

Group discussion Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."

Read Philippians 2:1-11 aloud.

1. This set of questions considers how Jesus emptied Himself (6-8). You could say he climbed down the ladder of success.

6 – By His nature, who was Jesus?

7 – How big a demotion was it to go from God to human?

8 – As a man, what were some ways Jesus humbled Himself?

What situations might have been more desirable than the life Jesus chose?

What might have been some more dignified ways to die?

2. Would you say most people are selfish or unselfish? Why?

How could a demotion be a good thing?

Peter Lynch was famous for giving up leadership of the Fidelity Magellan mutual fund so he could spend time with his kids.

When have you given up what you wanted in order to get a greater reward?

How does family life call you to become less selfish?

3. As He lived among us, what kind of results did Jesus get for emptying Himself?

Sometimes popularity, most times critics and by-standers.

After He died, what did Jesus gain from emptying himself?

What are some rewards that Jesus still awaits?

Verses 10 & 11 are unfulfilled. A large part of creation has not yet

acknowledged that Jesus is Lord. (That's why we have war & prison.)

How easy was it for Jesus to empty Himself if he knew of the rewards awaiting?

Recall his weeping in the garden, begging God for another way.

4. According to verse 5, how do Jesus' actions impact our actions?

How would you describe the attitude that Jesus demonstrated?

5. How is Jesus a good illustration of verses 3-4?

Why would Paul encourage Christians to "consider others better than yourselves"? Which is more natural, self-preservation or self-sacrifice?

How does emptying yourself bring fulfillment? How does accumulating for yourself bring emptiness?

What is difficult about emptying yourself?

6. How could principles from Philippians 2 help you do a better job loving your family?

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

What is a relationship that teaches you to be less selfish? If you are married, how does your marriage require you to be unselfish?

Resources

Bible notes

- A key issue in Philippians is Christian unity. Paul is urging his friends to get along with one another, and this text is one of his strongest pleas.
- Won't it be great when we finally get to see verse 10-11 fulfilled?

Kid-friendly activity...

Celebrate the good things God has done this last week! *Applause!*

Take a 2-liter soft drink to the meeting. Tell everyone that this is your special drink so you're never going to open it. You are going to put it on a shelf in your room so you can enjoy it.

Ask what the group thinks about that idea. Play devil's advocate – point out that if you drink it, you can no longer enjoy it.

Read Phil. 2:5-8 aloud.

What kinds of things did Jesus give up in this passage?

Show how He climbed down the ladder of success.

Why would Jesus give so much good stuff away?

How can our lives be better by emptying ourselves?

Could I enjoy my soft drink more if I emptied it out of the bottle into my tummy? Could I enjoy it even more if I shared with you guys?

How are our lives like this soft drink? What are some things that get better when we give them away? *Love, time, food, etc.*



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LIFE Group Guide

Philippians 2 – Unselfish living

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **Jesus emptied himself, and that led to huge blessings. That's how it works with unselfishness.**

This lesson looks at Philippians 2, one of the most powerful descriptions ever written about Jesus' work. It connects with Kevin's sermon on selfishness as the enemy of a good marriage, but it applies to situations beyond the family.

Be prayerful about participants becoming more like Jesus. This text and topic are life-changers, so discuss ways to be unselfish in real life situations. Also, pray about how members will respond to Kevin's series on relationships – family is an emotional topic, so responses could involve pain, guilt, and confusion.

Leadership tip: Pray for group members at least once a week, if not every day. This will focus your attention on needs of group members and give you a sense of what God is doing in their lives. If your group is too big to pray for each person every week, you have **another** reason to multiply.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ When was your most memorable date?
Hopefully it included your spouse, but maybe not.
- ❖ Who washes the dishes at your house?
- ❖ Braves or Cardinals or someone else?
- ❖ What is something that becomes greater when shared but loses value if you keep it to yourself?
Food, gossip, flowers, time, love, yard work, etc.