

The humility of Jesus

AS GOD HE EMPTIED HIMSELF

Main text: Philippians 2:1-11

Supporting texts: 1 Peter 5:5b-6; Luke 14:11

This weekend, Pastor Jonathan began the advent series *The Humility of Jesus* by looking at the description of the incarnation from Philippians 2:1-11. In this text Paul describes Jesus' preexistence, equality with God, identity with humanity, and the costly nature of that identity. What drives all of this, however, is his humility and self-giving. Humility is not a value in our culture now nor was it in Jesus' day, but it is at the core of what Jesus has demonstrated to us about the character of God by the becoming human. Paul links the model of Jesus in his humility to us and how we are to live in our relationships with one another.

Questions:

- Define the meaning of humility in your own words.
- In verse 3, Paul warns the Philippian church against selfish ambition and vain conceit. Why are these such a threat to the church?
- In verse 3b-4 Paul says, "Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." In the previous version of the NIV, it used to read: "but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Notice any differences? Why do you think they updated the translation?
- In verses 6-7, what descriptions of Jesus stand out to you?
- In Mere Christianity, CS Lewis calls pride "the great sin" from which all other sins are derived. He talks about the essentially competitive nature of pride: "Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others. If everyone else became equally rich, or clever, or good-looking there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest." Have you noticed pride showing up as comparison in your life? How so?
- Lewis defines humility in this way: "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less." How do we cultivate this kind of humility in our lives?