Imagine a Church Part 2
HUMILITY – OUTLINE AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GO DEEP

We must think big, start small, go deep and trust God! It is important to go deep.

How do we build a strong foundation? By doing what Jesus said!

Obedience is a proof of Lordship. ‘Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord and do not do what I say’ (Matthew 7:21)… And it is an interesting thought that the goal of teaching is obedience! Matthew 28:19.

KINGDOM MANIFESTO

- The Sermon on the Mount is sometimes thought of as Jesus’ “Kingdom Manifesto.” It expresses the spiritual implications of the rule of Jesus in our lives and shows us how we will live when Jesus is our Lord.

- God’s kingdom is countercultural and Christian spirituality is totally upside down!

  We lose our life to find it. (Matthew 10:39)
  Slavery leads to freedom. (Romans 6:18; 1 Corinthians 7:22)
  The foolish are wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18; cf. 4:10)
  The poor are rich. (James 2:5)
  The weak are strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)
  We die to live. (2 Corinthians 4:10)
  We give to receive. (Acts 20:35)
  The first are last and the last are first. (Mark 9:35)
  Turning the other cheek, going the second mile, giving the spare coat, washing feet, heap blessings on those who curse you, living without anger, laying down your life!

THE PATHWAY TO THE BLESSED LIFE IS PARADOXICAL!

- The last word of the OT is the word ‘CURSED’ and Jesus began His sermon with an announcement of blessings.
- Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10)
- Jesus is saying here that living this paradoxical lifestyle is our pathway to a joy that is self contained – a truly blessed life.

Question 1 – What do you think about these paradoxes? Share your struggles in living out these commands of Christ and encourage one another with testimonies of triumphs and blessings.
**HUMILITY**

We can sum up the first three beatitudes in one word ‘Humility.’ And Humility is essential for our spiritual growth. There is no progress in the Christian life without humility. We just stagnate in God.

**DOWN AND UP**

1) Down

‘Down’ is not a good word in our fast-paced society. Words that are related to it are not the kind of words that we like to hear: Down and out; downfall; down-hill; down-hearted; downcast; down syndrome; downgrade; downtrodden, down payment; and worse of all, down under.

Down is a word that's reserved for the weak; for the poor; for the unfortunate and losers.

2) Up

‘Up’ is a word we all loved. It is a word to be admired, to be pursued after. And words associated with it are words that people like hear: Upscale, up-market, upwardly mobile, upper class, up and coming, upbeat, upgrade, uptake, up town, etc. Why do you think they call the soft drink label 7-up; not 7-down?

You have to climb the corporate ladder. Up, as far as this world is concerned, is the direction of greatness. There is no other way. You ascend to fame, to money, to power, to comfort, and to pleasure.

**TRUE GREATNESS**

*What does God have to say about greatness? Phil 2: 5-8*

- Christ does not discourage the pursuit of greatness; he just radically realigns it.
- Paul’s message in Phil 2 is simply this: If you want to be truly great, then the direction you must go is down.

*In other words, you must descend into greatness.*

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT HUMILITY**

James 4:10

- Notice it says, “Humble your-self.” In other words, you do it!
- God’s not going to do it for you. You are the one that needs to be humbled.
1 Peter 5:5

- There is a certain obligation on young people to show respect and submission to those who are more senior than you.
- The word translated “clothe” in the NKJV is actually to put on precisely a certain type of apron. It was an apron that was only worn by slaves. Let it be apparent that you are a servant. Wear the clothing that marks you out as a servant.

Then the rest of verse 5 says: “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

- Pride is the desire for attention and praise from others. It means being at the center of the world and having everyone look to us, and acknowledge us as superior. It means raising a finger in the air and saying, "I’m number 1" and "I’m the greatest."
- God says repeatedly that he detests this pride. "I abhor the pride of Jacob" (Amos 6:8).

1 Peter 5:6

- It is God who determines the time when you are lifted up, not you. Jesus didn’t raise Himself from the tomb. He waited for His Father to do it! One of the biggest tests in our life is to humble ourselves and wait for God to respond. And sometimes He takes longer than we think He should.

EXAMPLES OF THE HUMBLE IN THE BIBLE

1. Abraham and Lot (Gen 13:14-18)

Abram could never have seen his inheritance until he had made that decision. When you humble yourself, God will take care of the consequences!

2. Ahab (1 Kings 21:17-29)

Because Ahab humbled himself before the Almighty and this is a law that works all the time: God gives grace to the humble but He resists the proud all the time.

3. Naaman (2 Kings 5)

Naaman thought that he could come to God in a big way on riding on his chariot! But he learnt that the way to approach God is to humble yourself.

4. James and John – The Two Sons of Thunder (Matthew 20:20-28)

The 10 were greatly displeased because they all wanted the job. There was nobody amongst the 12 that had pure motives. Jesus explained how the kingdom operates.

Question 2 – Success and Position can sometimes puff a person up. Does it mean God wants us to remain poor and insignificance? Of course not! So how can we remain humble in promotions? Share examples of successful men and women that are humble.

3
THREE WAYS TO WEAKEN PRIDE AND CULTIVATE HUMILITY

The first three beatitudes show us three ways we can weaken pride and cultivate humility:

1. **Begin the day acknowledging your complete dependence on God**
   - The word translated "poor" in Matthew 5:3 speaks of "cowering like a beggar." The poor in spirit recognize that they have no spiritual "assets." They know they are spiritually bankrupt.

2. **Remember the cross.**
   - Jesus used the strongest word for mourning. It is defined as the kind of grief that cannot be hidden.
   - One of the great functions of the cross is to open the eyes of men and women to the horror of sin. And when we see sin in all its horror, we cannot do anything else but to experience intense sorrows for our sin.

   When I survey the wondrous cross
   On which the Prince of glory died,
   My richest gain I count but loss,
   And pour contempt on all my pride. Isaac Watts

3. **Willingly accepts and submits to the will of God without resistance.**
   - Meek is a regular word for an animal which has been domesticated. It is the word for an animal which has learned to accept control. The strongest man to ever walk the earth said ‘Not My will but Your Will be done’. That means betrayal, pain and separation from His father, shame, humiliation and ultimately death. Yet He opened not His mouth like a lamb led to the slaughter.

PROMISES FOR THE HUMBLE

**God Will Not Despise the Worship of the Humble.** “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken spirit and a contrite heart, o God, you will not despise.” Psalm 51:17

**God Makes His Presence Known to the Humble.** “For this is what the high and lofty one says -- he who lives forever, whose name is holy: I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.” Isaiah 57:15

**The Humble Gets God’s attention.** It draws the gaze of our sovereign God (Isaiah 66:2). The trappings of religion do not attract God’s gracious gaze. Humility does.

**The Humble Pleases God.** He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God! Micah 6:8