

Introduction

- Down To Earth Series: Humility – the mind set of Christ
 - First week: Jesus, fully aware of His identity and authority, took a posture of a servant and washed His disciples' feet.
His example challenges our ideas about strength, success, and status.
Humility begins with security in who we are in Christ!
 - Second week: Pride, how it opposes God and is putting ourselves in His place of honor.
“Humility is the disappearance of self and the vision that God is all.”
- This week: We are going to look at Philippians Ch.2
A signature vs. describing Christ's incomprehensible humility.
There is an interesting, unifying aspect in Christ's humility.
Humility is bigger than you. True humility has a power that unifies.
 - Often the focus on humility is self.
 - ❖ Putting *our* pride in check. *Self*-awareness (introspect)
 - But humility has a more broad effect than that. [“there is no ‘I’ in team”]
 - ❖ Teams perform better: More diversity: More creativity: More fun: Richer experience
 - This isn't a modern discovery. Community is a requirement for survival.
 - Symbols of unity go back to antiquity and they are in every culture.
 - ❖ Symbols of unity: Wedding Rings, Yin-Yang, Om [SYMBOLS]
 - ❖ Statue of Liberty (The New Colossus, 1883) – wonder of world (280BC) [LIBERTY]
 - Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" -- **Emma Lazarus**
 - What a powerful unifying statement to the world. But, How are we doing in that?
 - ❖ All the greatest intent of unity and humility erodes under human management.
 - ❖ One more symbol for you [TRINITY]
- Unity in Christ – The Perfect Unified Community of the God Head
Incorruptible, imperishable, immutable >> Perfect relationship

Purpose of Philippians 2

- Paul writes this to the Philippians.

Philippians 1:7 Stand firm in **one** spirit, with **one** mind striving side by side for the gospel

Philippians 2:2 Fulfill my joy by being of the same mind, same love, and of **one** mind (Unity)

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was the mind of Christ

- Unity in Christ should bring Unity in Community
- Paul then uses a very creative way of describing ‘the mind of Christ.’ He tries to layout a different cultural view, a different reality.
- **Background**
 - Response to gift brought by Epaphroditus – “missionary support letter” **Phil 4:15**
 - Planted church on 2nd missionary journey (Acts 16:12) [*exorcism of slave girl*]
 - ❖ Well to do church: Lydia was a huge part of the success of the church.
 - Paul writing to encourage church in Phillipi, “Live out lives as a Heavenly Colony” **Phil 1:27**
 - ❖ Don’t shy away from sharing the good news of Christ **Phil 1:27-30**
 - You do that – by being in **unity** **Phil 2:2-4**
 - You do that – by **humility** (as modeled by Jesus) **Phil 2:5**
 - Alexander the Great [Father Philip II]. Macedonia use to be the center of the world.(336BC)
 - Colonized with Roman veterans (42 BC) – after Mark Antony victory in the Roman civil war against Marcus Junius Brutus after the assassination of Julius Caesar (Et tu Brute)
 - ❖ Reduction of taxes and special land ownership
 - ❖ Spiritually confused city. Temples to Greek gods, Roman Imperial Cult, even shrines to Egyptian gods Isis and Horus
 - ❖ Archeology shows no evidence of Synagog. Paul spoke to Jews in open air (Acts 16:13)
 - Not writing to a Jewish audience. Mixed (Roman/Greek) secular culture
 - Most likely writing from Rome – House arrest – success in preaching to imperial guards
 - He writes to them to thank them, but mainly to motivate them -be a different kind of colony
 - ❖ To be a heavenly colony on earth (kingdom of heaven)
 - ❖ Your identity is not Roman, nor Greek. It is in Christ.
 - ❖ He does this by using literary tools of their culture

Literary Analysis

[CHRIST-HYMN]

- Some of your bibles will have this section (2:6-11) inset
- Hymnos, Creed, appropriation of what is common to the ear in order to shift culture
 - Hymnos: [identify deity][Worship/give Glory to]
 - Encomium (eulogy): [Achievement][Honor/Title/Image]

Hymnos

- (*morphe*) form: Fundamental nature. (ie: *meta* – change | *morphe* – fundamental nature)
- (*harpagmos*) grasping onto plunder, either in robbery or in exploitation
 - Not a term Paul ever used. Only place in the bible.
 - Term borrowed to counter the imagery of the Roman emperor conquering and plundering.
 - Jesus did not find his position (being in the form of God) as something to exploit, or use to plunder
- (*kenosis*) to empty or to neutralize
 - Emptied (ESV), of no reputation (KJV), set aside the privileges of deity (MSG)
 - Neutralize His Glory || Upside down kingdom
- God does this by changing His nature to join the humanity condition!
 - He humbled Himself

Encomium

- Jesus great achievement in this encomium is humility / obedience to the Father
 - Becoming our curse (Deuteronomy 21:23 | 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- (*onoma*) name: His character is great. Indicating authority.
 - Above all other character/authority in the cosmos. (heaven, earth, Sheol)
 - ❖ Fulfilling Isa 45:22-25
 - Everyone, even enemies will confess: Jesus Christ | God, the creator's anointed messiah (chosen deliverer) is King – is The Glory of God the father

Summarize the Christ Hymn

- The Christ-Hymn is telling us:
 - Spiritual life isn't about appeasing deity – It is actually about THE creator sacrificing for us!
 - It isn't about great earthly achievements to give us glory (to commit my name to history) – It is about Jesus (God come to us) delivering us through humility and sacrifice
- Suffering | Unity | Humility | Glory (Value knowing Christ)
 - Model greatness” “I count everything as loss... rubbish, that I may gain Christ” **Phil 3:7-11**

Practical (psychological/philosophical/ethical)

- How we long for thing to be right (justice, order, good...)
- We try and try – and fail and fail.

The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft awry,
And leave us nothing but grief and pain, for promised joy!
- Moral argument for God (C.S. Lewis) >> how do we even have a concept of good/evil?

- Original sin: trying to define good and evil. Being good without God.
 - **Not attainable** this side of the fall, save pockets of God's presence on earth (Kingdom)
[*Not Dualistic.. but*]
 - **Nietzsche**: "God is dead" is actually a statement regarding the dislodging of ethical foundation of the western world. Then he went about trying to define an ethical structure without this moral foundation. "the will to power" (1883)
"self-determination, actualizing one's will onto oneself or their surroundings"
 - Man's **will** is like a beast standing between two riders. If God rides, it wills and goes where God wills. If Satan rides, it wills and goes where Satan wills. -- **Martin Luther** (Bondage of the Will)
 - Heavenly creature or Hellish creature. -- **C.S. Lewis** (Meare Christianity)
- Seems to match Paul's advice here is to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." **Phil 1:12-13**
 - That is, obey out of awe, respect and reverence for Christ
 - ❖ It is God who works in you > let God drive your will and fulfill your purpose
 - ❖ This brings God joy. This is our unity with our creator – participating in His good works
 - ❖ Andrew Purves, "Love is far greater than emotion... it is an act of will and obedience."
- This hymn is redefining honor/glory – culture
 - Identity of Christ | Act of Glory | Eternal name
 - We (individually\communal unity) participate
 - ❖ Jas 4:10 "Humble yourself before God and He will exalt you."
- What do we do with this? What does that really look like?
- **Confession** of how bad I am at this.
 - Constant conversation in my mind (ie: Jacob wresting with God)
 - ❖ I have to have silent meditation almost every morning to align myself.
 - ❖ The frequency of my prayer walks seems to equate to my participation with God vs. participation with Kylan's agenda.
 - But I have many counter habits: Thought patterns, *discontent, greed, pride, perversion, isolation*. I appreciate Nietzsche's point, but I think it is too simple. It can be torture just trying to discern my will.
 - ❖ I resonate with Paul's longed to depart and be with Christ.
 - ❖ But mine is a selfish salvation: **Ticket punch salvation**.
 - Certainly not a salvation described in **Phil 1:29** for the sake of Christ not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake
 - But maybe it is part of **Phil 2:12** working out my salvation with fear and trembling
 - Even though it feel like false humility – a plea for pity, for forgiveness. Yet, I will repeat...
 - ❖ Confession is a break from isolation, it is a repentance (a turning)

- My confession, My struggles – not necessarily yours. Yours is different, personal
 - ❖ Each of us have them.
 - ❖ We need to break it free from our control and put it next to the cross.
 - [Theology go the Cross] – Martin Luther
 - I want to argue that this is what Paul is putting in front of us.
 - **A different reality** than what is in my mind, different from what I am experiencing.
 - The reality of the Christ on the Cross is 180° from the culture of human campaign
 - Andrew Purves, “This love is not possible within the natural capacities of the human experience and will. It is entirely the result of abiding in Christ, the true vine.”
- Alien to this world - without accepting the invitation to participate in Jesus humble work.

Conclusion

- We have options. God has allowed us freedom. [**Read** ‘Gay Science’] – unnerving, powerful
 - Trust in your will to power: internal, self-glorifying
 - ❖ (slavery to the Sisyphean task of the human condition)
 - Or... Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ [**Read** Philippians]
 - Surrender of that will to the name above all names.
 - ❖ The one who emptied Himself to show you the definition of Love
 - ❖ The King - The creator – who invites you to be fully alive.
 - ❖ The one who transforms through humility/obedience.
 - Be united in His works (similar to uniting under an emperor)
 - Exalted in His work, in His humility
- Surrender / Confession / Repentance / Put all things at the foot of the Cross /
- You may come to the cross alone, but notice – you are not!
 - Not building colossus, not even lady liberty – Rome is no more, America seems to be Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’
- The cross will survive all nations and monuments – invited to live resurrected together
 - Upside down reality – die with Christ and resurrected with Him
 - Through His name we participate in Jesus glory

PRAY

Let’s worship the God who humbled Himself so that we might have a rich full life in His family.

The madman (Zarathustra - or Nietzsche himself?)

Haven't you heard of that madman who in the bright morning lit a lantern and ran around the marketplace crying incessantly, **'I'm looking for God! I'm looking for God!'**

Since many of those who did not believe in God were standing around together just then, he caused great laughter. **Has he been lost**, then? asked one. **Did he lose his way like a child?** asked another. Or **is he hiding?** Is he **afraid of us?** **Has he gone to sea?** Emigrated? - Thus **they shouted and laughed, one interrupting the other.**

The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. 'Where is God?' he cried; 'I'll tell you! We have killed him- you and I! We are all his murderers. But how did we do this? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where is it moving to now? Where are we moving to? Away from all suns? Are we not continually falling? And backwards, sideways, forwards, in all directions? Is there still an up and a down? Aren't we straying as though through an infinite nothing? Isn't empty space breathing at us? Hasn't it got colder? Isn't night and more night coming again and again? Don't lanterns have to be lit in the morning? Do we still hear nothing of the noise of the grave-diggers who are burying God? Do we still smell nothing of the divine decomposition? - Gods, too, decompose! God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him! How can we console ourselves, the murderers of all murderers! The holiest and the mightiest thing the world has ever possessed has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood from us? With what water could we clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what holy games will we have to invent for ourselves? Is the magnitude of this deed not too great for us? Do we not ourselves have to become gods merely to appear worthy of it? There was never a greater deed - and whoever is born after us will on account of this deed belong to a higher history than all history up to now!'

Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; they too were silent and looked at him disconcertedly. Finally he threw his lantern on the ground so that it broke into pieces and went out. **'I come too early', he then said; 'my time is not yet.** This tremendous event is still on its way, wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men. Lightning and thunder need time; the light of the stars needs time; deeds need time, even after they are done, in order to be seen and heard. This deed is still more remote to them than the remotest stars- *and yet they have done it themselves!*'

Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ,

Stand firm in **one** spirit, with **one** mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who:

though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.