

Be Humble or You'll Stumble

Philippians 2:8-11

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connect
groups

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PATH

Humility is that slippery quality that once you think you have it, you don't! Also, the pathway of humility is a hard one. For Jesus, it meant the cross. But humility will always be rewarded. Using Christ as our ultimate example, Paul demonstrated how Jesus' voluntary humiliation was compensated by the Father's lavish exaltation. So, even though humility comes at a price, without it, there will be no harmony, no unity. Pastor Skip covered three fundamental facts about humility:

I. Humility Is Sometimes Painful

II. Humility Is Always Hopeful

III. Humility Is Ever Needful

POINTS

Humility Is Sometimes Painful:

- Pride is the oldest sin in the universe and it shows no signs of growing weaker with age. Pride took Lucifer out of heaven and Adam out of paradise.
- Jesus is the ultimate example of humility—the shining opposite of Satan; He left heaven's glory for a gory death.
- The ultimate focus of the gospel story is not Christmas but Calvary—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8).
- Jesus' crucifixion is central to the gospels, with over 579 verses given to the last twenty-four hours of His life.
- Invented by the Persians and perfected by the Romans, crucifixion was a painful death for murderers, robbers, and slaves.
- Yet Jesus humbled Himself to the point of death for the forgiveness of humanity.
- **Probe:** The Greek word used for *humbled* is *tapeinoó*. It means to *make or bring low, to humiliate*. With Jesus as the ultimate example, discuss characteristics of humility. How can humility be painful in life?

Humility Is Always Hopeful:

- Though painful, humility is hopeful—it looks past pain to a future when God will highly exalt His people.
- The phrase *highly exalted* is *hyperupsoó* in Greek. It means to *elevate above others* and to *raise to the highest position*.
- The Father's estimation of Jesus is the polar opposite of the world's estimation.

- Paul's focus was on the upward trajectory of Jesus Christ after His death, coming in four phases:
 - Resurrection: death and burial were the last thing human hands did to Him.
 - Ascension: the disciples watched as Jesus vanished into the air.
 - Dominion: Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father, a place of power and authority.
 - Intercession: Jesus is active in heaven, praying for and interceding on people's behalf (see Hebrews 7:25).
- Furthermore, notice the definite article *the* in "the name" (v. 9). Jesus' name is *the* name above all names. He is *the* Savior and Lord.
- Please notice that God the Father called Jesus "Lord" (v. 11), a term used for *God (Adonai)*. The Father gave Jesus the supreme title—the sovereign Lord of all. This title was:
 - Predicted: "The Son of Man...His dominion is an everlasting dominion" (Daniel 7:13-14)
 - Preached: Peter proclaimed, "God has made this Jesus...both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).
 - Proclaimed: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13).
- Paul's teaching in the text is also an example for us: as the Father raised Jesus, so too will God raise His people. Peter stated a similar truth: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:6).

- **Probe:** How can humility bring hope in a practical sense? Consider these acts of Christian love and faith: Have a thankful heart. Put others first. Bear other's burdens. Forgive easily. Be teachable. Build up one another. Seek God's wisdom and knowledge. Understand God's goodness and grace.

Humility Is Ever Needful:

- The point of this passage is to show us how to treat one another. Unity comes through humility and conformity to God's will.
- If the Lord Jesus can humble Himself, so can you. If the Father exalted Jesus, He will lift you up, too.
- Here's the principle: the way up is down, and the way down is always the way up (see Luke 18:9-14).
- How will we know if we have arrived at true humility? We never will. The day you think you have humility is the day you lose it.
- Following Jesus' humility costs us sacrifice and service, but it pays with heaven and exaltation.
- Not only does God reward humility, it also improves others' lives.
- **Probe:** How much is God drawn to humility? Consider these texts: Job 22:29 (God saves the humble); Psalm 10:17 (God hears the humble); Isaiah 57:15 (God dwells with the humble). Discuss the key words in these passages: *saves, hears, and dwells*. Why do you think God values humility so much?

PRACTICE

Connect Up: Pastor Skip quoted Martin De Haan: "Humility is something we should constantly pray for, yet never thank God that we have." Take a moment to pray for a humble heart in relation to the following areas of your life: family, work, church, and outreach and service.

Connect In: Augustine said, "It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility

that makes men as angels." Discuss the truth of this quotation as it relates to the body of Christ. What are some ways the church can show humility in the world today, reflecting Jesus in word and deed?

Connect Out: As you reach out to your community with Christ's love, how can humility be a bridge between you and nonbelievers? Consider this quote by

Wes Simmons: "Courage. Boldness. Confidence. These are the words we typically associate with evangelism. But what if evangelism is more about our weakness than our strength, more about humility than boldness? What if it's more about sharing why *you* need Jesus, inviting people into *your* brokenness, than it is about trying to convince them why *they* need Jesus?"