

As We Will          Philippians 2: 5-11

In America we take great pride in having choices. We want to know what our options are related to just about everything we do. From McDonalds to Wendy's, to Berger King we want choices. I must say Berger King is the best choice. Why? They allow you to "have it your way".

I talked before about the window stickers on automobiles. We want go there again, but there are thousands of choices on four wheels in America. On and on the choices go. Yes, we have made choice an idol of sorts to the point where it is ridiculous.

Paul writes to a young, new church to remind them of what is at the heart and soul of their identity. He reminds them of what their attitude should be in response to whatever goes on in the culture. Paul seeks to clear their understanding of who Christ was, their Christology. In so doing, he defines the essence of who the church is at the core of its witness to the world.

Paul begins by stating that although Christ's nature was that of God, Jesus the man chose to make himself nothing. In verses 7 and 8, Paul boldly proclaims that Jesus Christ humbled himself and was obedient to who God's sending him into the world.

Christ made himself poor, choosing to be a servant and a human being. This choice of Jesus not only comes to define who Jesus was but also who the church confesses as Lord of life.

Paul wants this young church to realize that there really is only one choice that matters in the community of faith. That choice is the Lordship of Jesus the Christ. The non-essentials that Sam has brought to our attention in Bible studies are just that. Denomination, method of baptism, method of receiving communion, membership transfers, on and on, these are things we the members, have instituted, not God!

The church should be defined by what matters. The true confession of Jesus as Lord frees the church to be who we are as we humble ourselves and take on the role as servant, one and all.

Paul wants the church to know that as Christ was obedient, even to death, so must the church become obedient to the will of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ and what that will mean in its life and witness.

In our day when choice has become idolized, the church needs to witness to exactly what choice must seek to define and shape all other choices.

Choosing can become just another excuse for not making a real commitment. Paul wants the church at Philippi to powerfully and definitively proclaim obedience to the only choice there is for truth and justice. Christ was obedient to the only choice that matters in life. He set the example.

Paul also wants the Philippians church to realize that God will respond to such a choice with exaltation and glory. The truth is if you choose to follow Christ, you will be blessed.

Jesus will forever be defined by his choosing, which elevated him to the highest place. This truth becomes the corner stone upon which the church stands to witness and proclaim the Good News.

The same holds true for us individually. We will be defined by the choices we make. Our reputation will be formed by the choices we make. That can be good or not-so- good. When it's all said and done, you have the choice. Right now you can decide to recommit your life to Christ and his bride, the church.

As the church united we were called into existence to make others aware of the important choices in life. To recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ, to live a life that exemplifies the one we claim as Lord of Lords in your life and in mine.

Paul wants the young church of his day to claim its identity in witness and proclamation. He reminds them that just as Jesus chose to be obedient to the will of God and took on the role of humble servant so too must each of us decide. As we will! As we will!