stripped and completely humiliated. If we want to use Jesus' mind, we must be ready to be 'exposed', ridiculed, slandered without retaliating.

Truly we should be happy to know Jesus Christ and to have His mind and heart, so that our lives are changed to be like Him and one day we will live with Him forever in the New Jerusalem. Amen.

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