

# Philippians

*A Life of Purpose and Joy*

## Seeing Jesus with Fresh Eyes

**Date:** Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April

**Speaker:** Abbi Wells

**Key Verses:** Philippians 2:1-11

### **Talk Summary:**

Jesus is different to other Kings and God of his time; he doesn't use his power to conquer, win battles and gain prestige. Jesus redefines what it meant to be divine. Being divine is about self-sacrificial love. Tom Wright, who used to be Bishop of Durham says: "As you look at the incarnate son of God (Jesus) dying on the cross the most powerful thought you should think is: this is the true meaning of who God is. He is the God of self-giving love."

Jesus uses his power for others and for the glory of God, so we should too! There are lots of places in our lives we have power and influence. The world encourages us to pursue power and prestige for ourselves. How can we be like Jesus and use our influence for others and for God? Shane Claiborne, writer and activist uses the phrase "growing smaller and smaller until we take over the world". Instead of aiming to be become more powerful, we aim to go smaller. It isn't that we want to be insignificant or ineffective, but that the significance and power we are after comes from doing things Jesus' way, it comes from self-giving love.

Jesus was able to humble Himself and live a life of self-sacrificial love because He knew He was. We need to know we are, God's children dearly loved, if we are start living this way. Jesus' love for us enable us to love others and enables us to use our power for others and for God. Mother Theresa says, "we can do no great things, only small things with great love". Let's start to live as Jesus lived, let's start with doing the small, everyday things with great love.

## Worship

*Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.*

*(Small group worship resources can be found at [bvc.so/sgworship](http://bvc.so/sgworship))*

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

*If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:*

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

## Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- During the sermon we talked briefly about **unity, self ambition and vain conceit**. If you'd like to explore these themes further and think together about how these might relate to your lives, here's some extra questions:
  - **Selfish ambition** is when we want to succeed, but we also want others to fail. When we're constantly thinking what's in it for me, how can I use this situation to my advantage?
  - **Vain conceit** is "the desire for personal prestige." (William Barclay). It's the desire to be seen and applauded by others, to be admired and have your opinion sought on important matters. It could look like trying to live for the applause of others or having a persona, a game face you put on so people think you're perhaps powerful or in the know.
  - Where in your life do you find the attitudes of selfish ambition and vain conceit most tempting?
  - How could Jesus' example and His love for you be the antidote to selfish ambition and vain conceit in your life?

### Other questions based on the sermon:

- Reading through the passage, what strikes about how Jesus is described?
  - What do you think about v.6+7, where it talks about Jesus not considering equality with God something to be used to his own advantage?
- Where do you have power and influence in your life? In your family, on social media, at work, at school, in your neighborhood?
  - How might you use this for God or those around you?
  - How could you use your position to raise others up? Are there people you could come alongside? Or step aside for?
- How does Jesus' love for you enable you to live a life of self-sacrificial love and use your power and influence for God and for others?
- How could you do small things with great love this week?

## Witness

*We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:*

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invite to?
  - A new online Alpha course began 14<sup>th</sup> April, if you know anyone who is exploring faith feel free to invite them, it's not too late to join. More details at [bvc.so/alpha](http://bvc.so/alpha)