

JESUS WILLINGLY HUMBLLED HIMSELF

Philippians 2:1-11

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How would you describe “the Christmas spirit”?
- What is humility?

As we prepare for Christmas, most of us think about buying presents, baking treats, and making plans with family. Some of us delight in the season so much, we long to make the “spirit” of Christmas last all year long. But how often do you think about your spiritual growth as part of that preparation? The Apostle Paul would suggest it’s not our typical preparations that make the Christmas spirit possible, but rather our growing Christlikeness that is key. In his letter to the Philippian church, he implores them to address issues of conflict and division like Jesus. He points to a hymn that would have been very familiar to them. The words of the hymn describe Christ’s example and when we study these words we find a deeper understanding of the incarnation and what it really takes to live out the Christmas spirit all year long.

Listen: [*Jesus Willingly Humbled Himself*](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- In segment 1, host Scott Hoezee defines the doctrine of incarnation as “the idea that God himself...all of God...poured himself into a human being, Jesus of Nazareth, who was really God and really human...” Why does it matter that we understand that Jesus *willingly* humbled himself in this way?
- Recall a conflict you encountered in your church community. Reread Philippians 2:3-4. What was the root of the conflict? Imagine how the conflict you recalled might have played out if each individual or group was primarily concerned about the need of the other individual or group. What do you think would have been the same? What would have been different?
- In what ways (natural or earned) might you “rank” higher (in the eyes of your culture) than others in your life? What rights and privileges do you have as a result? What would it look like to humble yourself, to lay down those rights and privileges like Jesus laid down some of his privileges of divinity in order to also be fully human?
- In segment 2, host Dave Bast says “there are two specific things that Jesus did that we are called to imitate him in doing ourselves. One has to do with his death...we are called to be the same kind of gentle, non-retaliatory; and the other is here...we should be imitating his birth. What he did in his birth. He gave up privilege.” Of those two ways we are called to imitate Christ, which do you think is more challenging? Why?

Related Passages

- **Matthew 20:20-28**
- **Mark 10:35-45**
- **John 13:1-17**
- **1 Peter 2:11-25**

Conclusion

As Scott closes the episode, he talks about the need to think very intentionally about how we might practice Christlike humility by surrendering our privilege, power, or opinions. How are we modeling this kind of humility for those with whom we have influence, like children or those who are new or young in faith? Have you ever thought intentionally about this?

Spend some time now doing that intentional thinking. Begin your time of reflection by praying for illumination; ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart to his teaching and reveal any areas in need of growth. Write down your responses, so you can reference them again.

- Consider different areas of your life and identify if you have privilege in any of those areas, and what those privileges are. In which situations are you in the position of power?
- Who in your life is watching your behavior and might be influenced by you? Think about family relationships, friendships, and community relationships, but also consider faith maturity and who might be watching you to see how a believer lives out his or her faith.
- What attitudes or privileges are you currently living and modeling?
- Where might God be calling to you surrender your power and privilege, so that you might humble yourself to serve others like Jesus humbled himself to serve us?

Close your time of reflection in prayer. Remember to give thanks for Jesus' willingness to humble himself and lay down his divine privilege to become fully human so that he could meet our need for salvation.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/jesus-willingly-humbled-himself>

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