

Meditation #5 – Philippians 2:6-11, “The Pattern of Christ’s Humble Love”

1. Last time, we heard Paul’s plea to humble gospel love, but here shows us the supreme pattern of humble love which gives us the power to walk in humility.
2. First, our Lord’s humility is to be the rule or standard for our lives. HOW did Jesus show us such humble love??? *He laid aside his **privileges** & assumed a humble **position** - “*although he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped*”
 - a. To be in the **form of God** highlights the **divinity** of Christ as the Son of God – he *radiates* who God is in his very nature. As we confess in the Nicene Creed, “*he is very God of very God.*” And so, he possesses glory, honor, majesty, splendor, and all authority. He is the very KING of heaven!
 - b. But Jesus did **not** hold onto these privileges. Today we see so many people insisting on their rights. In the States, we saw people marching to the Capitol with guns to protest the coronavirus restrictions. People have that right, but sometimes we can allow our freedom to trump our love for our neighbor in various ways.
 - i. But what do we see in Jesus? HE gave up his divine privileges in order to become a slave of all. “*He emptied himself...made of no reputation.*”
 - c. To **empty himself** can be understood as he **became nothing** for us. He became of **no reputation**. People talking about White Privilege today. This phrase seeks to point to the various privileges a person enjoys because of the color of their skin. Regardless of what you think of the term, as Christians we recognize that whatever privileges we are born into, we are not to feel guilty about them, but we are to recognize that they are good gifts of God that we are given to serve others. **Dr. Anthony Bradley** puts it this way in an article, “Our economic, genetic, or socially-conditioned privileges are not for the purpose of *protecting* and *conserving* said privileges for ourselves, but rather to pass on the benefits to others who are on the margins. Our privileges are bestowed upon us by God so that we may use them to love our neighbors well (Matt 22:36-40).”
 - d. This is what we see **Jesus** do. He gave up his divine privileges to become a servant of all. The King of the Universe gave up the privileges of heaven to become a small ordinary Jewish baby whose life story would be marked with suffering and rejection and would culminate at the cross. WHO shows love like this?
 - i. ILL: Imagine crossing over the border to a country that hostile to Christians. boundary & dedicating your life to those who may be hostile to you your entire life. This is what Jesus did for our salvation!
 - e. The one who had all authority, prestige, power, and glory crossed the line into our world, WHY? *Not to be served, but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many!*

- f. He emptied himself by *being born in the likeness of men* and being *found in human form*. He became a true human being. He did not lose his divinity at any moment - the Son of God became a human not by *subtraction*, but by *addition*.
 - g. Jesus crossed that most impossible divide between the Creator and the Created, and he humbled himself so low. *Remember how he washed his disciples' feet just before the hour of his crucifixion in **Jn. 13**. He laid aside his outer garments, got on his knees, and washed the feet of his dirty disciples, even his enemy Judas.
 - i. After this he called his disciples to himself to imitate his example and said in **Jn. 13:17**, "*if you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.*"
 - h. APP: none of us, men or women, like to take on a role of a servant. We'd rather be served, and be in charge, making the decisions, letting others serve us. But Jesus redefines leadership and true greatness in his kingdom and shows that it is marked by humility. Laying our lives down. Second, we see how Jesus...
3. He became an obedient servant – "*he was obedient to the point of death.*" As the obedient servant of God, he came to **undo** the consequences of the First Adam.
- a. What did the first Adam do? He grasped at equality with God, and did not serve God faithfully in his life, and as a result he brought death upon himself & this world. He did what we are tempted to do, he acted out of *selfish ambition*, and grasped at privileges that didn't belong to him.
 - b. Jesus is the **Last Adam** – although the privileges belonged to him, he gave them up for us. He became a faithful servant in the place of us who fail to serve God faithfully every day. *God said to the first Adam, if you are obedient to me, then that Tree is yours (tree of life) and he *failed*. But God said to Jesus, the final Adam, if you are obedient to me, then that Tree is yours (speaking of the cross), and he *succeeded* for our sakes.
 - c. He was obedient to the point of death...*even death on a cross*. The cross is an awful place of execution. It's the utter opposite of what Jesus enjoyed in glory. But Paul shows us here that Jesus *counted our salvation as more important than his own life*. The soldiers mocked him saying, "he saves others, he cannot save himself." & they were right. Jesus willingly gave his life for our sake.
4. Dear Christian, is your heart moved by this supreme example of Christ's humble love? HOW can we consider what Jesus gave up for us, and then hold on so tightly to our own rights, our own opinions, our own agendas??
5. Beloved, Jesus shows us that the path of humility is what leads to glory. "Therefore, God has highly exalted himself and bestowed on him the name above every name."
- a. The suffering obedience Christ offers is what *leads* to his great exaltation. Now Jesus is crowned with glory and honor! All will one day confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This was the confession of the Ap. Paul even from his prison cell. Even though

he was suffering for the gospel, stripped of all of his privileges in this humble position, he proclaimed Jesus Christ is Lord! This is our confession as well!

6. Because the path of humility is what leads to true glory, **1 Pt. 5:6**, *“humble yourself before the mighty hand of God, & he will exalt you.”* In the Christian life, ***the way down is the way up.*** As Augustine puts it, “Do you wish to rise, begin by descending.”
7. WHY should we walk on the path of humble Christian love today and in the week ahead? Because it is the path that leads to glory, and it is the path Jesus walked for our salvation. **Rom. 15:2-3**, *“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself but as it is written, “the reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”*

Conclusion

So may we live as those who prefer others in love.

*When we feel that ugly head of pride rising within us, may we consider Jesus. May we consider Jesus, the one who came *“not to be served, but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many.”* And by God’s grace, may we walk in his steps all the way to glory. Amen.