



IN COMPANY WITH JESUS

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Philippians 2:1-4 RSV

Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of my favourite books of the Bible and words like those above make it so—words that describe what Jesus was like. One of the things I like most about Jesus is his humility. But there was a lot more to make him who he was. He loved deeply, was obedient to his Father in heaven, had compassion, and he gave sacrificially – even going to the cross for us.

I know that most of you who read this want to follow Jesus. But following him is not only doing what he does, it's also having his characteristics. To have those we need to study his life. We

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need to spend time with him, talking with him, being in fellowship with him, uniting with him in Spirit.

Most of us want to be like Jesus because we admire him. Maybe we want to hear our heavenly Father tell us, as he told Jesus, *"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."* (Matthew 3:17)

But following Jesus and doing good is not always easy. Sometimes it's downright painful. There are those in the world who are proud, self-centered, and powerful, opposing those whose ways differ from their own, wanting them out of the way. They behave like the Pharisees did in Christ's world, causing pain to those who don't deserve it. When this happens to us, we can find consolation in knowing we're in company with Jesus.

Jesus said, *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33)

Probably, the nearer we are to Jesus, the more likely trials will come. To be a true follower of Jesus means being in fellowship with him, even in the suffering.

Can you face your suffering like Jesus did? Can you continue following him in the midst of it?

Take comfort in what Jesus said, *" . . . take heart! I have overcome the world."*

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