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While St Paul was in prison because of his preaching, he wrote to the Christian community in the city of Philippi. He had been the very first to preach the Gospel there, and many people had come to believe and had committed themselves generously to this new life. Even after Paul had left them, they continued to bear witness to Christian love. Knowing this about them made him very happy, which is why his letter is full of affection for the Philippians.

 He encouraged them, therefore, to go ahead and to grow both as individuals and as a community. For this reason he reminded them of their model, whose gospel style of life they should learn from.

**‘Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.’**

What is this ‘mind’? How can we know the deepest desires Jesus had, so as to imitate him?

Paul understood how: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had emptied himself and had come down among us. He became man and was completely at the service of the Father, so that we could become children of God. (Paul had written about this to the Galatians, saying, ‘And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”’ (Gal 4:6). And in John’s Gospel it says, ‘But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God’ (Jn 1:12).)

Jesus had fulfilled his mission through the way he lived his whole life. He continually humbled himself so as to reach those who were the most small, weak or insecure: lepers, widows, strangers or sinners. He raised them up, making them feel loved and saved at last.

**‘Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.’**

In order to recognize and cultivate the mind of Jesus in us, let’s first be aware of his love and the power of his forgiveness. Then let’s look to him, making the style of his life our own. It urges us to open our hearts, our minds and our arms to welcome each person just as they are. Let’s avoid making any judgements about others, but allow ourselves instead to be enriched by all that is positive in those we meet, even when it may be hidden in a pile of wretchedness and errors so that it seems to us a ‘waste of time’ looking for it.

The strongest desire in the mind of Jesus, which we can make our own, is love freely given, the willingness to be at the service of others with our talents, whether great or small, and courageously and positively build up good relationships wherever we are. This love knows how to face difficulties, misunderstandings and differences with a gentle spirit, determined to find the ways of dialogue and mutual agreement.

**‘Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.’**

Chiara Lubich let the gospel guide her entire life, and she experienced its power. She wrote, ‘*Imitating Jesus means understanding that we Christians only make sense if we live* for *others, if we think of our existence as a service for our brothers and sister, if we organize our lives on this basis. Then we will fulfil what Jesus has most at heart. We will have fully grasped the Gospel. And we will be truly blessed.*’

*Letizia Magri*