

Philippians 2:5-11 — Humility Leads To Honor

June 14, 2020

It is great to be back in the building! I missed everyone. I never realized how much we would miss the church family until we didn't have the church family around each week. Everyone I talked to has felt that way.

I want to say a special thanks to those who humbly chose to put others before themselves and attend a video venue either in the Commons or the gym. I also want to say a special "Hello" to those watching via livestream. Given the current COVID risk in our community, it makes sense for those at risk to join us via livestream at this time. Please know you are loved and missed.

Two weeks ago in Philippians, Paul talked about humility and that it is humility in the church which produces unity in the church. At that time, Paul gave us a description of what humility looks like.

Humility is considering others more significant than ourselves. Humility is looking out not just for our interests but for the interests of others.

Since that sermon, our entire country experienced what happens when Paul's words on humility are NOT applied.

It began with police officers who were considered racist. Let's drop the racist term for a moment. They were proud people and not humble people. They didn't consider George Floyd better than themselves. They didn't look out for George Floyd's interests but only for their own interests. With arrogance, and an attitude of superiority, they used their position of power to painfully take George Floyd's life. As a result of their actions, an entire country was furious. It didn't matter if you were black or white. Officers given the privilege of wearing blue and

carrying a badge should never treat anyone that way. It doesn't matter the color of their skin. Many in the black community were especially hurt. What began as peaceful protests unfortunately soon turned violent.

Bricks were thrown at police, and molotov cocktails were used to burn police. Police were shot, stabbed and killed. When I was writing this message, more than 750 police have been sent to the hospital. To be clear, this destruction was color blind. Black businesses and white businesses were burned to the ground. I watched a video of a young black man beating an elderly black man over the head with a 2-by-4 because the elderly black man tried to stop the young man from looting and burning.

This violence didn't bring people together. It didn't bring unity between races but only more hatred. Remember, the only path to unity is through humility, not violence and pride. The path to unity is considering others as more significant than ourselves and looking out for others' interests, not just our own. Burning, beating, and shooting tears people apart. That is especially true in the church but it is also true in the world.

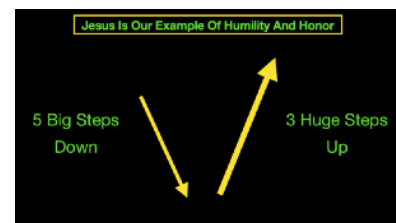
This morning, as we return to the book of Philippians, Paul moves from talking about the principles of humility we are to follow to giving us a great example of humility. Who is the example of a humility we are to follow? His name is Jesus. Jesus was the humblest person to walk the face of the Earth. He is the one we want to learn from. He is the one we want to follow. Let's read Philippians 2:5-11, and then we will study it together.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:5–11 (ESV)

This passage breaks into two pieces. First, Paul worked his way down. He shows us the descent of Christ, the extent of the humility of Jesus. Paul detailed five big steps down Jesus took. Second, Paul showed us the exaltation of Jesus.

He showed us how Jesus was richly rewarded by God the Father for his humility. Paul ended by telling us Jesus' humility is not just an example for us to follow, but the reward Jesus was given for his



humility is something all humble Christians can look forward to enjoying. **The more we humble ourselves in this life like Jesus, the greater our reward will be from God the Father in the next life.** That is a principle we must remember. Humility is hard but it is never a losing situation. God LOVES to reward the humble.

Let's dive into our study.

The key to understanding all of these verses begins in verse 5.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus... Philippians 2:5 (ESV)

The attitude of considering others more significant than ourselves and looking out for their interests, not just our own, is foreign to the world around us. We live in a self-oriented world where people's primary goal is to look out for themselves and care about themselves.

It is different for Christians. A humble attitude that takes an interest in others is not foreign to us. It is what God is cultivating in us.

We have been saved by Jesus, and the Holy Spirit has come into our hearts. The spirit of Christ in us starts forming the mindset of Christ among us. That is an attitude that cares about others, not just ourselves. While this attitude is unnatural in the world around us, it is the very attitude of Christ that the Holy Spirit is cultivating within us. We do not try and develop this attitude on our own. The more we walk with Christ, the more we find this others-first attitude within us.

I point this out so we realize how foreign this others-first attitude is in the world around us but how essential it must be among us as Christians.

The Descent of Jesus — The humility of Jesus led him to come down and die for us.

...who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped... Philippians 2:6 (ESV)

Paul began by saying Jesus was in the form of God. What does it mean that Jesus was in the form of God? The Greek word for “form” is the word *morphe*. The Greek word *morphe* comes over into English. We sometimes hear scientists using it. They talk about metamorphosis, which means changing forms.

The Greek word *morphe* doesn’t just mean “form.” That is a simple bald definition. A more precise definition of the Greek word *morphe* is a form that truly expresses its underlying nature. When Paul said Jesus was in the form of God, that is saying Jesus — before he took on flesh and came to Earth — for all of eternity past, was in his true essence, was in his deepest being, God. Jesus was, is, and always will be nothing less than God.

The best way to understand the meaning of the Greek word *morphe* is to compare it to another Greek word, which is the word *schema*. Both are translated in our English Bible using the word “form,” but there is a big difference between the words.

Morphe means something appears to be what it is and its appearance accurately represents its true identity.

Schema means something appears to be one thing but its appearance DOESN'T represent its true nature. *Schema* means something is wearing a mask.

My favorite illustration of the difference between *morphe* and *schema* is the transgender movement. In that movement, people of one gender are convinced they have the wrong gender. They start wearing clothes of the opposite sex, take hormones of the opposite sex, having surgeries to change their anatomy to the opposite sex. Some people finish the procedures and their changea look quite convincing. The problem is that no matter how hard they try to become the opposite sex, all they can do is change their *schema*. They can only change their appearance on the outside. They can never change their *morphe*, their true identity on the inside. Every cell in their body either has an XX chromosome — and they are female — or an XY chromosome — and they are male. They may successfully change their *schema* but they cannot change their true *morphe*.

When Paul said Jesus existed in the form of God, and Paul used the Greek word *morphe*, he was using that word for an important reason. He said Jesus was, is, and always will be God. He didn't just appear to be God. Jesus is in his deepest essence, on his genetic level, nothing less than God. That is Jesus' true character, his true nature.

Paul said this because he wanted us to know where Jesus began when he humbled himself. Jesus started from the highest place in the universe because he is the highest being in the universe. Jesus is nothing less than pure God.

Why do we need to discuss Jesus' starting point?

Every false religion that attacks Christianity will attack either the deity or the humanity of Jesus. Most of them will attack Jesus' deity. They will tell you Jesus is not God — "He may look like God but he isn't God." For example, take the Jehovah's Witnesses. They may not tell you this right away, but they will eventually admit they do not believe Jesus is God. They believe Jesus is the first created being. They believe Jesus is less than God because they claim it would be too much for God to become man.

The problem is this clearly contradicts the Bible. It clearly contradicts exactly what Paul said in this verse.

If Jesus isn't God, it also destroys the gospel message. It would leave everyone who trusts in Christ unsaved. This amazing truth, that Jesus is nothing less than pure God and as such holds the highest position in the universe, is not just found in an obscure Greek word in the book of Philipians. It is all over the Bible. Let me show you an easy way to find it in the Gospel of John. John began his gospel with these words.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1 (ESV)

John talked about the Word. At first, John didn't define the Word, he just described the Word. The Word has always existed from eternity past. The Word is in some way distinct from God the Father, yet at the same time the Word is

God, just like God the Father. John intended to begin his gospel with this mind bender. He gave us truth but he wanted us to keep reading to understand the truth. If we keep reading in the Gospel of John, John gave us the identity of Word that has always existed, who is God, yet who in some way is distinct from God the Father.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 (ESV)

The Word is Jesus. The Word has now taken on a human body to live among us and walk among us. Jesus is nothing short of true God!

When John used the term “Word” to refer to Jesus, the Jews would have instantly associated the Word of God with the creative power of God. In Genesis 1 and 2, God spoke his word, and things were created. Jews reading John’s Gospel would have connected that the Word of God, who is Jesus, as the same Word of God who created everything in the universe from the book of Genesis.

Both the apostle John and the apostle Paul affirmed that Jesus is the Word of God who created all things that exist out nothing. Speaking about the Word of God, who is Jesus, John said this:

All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:3 (ESV)

The apostle Paul also said that about Jesus.

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16 (ESV)

Jesus didn’t just create things in eternity past, but his miracles were creative acts of God on Earth where he continued to create things out of nothing. Creating something out of nothing is what only God can do. He created fish and

bread to feed thousands out of a little boy's lunch. In the palms of his hands he instantly created fully-formed fish and fresh bread. He created sight in eyes that were blind. He created the ability not just to speak language and hear language in the ears and mouth of a deaf-mute man, he also created the ability to comprehend language the deaf-mute man had never heard and the ability to speak with perfect fluency language the deaf-mute man had never spoken. Jesus created that ability in the man's mind out of nothing.

When we studied Jesus curing leprosy, he created things out of nothing. When we studied Jesus curing leprosy in the Gospel of Mark, we sung a silly children's song, you might remember it, "Leprosy... all my parts are falling off can't you see... I have the disease of leprosy." Lepers had fingers rot off their hands, toes rot off their feet, noses and ears rot off their faces. When Jesus cured lepers, he instant created fingers, toes, noses, ears, and flesh out of nothing! Those are things only God can do! Those are things only the creator of the universe, who made something out of nothing, can do.

So before we look at Jesus' humility, we must begin by understanding Jesus' full identity. Jesus is nothing less than pure God. Jesus is the Word of God. He is the one who created everything in the universe. He is the one who holds the entire universe together. Nothing exists in the universe that wasn't created by Jesus.

Now that we see the height from which Jesus started, let us see the depths to which Jesus descended in humility to save you and me.

1. Jesus humbled himself by not insisting he hold onto his rights as the creator.

he did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.

Paul began by saying, “Jesus did not regard his equality with God...” In case you missed it, this verse begins by restating the point Paul just made. Jesus is equal to God. The Greek word for “equal” is the Greek word *isos*. It means exactly equal. We use the Greek word *isos* in English. Remember an isosceles triangle? A triangle with two exactly equal sides? That is the way Jesus is described. He is exactly equal to the rest of the godhead.

Paul said Jesus did not consider his equality with God a thing to be grasped. That means to be clutched. It means to be held onto. Jesus had all the rights and privileges of being God and creating the universe. I cannot imagine the honor and privileges that comes with being the one who created everything out of nothing. Jesus didn't demand to hold onto the rights and privileges that came with his position. He was willing to set aside all of the rights and privileges of his identity as God. The one who created everything and who was worshipped as God set aside all of that so filthy sinners who deserve the lake of fire, that is you and me, could be saved. He considered us more significant than himself. He looked out for our interests, not just his own.

That is what humility begets. That is what humble people do. They are willing to give up their rights, privileges, and position to serve and save people far less than they are, people who are ungrateful, wicked and rebellious, like you and me. That is what humility looks like. That is what humility does. It gives up the comforts, privileges, and rights that are earned and deserved to save

ungrateful and undeserving people, like you and me. It is setting aside the deserved and justified comforts of your life, to humble yourself and serve ungrateful and undeserving people.

2. Jesus humbled himself by emptying himself.

But emptied himself...

What does it mean that Jesus emptied himself? This is talking about the incarnation. It is Jesus taking on a body in the womb of Mary. What happened in that moment? Some people read the word “empty” and think that when Jesus came to Earth, Jesus must have given up some of his divinity, so he could take on humanity. They think Jesus was 50 percent a human being and 50 percent a divine being.

At first, that sounds like a reasonable explanation until we think about it for a bit. If Jesus went from being 100 percent God, to only 50 percent God, then would he cease to be God? If Jesus was only 50 percent a man, then he wasn't truly a man. How could Jesus identify with us or understand us if he wasn't truly a man like us? Think of it from the perspective of your own life. Either someone is 100 percent a human being or is a not human being. If there a person in this room who is only 50 percent human, that person wouldn't be human. It doesn't matter if someone is very old or very young or even if that person is still in the womb, all people are 100 percent human. If they are less than that, they aren't human. Jesus would not still be God if he didn't remain 100 percent God. Jesus could not be man if he was not 100 percent man.

This means that when Jesus took on flesh, he was 100 percent God and 100 percent man at the same time! To prove it to you, I point you to the transfiguration we studied in the Gospel of Mark a few months ago.

At that time, even though Jesus climbed the Mount of Transfiguration looking no different than an ordinary human being, while on the top of the mountain, Jesus temporarily let his divine glory shine through. The Bible says his face shown with glory as bright as the sun. His clothes flashed with the whiteness and brightness of lighting. At that time, Jesus temporarily let his divinity shine through his humanity. What we see is Jesus as God simply poured himself into a small vessel when he became a man. Jesus didn't lose his divinity in the womb of Mary. He added humanity to his divinity in the womb of Mary. On Earth, Jesus veiled his glory. He never lost his glory.

Here is the definition I gave you in your outline. I wrote this down for you to refer back to it. It is important we get this right.

Jesus emptying himself means that Jesus voluntarily chose to limit the free exercise of his divine attributes so he could fully identify with us in every way. Jesus didn't lose his divine attributes when he became a man. Emptying himself meant Jesus chose not to use his divine attributes when he became a man.

If emptying himself doesn't mean Jesus lost any of his divinity, he just added to himself humanity, then what did he empty himself of? Let's find out.

When Jesus emptied himself, what attributes did he set aside?

1. He temporarily gave up his heavenly glory.

I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. John 17:4–5 (ESV)

When Jesus humbled himself and took on flesh, he temporarily gave up his glory in heaven. He longed to get that glory back and to return to face-to-face relationship with God the Father. Jesus gave up the adoring praises of the angels so he could be spit on and whipped.

2. He gave up the independent use of his authority.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.
Hebrews 5:8 (ESV)

I don't know all there is to know about the way the Trinity operates. I do know God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit operate in perfect, loving, and joyful harmony with one another. There is no conflict between the God the Father, God the Son, and Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, in some mysterious way, when Jesus took on flesh, for the first time he had to learn obedience. For the first time it was hard for him to do his father's will, not just pure joy for him to do his father's will.

Think of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane as he knew his father's will was for him to die, for him to become sin for us. This would be unspeakable anguish. Jesus pleaded to God the Father, "if possible, let this cup pass from me."

Jesus gave up the joy of obedience for the pain of obedience when he took on flesh.

3. He chose to limit his divine knowledge.

But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. Matthew 24:36 (ESV)

As completely equal with God, Jesus should know the day of his return, but since he chose to limit himself, he chose to not know the day of his return.

Jesus didn't stop being God, but he chose to limit some of his attributes as God. He chose to limit the knowledge of the day of his return.

4. He set aside his eternal riches.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV)

It is impossible for us to comprehend the riches of Christ. Jesus created everything. Jesus owns everything. Jesus could not possess any more riches than he already possessed in heaven. Before Jesus came to Earth, who could give something to Jesus that he did not already own?

When Jesus came to Earth and poured all of himself into a human body, he gave up his vast wealth. Jesus was born into a poor family. The Bible tells us foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man had no place to lay his head. Jesus was so poor, he was a homeless man. Jesus had to borrow a donkey to ride into Jerusalem for the Triumphal Entry. Jesus didn't own a donkey. Today, we would say Jesus was so poor he didn't have a car. Jesus had to borrow a boat to sail across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was too poor to own a boat. Jesus had to borrow a tomb. He was too poor to have a tomb. When Jesus died, the only thing he owned were the clothes on his back. The one who owned everything emptied himself of his riches so he could be the one who owned nothing.

5. He gave up his favorable relationship with God the Father.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

Jesus gave up the favorable relationship he had with God the Father for an unfavorable one. Before the cross, Jesus and God the Father had been in an eternal love relationship with one another that was never broken. Jesus was willing to have God the Father turn his back on him. Jesus was not just willing to have this relationship broken but to endure all of the wrath of his father that we deserve for our sin. An eternity of just wrath in the lake of fire was poured out in concentrated form on God's own son while he hung on the cross. God the Father and God the Son, who had been in the closest most joy-filled relationship in the universe, experienced the most distant and wrath-filled relationship in the universe as Jesus hung on the cross.

Use your imagination to think of it this way. Those of you who are married know the joy a healthy marriage can bring. You also know the incredible pain that exists between a husband and wife when they fight and have deep hatred for one another. That is a small sampling of what Jesus experienced. It is a small sampling of the joy-filled relationship Jesus gave up.

We know Jesus experienced this and this broken relationship was one of the most exquisite agonies of the cross as Jesus cried out, "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?" The pain of the broken relationship was killing Jesus.

This is what humility does. This is what humility looks like. It means having rights and privileges but not holding onto them, not demanding them but willingly letting go of those rights and privileges. It is to empty ourselves of them to humbly serve and love others who are undeserving and ungrateful, yet humility

still considers ungrateful sinners as more significant themselves, just like Jesus did for us.

How humble was Jesus? How low did Jesus go? He never got rid of the rights and privileges of being God, he just chose to not use those rights and privileges so he could completely identify with us and become one of us in every way.

3. Jesus humbled himself by becoming a slave to serve us.

By taking the form of a servant...

Jesus didn't just set aside his divinity to take on humanity and identify with us as human beings, but look at the role he took. Jesus didn't take on the role of a king, even though he is one. Jesus didn't live in a home even though he deserved one. Jesus took on the role of a servant, literally the role of a slave. This doesn't stop us in our tracks like it should. A slave in the ancient world was the worst of people. He or she was the lowest of humanity. Slavery was a life of serving others and never serving yourself. That is the kind of human being Jesus became.

This was not theatrical. Jesus did not just appear to be a slave to fake us out, like he was dressing up as a slave for Halloween. Jesus didn't pretend to be a slave. He actually became a slave, a servant of everyone.

When it says he took on the form of a servant, the word for "form" is the word Greek *morphe*. It is not the Greek word *schema*. We learned the significance of the word *morphe*. Jesus didn't just appear to be a servant of others, he actually came as a legitimate servant of others all the way down to every fiber of his being. This is why we read Jesus describing himself this way.

...But I am among you as the one who serves. Luke 22:27 (ESV)

Jesus' whole life was about serving other people. Name one thing in Jesus' life where we read about Jesus serving himself. As we learned in the Gospel of Mark, when Jesus was healing the sick, he never took a lunch break. He kept healing people late into the night, skipping meals because he was there as a servant of people. Remember in the book of Mark when Jesus tried to get away with his disciples for some rest? Everybody was exhausted and needed some peace and quiet away from the crowds. What did the crowds do when Jesus and his disciples took a boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee? They ran ahead of Jesus and met him there. Most of us would have told the crowds to go home. We are on vacation. We are off duty. It is our day off and everyone is exhausted. That is not what Jesus did. He pulled the boat to shore, and in spite of being completely exhausted, he began healing and teaching people. Jesus took on the role of a servant of everyone, a slave.

At the Last Supper, when the apostles were jockeying for positions of power and trying to decide who was the most important, so nobody would wash dirty feet, Jesus — who was the honored guest for the meal — took off his outer garment and wrapped a towel around his waist. He did the job of the lowest slave in the house. He washed everyone's dirty feet. Jesus so humbled himself that he didn't just become a man, but he became the lowest of men, a servant of everyone.

4. Jesus humbled himself by identifying with our humanity in every way.

Being born in the likeness of men...

The word “likeness” is the Greek word *homoionma*. It means similarity. Paul said that when Jesus was born and lived among us, he so completely identified with our humanity in every way that nobody could have looked at him and identified him as God. Jesus laid aside his divine prerogatives so completely and adopted humanity so fully that nobody was able to recognize Jesus as God because he was completely human in every way! Jesus didn’t glow in the dark. Jesus didn’t use his divine powers to help him with homework at school. When Jesus worked as a carpenter with his father, the one who created trees needed to learn how to cut, sand, plane and build furniture out of trees. This is why when the people of Nazareth, Jesus’ hometown, heard of Jesus performing miracles and claiming to be God, they thought Jesus was nuts. They said, “Who does this guy think he is? He is only the carpenter’s son!” In 30 years of living in Nazareth, nobody recognized Jesus’ true identity. His true identity wasn’t revealed until he performed his creative miracles making something out of nothing, doing things only God can do. That is how low Jesus was willing to go. The one who created the universe restrained his divine attributes so completely that he could identify with us in every way.

This is why the Bible tells us Jesus grew tired. Jesus needed to sleep. Jesus grew thirsty. Jesus had to study and learn, just like we do. Jesus went through puberty. Jesus needed a haircut and a shower. Jesus needed to do his laundry. Jesus completely identified with us in every way except for sin.

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17 (ESV)

This is why the writer of Hebrews said...

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15 (ESV)

This is humility. Jesus went down, way down. He did not hold onto the rights and honor of being God but instead limited the exercise of those rights and attributes. He fused himself with a human body so he could experience humanity in every way with all of the temptations and pain of sin while he never committed sin.

This is humility. That is stooping low. The only way for us to have unity with God the Father was for Jesus to go down, all the way down to completely identify with us in every way. That is the example held out to us to follow.

5. Jesus humbled himself to the point of death.

And being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death...

Jesus didn't just humble himself to become a man. He didn't just humble himself by becoming a poor man, a slave to other men. The one who is God and created everything in the universe humbled himself to be obedient to the point of death. Imagine what it would be like to know that God the Father's will for your life was that you would die for sin. What great humility it would take to be willing to choose to suffer, to choose to die.

It was no more pleasant for Jesus to die than for you or me to die. In fact, it was far worse for Jesus to die as God the Father poured out an eternity of wrath on his son. In addition, Jesus is the one who could not die so he had to choose to die. Imagine choosing this agony. Imagine choosing when to die and give up your spirit.

Remember, Jesus used none of his divinity to insulate himself from the pain of death on the cross. Jesus humbled himself to go through all of this because he loves us. He considered us more significant than himself. There was no way for us to be saved from our sin unless he did this for us. Jesus did this not because he was looking out for his interests but he was considering our interests, the only way we could be saved. It is so humbling to have a Jesus that loves us so much. It is so humbling to have a Jesus that loves us so much he chose to go through all of this.

Paul reminded us that Jesus' death was not an ordinary death. It was even death on a cross. That is the bottom. The absolute bottom. Crucifixion was originally invented by the Persians, but it was perfected by the Romans. It was considered to be the most hideous form of death conceived by man. Burning was an easier way to die. Drowning was an easier way to die. Crucifixion was so bad, no Roman citizen was allowed to die by crucifixion, no matter what crime they committed. They even invented a word in the Greek to describe the kind of pain that was only achieved by death on the cross; it was called *excrucis* pain. In English, we call it excruciating pain.

Those who were crucified hung stark naked before a crowd with the weight of their body supported by nails in their hands and feet. Imagine the pain of a nail in the palm of your hand supporting the full weight of your body. Imagine how hard it would be to breath as your arms stretched wide, collapsing your lungs. Imagine the searing pain of supporting your body up by your feet with the weight of your body being supported by a nail driven through your foot.

Have any of you had a deep splinter in your foot? Do you remember how painful it was? Do you remember how it was so painful you couldn't bring yourself to pull the splinter out? Now imagine not a splinter but a nail. Instead of the gentle pull of tweezers, imagine the entire weight of your body carried upon the nail in that wound.

Now imagine your back having been torn wide open with whips and hooks now rubbing back and forth on a rough wooden beam. The whole time you hung before the people you were dying to save, they were laughing at you, mocking you, spitting on you. How many of us would have given up? If we were Jesus, how many of us would have tapped into our divine power at that point and torn ourselves off that cross and obliterated humanity for their hideous evil? We would have done that. Jesus didn't do that.

At any time Jesus could have called on his divine power to take himself off the cross. At any moment he could have stopped it, but he didn't. He endured all of this to the point of agonizing death because he knew that was the only way we could be saved. Jesus is so humble. Jesus kept considering us more significant than himself. Jesus was constantly looking out for our interests, not his own.

That is humility. That is what we are called to as Christians. We are to humble ourselves to care for other people, with crazy amounts of humility, like Jesus humbled himself to love and save us with crazy amounts of humility.

That is how the world recognizes us as Christians. We are little Christs in this world. We have crazy humility as we love and serve others around us, just like Jesus did for us.

Before we go further, let me give you some observations about humility that we have learned from Jesus.

Unity in the church comes when we give up our rights to humbly serve others like Jesus in the church.

If we want humility in our church, we must be super crazy humble. It doesn't matter how important you are in this world. It doesn't matter how much money we make in this world. It doesn't matter who we are. We are called to go low. We are called to be humble and be servants of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Even if they don't understand us, even if they get angry at us, we keep humbling ourselves to love and serve them just as Jesus kept humbling himself to love and serve us. When we do that, the church is a unified place, which is a beautiful thing.

Unity in marriage comes when we give up our rights to humbly serve our spouses, like Jesus gave up his rights to humbly love and serve us.

I see this in marriage counseling. The husband raises his voice and yells at his wife. The wife gets emotional and manipulative. I hear a constant refrain. "I don't deserve this..." "You owe me this..." Those are all catch phrases of pride, not loving phrases of humility. If you have a husband and wife that are willing to swallow the hurt and be humble servants of one another like Jesus is to them, a marriage will make it. If a marriage is filled with catch phrases of pride, instead of humility, it is headed for the rocks. Your marriage will break apart. Pride separates people. Humility unites people.

Unity in culture comes when we give up our rights to humbly love and serve others, like Jesus gave up his rights to humbly love and serve us. We should expect to be hated and mistreated when we do this.

Unity between races is not found by protesting, violence, looting and burning. Unity is found by people being humble. It comes from people being willing to giving up their rights, from people being willing to leave their place of privilege to love and serve others. It comes from being willing to be misunderstood and laughed at by the very people we humble ourselves to serve. That happened to Jesus; we should expect it to happen to us. Politics will not change people's hearts. An organization called Black Lives Matter will not change people's hearts. Only Jesus changes hearts. Only Jesus can make us humble people who serve others, instead of prideful people who want to use others.

The Exaltation of Jesus — God the Father greatly rewarded Jesus because of the great humility of Jesus.

I love where Paul went next. Great humility like Jesus doesn't just lead to unity in the church. It doesn't just lead to unity in marriage. It doesn't just lead to unity in culture. Humility also leads to a great reward. **The greater the humility of God's people, the greater the reward will be for God's people.** Once again, the example for us to follow when it comes to reward for humility is Jesus.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, Philippians 2:9 (ESV)

As a result of Christ's incredible humility to stoop so low to love and save us, God the Father richly rewarded Jesus.

God rewarded Jesus' humility by giving him the highest position in the universe.

Paul said God has highly exalted Jesus. In Greek it literally says God hyper-exalted Jesus. The idea is God the Father exalted Jesus as high as is possible in the universe. There is no place higher for Jesus to go. There is no being that can be higher than the resurrected Jesus right now.

Some of you will say, that doesn't sound impressive. This doesn't make sense. I thought Jesus was, is, and always will be God. How could God the Father give Jesus the highest position of honor in the universe when as God, Jesus already possessed the highest position in the universe? That is a good question.

Jesus held the position of being God before he humbled himself to permanently take on a human body. Jesus is now holding the highest position in the universe in a human body. Remember that Jesus as God has chosen to restrain his divine attributes so he could identify with us in every way. Now the one who identifies with us in every way and who is in a resurrected body that is identical to what our resurrected bodies will be has been given the highest position in the universe.

Think of it this way. God the Father gave Jesus, as a human being just like us, the highest position in the universe over everything that exists because he perfectly humbled himself and died for us. Jesus held the highest position in the universe before he became a man. Now Jesus holds the highest position in the universe now that he has become a man. What is even more amazing is we can call Jesus our brother. We are adopted brothers and sisters of the man who has

been placed in the highest position of authority in the universe. Jesus as a man is placed in authority over everything by God. It doesn't matter how far you look with a space telescope, Jesus as God created it all. Jesus as a man is now ruling over it all. He is our brother. He took on humanity to save us because he loves us. This is mind boggling! Look what other Scriptures say about the resurrected Jesus.

...that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church... Ephesians 1:20–22 (ESV)

But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:9 (ESV)

As a reward for Jesus' humility, God gave Jesus the position of highest authority and power in the universe. Paul's point was that just as God loved rewarding Jesus for his great humility in this life, God the Father looks forward to rewarding the humble Christian in the next life.

The more humble we are for serving and loving other people in this life, the greater our reward will be from God the Father in the next life.

God rewarded Jesus' humility by giving him the highest name in the universe.

Bestowed on him the name that is above every name...

What is this name? At first, it doesn't look like Paul told us. If we keep reading, he did tell us the name.

...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:11 (ESV)

The name that Jesus is given is “Lord.” That may not sound impressive until you realize that in the Greek that is the personal name of God. Jesus as the man who is God is not just given the highest position in the universe, but he is also given the highest title in the universe. The man Jesus is given the title of God. The only way to understand the significance of this is to remember that as a divine being, Jesus possessed those things, but as a human being, Jesus possessed none of those things. Jesus, as a human being, is given the title of God.

The point is, God loves to reward the humble. The more we humble ourselves to love and serve others in this life, like Jesus did for us, the greater our reward will be in the next life, just like it was for Jesus. Jesus was the ultimate humble person who was given the ultimate reward, the highest position in the universe and the highest name in the universe.

God rewarded Jesus’ humility by making him the one everyone will worship in the universe.

...so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:10–11 (ESV)

Paul then gave us a picture of eternity. Jesus’ reward for his obedience is not just that he holds the highest place in all creation. It is not just that Jesus holds the greatest name in all creation. It is that everyone and everything will bow the knee and worship Jesus, the man who is God, for eternity. No exceptions. It doesn’t matter how powerful the spiritual beings are in heaven, all of them will bow the knee and worship Jesus. Michael the Archangel will bow the knee and

worship Jesus willingly. Satan the fallen angel will bow the knee and worship Jesus unwillingly, but he will do it.

Paul's point was simply this: Look at the incredible depth of humiliation to which Jesus stooped to serve us and save us. Look at the incredible amount of reward given him by God as a result of his humility.

The same God who exalted the humble Christ, will also exalt the humble Christian.

This is the principle.

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. James 4:10 (ESV)

Conclusion

This morning, there are two things we have learned that we must keep in mind when it comes to humility.

1. **The only way to unity in this world is through humility.** That humility will sometimes be costly. It may sometimes be painful. It was for Jesus. He gave us an example to follow as the most humble one in the world.
2. **The only way to be richly rewarded by God is through humility.** The lower we are willing to go to love, serve and care for other people, the higher our reward will be in eternity from God the father.



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