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*Hey leaders! In this sermon, we were reminded that although we've entered a new year, God is still God, His word is still His word, His Spirit still dwells within us, and we are still invited to become more like Jesus.*

NEXT WEEK we will begin a new series called "**Race Against the Horses**", which refers to how Jeremiah did not live up to his potential and includes an invitation to live for more. God's invitation for our best life is when we live with a radical, bold, expectant, and dependent faith in God.

**Thank you for shepherding a group of people to Love God, Love Others, and Live Sent!**

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?  
Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or [discipleship@rockbridge.cc](mailto:discipleship@rockbridge.cc)

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**"Humility captures Christ's attention because it shows Him our willingness to live a spiritual life. And a spiritual life means denying oneself for the love of God."**

[Walter Kahler]

LEADER RESOURCES || **Leader Note** We do our best to equip, empower, and encourage you to shepherd your group well. Access a resource by clicking on the underlined title and share them with your group!

- **Passage Summary**
  - Paul urges believers to be united in spirit and purpose, living in humility by valuing others above themselves. He highlights Christ's ultimate act of humility and obedience: though He was God, He took on human form, served others, and submitted to death on a cross. Because of this, God exalted Him above all, giving Him a name above every name. Paul calls believers to live without grumbling or arguing, shining as lights in the world by holding firmly to the word of life, so their faith reflects Christ's glory and brings joy to those who have labored for them.
- **Philippians 2 Commentary & Do Everything Without Grumbling**
  - Use this commentary and article for background and encouragement. These would be good resources to share before you gather.
- **Humble Yourself – Like God**
  - This would be a good resource to share with your group after you gather.

ENGAGE & CONNECT || **Leader Note** The goal for the icebreaker is to prepare your group for the conversation ahead by connecting with one another's hearts and building joy together.

What is one thing you want to do differently OR one area you want to grow in this year?

BEGIN WITH PRAYER || **Leader Note** Begin your time together by thanking God for his presence and praying His word back to Him. Ask a few people to pray, beginning in a posture of humility and dependence!

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*“For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.  
Let his faithful people rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds.”*

[Psalm 149:4-5]

**BIG IDEA || Leader Note** Read this aloud so your group knows the theme of today’s reading and discussion.

In this new year, God is still God, His word is still His word, His Spirit still dwells within us, and we are still invited to become more like Jesus.

**PASSAGE & DISCUSSION || Leader Note** Have people read aloud the passage as instructed. Your role is to **FACILITATE**, so keep your group moving along, encourage multiple people to share, and look for opportunities to point out the grace and glory of God! Here are two reminders: 1) Every question does not have to be answered ... go where the Spirit leads! 2) Answers do not have to be read aloud ... they’re for guidance!

Have a couple of people read aloud portions of Philippians 2:1-18.

1. What stood out to you most about this passage?
2. In the sermon we heard, *“Our sacred union with Christ changes our outlook on our past, present, and future.”* How did you experience that to be true in the past year? *This is an opportunity to go first!*
3. What does Paul mean by “thinking the same way” and “having the same love”? How is this unity connected to Christ and His example? *Paul emphasizes a unity of purpose and love grounded in Christ’s example. This unity reflects humility, selflessness, and a shared commitment to glorifying God and advancing the Gospel.*
4. What is the significance of God exalting Jesus? How does this exaltation connect to His humility and obedience? *Jesus’ exaltation demonstrates God’s approval of His humility and sacrifice. It reveals that true honor comes from God and is tied to faithfulness, not self-promotion.*
5. Paul instructs believers to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” How does this align with God working in them? *This instruction highlights the partnership between human effort and divine enablement. Believers are to actively pursue spiritual growth while trusting God’s power and guidance to transform them.*
6. Paul calls believers to “do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit”. How can we embody this humility in our relationships to one another and those around us? *We can focus on serving each other, celebrating others’ contributions, and fostering an attitude of gratitude. This involves prioritizing unity and encouraging one another in love.*
7. Paul exhorts the Philippians to rejoice, even amid suffering. How can we cultivate a culture of joy, regardless of circumstances? *We can practice gratitude, focus on God’s promises, and support each other in challenges. Sharing testimonies and engaging in worship together can foster a joyful spirit.*
8. What areas in your life reflect the humility of Christ? Where might you struggle to adopt His mindset? *Personal reflection might reveal humility in serving family or coworkers but difficulty in relinquishing control or recognition. Christ’s example challenges believers to grow in selflessness.*
9. What does it mean for you to “shine like a star” in your current environment? How can you be a light for Christ where you live and work? *This might involve demonstrating integrity, speaking truth with love, or offering kindness in a difficult setting. Reflecting Christ’s light requires intentionality and reliance on the Holy Spirit.*

10. Paul encourages believers to “hold firmly to the word of life”. How have you done that well in the past year? What new practices can help you stay grounded in God’s Word amid distractions? *Practices include daily Bible reading, memorizing Scripture, engaging in group study, and setting aside time for prayer. These disciplines anchor believers in truth and guide their decisions.*

**STEP OF OBEDIENCE || Leader Note** *This is an opportunity for people to put into practice what the Spirit is inviting them to do and live in obedience to God for the sake of love! You can encourage your group to be accountable to one another and use these to follow up with one another throughout the week.*

Our faith lacks power, when we admire Jesus instead of imitating Him. *What would be the impact on our lives if we adopted the attitude of Jesus?* Based on what we’ve read and discussed today, what is a step of obedience you can take this week in this area? How might God be calling you to ...

- a more committed union with Christ?
- be more unified with your church family?
- imitate and adore Jesus more fully?

*Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 3-4 for this question.*

**PRAYER FOCUS || Leader Note** *We want to commit to praying for OTHERS as a unified church who is dependent upon God for everything. Be intentional about saving at least 5-10 minutes for prayer at the end of your gathering each week to pray together. You can pray for one another as well as the prompts below!*

### **Growing in Christ in the New Year**

- As we step into this new year, let’s rest in the unchanging truth that God is still faithful, good, and sovereign. His word remains true and steadfast. His Spirit still dwells within us, guiding and empowering us. And we are still graciously invited to become more like Jesus each day.
- Let’s pray together, thanking God for His constant presence and asking for His help to deepen our faith and trust in Him this year. Let’s commit ourselves to His word, His Spirit, and His work in transforming us into the likeness of Christ.