

Philippians – Week 4 – The Humility of Jesus Christ – Bible Study Helps

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the profound humility of Jesus Christ as a model for Christian living and unity. It emphasizes that true unity among believers requires a mindset of humility, selflessness, and esteeming others above oneself. The sermon draws parallels between Christ's sacrificial love and how Christians should interact with one another, highlighting the importance of this mindset for the advancement of the Gospel and the glory of God.

Key Points:

- Unity among believers is crucial for the advancement of the Gospel
- Christ's humility is the ultimate example for Christians to follow
- Believers must esteem others above themselves to achieve unity
- The mind of Christ involves sacrificial love and service to others
- Christian unity requires rejecting strife and vainglory
- Practical application of Christ's humility in daily life and relationships

Scripture Reference:

- Philippians 2:1-11

Stories:

- William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, exemplified the "others" mindset by choosing to walk alongside a bell-ringer rather than enjoying a luxurious ride
- An anecdote about a CEO leaving their office to work alongside lower-level employees
- References to Jesus touching lepers, welcoming children, and feeding multitudes as examples of His servant leadership

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Discipleship and Small Group Guide: The Humility of Jesus Christ

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Unity among believers is crucial for the gospel's sake.
2. True unity requires humility, which is exemplified by Jesus Christ.
3. We are called to esteem others above ourselves, following Christ's example.
4. Our mindset should reflect that of Christ, who humbled Himself for our salvation.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon mentions four blessings found in Christ: consolation, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, and bowels and mercies. How have you personally experienced these in your walk with Christ?
2. Why do you think unity is so important in the body of Christ? How does disunity affect our witness to the world?
3. Unity requires humility. Why do you think this is true? Can you share an example from your own life where pride hindered unity?
4. Reflect on Philippians 2:3-4. What are some practical ways we can "esteem others better than ourselves" in our daily lives?
5. The sermon emphasizes Jesus' humility in becoming human and dying on the cross. How does meditating on Christ's humility challenge your own attitudes and actions?
6. What areas of your life do you find it most difficult to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5)? Why?

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7. How does the promise of Christ's exaltation (Phil. 2:9-11) encourage you in your own journey of humility and service?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, intentionally look for opportunities to serve others, especially in ways that might be considered "beneath" you.

2. Identify one relationship where there's tension or disunity. Pray about how you can apply the principles of humility to improve that relationship.

3. Memorize Philippians 2:3-11 over the next week, meditating on Christ's example of humility.

4. Write a letter of encouragement to someone, focusing on their needs and concerns rather than your own.

5. As a group, brainstorm ways you can collectively serve your church or community in a humble, Christ-like manner.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for the example of Christ's humility. Ask for His help in cultivating a humble, others-focused mindset in your daily lives.

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Discipleship Questions

How have you personally experienced the blessings of consolation, comfort, fellowship, and compassion in Christ that Paul mentions in Philippians 2:1? How might reflecting on these experiences motivate you to pursue greater unity with other believers?

In what specific ways can you practice 'esteeming others better than yourself' in your daily life and relationships? What challenges might you face in doing so?

How does Jesus' example of humility, as described in Philippians 2:5-8, challenge our modern notions of success, status, and self-promotion?

What areas of your life might God be calling you to 'empty yourself' or lay aside your rights and privileges for the sake of others and the gospel?

How can we cultivate a mindset of unity and harmony within the church while still addressing important doctrinal or practical disagreements?

In what ways might your pursuit of personal reputation or image be hindering your ability to fully serve and glorify Christ?

How does the promise of Christ's ultimate exaltation (Philippians 2:9-11) encourage you to persevere in humility and sacrificial service?

What practical steps can you take to shift your focus from 'strife and vainglory' to 'lowliness of mind' in your interactions with others?

How might adopting the 'mind of Christ' transform your approach to conflicts or disagreements in your family, workplace, or church?

In what ways can you apply the principle of 'looking not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others' (Philippians 2:4) in your current life circumstances?

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A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

Day 1: The Humility of Christ

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

Devotional: Today, we reflect on the incredible humility of Jesus Christ. Despite being equal with God, He willingly emptied Himself and took on human form. He gave up His rights and privileges to become a man to die for sinners. Consider how Jesus, the Lord of all creation, became a servant and was obedient to death on a cross. How does this supreme example of humility challenge your own attitudes and actions? In what areas of your life do you struggle with pride or self-importance? Ask God to help you cultivate a Christ-like humility that puts others before yourself, just as Jesus did for us.

Day 2: Unity in the Body of Christ

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6

Devotional: The Apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of unity among believers. This unity isn't just about getting along; it's a reflection of the very nature of God. As you read, notice how Paul connects our behavior to our calling in Christ. He urges us to be humble, gentle, patient, and to bear with one another in love. These qualities are essential for maintaining unity. Reflect on your relationships within your church family. Are there any tensions or disagreements that are hindering unity? How can you apply these virtues to promote peace and oneness in your community of faith? Remember, our unity is a powerful testimony to the world of God's transforming love.

Day 3: The Mind of Christ

Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Devotional: Having the "mind of Christ" means allowing God to transform our thinking. It's a radical shift from the world's self-centered perspective to God's others-centered love. As you meditate on this passage, consider areas where your thinking might still conform to the patterns of this world. Are there attitudes or beliefs you hold that don't align with Christ's teachings? Transformation begins with offering ourselves completely to God. What might it look like for you to present your body as a "living sacrifice" today? Ask the Holy Spirit to renew your mind, helping you discern and embrace God's good, pleasing, and perfect will.

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Day 4: Serving Others in Love

Reading: Mark 10:35-45

Devotional: Jesus redefines greatness in God's kingdom. While the world seeks power and status, Jesus calls us to a life of service. Reflect on Jesus' words: "And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." How does this challenge our natural inclinations? Think about your various roles - at home, work, church, or in your community. In what ways can you embody Christ's servant leadership in these areas? Remember, Jesus didn't just teach about service; He demonstrated it by giving His life as a ransom for many. As you go about your day, look for opportunities to serve others sacrificially, following in the footsteps of our Savior.

Day 5: Exaltation Through Humility

Reading: James 4:7-10

Devotional: There's a paradox in God's kingdom: the way up is down. James echoes Jesus' teaching that those who humble themselves will be exalted. This passage calls us to submit to God, resist the devil, and draw near to God. It's an invitation to spiritual cleansing and sincere repentance. As you reflect, ask yourself: In what areas of my life am I resisting God's will? Where do I need to let go of pride and embrace humility? Remember, true humility isn't thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less. It's about recognizing our complete dependence on God and living in light of that truth. As you humble yourself before the Lord today, trust in His promise to lift you up in due time.

This reading plan and devotional guide focuses on cultivating Christ-like humility, promoting unity among believers, renewing our minds, serving others in love, and embracing the paradox of exaltation through humility. May these reflections deepen your walk with Christ and transform your relationships with others.