

# Light Brings Salt

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## Iron Range Bible Church

*Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*  
*"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."*



### Reflecting True Humility

**Pastor John Griffith**

Here we have to examine Phil. 2:3-4 to see the practical application in the life of the believer or how this same thinking and having the same love, this unity of spirit and oneness of purpose is to manifest itself in the life of the committed believer in Jesus Christ in our service to and relationship with one another.

2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 2:4 *do not (merely) look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Paul's first exhortation is that we "do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit." Both of the words used here for selfishness and conceit emphasize a self centered approach to life in that everything is done to promote themselves in deference to the needs of others. This is hardly something that promotes unity in a congregation, this is the reason it is often translated disputes or strife. Empty conceit describes one who has acquired a thirst for glory, the limelight and does not have a basis for that praise, therefore its empty, worthless praise.

Those two characteristics present the negative, attitudes that we should not have. Paul quickly shifts to **the positive.** "but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself."

This exhortation is **to think** in a certain way described by the first part of the word tapeinos, that is to be lowly therefore lowly thinking or to think with humility. Humility was not something that the Greeks of the day

regarded very highly in their literature or thinking. What Paul is saying is that we as Believers are to view ourselves as less important than others. We are to make a conscious sure judgment resting on the careful weighing of the facts; adding up the facts and drawing a conclusion the basis of which is the fourfold appeal of Jas. 1:2.

This in no way means we are to have a false or unrealistic view of our own gifts compared to others, but it does mean that consideration for others must precede concern for ourselves.

#### Summary Observations of 2:3

1. Paul admonishes them against dispositions which are hostile to unity and the goal of maturation and glorifying God.
2. Nothing should be done or even contemplated from the standpoint of selfishness or conceit. This is not just to apply in church but also in the home, on the job therefore in every circumstance.
3. Selfish ambition, *evriqei,a*, describes one who calculates everything that they do, every action they take, every relationship that they pursue is designed to promote themselves and their own interests. Therefore exhibit no sensitivity towards others.
4. Selfish ambition is definitely a characteristic that does not promote unity anywhere it is found.
5. The idea behind "**empty conceit**" is related to the result of selfish ambition in that what is gained is devoid of any lasting and real glory. They have a thirst for glory, the limelight but without a genuine basis for glory or praise.

6. So, whatever is attained from selfish ambition gives the individual an imagined advantage but not a real advantage in life. Imagined speaks of fantasy land thinking.
  7. The real advantage results from BD, the Word of God, applied in our life, in whatever niche you find yourself.
  8. An imagined advantage is always based on something that does not commend one to God. 1 Cor 6:12; 10:23 (not profitable spiritually)
  9. One's personal appearance, talents, I-Q, strength, possessions, wealth, etc. do not give one a real advantage.
  10. A real advantage that commends one to God and is eternal. (What is eternal about anything in point #9) 2 Cor 4:18
  11. Faith recognizes the real and forever-advantages in life as we walk by faith. 2 Cor 5:7  
The human viewpoint says there is nothing that is forever.  
All the BD you learn, all the Divine Good you produce as you use that BD, not only glorifies God in time but also in eternity as you are given eternal rewards for that DGP.
  12. The reality of salvation places one in possession of real advantages, things that the kosmos, the world system cannot bestow:
    - #1 - Eternal life
    - #2 - being blessed with all spiritual blessings
    - #3 - resurrection body
  13. Faithfulness to God in one's niche is the critical issue.  
Are you going to worship and serve God faithfully no matter the external pressures?
  14. If we are to fulfill the exhortation here to regard our fellow believer as more important than ourselves certain things must be kept in mind.
  15. First, that as believers we are all the products of God's grace. **1 Cor 15:10**
  16. Apart from Christ we can do nothing.  
**Jn 15:5; Phil 4:13**  
Remember the 4-fold appeal in 2:1 revolves around our position in Christ.
  17. Grace orientation produces a modest, humble opinion of oneself, not self defamation.
  18. We are not to have a false or unrealistic view of our own spiritual gifts related to others in the body of Christ, but that we are to have consideration for others, a sensitivity for other's needs, this is to precede a concern for our own.
  19. We need to remember that we are all members of the body of Christ and all have an important function to fulfill. 1 Cor 12:21-25  
It takes every member of the body doing its part to realize the unity and purpose that God has established for us in time.
  20. We must constantly test our instincts and desires that derive their source in the sin nature that would enlarge our own self importance over others.
- Our overt response and responsibility to this attitude of true humility is indicated in 2:4 *do not (merely) look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*
- To look out for - σκοπέω refers to looking attentively at, to look at something closely, here to consult one's own interest as the consequence of self-centeredness.
- Paul's exhortation is to widen our circle of consideration. We must learn to think beyond ourselves and give serious consideration to others, to not be so self absorbed.

#### **Observations on 2:4**

1. The self-centeredness that considers only one's "own rights," plans and interests must be replaced by a broader outlook that includes the interests of others.
2. This does not mean that your own needs and concerns are to be totally ignored.

3. We are NOT to neglect the needs of our families in order to involve ourselves in the good of others, -- MUST BE A BALANCE. 1 Tim 5:8
4. Paul's exhortation here is that as Believers your scope of concern is to be wide enough to include others. Rom 12:10
5. We need then to be sensitive to the niche and testing of others.
6. When Believers exercise this mutual concern, problems of disunity quickly disappear.
7. Pray for an increased awareness of others and the wisdom to apply it with understanding.

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## Obama's Radical Roots And Rules

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY

**Election '08:** Most Americans revile socialism, yet Barack Obama's poll numbers remain competitive. One explanation: He's a longtime disciple of a man whose mission was to teach radicals to disguise their ideology.

The presumptive Democratic presidential nominee's choice of the word "change" as his campaign's central slogan is not the product of focus-group studies, or the brainstorming sessions of his political consultants.

One of Obama's main inspirations was a man dedicated to revolutionary change that he was convinced "must be preceded by a passive, affirmative, nonchallenging attitude toward change among the mass of our people. They must feel so frustrated, so defeated, so lost, so futureless in the prevailing system that they are willing to let go of the past and change the future."

Sen. Obama was trained by Chicago's Industrial Areas Foundation, founded in 1940 by the radical organizer Saul Alinsky. In the 1980s, Obama spent years as director of the Developing Communities Project, which operated using Alinsky's strategies, and was involved with two other Alinsky-oriented entities, Acorn and Project Vote.

On the Obama campaign Web site can be found a photo of him teaching in a University of Chicago classroom with "Power Analysis" and "Relationships Built on Self Interest" written on the blackboard — key terms utilized in the Alinsky method.

The far-left Alinsky had no time for liberalism or liberals, declaring that "a liberal is (someone) who puts his foot down firmly on thin air." He wanted nothing less than transformational radicalism. "America was begun by its radicals," he wrote. "America was built by its radicals. The hope and future of America lies with its radicals." And so, "This is the job for today's radical — to fan the embers of hopelessness into a flame to fight. To say, '... let us change it together!'"

Alinsky students ranged "from militant Indians to Chicanos to Puerto Ricans to blacks from all parts of the black power spectrum, from Panthers to radical philosophers, from a variety of campus activists, S.D.S. and others, to a priest who was joining a revolutionary party in South America."

Capitalism always was considered the enemy. "America's corporations are a spiritual slum," he wrote, "and their arrogance is the major threat to our future as a free society." Is it surprising that an Alinsky disciple such as Obama can promise so blithely to increase taxes on CEOs?

Obama calls his years as an Alinskyesque community organizer in Chicago "the best education I ever had, and where I learned the true meaning of my Christian faith." But as radicalism expert Richard Lawrence Poe has noted, "Camouflage is key to Alinsky-style organizing. In organizing coalitions of black churches in Chicago, Obama caught flak for not attending church himself. He became an instant churchgoer."

Indeed, Alinsky believed in sacrificing ethics and morals for the great cause. "Ethical standards must be elastic to stretch with the times," Alinsky wrote in his last book, "Rules

for Radicals," adding that "all values are relative in a world of political relativity."

Published a year before Alinsky's death in 1972, "Rules for Radicals" includes a dedication in which he gives "an over-the-shoulder acknowledgment to the very first radical . . . who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his own kingdom — Lucifer."

Alinsky's writings even explain what often seems like Obama's oversized ego. In New Hampshire in January, for example, the senator told an audience that "a beam of light will come down upon you, you will experience an epiphany . . . and you will suddenly realize that you must go to the polls and vote for Obama."

It was a bizarre spectacle, but consider that Alinsky believed that "anyone who is working against the haves is always facing odds, and in many cases heavy odds. If he or she does not have that complete self-confidence (or call it ego) that he can win, then the battle is lost before it is even begun."

According to Alinsky, "Ego must be so all-pervading that the personality of the organizer is contagious, that it converts the people from despair to defiance, creating a mass ego."

Alinsky also readily admitted that he didn't trust the people themselves. "It is the schizophrenia of a free society that we outwardly espouse faith in the people but inwardly have strong doubts whether the people can be trusted," he wrote. "Seeking some meaning in life," the middle class, according to Alinsky, "turn to an extreme chauvinism and become defenders of the 'American' faith."

This is evocative of Obama's remark during the primaries that small-town Americans are "bitter" and "cling to guns or religion."

Obama is also following Alinsky's instructions to the hard left for attaining power in America. In the last chapter of "Rules for

Radicals," titled "The Way Ahead," is found this declaration: "Activists and radicals, on and off our college campuses — people who are committed to change — must make a complete turnabout."

Alinsky noted that "our rebels have contemptuously rejected the values and way of life of the middle class. They have stigmatized it as materialistic, decadent, bourgeois, degenerate, imperialistic, war-mongering, brutalized and corrupt."

According to Alinsky, "They are right," but he cautioned his comrades that "the power and the people are in the big middle-class majority." Therefore, an effective radical activist "discards the rhetoric that always says 'pig' " in reference to police officers, plus other forms of disguise, "to radicalize parts of the middle class."

Obama's rhetorical window-dressing is easily recognizable as Alinskyesque camouflage. New annual spending of more than \$340 billion, as estimated by the National Taxpayers Union, is merely a wish to "recast" the safety net woven by FDR and LBJ, as Obama describes it in his writings. The free market is disparaged as a "winner-take-all" economy. Big tax increases masquerade as "restoring fairness to the economy."

Barack Obama's "Change We Can Believe In" is simply socialism — imposed by stratagem because Americans have never believed in Marxist economics. Saul Alinsky understood this, and his ghost is alive and well — and threatening to haunt the White House.