

Letting God Glorify Himself at Our Expense

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of following Jesus by having the attitude of humility and seeking God's glory above all else. It delves into the example of Christ's selflessness, obedience, and willingness to step down from his divine privileges to the point of death on the cross, showcasing the ultimate sacrifice for God's glory. The message challenges listeners to embrace a life of unselfishness, obedience, and humility, mirroring Christ's example of complete surrender and willingness to endure any cost for the Father's glory.

Scripture: Philippians 2:5, Ephesians 5:10, John 17:4, Matthew 16:24, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Peter 2:21, Luke 9:23, Galatians 2:20, Romans 15:3

Topics: "Humility", "Selflessness"

Description

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Transcript

Yeah, when I consider the work of your heavens, work of your fingers, does anybody know what is the verse before that? I didn't. I had to look it up. So don't feel bad if you don't.

Anybody happen to know without looking? Yes. Oh, maybe she does. We actually saw it demonstrated.

So let's turn to Psalm 8. I love the contrast here. And I encourage you, family, as we, as you think about our memory verses during the week, it's good that you memorize them and maybe say it over and over again. I have it whenever the verse is posted.

I save it as my screensaver on my phone, so that I'm often reminded to go back and look at it. And it helps me memorize it. And then when I have time, I try to go and look at the verse itself in its context and perhaps read the chapter or the verses before and after.

This is verse 3. When I consider your heavens, Psalm 8, verse 3, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained, what is man that you take thought of him? Recently, I had the chance to spend a few nights outdoors. It was cold, but it was beautiful. And the stars were, it was out far away

from the city lights, so you could see the heavens.

And times like that, I think of this verse, there's such amazing beauty there. What am I? This little speck of a speck of a speck of a speck on earth that you say, hey, I want that you, God would say, I want to pour my divine nature in you. I mean, there's the universe and then there's the Milky Way, which is pretty huge in itself.

And then you've got this solar system within that, probably other systems, star systems. That's what solar system means. It's related to the sun.

And then the sun is huge. And then you've got these huge planets. And earth is what, maybe fourth or fifth on the list of little small pebbles, maybe, or specks.

And then this little speck that's so big for us, there's a little speck called North America. On that little speck on the speck called North America is a little country called the United States. And in that little speck of a speck of a speck is a state called Colorado.

And now you drill down and then there's this speck on a speck on a speck on a speck on a speck on a speck. That's me. What is man that you would lavish your love so richly on me? I mean, have you ever looked at a little piece of dust and think, I want to do something nice for that piece of dust.

That's what God did for me. So what God did for you and I, let's never forget that. And all our gathering and praising is wonderful, it's acceptable to him, but let's never forget how small we really are.

What a privilege it is that God would come down and say, I will take on, I will be made in appearance as this speck of a speck of a speck of a speck of a speck. God fit into this tiny little speck so that we might become the righteousness of God through Christ. That's verse three and four.

But before that, verse one, Oh Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You who have displayed your splendor above the heavens. And then he says, but as it were, if I could paraphrase much rather than the stars singing my praise and the mountains singing my praise, you think it's intentional that God didn't give the mountains a mouth and didn't give the rocks a mouth and tongues? Yes, because there's somebody else he gave a tongue and a language and a mouth with which to praise him.

Who? Infants. Verse two, from the mouth of infants. That's why we like to have the children come up every now and then.

They sing better than we can from heaven's perspective. From the mouth of infants and nursing babes, you have established strength. And the New Testament paraphrase of that says praise, showing that praise is strength.

Because that's the verse that was quoted in when Jesus, Matthew 21, when Jesus was coming in the triumphant entry, he says, don't you know it's written? You experts of the law, you missed it. Because of your adversaries to make the enemy and the revengeful seize when I consider your heavens, etc. And then he says, what is man that you take thought of him and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than God.

Who's the him? David only knew it as himself and human beings. The writer of Hebrews clarifies, this is Jesus. You have made Jesus this man that you would be mindful of, this speck of dust.

You have made him a little lower than God and a little is putting it mildly. What do you mean a little lower than God? Jesus came down so far to become the speck of a speck of a speck of a speck. And you crown him with glory and majesty.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands and you put all things under his feet. Verse 9, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. We speak in this church often about the new covenant.

And unfortunately, I don't hear much preaching about it. And that's one of the reasons we believe God has called us to emphasize this a little bit more and speak on it. And if you hear that often in this church, there's a reason for it to fill up, as it were, the messages that are lacking in Christendom.

Please understand, I'm not trying to compare myself with others or say we're better or worse. God is a judge of that. But I know we know that God has called us for a very specific reason.

If we didn't have a specific purpose as River of Life Christian Fellowship, we just might as well all join whatever church is closest to us. One that you can walk to. You don't have to drive.

Because it doesn't really matter. It does. And I believe God has called different expressions of his body, even within this area, to emphasize certain things.

Without comparing ourselves with others, without judging others, loving everyone, blessing everyone we meet. But recognizing that there's a purpose with which God has called us here. And one of those is to shine the light on the corners of God's truth that may not otherwise be talked about very often.

Especially as it pertains to the New Covenant. But my fear for myself and for us as a church is that this word New Covenant can become, as they say in the world, a buzzword. It's just, oh, New Covenant.

We've got this little niche, New Covenant. And it can become something that just flows off of our tongues very easily without our really knowing what does that mean. Now there's plenty of teaching that we have available on the CFC website or even our RLC website about the New Covenant.

So I'm not going to go into that. But if you feel like you don't really understand the New Covenant, I'd encourage you to go sometime and search online for teachings on that from our website. And it's important to know that.

But I want to talk about an aspect of the New Covenant today that has been on my heart for a few weeks. The New Covenant is essentially to follow Jesus in such a way that I become like Him. Let's turn first to John chapter 17.

When Jesus came and opened the new and living way, and opened the way into the New Covenant, you can say, He went around with this phrase, You see that over and over again in the New Testament, in the Gospels. Follow me. He was passing by and walking along the beach.

And the Father prompted Him and said, Hey, there's a couple of guys over there. They already knew Him. It was Peter and Andrew.

Andrew had met Him before that and then called Peter. And sometime later, Jesus is walking by and sees them again. And the Father says, Call them to follow you.

So Jesus goes and says, Leave your nets and come follow me. And they did. Left their nets and followed Him.

It says, He went a little further up the beach and there was their competition. James and John. I mean, they weren't the same.

They were two different groups. Any fish that James and John caught, Peter and Andrew didn't get to catch. And vice versa.

And God says, Listen, you competition, I'm going to call you to build a church together. So He says, James and John, you too. I mean, I wonder if Peter and Andrew are walking by like, No, not them.

No, please. They've been stealing our fish. Not stealing, but they're making more money than we are.

Something like that. But anyway, God says, James, John, you also follow me. My point is, the call was, follow me.

And that must continue to remain the call that we emphasize if we're going to build the church of Jesus Christ. It's not, come and listen to some good teaching, and have a good time of singing, and let's have some time of prayer, and let's hang out together, and eat a meal together, and have good conversation, and you scratch my back, I'll scratch your back, and send a few messages during the week to pep talk each other. No.

The call from beginning to end in the new covenant is this. Jesus saying, follow me. Must continue.

In everything you hear in this church, brothers and sisters, and those of you online, please know, this is our heart. It's always Jesus calling, follow me. We may express it in different things.

There are different aspects of following Jesus that we might focus on in a message, but through it all, it's the same call. Jesus saying, follow me, follow me, follow me, follow me. If you started by saying, I follow you, Lord Jesus, when I gave my life to you, it doesn't end there.

Today, I've been a Christian for I don't know how many years, because I don't remember exactly when I was born again. When I was a young boy, I believe. But today, the call for me is exactly the same as it was when He first called me, follow me, that's it.

Jesus said, follow me. While I was full of sin, He said, follow me, I'll clean you up, I'll cleanse you. Now follow me.

And the call for, I remember this story, a legend has it, or the story that's been passed down about how Peter died. I don't know if it's true, but there's a spiritual lesson in it. They were persecuting in Jerusalem, the way I understand it, some years after the Day of Pentecost, many years later, and Peter was trying to escape.

And so he ran out of the city and started, and he's managed to escape. And as he's walking, he sees in a vision, Jesus walking back, carrying His cross. Again, this is, I don't know if it's true, because I didn't hear it from Peter.

So one day I will ask him, is that really what happened? But the story goes that, as he was going, he saw Jesus walking backwards to Jerusalem, carrying His cross. And Peter asked Him, Jesus, what are You

doing? He says, I'm going again to be crucified, since You're going the other way. And Peter knew the message.

It was his time to die. So he turned around and went back. And I think the part I wanted to stress, was that he was saying, follow me.

That Peter remembered the call that Jesus gave him at the beginning. Follow me, Peter. And then in John 21, right before Jesus departed, he gave Peter the same call.

What is it to you about what happens to somebody else? Follow me. And then at the end of his life, Jesus says, follow me. In death as well.

And Peter was crucified. And as the story goes, he was so mindful of how unworthy he was, even to die in a similar way as his Savior, that He asked them to hang him upside down. On a cross, upside down.

Can you imagine how painful that must have been? But regardless, that was the call. Peter understood it. The disciples understood it.

They emphasized that. Paul said it. Follow me.

I'm following Christ. All these letters I write to you, church. All these things I've written to you, Titus and Timothy.

It's essentially this. That you might really follow Jesus. And to follow Him all the way to the end.

So what does it mean to follow Jesus? Because that is the new covenant. Is to follow Jesus. In everything.

All the way to the end. If I see something of the nature of Christ, it doesn't mean doing everything that Jesus did. That's where a lot of people also go astray.

It doesn't mean that I have to, because Jesus cast out demons, therefore I should. Or because Jesus healed the sick, therefore I should. Because Jesus raised the dead, therefore I should.

God may use some in the same way that He used Jesus. But we are called to have the same attitude that Jesus had. The nature of Christ.

The nature of God. You can say that the new covenant is essentially us becoming like God in His nature. And that nature is manifest in our attitudes.

More than even our words and our deeds. Let me explain what I mean by that. Because if you look at the words of Jesus and you say, I want to follow Jesus.

Then, well, I only say the words He said. That's it. And you never hear any other words coming from my mouth.

We know that's not true. You look at the actions of Jesus. He did so many actions.

He lived in Israel. Does that mean that we should therefore all live in Israel? No. He didn't have a car.

He wore certain types of clothing. He never had a phone. All these things.

So does it mean that we therefore adopt a lifestyle that looks like Jesus? No. That's not partaking of His divine nature. That's not following Jesus.

Following Jesus is in our attitudes. In your attitude which determines your words and deeds. In your attitude, if you are like Jesus, then your words will be Christ-like even if they are not Christ-copying.

You know, there's a difference between Christ-copying and Christ-like. Christ-copying is, I dress like Jesus, I look like Jesus, which I don't know what that is. I live like Jesus and all those things in an outward way.

Christ-like is an attitude. It's my nature that's becoming more and more Christ-like which is changing my attitude towards things and people as a result of which my words are changed and my actions are changed. This is what it means to partake of the divine nature.

What it means to be in the new covenant. And to follow Jesus, I'd like you to see here in John 17 that you could sum up Jesus' life and the example that we are to follow when he says, follow me. Jesus says, follow me.

What is it that I'm going to follow? And I see, as I've been meditating on Christ's life and reading about it in the Gospels and even the teachings about the attitude. Why do we have the Epistles, for example? If you're curious, isn't it enough that we have the Gospels? How did Jesus live? See, that's exactly what I was just saying and that is, if I only had the Gospels I would only know mostly what Jesus did and said. And Luke says that, right? In the book of Acts, the first account, what Jesus did and taught.

That's the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In the book of Acts, you get to see what the apostles or the disciples did and taught. Mostly what they did, really, in the book of Acts.

In the Epistles, you get what the disciples taught, which shine a light into the attitude of Christ, into the nature of Christ. That's why those are very, very important books. A lot of people like to read the Gospels, they like to read the Bible stories in the Old Testament.

And that's good. Children, you can start there. But as you grow in Christ, I hope that the letters of Christ, which are the Epistles, that's what epistle means, letter, will become precious to you because, in a sense, they shine a light, not so much into what Jesus did, because you don't read much about what Jesus did in the Epistles or what he said but you read why he said what he said.

What was it about his nature and his attitude? That's why, for example, you have a verse in Philippians 2, verse 5, that says have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Not have these words or have these actions or eat the food that Jesus ate or drink the water, the liquid that Jesus drank. Have this attitude.

That is what it means to partake of the divine nature. And I see that Jesus' life could be summarized in this, that he only sought his Father's glory in everything that he did. It was only this.

I only want to seek your glory, Lord. So read this in John chapter 17. This is a prayer that Jesus prayed after a little message he preached to his 11 disciples.

The way I understand it, by now Judas has left to go betray him. He's left with his 11 close disciples. And he's handing off the baton to them as it were.

And he's encouraging them. He's saying, I'm going to send you a helper called the Holy Spirit. And then after he finishes teaching them these things, he says, I'm going to pray for you.

And he prays to the Father in a way that they could hear him. And then he says, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son.

Now if you stop there for a moment, he says, well Jesus, I thought you were very humble. What is this glorify your Son business? Jesus has the right to be glorified because he is God. He's always been God.

He was speaking about the glorification that comes through his being crucified and bearing the sins of the world. Defeating death and the grave through his resurrection and being raised up in the heavenlies. But even in that glorifying of the Son, you see what he says? So that the Son may glorify you.

This was Jesus' only objective. And I see that throughout his life. Whether Jesus suffered reproach or was honored.

Because Jesus did receive some honor. There were Greeks who came from a long distance to see him. Herod wanted to hear him preach.

Herod was the ruler of his area. Crowds would gather to see him preach or hear him preach or to see him do miracles. And he was a popular person in some sense.

Had a large gathering. And then at other times a few minutes later, they would want to kill him and stone him and throw him off a mountain. And then they eventually did kill him.

And no matter what his outward life looked like, up or down, despised or honored, it was this. Let your name be glorified. Father, I only want you to be glorified.

And this, dear brothers and sisters, is the essence of the new covenant I see. Is to seek the glory of God in all things. I talked about that verse a couple weeks ago in Ephesians 5 verse 10 which has become my daily motto verse.

Not just daily, like hourly, like constantly through the day. You know Ephesians 5 verse 10, right? Let's look at it again quickly. We looked at it a couple weeks ago.

Ephesians 5 verse 10. Let's read verse 8 first. If your Bible has it like mine, verse 9 is in parentheses.

That means the Holy Spirit through Paul is just explaining something in passing, but the sentence, really you can read verse 8 and verse 10 together. Ephesians 5 verse 8. You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. So we're talking about following Jesus.

Following Jesus is more than just saying, I was once in darkness, now I am in light. That's a testimony of a lot of Christians. I was once in darkness, now I am in light.

Okay. The Holy Spirit says, let's see if you're really in the light. You were formerly in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord and so walk as children of the light.

Let the fact that you are in the light now be seen by how you walk. That you're following Jesus. That means it's not that I'm translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and I'm just sitting there with my legs crossed waiting for Jesus to come and take me home.

He says walk as children of the light. Prove to the heavens and prove to everybody you meet that you are in the kingdom of light by how you walk. Continuing in verse 10, what does it mean to walk in the light? We read in verse 10, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

This, I'll tell you honestly brothers and sisters, for a number for a while now, has been my constant prayer. I find in the middle of the day, if I have a little gap, maybe I'm sitting at my computer and I'm about to do this or something else and there's a little gap, you know those gaps in the day you have where it's like nothing really that you have to focus on. There's a little gap before that next thing you have to focus on.

I find this prayer coming up from within my heart. Lord, I want to learn what is pleasing to you. Seeking to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

I just want to know that Lord. And I'll tell you my dear brothers and sisters, if you pray that prayer in faith, He will answer. If you say Lord, I want to learn what is pleasing to you.

And I really believe you'll show it to me. He will answer. Now, let me give you a practical example.

Let's say you're there in the workplace. You say, Lord, what is it that should be pleasing to you? Let's say you're doing the dishes and there's a pile of laundry that you're trying to juggle both, right? Laundry and dishes. And there's something else and the meals still need to be cooked.

And all these things going on in the middle, you have this little gap of a thought says, Lord, I just want to seek what to learn, what is pleasing to you. And you might think, the religious person would think, well so, just go forget about the dishes and the laundry and the meal that needs to be cooked and go lock yourself in your bedroom. Forget about your kids for a little while and just fast and pray for the rest of the day.

That's religiosity. The Lord doesn't always say you know, what is pleasing to the Lord is not always fasting and prayer, even though that's good. It's not going out on the street and evangelizing because you come back home and that pile will still be there and the kids will be hungry.

So, seeking to learn what is pleasing to the Lord, after you pray that prayer, after I pray that prayer, more often than not, I just continue doing what I'm supposed to do next. Which is, maybe I have another work meeting or I've got to write this email or I've got to do that other thing. I've got to go take the kids here or for you moms, making them a meal or doing the laundry or whatever.

You're continuing to do what you were planning to do but you're seeking to learn what is pleasing to the Lord in your heart. This is having the attitude of Christ. Because that's what he throughout the day, Jesus was saying, Father what is pleasing to you? What is pleasing to you? I love that verse in Romans 15 verse 3. Keep your finger here, we'll come back to it.

Romans 15 verse 3. Keep your finger on John 17 that is. This is why we are a church where we encourage you to bring your Bible because we go to a lot of verses and it's good to follow along and read with me, family. It's very important.

Don't just rely on my or your hearing it. Read it with me so you see it in your Bible. For even, Romans 15 verse 3, even Christ did not please himself but as it is written the reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.

Christ did not please himself so throughout the day his prayer was, Lord, Father what is pleasing to you? I don't want to please myself. I don't want what I do next to be determined or to be driven by a what will please me, what will be good for me. I don't want to say that word to my spouse or to my children or reply to that text message out of a what will please me because Christ never pleased himself and the essence of the new covenant is to follow Christ in every area.

It ought to be said about Santos at the end of his life Santos never pleased himself. Now, there were times when I did. The times of ignorance God is overlooked.

Now he commands all men everywhere to repent. I've repented of all, not just sin. I've repented of pleasing myself.

When's the last time you repented of pleasing yourself? I'm not asking you that question like in a pointed way. I'm asking myself that question. Lord, have I recently repented of the fact that so many of my decisions are made out of wanting to please myself and I want to repent of everything that's un-Christ like and if Christ didn't please himself it ought to be said about Santos he didn't please himself either.

The times when he did were forgiven and cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ and now he's always seeking only to please God because that's what it means to follow Jesus. Now, I'm belaboring this point and taking time with it because it would be a tragedy if I say I was a follower of Jesus that's what Christian means and then I get to the end of my life and Jesus shows me what it actually meant to follow him which is here in his word and the Holy Spirit reveals to us and I realize, man, there were so many things I didn't follow him. Where, you know, I followed him with forgiveness of sins and I followed him in, you know, the truths he showed me about justification and being filled with the Holy Spirit but then Jesus went over this way in not pleasing himself and me calling myself spirit filled and forgiven and justified and baptized in water and all that stuff went this way in pleasing myself and I continued on my merry way because I didn't read God's word that would have showed me, no, but Jesus went this way, Santos he kept quiet in that situation in the conflict at home and you said something you didn't follow Jesus and I know for my own life how I can go days, weeks, months even years not even knowing that I've strayed from following Jesus so far in little things like this, in our attitudes following Jesus in not pleasing ourselves let's go back to John 17 like I was saying ultimately Jesus sought the glory of the Father in everything, that's what drove his life and he says here in verse 4 I glorified you on the earth having accomplished the work which you have given me to do Jesus finished the work that thank you Jesus finished the work that the Father gave him to do and he says that finishing of the work wasn't so that I could say I have finished the work the Lord recently peeled back some layers of selfishness in my life and that's where this is coming from where I started to see that my desire to be holy and to finish the work that God placed me on the earth to do was so that I could say at the end of my life yes Lord I finished the work that you've called me to do and then I in an imaginary conversation I imagined that I reached the end of my life yes I was born in sin I lived in sin and I was born again, translated into the kingdom of light and even then sometimes I fell the Lord slowly brought me back up and then I followed him and I served him made myself available to be used by him and finished the work which he gave me to do or what I thought was what he gave me to do and I imagined that when I reached the end of my life I came to God and God says okay Santos well done now I'm going to send you to hell what would my response be and I had to pause there for a moment and say well Lord that doesn't make sense I served you I gave up for you I obeyed I denied myself when there was that opportunity to lust I didn't lust you know when there was that opportunity to get angry I didn't get angry and I did this other thing and I prayed and I fasted who do I sound like the Pharisee and my mind went back to that story that Jesus told where there were two people standing and the Pharisee said Father I deserve

heaven God I deserve heaven that's essentially what the Pharisee was saying I deserve heaven because I've done this I did that other thing look at my home look at my children look at that other thing and so if God was to say to me at the end of my life yeah you did all these things I'm going to still send you to hell what would my response be and in the back of that same church building was a tax gatherer Jesus said who said Lord I'm a sinner just can you be merciful to me and I was convicted over the thought that when I was born I was a sinner and I knew it I didn't know it right before I was born again I was a sinner and I knew it what have I become today am I all of a sudden not a sinner I was a sinner when I was born I was a sinner when I was cleansed now I'm not a sinner I've got some good works Lord don't treat me like all those other sinners now bear with me there's an end to this but what the Lord showed me was that I could think of my pursuit of Christ and my wanting to be like him and finishing the work that he sent me to do and even perhaps getting there somehow and thinking Lord look I finished the work that you sent me to do and I expect to hear well done good and faithful servant and I sort of straighten my collar because I'm the good and faithful servant that's not what Jesus was talking about at all and to follow Jesus is to have this attitude I want to talk about that for a moment because Jesus lived a perfect life for 33 years pleased the father pleased the father so much so that a couple of times the father was so excited by how pleasing his son was to him that he even shouted it from heaven you read it in Matthew chapter 3 at his baptism and then in Matthew 17 again the father I picture it like the father was like you guys on earth this is my son I'm so happy with him I'm well pleased with him and after 33 years of a faithful life of pleasing the father what did Jesus hear his father say I'm going to send you to hell I'm going to forsake you do you want to follow Jesus have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus who when he heard the father say I'm going to have to forsake you son and I think Jesus knew this before he came down to the earth but there was some sense in which here in his humanity fully God and fully man when he when he was there in Gethsemane which is after what we're reading here in John 17 and the reality of it that the father would forsake him on the cross and he would have to be forsaken for those 3 hours on the cross so that he might repent and become sin who knew no sin that I might be the righteousness of Christ we're told later righteousness of God 2 Corinthians 5 he became sin he was forsaken by God that's what hell is forsaken by God and I thought of Jesus but think about following Jesus right where he goes I want to go and Jesus followed and sought the father's glory so thoroughly so completely so without any selfishness at all that when the father said yes you've lived a faithful life I'm going to send you to hell at the end of it to suffer hell which is much worse than all the physical suffering that he suffered Jesus wrestled with it here's why he wrestled with it because for him you know he only sought the father's glory and for him the father's glory and the father's presence were always the same thing he gave the father glory by his unity with his father this is the glory that I've given them that they may be one as you and I are one that was seeking the father's glory but for the first time Jesus was facing the situation that the father's glory was separate from his presence with the father that for the father to be glorified he would have to forsake his son Jesus he'd never faced this before and he said this is difficult father how do I pick being one with you fellowship with you or seeking your glory and there I see how committed Jesus was to seek his father's glory he says father I seek your glory alone at any cost I've only come here to glorify your name and so he says okay lord you can forsake me I'll seek your glory now the good news is the assurance we have and you must be absolutely certain of this I don't want to go on too much further before making it clear you and I will never hear the words I'm going to send you to hell if you're in Christ Jesus never because he already did it to Jesus that's why Jesus faced that penalty Jesus faced that penalty he's the only one that could because he was God and man and so I don't have any doubt I'm not wondering will God really still send me to hell but there's an attitude there that we must focus on that's the attitude I want us to meditate on even as you think about these things that the attitude of Jesus was at whatever cost I remember reading there's a book that A.W. Toza wrote I forget

which one it is now maybe anyway I don't remember which one he says lord glorify yourself at my expense send me the bill I won't complain I won't argue I won't fight against you glorify your name at my expense this is the attitude of Jesus and yes Jesus had to take it all the way to the very end where he experienced being forsaken by God that was his expense what did it cost Jesus to glorify the father hell itself now yes we know for those of us who are in Christ Jesus he will never leave us or forsake us he will never allow us to have to face that extreme expense I won't ever have to face eternal separation from God because Jesus faced it for me and I am in Christ for those of us who are in Christ he's already suffered it for us praise God for that but now here I am on earth and I will face situations that are a little bit less I mean quite a bit less than the suffering of hell it will be somebody said something bad about me there is somebody said something bad about me and then there is hell which is horrible where their worm never dies and their fire is not quenched the reason I say this is because I have been convicted about how easily when things don't go my way or I am in a situation that feels difficult or constraining my tendency in my flesh is like oh Lord why me why is it always me that's having a problem look at that other person they seem to have such a wonderful life and my life is so hard and so difficult and and this and then they are saying this about me and those other people I never do them any harm and they are spreading rumors about me and poor me poor me poor me and God says ok I see that you really aren't interested in me being glorified in your life and when we pray this prayer Father glorify yourself at my expense that's another way of saying Ephesians 5 verse 10 I only want to learn what's pleasing to you glorify your name at my expense and I found that the Lord if I really mean that prayer will present opportunities in front of me throughout that day through things that will happen with the children or my wife or at work or I'll get a text message or I'll get an email or I'll hear this or I'll hear that or I'll read the news and all of these things are God planning my life in such a way that he can answer and fulfill my heart's deepest cry when I said Lord I only want to be pleasing to you glorify yourself at my expense God said ok I'm going to take you at your word Santosh now if you really mean it you're going to face some difficult trials you're going to experience failure you're going to experience disappointment that thing you wanted so badly I'm not going to let you have it that other thing you were afraid of happening to you is going to happen to you and that other thing that you wanted everything you had it all lined up and then something came and messed it up as they say in the world when all hell breaks loose we shouldn't use the word hell lightly because hell is a very very serious thing and so I don't even use that phrase because nothing on earth is ever close to all hell really breaking loose if all hell really breaks loose there's no hope for us there's no mercy in hell there's no repentance in hell it's over forever and ever so but nothing else I use that term because a lot of people use that well you know all hell broke loose what does that mean that oh everything went bad if Murphy's law if something could have gone wrong it did that's the kind of day I had and in those days oh dear brothers and sisters can we see a father who says I want to glorify my name through your life and you won't regret it in eternity the life that will be the most that will have been the most successful the most useful to God is the life that was given to him completely that he might be glorified at whatever expense where my feelings don't even matter turn to Philippians chapter 2 Jesus exemplified this life look at that verse I just mentioned earlier Philippians 2 begin reading in verse 5 have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus attitude remember not actions not words attitude who although he existed in the form of God verse 6 did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself my margin says laid aside his privileges that's the literal meaning there I think another translation says made himself of no reputation have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus who made himself not the father made him he made himself of no reputation that means he says Lord I don't want a reputation because today we have a version of Christianity Christendom that where Christianity is a platform to promote your gifts and your abilities where you copy the motivational speakers and preach sermons based on those abilities you copy

the musicians of the world and how they play their songs and you make your Christian songs sound just like it where you can't tell the difference sometimes you listen to Christian radio and you're like sounds just like that other worldly song I hear in the radio when I go to the restaurant to the grocery store what's the difference they're seeking a reputation here in the world they want to be popular most number of likes most number of followers most number of views and this spirit is creeping into Christendom not creeping it's overtaking Christendom sadly crept in 100 years ago I think maybe 75 years ago and there weren't godly watchmen in those churches to notice the spirit that was creeping into the church the spirit of the world and the music and the fashion and the interests and what captivated people's hearts and they weren't there to chase out those spirits like Jude warned us to and now it's become where that's what most of Christendom is like and here we are god calling us calling all of us not just here in this church but all over the world to repent to have the attitude that was in Christ Jesus that essentially was this making myself of no reputation laying aside my privileges you know we live in a day and age where everything is about privileges your privileges taken away from you people are talking about guns being taken away my privileges you know that Jesus laid aside his privileges you think that that gun that people want to take away is that anything compared to the seat of the throne of heaven where Jesus laid aside his privilege and we have a false version of Christendom in this country especially that thinks that Christianity is to hold on to my gun rights and my other rights Jesus laid aside his privileges now don't take it the wrong way if the lord gives you a conviction about something stand to it but let it not be in this sense of self entitlement and empowerment that I have a right to because I'm an American citizen all you have to do is travel to some third world country and your concept of rights and privileges will go out the door and read the book of Acts what rights and privileges did they have under emperor Nero and so don't fall for the fake the false religion in this country that's called Christianity but he laid aside his privileges made himself of no reputation that's what it means when he emptied himself and you know discrimination discrimination is an evil evil thing people all over the world suffered including in this country but you know Jesus was more discriminated than anybody ever has been discriminated against and yet he never once complained about it he didn't march down the streets of Jerusalem discriminating saying against discrimination from the Romans you never see him once doing that he chose to be a part of the discrimination he chose to lay aside his privileges have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus who emptied himself taking the form of a bond servant and you see this I want you to see the graph of Jesus life as it were he starts out there, Jesus life didn't start in the manger or even in Mary's womb this journey of emptying himself started in the heavens we read here, this is actually where Jesus life on earth begins as it were, it says he didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped so it started in his attitude while he was there in heaven while the angels were busy singing his praises in his mind he starts to have this attitude which he always had but he says I'm going to start going down I'm going to step down step down step down step down, step down sometimes you read about elders who are asked to step down and they're all upset, why are you asking me to step down they haven't seen Jesus if you're ever given a ministry and then you're asked to step down read Ephesians 2 verse 6 and say Lord Jesus you step down I want to step down I want to know where else I can step down if it is what will bring you greater glory God and I remember some time ago some people in this church said Santosh needs to step down as an elder in this church I said yes Lord if you want me to step down I will I'm not here to be an elder, I want where Jesus is not an eldership position or pastor or all these things Lord do you want me to step down is that where you're leading me I want to be there I'll run there Lord, I really meant it he stepped down took the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men like I talked about earlier the speck of a speck of a speck of a speck of a speck in the likeness of men and so this is bondservant is pretty low man is low bondservant is even lower than that and then you found him as a man and each step of Jesus life was a little more of the father

telling him hey I need you to step down again I know you stepped down yesterday Jesus but step down again okay father it will bring you more glory okay I'll step down, go lower and I I'm challenged by this because I think I'm a little bit more unselfish today than I was say 4 years ago maybe 3 or 4 years ago and it's easy for me to start to think I'm a pretty unselfish person you know like I've said in the past too I thought I was unselfish so I got married then I realized I'm quite selfish I thought I was unselfish so I had children and then God said I need to really rid him of unselfishness I'm going to give him 6 6 times he's got to and even after that I realized I'm still so selfish and that's when I realized Lord I haven't seen your unselfishness I want it where if the father said Jesus I need you to step down he said okay yep I'll step down which is exactly the opposite of what's going on in the world and sadly even in Christendom where people are trying to step up climbing the ladder the corporate ladder and the Christendom ladder take both around the world he being found in appearance as a man the father said I need you to humble yourself a little bit more and die okay yeah I'll die and here the first death he's talking about just a normal death even for Jesus to die a normal death let's say Jesus died of old age do you realize how much he had to have stepped down him who had life in the very beginning nobody created him he was with the father from the very beginning he couldn't die there was no death in him he had to step down so much to becoming obedient to the father showing him how to step down again step down again Jesus there was no father what is all this step down step down step down 33 years of stepping down again no and now you and I when we are asked to step down or go humble myself a little bit more we struggle with it we haven't seen the glory of Jesus humility he stepped down and became obedient to the point of death any death would have been a significant step down for Jesus and then the writer of Paul says even death on the cross not just a death like death on the cross painful and the mocking and the horrible thing that it is we don't have crucifixion these days that's why we don't know it even the death chamber the electric chair is sort of honorable they give you a nice big meal at the end of it Jesus didn't have any what would you like to order can you imagine Pilate saying hey what would you like to order as your last meal criminals are treated with respect today Jesus wasn't even death on a cross and then it didn't stop there even being forsaken by his father where the one that he had experienced fellowship with all his existence forsook him this is what it means to follow Jesus and so I'll end there I think we've heard enough I want to follow Jesus I don't want to just lie about following Jesus I don't want to say I've decided to follow Jesus no turning back and then the father Jesus show me I'm going this way I'm going down I want like Peter to see Jesus cross that he took up on this earth he'll never have to take up a cross again I want to see Jesus while I'm sitting there in my home with my family and see the cross that Jesus took up and Jesus saying Santosh are you going to follow me I'm going this way I don't know about you you can defend yourself you can continue that argument with your spouse or you can try to justify yourself and you can not ask for forgiveness you can choose not apologizing but this is the way I'm going I'm stepping down one more time will you follow me what joy we will have when we see him this is what it means to be united with him Amen Amen

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