

(Basics) 34. Humility in Jesus' Death

by Zac Poonen

Jesus' humility is an example for us to follow, and it involves being willing to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others, recognizing our own weakness and dependence on God, and submitting to a humiliating death.

Duration: 13:05

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 26:38, Luke 9:23, Luke 14:11, Luke 23:34, John 8:15, Philippians 2:8

Topics: "Humility In Christ", "Servant Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of demonstrating the life of Christ in our own lives and localities. He highlights the humility of Jesus, particularly in the Garden of Gethsemane and during his trial and crucifixion. Jesus chose not to call upon angels for help, but instead humbled himself and accepted the unjust treatment and death that his Father had planned for him. The speaker encourages listeners to live with an open palm, serving others and meeting their needs, just as Jesus did throughout his life. He emphasizes that true Christianity is not about seeking honor or popularity, but rather following the example of Jesus and living in humility.

Transcript

Today we're going to look a little more at that humility of Jesus Christ, which is an example for us to follow. It's important for us to follow this example because God says He gives His grace only to the humble. His disciples, on the night before He was crucified, when He washed their feet, He said, You call Me Lord and Master, John chapter 13, and I have washed your feet.

You must do the same for one another. What does that mean? Many people have felt that it means that we must all take basins of water and wash one another's feet. Even if our feet are covered with socks and shoes and are not dirty, that becomes a day when He took that basin of water.

If all those disciples were wearing socks and shoes like we wear today, particularly in colder climates, then there would be absolutely no need to wash their feet at all. Why did He wash their feet? It was not a religious ritual He went through. It was an act of necessity.

It was not a religious ritual. It was an act where He saw a need for a dirty job to be done for His disciples, and He did it. So when He said that I have given you an example, I, the Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet because I gave you an example, John 13, 15, that you should also do as I did to you.

We ask ourselves, what is it that Jesus did to the apostles? In one sentence we could say He met their physical need by doing a dirty task for them. So what has He told us to do? He has told us to be willing to do dirty tasks for one another where there is such a necessity, not to go through a ritual. If you are in a meeting hall, for example, the way you wash people's feet would probably be by going and cleaning the toilet so that it is kept clean.

That would be the equivalent of washing the feet today. It is a question of seeing a particular need and then meeting it. And what Jesus did there in taking that basin of water and washing their feet was typical of His whole life.

All His life I believe He was a servant of all men. We are not told how He lived for thirty years in Nazareth, but I can imagine how He lived. He must have lived serving others, serving His younger brothers, younger sisters, serving Mary, serving others in the neighborhood, being willing to do any task for anyone, seeing a need and being quick to meet it.

There we see His humility, and there we see how God wants man to live. My dear friend, that is how God wants you to live. And if you can see this and be gripped by the glory of Jesus, your life can be transformed.

Don't worry if other Christians around you are not living like this. Don't judge them. Don't find fault with them.

That is not our business. God is the judge of all men. We don't have to judge anyone.

But you can be like this, can't you? How happy you will be! Jesus said that in John 13, 17, after speaking about being willing to wash one another's feet and actually doing it. He said if you know these things, you will be really happy if you do it, not if you just think about it. The way of life that Jesus demonstrated is a way of supreme happiness.

You are not happy when you sit like a big Maharaja or Lord on your chair, make other people serve you. If you really want to be happy, be a servant. Jesus associated very closely with the lowest level of society in His time.

He moved among them as their equal. Have you seen fishermen on the coasts of India? You go down to a number of places along the coast and you can see fishermen. At what level of society do they live? They are despised as belonging to the lowest level of society.

Particularly, I don't mean these rich fishermen who go out in trawlers and motor boats. No, I am talking about people who put their nets into the sea and catch fish. And Peter and James and John were like that.

If you want to see what they were like, go and look at these fishermen who cast their nets into the sea, who go out in their little boats. And Jesus associated with them. And not only with people in a low level of society, socially, but also those who were at a very low level morally.

Prostitutes, drunkards, cheats. He was sinless and perfect. And He mingled with them.

And He was not afraid of people calling Him bad names, saying He is a friend of sinners. And He never made a single sinner feel awkward through His perfect holiness. You know, one mark of a humble man is that he never makes you feel awkward.

He always makes you feel comfortable around His presence, even if He is holy. Jesus was like that. The Pharisees were not like that.

You know, they were so stiff. They wouldn't let anybody come near them because they considered themselves so holy. But Jesus wasn't like that.

He mingled with the lowest level of people and made them feel at home. And in fact, He moved around with His disciples so freely that Peter would sometimes rebuke Him and felt free to give Him advice. Can you think of that? The disciples would feel free to give Him some advice, Lord, we think you should do this or that.

Now, how is it today with a lot of Christian leaders? You find them mingling like this? No. Christianity has not given to our country a demonstration of how Jesus lived on earth. We have failed.

We need to acknowledge it. Never mind others. You who are listening to this program, you can demonstrate the life of Christ in your own life, in your locality.

And if little by little each of us do that, our country will once again be able to see true Christianity demonstrated with people living like Jesus. See the humility of Jesus in the spiritual realm. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He was under tremendous pressure.

The Bible says in Matthew 26 and verse 38 that Jesus was deeply grieved to the point of death. And what does He do at such a time? He doesn't act as though He is self-sufficient. He doesn't need anybody's help.

He calls Peter and James and John and says, pray with me. Think of asking somebody to pray with you. A proud man will never ask anybody to pray with him.

You say, I don't need your prayer. I'm okay. But Jesus, the Son of God, who lived such a perfect life, asking these simple, stupid, foolish disciples who had so many weaknesses, saying, will you please come and pray with me because I'm under tremendous pressure.

Jesus was conscious of His weakness as a human being. And He sought the fellowship of His disciples in prayer. Do you do that? Or are you so self-sufficient? Do you see, my dear friend, how far, how far we are from the humility of Jesus Christ? It's because we're not honest to acknowledge that we're nothing, that God's power cannot be manifested through our lives.

You know why God's power was manifested in such a fantastic way in the life of Jesus? Because He recognized He's nothing. He just lived before His Father as nothing, and the Father could manifest all His power through Christ. There are only two spirits operating in the world, one going up, the other going down.

Up in the sense of exalting oneself in pride, down in the sense of humbling oneself, the spirit of Lucifer and the spirit of Christ. And it's operating everywhere. It's operating in Christendom too.

You find even in Christian organizations, Christian churches, Christians trying to push other people down, get on top of their shoulders, climb up to higher, higher, higher positions. And what spirit is that? Is that the spirit of Christ? No, it's the spirit of Lucifer. It's the spirit of Satan operating in churches, Christian organizations.

Isn't that sad? Jesus Christ came with another spirit of humbling Himself, going down. And I want to say to you, this is the way we can identify a true disciple of Jesus. He has absolutely no desire to go up or to become great or big, either in the Christian church or in the world.

He just wants to go down. He wants to bless others. He doesn't want to exalt Himself over a single person anywhere.

Finally, we see in the death of Jesus, His humanity coming to a perfect end, to perfection. Because in the death and the trial of Jesus, He was never given justice. He was humiliated, ridiculed, mocked, ill-treated, and made like the scum of the earth.

And there you see His humility, that He never called the angels to help Him. He could call 72,000 angels with one word. Why didn't He do it? No, He humbled Himself.

He didn't grab. All through His life, He opened His palms to give to others, and He finally opened His palms to receive the nails on the cross. This is the way that Jesus went, and this is the way that God wants you and me to live--with an open palm, not with a clenched fist to fight with others.

No, but with an open palm to give up our rights, not judging others, leaving it to God to judge. Jesus once said in John 8.15, I don't judge anybody. He submitted to the humiliating death that His father planned for Him, and it didn't matter how He was killed.

He accepted it. He was obedient unto death. My dear friend, this is the real Jesus of the scriptures.

He was not honored as a celebrity or a film star, like many of today's evangelists. On the other hand, people rejected Him, despised Him and nailed Him to a cross. This is true Christianity.

It is not a popular big thing. The Bible says that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination before God. Let's look at Jesus and go down the way He went.

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