

## Humility toward Jesus

*John 3:22-30*

**Introduction:** How should we relate to Jesus? How should we relate to someone who not only taught with authority but who was also born of a virgin, who lived a sinless life, who healed people, performed other miracles (like feeding 5,000 people with a small amount of food), who died on the cross to pay for our sins, and who rose bodily from the dead after three days? How do we relate to someone like that? John the Baptist understood more clearly than anybody else in his day who Jesus was and therefore how to relate to Him. He understood that we relate to Jesus in humility. May we be encouraged by John's example.

### Read John 3:22-30

1. What insights do we gain from this passage regarding how John viewed himself in relationship to Jesus?
2. In what ways does John express humility toward Jesus?
3. What does John mean when he says, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v. 30)?

Steve said:

There is a sense in which each of us needs to come to the place where we say about Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." You and I need the same attitude of humility toward Jesus that we see in the life of John the Baptist. In other words, we each need to come to the place where we can say with integrity, "The goal of my life is to glorify Jesus." When you glorify someone, you make that person look good; you highlight and magnify the attributes of that person for others to see; the glory of that person is on full display. When you and I glorify Jesus, His attributes are on full display in our lives. Others see less and less of us and more and more of Jesus. He increases and we decrease.

4. How much do you live with the motivation of seeking to glorify Jesus with your life? Is it something that is tangibly real in your life?

5. Practically, how can our lives "highlight and magnify the attributes" of Jesus for others to see?

Steve said:

Imagine what your relationships would be like if you had "this attitude [of humility] in yourself which was in Christ Jesus"? What if the people around you experienced you the way people experienced Jesus? If that were to happen, you would be "glorifying Jesus" - showing people this amazing attribute of humility, putting on full display just how glorious Jesus really is. If this were to happen over an extended period of time, you would be able to say, "Jesus is increasing, and I am decreasing." Instead of being concerned about how YOU look, you'd be concerned that people see how Jesus "looks." . . . This lifestyle of humility (toward Jesus and toward others) is one of the grand challenges from the life of John the Baptist. As we mentioned earlier, the Holy Spirit produces this humility within us; that's one of the core things He does - shine the light on such attributes of Jesus. But we participate in the process, don't we. One of the most practical things we can do to cultivate humility is to dwell on the cross of Christ.

6. Would you say that the people around you experience you the way people experienced Jesus regarding humility? Why or why not?
7. What would your relationships look like if you did have this attitude of humility in yourself which was in Jesus?

Steve said:

Carl Henry asked, "How can anyone be arrogant when he stands beside the cross?" When we stand beside the cross, we become convinced, "He **must** increase, but I **must** decrease."

8. What does it mean to stand beside the cross?
9. Why does standing beside the cross convince us that Jesus must increase and we must decrease?