



Week 9 – March 3, 2013

Who is This Man? – Humility

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Humility

Paul is talking about the nature of Christ (verses 6 and 7) and how to relate to others (verse 5).

Jesus was fully God. But he was also fully human. As a human he was a servant. Jesus said: “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” —Matthew 20:28

Biblical humility is often confused with self-deprecation or modesty. Like saying you’re not much of a chess player when you know perfectly well you are. True humility is:

- Surrendering and yielding to God in all areas of life
- Recognizing gifts and virtues others possess, particularly those that surpass our own. And, giving authentic encouragement and enthusiastic support to these persons.
- Recognizing our own limitations regarding talent and accomplishment. Not thinking more of ourselves than we should.

The words serve, service, or servant appear over 1,100 times in the New Testament. In the original language, serving implies action, faithfulness, and commitment. When humans demonstrate the nature of God, in this case humility and servanthood, relationships will thrive and be nourishing for both parties in the life-giving relationship.

Questions for Reflection

1. Name a humble person or a few humble people. What are some qualities and characteristics they have? What are some things they don’t do? What is your impression of this person or these people?

2. How do you do with humility in your life? Are certain areas more difficult than others?

3. Jesus was primarily a servant. What is the relationship between being humble and being a servant? How do you generally feel after serving another person? What would it take, in your life, to move from doing occasional acts of service to living a life of servanthood?

4. Is it difficult for you not to compare yourself to others? Do you tend to compare yourself to people you are “superior” to or “inferior” to? What are some negative things that happen when we constantly compare ourselves to others?

5. Part of humility is recognizing our own limits regarding talent and achievement. What are some ways we can push ourselves to grow and improve while also having the humility to know what we are capable of?

This Week's Prayer Focus - Humility

Pray this prayer daily during the week. Spend additional time focusing on a short section of the prayer. Spend a few moments in silence listening to God and being attentive to the ways God is speaking to you.

Dear God,

I am too influenced by what others think of me.

I am tired of pretending to be something I'm not.

I spend too much time and energy managing my image—

that I'm nicer, smarter, richer, more balanced,

healthier, and more spiritual than I actually am.

Stop me from promoting and publicizing myself.

I don't want to be discouraged by criticism.

I don't want to be prideful when applause comes my way.

Teach me the whys and hows of having a humble mind.

Soften my heart. Enlarge my heart. Make my heart humble.

Give me the humility that

admits my mistakes and welcomes guidance

realizes my vulnerability and recognizes my need for You.

Let me experience forgiveness and favor through humility.

Through humility, may love and grace be seen in me and through me.

Let me see myself for who I am and trust more fully in You.

Save me from the desire of being approved.

Rescue me from the fear of being forgotten.

Deliver me from the desire of being honored.

Liberate me from the fear of being less than others.

Allow my thoughts, words, and actions to build-up rather than tear-down.

Teach me not to judge, but to see others through Your eyes.

May humility form in me life-giving habits:

That I empathize rather than criticize.

That I serve rather than attempt to satisfy myself.

You resist the proud and give grace to the humble.

Recreate me and refine me.

Remove pride and restore humility.

Amen.

This Week's Bible Memory Verse

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many. —Matthew 20:28

This Week's Resources

A book we have available this week at The Water's Edge:

Who is This Man? The Unpredictable Impact of the Inescapable Jesus by John Ortberg

A book to consider ordering:

Humility: The Beauty of Holiness by Andrew Muarry

A business article worth reading:

Humility: The Most Beautiful Word in the English Language

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_69.htm

This Week's Challenge

- Enthusiastically encourage a few people during the week.
- Selflessly serve a few people during the week.

Next Week – Who is this Man? - Empowering