

Philippians 2:5-11

Some of the characteristics which are generally **admired** in our world today would include having **toughness**, **ambition**, and **assertiveness**. But that's not necessarily **as true** when we look at characteristics which are valued and admired in the **Church**. Characteristics which would promote **peace** and **unity** would rate much **higher** on **our** priority list. And perhaps the **most** valued characteristic in the Church would be **humility**. How can we promote a **humble** attitude in our lives? It certainly doesn't come **naturally**. Our text takes us to the great **source** of humility - our Lord **Jesus** Himself. The work of **Jesus** takes humility to the **highest level** of all. And the **Church** - His family of **believers** - now strives to **imitate** His humility. We know that Jesus took His humility, all the way to the **cross**. And we **also** know that the heavenly Father **responded** to His humility by **exalting** Him to the highest position of all. As we consider our text today let's focus our **attention** on **The Humility Of Jesus**.

Our text begins with these words, *“Indeed, let this attitude be in **you**, which was also in Christ **Jesus**. Though he was by nature **God**, he did not consider **equality** with God as a **prize** to be **displayed**, but he **emptied** himself by taking the nature of a **servant**.”* Jesus is true God. The prophet Isaiah described Him as *“**Immanuel** - **God with us**.”* So, **equality** with God was not something which Jesus was trying to **achieve** - He already **had** equality with God - He already **had** divine **wisdom**, **power**, and **majesty**. But while this is **true**, Jesus didn't **flaunt** His godliness. Instead, He **emptied** Himself of the **full use** of His godly characteristics, and He made Himself **nothing**. Jesus **set aside** any desire to be treated like a **king**, or to be **waited on** hand and foot, and instead, He made it clear that He had come to the earth to **serve**. Jesus took on the nature and conduct of a **servant** - living a very **humble** life from the very **beginning on** - coming into this world as a little **baby**, and being laid in a **manger** for His bed.

Jesus took His humility to the **nth** degree, as the Apostle Paul tells us in today's text, *“He **humbled** himself and became obedient to the point of **death** - even death on a **cross**.”* Jesus was totally **obedient** to the will of His heavenly **Father**. He came to **complete** His Father's work, and He matched the Father's **will** in everything He did. This was the **only way** that lost **sinners** could be **saved** - that lost sheep could be **restored** - that **outcasts** could become children of **God**. Jesus perfectly obeyed His heavenly Father all the way to his final **breath** - to His **death** on the cross.

While Jesus **hung** on the cross the crowd of onlookers considered Him to be stricken, smitten, and afflicted **by God**. And that's **exactly** what was **happening**. Paul told the **Corinthians**, "*God made him, who did not know sin, to **become sin for us**, so that we might become the **righteousness of God in him**.*" God placed the sins of the **whole world** on His **Son**, and Jesus **humbly accepted** those sins. In **exchange**, Jesus gave us His **perfect righteousness**. He suffered the **punishment** for our **sins** by dying a **painful and humiliating death** as He was **forsaken by God**, and **abandoned** to the tortures of **hell** which **we** deserved. And in **return**, He provided eternal life in **heaven** to **everyone** who would put their trust for salvation **in Him**. He did it **all** - and He did it **for us**.

Jesus took humility to the point of dying on a **cross**, to appease the **wrath of God** because of our sins, and to **reunite** us with the Father - enabling us to live as God's **forgiven** people. Again, Paul told the **Corinthians**, "*You know the **grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that although he was **rich**, yet for **your** sakes he became **poor**, so that through his **poverty** you might become **rich**.*" The **humble** sacrifice of Jesus has made us **rich** - rich with the **grace of God** - rich with the **joys of heaven**. With his holy, precious **blood**, Jesus bought **forgiveness** for us. His **death** set us **free** from all **condemnation**, and from any **power** which the **Devil** could bring **against** us. Satan and his cohorts have **lost**, because Jesus has won the **victory** over them, and has **shared** that victory **with us**. The **humble** and **unselfish** life which Jesus lived, and the holy and innocent **death** which He died, have made it possible for us to be brought into the family of **God**, and to become heirs to our heavenly Father's **kingdom**.

Since Jesus **humbly** obeyed His heavenly Father, and **perfectly** carried out the Father's will, He **deserves** a **reward** - and God the Father made sure He **received** that reward. Again we read from today's text, "*Therefore God also highly **exalted** him and gave him the name that is **above** every name, so that at the name of Jesus **every** knee will bow, in **heaven** and on **earth** and **under** the earth, and **every** tongue will **confess** that Jesus Christ is **Lord**, to the glory of God the **Father**.*" Because Jesus never missed a step in the heavenly Father's **plan**, God **exalted** Him - by **raising** Him from the dead, and seating Him at His right hand in **heaven**. The same **Jesus**, who once came here to the earth as a **humble** and lowly **servant**, now lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit with endless **power** and **majesty**. Jesus no longer **limits** Himself, but instead, He now makes **full use** of His perfect **wisdom** and **power**. As our Lord and Savior, He **knows** us well. He knows **everything** we need in life, and He graciously **provides** us with the physical and spiritual **blessings** which are **vital** for our survival.

God has also **exalted** the **name** of **Jesus** to be **above** every **other** name. In recent years, when people in America hear names like **Bush, Obama, Trump,** and **Biden**; about **half** of them think of these men as **saviors** from the wickedness and evil in our country, and the **other** half **tolerate** them for as long as they're in office. But no matter how you feel about **any** of them, they are **never** to be **worshiped**, and their names fall far **short** of the name of **Jesus**, who is our Savior from all **sin** and **eternal** condemnation. Our text clearly tells us that, "*At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" That may not happen **today**, and it may not happen **tomorrow** - but it **will** happen when the **Last Day** arrives, and all people assemble before the Lord in all His **glory** to give an **account** of our lives. Those who **deny** that Jesus is Lord **today**, will have to **swallow** their shameful words, and finally, albeit **too late**, **acknowledge** Him to be the Son of **God**. There will no longer be any **doubt** in **anyone's** mind, that Jesus is the **one** and **only true God** - and that confession will bring **glory** to our heavenly Father.

The events of **Palm Sunday** give us a little **preview** of what that will be like. On that first Palm Sunday the crowds of people **welcomed** Jesus as He came to them in great **humility** - **gentle** and riding on a **donkey**. The fact that Jesus was riding a **donkey** instead of a **warhorse** indicates not only that He was **humble**, but also that He was coming in **peace**. The people sang **hosanna** - **save** now - and they welcomed Him as the son of **David**. They were looking for salvation from the tyranny of the **Romans**, but what Jesus was **bringing** them was salvation from their **sins**. Today, as we again **celebrate** Palm Sunday, we join together with believers from all over the world in singing **our** hosannas, and expressing **our** love for Jesus as we **worship** Him.

But there are **other** ways that we can **also** worship and honor our Lord. Whether we're **young** or **old**, whether we're at **work** or at **school**, whether we're at **home** or **away** - we can live our lives as people who are **unashamed** of Jesus. We can **show** our love for Him by **turning away** from the evil **thoughts** and **actions** which **harm** our souls, and by living lives of **humble obedience** to God. Our attitude is to be the same as that of our Lord Jesus. So, we can be **content** with **whatever** God gives us in life - gladly sharing with **others** from the **bounty** which God so generously provides. Amen.