



# All Christians' Fellowship International

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

**TOPIC:** The Motivational Example

**TEXT:** Philippians 2:1-11

**Instructions** - *Let the above passages be read each time you come together to study this topic so that everyone could participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information on the topic and come up with follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone to have an equal opportunity to participate.*

**Introduction:** Our culture tells us to respond to a challenge with the comeback "What's in this for me?" Yet outreach, missions and service involve communicating God's love to our world in ways that will inevitably involve our loss of comfort and sacrifice of our personal rights. Where do we find the sustained motivation for such giving? Paul wrote the book of Philippians while in some sort of captivity, either prison or, more likely, a type of house arrest that had him chained to a Roman soldier twenty-four hours a day. From this context he wrote the letter to the church at Philippi, which we have in four chapters. The letter is characterized by the word joy, which provokes readers to ask, "How could Paul find joy in the midst of such difficult circumstances?"

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. In thinking about your service to others, either in your own culture or somewhere else in the world, what potential losses do you fear most?
2. What do verses 1-5 reveal about Paul's purpose in setting Jesus forth as our example? (Read Philippians 4:2-3 as well).
3. How would you feel about receiving a letter like this?
4. Discuss what we can emulate in the progression downward and upward of Jesus' service (vs. 6-8) and then reward (vs. 9-11)
5. Discuss what Jesus needed to release in order to come to earth to serve humanity (vs. 6-8)? Why did He release all this—even allowing himself to be taken to the point of death on a cross?
6. No matter what the challenges described in this passage—servanthood, humanity, humility and even death—it seems that Jesus entered these sacrifices by choice: He "made himself nothing" (v. 7). How does this passage apply to times when we choose suffering?
7. Notice in verses 6-8 that Jesus had to come into the world in order to reach lost humanity; He couldn't reach them in the same way from heaven (vs. 6-7). What "worlds" might you need to go into so that others can know the love of God?

9. In this passage, Paul writes of Jesus' incarnation (vs. 6-8) and his glorification (vs. 9-11). Imagine that you are imprisoned with Paul for preaching the gospel. How might these realities serve to motivate you to endure prison hardships and to continue serving others?

10. How do you think the phrase "made himself nothing" (v. 7) applies to our serving others? What does this passage teach us about God's perspective on sacrifice in this life and rewards in the next (vs. 9-11)?

11. What role do you think the heavenly reward (vs. 9-11) played in Jesus' obedience in service and sacrifice? What role should the prospect of eternal or heavenly reward play in motivating us toward sacrificial service?

12. Imagine that you're contemplating a cross cultural service project to work with extremely poor people. You're recruiting others to support you financially, and someone asks, "Do you mean that you're actually paying to go and work in these squalid conditions?" How might you use this passage as your basis for responding?

13. To continue the study of the motivational example of Jesus, read 1 John 3:16-20. How does John exhort his readers to follow the example of Jesus (v. 16)? What form does this "laying down our lives" take in practical daily living (v. 17)?

14. What are the characteristics of the love that God wants us to express (v. 18)? What effect on our consciences does God promise when we act out his love in this way (vs. 19-20)?