

# Philippians 2:1-11

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is eLord, to the glory of God the Father.

## Intro

This book is great. It's like Paul knew that there was going to be a twitter someday.

Paul begins this paragraph with a great introduction. He basically says, "If you have gotten anything from Jesus, listen up.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit. That's hard. That's how I do everything!

## Outline

1. The practice of humility
2. My problems with humility
3. The place we find humility

## 1. The Practice of Humility

Now as soon as we say this, I think for many of us, a lot of very wrong images come to mind. Somehow in the christian tradition we have totally emasculated humility.

### **Humility Does not mean thinking you're lame.**

Too often this is what we do. We try and practice christian humility by downplaying the gifts god has given us.

This isn't what we see in the bible. Paul did not say, "Listen to me if you want. I'm just a regular guy, you know... what do I know?"

No. Paul knew his calling, and he knew if gifting. He confidently said, "Follow me, as I follow Christ."

## Humility means thinking of others.

In this letter Paul says, "Rather than doing things out of selfishness and rivalry, do them out of love and concern for others." *That's humility.*

And Paul was a great example of this. His hearers knew it.

## Acts 16

The story of the founding of the Philippian Church.

- Woman - Lydia, seller of purple goods from Thyatira
- Slave - Spirit of divination, "These are the servants of the most high!" Paul was annoyed, cast out the demon, got beat up, thrown in jail.
- Gentile ...

### Acts 16:25-30

**25** About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, **26** and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. **27** When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." **29** And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. **30** Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Paul was more concerned for the jailer's wellbeing than his own. He was willing to remain in prison (unjustly so!) so that the prison guard wouldn't come to any harm. When the jailer saw that kind of humility and love, Paul didn't have to preach at all.

I wanna be like that.

## 2. My Problems with Humility

Paul tells us what the opposite of humility is back in Philippians. "acting out of selfish ambition or conceit."

Pride is not just thinking you're the best, but acting out of selfishness and rivalry. (Original Language.)

**Selfish ambition** is a single minded focus on your needs. Using people to get what you want, always fighting to be on top, a cut-throat ambition for your own success.

**Conceit** here refers to rivalry. Always having to be better than that guy.

### **We often do good things from selfish ambition and conceit.**

But good things done out of selfishness always leave you burnt out.

- When you encourage and befriend people because you crave approval, you'll always end up jealous and wracked with anxiety.
- When you serve in ministry because you want power and influence, you'll get frustrated, burnt out, and start guilt tripping everyone else.

### **Christian humility can't be imitated.**

It can only be inherited. This is where it's difficult. I wanna be like Paul, I wanna be like Jesus. So what do we do? We imitate. This is where that self effacing, false humility comes from. We try so hard to look the part, so we just beat ourselves up, and downplay the very things that God has gifted us with.

All the while, the only thing we're thinking about, is us.

## **3. The Place we Find Humility**

Paul tells us back in in Philippians 2.

**5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is eLord, to the glory of God the Father.

Nothing has the potential to humble you like a great gift. Because of Christ's gift, Paul tells us that this mindset of love and humility is "ours in christ Jesus."

First, because he enables us by his spirit. He humbles us, and creates in us a new heart.

If you don't have it, it's simply because you've forgotten. It's already yours. When you remember that the person with whom you're so fiercely competing, those people

whom you look down upon, are precious children of God; for whom Jesus died, it's impossible not to love them in humility.