

June 4, 2023

## Overflow 2-We Are Designed For This!

How many of you want a life that overflows with God's blessing so you can be a blessing to others?

If that's what you want, how do we get there?

### I. VALUE what Jesus VALUES

“If you want to be great, learn to be the servant of all. Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.”  
–Jesus (Mark 10:43-44)

Today we jump into what I believe is one of the most important couple of paragraphs of the whole Bible. You might call it Paul's commentary explaining this statement from Jesus. But in the explanation he describes what it means to follow Jesus. Although it is such an important explanation, I also believe it is one of the most **IGNORED** and **NEGLECTED** few paragraphs of the entire Bible. And I believe it is neglected, and the commands ignored because our hearts are frequently off target!!

If we are to VALUE what Jesus VALUES, we are going to need to know what Jesus values. Paul could not make it more clear than in the section we are about to study this morning.

### II. VALUE others

*Philippians 2:3–4 (NIV) 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.*

**QUESTION:** How many of you agree that this is a great value we should aspire to?

Don't you think the world would be a better place if more people valued others more by looking out for others?

- This is the **HIDDEN SECRET** to good **parenting**, good **marriages**, and **being a good friend, or neighbor**.
- This is the hidden secret to loving people the way Jesus loved people.
- This is the hidden secret **for changing ourselves**, and **changing the world! And changing the world begins with changing ourselves!**

NEXT QUESTION: How many of you think you have what it takes to pull this off consistently?

***I know I don't!* It only seems impossible BECAUSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE ON YOUR OWN!!**

When the end task seems impossible, start at the beginning.

- Another way to say this is **1 + 2 = 3**. (Verse 1 + verse 2 produces verse 3).

*Philippians 2:1 (NIV) Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,*

**This is one of those “IF / THEN” arguments: “IF” (verse 1) is true, “THEN” (verse 2) flows from your savior not YOU.**

**With “If” statements, he points them back to the RELATIONALLY dependent way RATHER than the rule based RELIGIOSITY way!**

**WHEN we don't value others the way Christ does... we need to return to our savior (AGAIN)! He uses these “If” statements to point them back to Jesus!**

- **Having trouble with others?** Unite again with Jesus Christ, remember how you were encouraged when you were messed up.
- **Having trouble with others?** Make sure you are experiencing Jesus' love.
- **Having trouble with others?** Make sure you are filled with God's Spirit, Jesus died for you to make this possible!
- **Having trouble with others?** Make sure that the tenderness and compassion of Jesus is your experience so that you can overflow with HIS tenderness and compassion.

**IF you return to Jesus RELATIONALLY and remember that... THEN... here's the “THEN” statement:**

*Philippians 2:2 (NIV) then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind*

**Fight the right battle.** Our struggle is not against people, but against a hidden enemy. Our enemy is a MASTER at dividing us. Don't unintentionally become his tool!

**“I am most dangerous when I'm RIGHT”.** I say that because whether I am right or I only think I'm right, my sense of JUSTICE causes me to press for right things the wrong way!! Perhaps this story will explain it more vividly.

The Seemingly Right Thing.

Richard Dunagin writes: At their school carnival, our kids won four free goldfish (lucky us!), so out I went Saturday morning to find an aquarium. The first few I priced ranged from \$40 to \$70. [The book I got this from was written in 1993, aquariums have gone up dramatically]. Then I spotted it right in the aisle: a discarded 10-gallon display tank, complete with gravel and filter for a mere five bucks. Sold! Of course, it was nasty-dirty, but the savings made the two hours of clean-up a breeze.

Those four new fish looked great in their new home, at least for the first day. But by Sunday one had died. Too bad, but three remained. Monday morning revealed a second casualty, and by Monday night a third goldfish had gone belly up. We called in an expert member of our church who has a 30-gallon tank. It didn't take him long to discover the problem: I had washed the tank with soap, an absolute no-no. My uninformed efforts had destroyed the very lives I was trying to protect.

Sometimes in our zeal to clean up the lives of others, we unfortunately use "killer soaps" -- **condemnation and criticism....** We think we're doing right, but our harsh, self-righteous treatment is more than they can bear.

**Have you ever experienced either side of that wrong equation?**

Paul knew that Churches can split and disintegrate over SOAPY cleaning solutions, and that is why we are reminded to use the same solutions Jesus used— **self sacrificing, serving solutions!**

1+2=3. **Verse 1 + verse 2 produces verse 3.**

*Philippians 2:3 (NIV) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves*

*Philippians 2:4 (NIV) Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

Jesus did what was best for the other person—(ALWAYS).

*Philippians 2:5 (NIV) In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

**THEN Paul describes what Christ's Mindset looks like in 2:6-11.**

*Philippians 2:6-7 (NIV) Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

God designed human beings to be “in very nature,” “servants”. **But as the Genesis story goes, so goes our story: We OFTEN choose to serve ourselves rather than God and OTHERS.**

Our pride breaks God’s design for us, but Jesus’ perfect humility makes it possible to restore it.

*Philippians 2:8 (NIV) And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*

Jesus sacrificed himself to save us so that we can be restored to our design to live in OVERFLOW! **THE OVERFLOWING CUP (Revisited)**

- We are designed to be like that glass cup overflowing with Jesus, the living water, blessing us to be a blessing.
- We chose instead to be defiled and filled our lives with sewer rot, thinking a self centered life was actually more fulfilling than God’s design for our lives.
- Even though this was our story, Jesus **held back from judging us, and came to give us grace instead!** He did this so we can do this for others.
- His cross makes us sparkling clean glasses again. Being **transparent** before God is the better way. No more hiding. We are free to confess and be cleansed.
- **Through Jesus, God raised us up** from death to life **Filling us God’s Holy Spirit** he blesses us to be a blessing to OTHERS.
- **BECAUSE OF JESUS VICTORY, we can now create a chain reaction** to grace and kindness that comes FROM JESUS, THROUGH US, FOR OTHERS.

God designed us and saved us to be a blessing to others out of the OVERFLOW!

Will this be easy? No! Will it cost us? Yes. But any time you start to wonder if stepping down the humble path of *serv*ing the interests of others *is worth it, remember this:*

### III. Humble yourself and God will raise your VALUE

*Philippians 2:9–11 (NIV) Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

One of VVCC’s values is that we are “For” the Verde Valley: But it all starts here with the decision to have the MINDSET of Christ “in our relationships with one another. (2:5)”

**IMPORTANT AND DIFFICULT QUESTIONS:**

- *What will you do with this fundamental truth about taking up the MINDSET of Jesus in your relationship with one another?*
- *What are you doing for OTHERS?*
- *What will you do for OTHERS?*

PRAYER TEAM:

PRAYER.

## Talk It Over

## OVERFLOW

(Week 2)

We are designed for this!

### SMALL TALK

1. Have you ever witnessed or experienced an act of selfless love or humility? If so, please share the story with the group.

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Philippians 2:1-11.** In verse 2, Paul urges the Philippians to be "like-minded" and have the "same love." What do you think he means by this?
3. Paul emphasizes the importance of considering others as more important than ourselves. Why is it challenging for us to embrace this mindset?
4. The passage describes Jesus humbling Himself by taking on the "very nature" of a servant. What does this teach us?

### GETTING PERSONAL

5. Is it possible to live out the selfless attitude Paul described? If so, what steps can be taken toward this end?
6. The passage highlights Jesus' exaltation after His humility. How does this inspire you to persevere in humility and selflessness, even when it may be difficult or unnoticed?

### MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

7. Can you think of a specific person or situation where you can demonstrate the kind of care and concern 2:3-4 describes? How will you go about doing it?