

**The Humility of Christ**  
*Philippians 2*

**Introduction:** Today, we begin an Advent series on the topic of humility. We will begin this week by looking at Jesus' ultimate expression of humility as expressed in His incarnation and crucifixion and then over the next few weeks we will explore various aspects of humility. May God use these studies to grow the fruit of humble hearts in each one of us.

**Opening Discussion:** How would you define humility?

**Read Philippians 2:1-11**

1. How are the believers at Philippi to relate to each other (vv. 1-4)?
2. What role does Paul say humility plays in maintaining healthy relationships (vv. 3-4)?
3. Why is humility so foundational to unity in the body of Christ?
4. In verse 5, Paul says, "Have this attitude [i.e. humility] in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." Does it strike you as strange to say that Jesus was humble? Why or why not?
5. How does Paul say Jesus expressed his humility (vv. 6-7)?
6. What was the reward of humility in Jesus' life (vv. 9-11)?

Steve said:

A core aspect of humility is ***absolute submission to the will of the Father***. Jesus demonstrated that by becoming one of us. Even though it is true to say that God "sent His one and only Son" (John 3:16), it is also true to say that Jesus willingly took on flesh and blood. He willingly became one of us so that He could die for us. In relation to God the Father, Jesus dem-

onstrated humility because He demonstrated absolute submission. He wanted what God the Father wanted.

. . .When we bow in absolute submission before God we are only imitating Christ who willingly laid aside His heavenly prerogatives and become one of us. If you want a glimpse of your own pride, one of the things you can do is evaluate, "What area(s) of my life are not submitted to the will of God?"

7. Do you agree with the statement that "absolute submission to the will of the Father" is a core aspect of humility? Why or why not?

8. What, if any, area(s) of your life are not fully submitted to the will of God?

Steve said:

Remember that we're not merely supposed to admire the humility of Jesus; we are supposed to have this same attitude in ourselves that we see in Him. When Jesus spoke about discipleship – being apprenticed to Him as a learner in the kingdom – He spoke in these very terms: taking up the cross daily and following Him. Discipleship involves denying our own desires and will in favor of God's. Since discipleship involves radical obedience, discipleship is really an expression of humility. Instead of saying, "I am lord of my own life and I'll think whatever I want, say whatever I want, and do whatever I want," a disciple humbles him/herself by becoming obedient.

9. Why is discipleship an expression of humility?

Steve said:

Jesus' humility is the benchmark for our humility. Paul wrote, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." If we take seriously Paul's directive, it would be a huge mistake to think, "I need to **act** a little bit more humble. . ." or "I really shouldn't let my pride show through quite as much. . ." No, at the center of our being we actually need to be "gentle and humble in heart." We need the Spirit of Christ to produce the humility of Christ within us.

10. What is the difference between *acting* humble and *being* humble?

11. Practically, how can we cooperate with the Spirit of Christ to be humble in heart with the kind of humility that Jesus had?