

# Seek For The Humility Of Jesus

by Zac Poonen

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**Scripture:** Philippians 2:5, 1 Peter 5:5, Matthew 11:29, 1 Peter 5:5, Philippians 2:9, Proverbs 14:14

**Topics:** "Humility", "Gentleness"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Okay, there is a proverb in English. Some English proverbs are not in the Bible, but they're good. And that is that familiarity breeds contempt.

That means that even though you may be excited to meet someone in the beginning, over a period of time, as you get more and more familiar with that person, you don't value that person as much as in the beginning. Most marriages are like this. In the beginning, on the wedding day, or just before that, when they're in love with each other, there's such an excitement about being together.

But a few years later, it's become commonplace that excitement is not there. I use the example of a newly married couple. I'm trying to illustrate what Jesus said to the church in Ephesus, you have left your first love.

You've gone away from your first love. That's what I mean by familiarity breeds contempt, in Revelation chapter 2. Now use the example of a newly married couple, and the newly married wife is eagerly waiting for her husband to come back from work, and as soon as he knocks at the door, she jumps up and opens the door, and welcomes him, and hugs him, and says, come, let's have dinner together, and they have a wonderful time together. You go and visit the same home, five or six years later, and the husband's

coming back from work.

I mean, she's somewhere in the house, but she's not there to greet him anymore. He opens the door himself, and she says, well, the dinner's on the table. I got hungry, and I ate.

I couldn't wait for you. You can go and have it yourself, not like the old days. The first love is gone, but something like that has happened also to most Christians that I have met in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

In the beginning, it was so exciting. Think of the day you were first converted from being a nominal Christian, or a heathen, or a sinner, and you found Christ, and it was so exciting. Years later, you're still attending the conferences, and attending the meetings regularly, but deep down in your heart, you say, well, to tell you honestly, it's pretty boring.

I mean, a meeting may be boring, because the people there are not walking with the Lord, and what they share is all dead stuff. That is boring, but if your relationship with Jesus becomes boring, that's pretty serious. There are people who, in the beginning of their Christian life, would never miss a day reading the Bible.

Lots and lots of them say, Brother Zach, I've been so busy, I don't have time to read the Bible. I say, what about, do you have your lunch every day? Maybe some of you skip breakfast, but do you miss your lunch as well? Are you so busy that you don't have time for lunch? I mean, it's a rare person who says, I don't have time to eat, and eating a meal sometimes takes a long, much longer than just reading a few verses of the Scripture and meditating on it. You have left your first love, and that happens so often, and it's like a marriage.

It has gone sour. They're not divorced. No, the husband and wife are not divorced, but they don't sit together anymore for their meals, and they're pretty bored with each other.

They don't talk like they did in the old days. Each person is doing their own thing, and one not bothered about the other. You think of your own marriage.

I mean, if yours was an arranged marriage where you never cared for each other, that's another thing, but if you really loved one another, how is it today compared to the early days? And how is your relationship with Jesus? So the purpose of every meeting and even a conference like this is very often to bring us back to our first love, to bring us back to our fervent devotion to Christ. But those of you who have been believers for some time, you should be people now who are stirring up others to devotion to Christ, not having to be stirred up yourself. And what is the reason for all this? You know, you can't really live the Christian life without grace from God.

Grace is, to your life, in the Christian life, what money is in this world. Think of it like that. If you don't have money at all, you can't live.

You can't buy food, you can't rent a house, you can't send your children to school. You can do nothing in this world if you have zero money. And the more money you have, the more luxuriously you can live in this world.

Grace is like that in the Kingdom of God. And you know, as you look around the world, it's obvious certain people have a lot of money. You can make that out by the way they live, the cars they drive, the way they

dress, and where all they travel, etc.

And you can make out the people who have less money, or the people who have almost nothing, the homeless people. And you don't have to ask any questions. You look at a person and you can make out.

Watch their lifestyle and you can make out, are they very rich, or mediocre, or poor. It's the same in the Christian life. You move around with a person for a little while, and you can find out if this guy is a fervent, full of fervent devotion to Jesus Christ, or sort of average, or sort of pretty bored of the Christian life.

Like once upon a time, he loved the Lord deeply, but those days are gone. And he doesn't appear to be so disturbed about it. It's like that couple.

They don't remember the old days when they were fervently in love with each other, they greeted one another so fervently. And they're not so keen on those days coming back. That's sad, isn't it? And even the way a lot of husbands and wives speak to one another, it's so, sometimes so rude compared to the way they did it at first.

And they speak in a more kind way to the stranger in the door, who comes to the door. Then they speak to each other. It's tragic.

So we need to ask ourselves, what is the thing that's missing in our life? Jesus' life was never like that with the Father. Jesus was always fervent in his devotion to the Father. There's never a moment when he was bored with his Father.

You know the number of times he'd go off into the wilderness? If you didn't find Jesus in the house, you know where you could find him. He'd be out in some wilderness away somewhere, alone with his Father. Years and years.

I mean, he's already been on earth for more than 30 years, talking to the Father for 30 years. And he still wanted to be alone with the Father sometimes. It's like a married couple, they've been married 30 years, and they still want to be alone together and talk to each other and express their affection and love for one another.

Isn't it wonderful to see a married couple like that? That's how Jesus was. Never bored. And it's good to ask ourselves whether our devotion to Christ is of the same type, because Jesus said, as the Father sent me, so send I you.

And you remember what I pointed out to you when I spoke about that from John chapter 1. Please turn with me there to John chapter 1 and verse 14. First of all, we saw the glory of God the Father in Jesus, full of grace and truth. It's not just that they heard his words or his preaching.

It doesn't say we heard, we saw. And that's what people need in their relationship with us as Christians. They need to see something, not just hear.

People may forget what you preach to them. But if you live a life as a saint of God, they will never forget you. If a man has come once in his life in contact with a genuine saint, he will never forget him for the rest of his life.

He may forget many of the things that you have spoke and preached, but he'll never forget the impact of that man's life. And it must be like that with each of us. That people who come in touch with us may forget

all the things we preach and our doctrines and all that, but they should never forget the impact our life had on them.

All through their life, 30, 40 years, they'll never forget. That is true Christianity. And that is God's will for every one of us.

And the other verse I showed you was John 1, 18, where it says, no one has seen God in the age I am, but Jesus explained the Father. And it's the same today. No one on earth has seen Jesus Christ.

Our calling is to explain to the world what Jesus is like. How? With clever words, no. Primarily by our life.

That's our calling. Don't think your calling is just to gather on Sundays, meet together and share a few things from scripture together, sing a few songs together and go home and wait for the next Sunday when you come together. This is the routine of many Christians.

That's not Christianity. Jesus said, when the Holy Spirit's come upon you, you shall be my witnesses everywhere. From Jerusalem, which is your home, starting in your home, and in concentric circles outside Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, to the outermost parts of the earth.

And as I told you, you shall be my witnesses. Not bear witness, but be. That means your life will be like a shining light that people cannot forget what they have seen.

So this is our calling. To let people see the life of Christ in us and to explain to them from our life what Christ is like. For example, you've got to ask yourself this question.

Supposing the people you have met in your place of work and other places, you've never spoken one word to them about your faith or about Christ or Christianity or they don't even know what religion you are. And supposing they've, can you think that, can you feel that the people who know you sense there's something different about this man? He's not like the others in the office. He's not like the others who might know in the neighborhood.

He's not like my other family members. There's something different about him. It's not because of what he says, but there's something about his life which is different.

Is that the impression people get about you? Or your relatives, for example? Or do they feel, well, I mean, he talks about Christ and all, but he gossips just like anybody else. He backbites about others just like any other human being. He complains about various things and he's got criticism and all types of things.

And I can see he runs after money just like anybody else in the world. I don't see much difference in him except that he's religious and talks about Christ. That is what most people say about most Christians.

Now, the purpose of our seeking to have a church which preaches the full purpose of God is to produce a different quality of Christians. Who manifest by their life what Jesus Christ is like. Like Jesus manifested by his life what God was like.

Turn with me now to 1 John and chapter 1. This is what the apostle John wrote at the age of 95. 65 years after Christ had ascended up to heaven, John had walked with Jesus for three and a half years. 65 years later, he's trying to recollect those three and a half years he spent with Christ.

And what did he say? He says, that which was from the beginning, he's talking about Jesus, the life of Jesus, which we heard. We heard the words that came out of his mouth, full of grace and truth. We saw with our eyes that life.

We looked at that life and we touched it. We touched this eternal life which existed from before the universe was created. We actually touched it because that life was manifested.

And what we are proclaiming to you, John says, is not some theory. It's not like Moses who went up to the mountain and heard the commandments and came down with his tablets of stone and said, hey fellas, these are the 10 commandments and these are the other 603 commandments God has given. Please take note of them.

No, he says, they're not talking about all that. They're talking about a life that we saw, a life that we touched, that we heard and saw. The life which was with the Father from all eternity was manifested to us.

As the Father sent me, Jesus said, so send I you. And I'm convinced that people who come in touch with us must be able to say something like that and say, we came across a man once or a woman once. He or she was different from all the others.

Now, I met thousands and thousands of Christians, but this guy was different. This lady was different. There was something about him, about her, which radiated something in their life.

Which was different. There was no bitterness there against anyone. I never sensed in that person's conversation a desire to speak evil of others or gossip or backbite.

He was very gracious. He was very firm in his convictions. He would never compromise on anything.

He was very firm the way he brought up his children and he would not compromise in any area, but he was not critical of those who disagreed with him. He just bore with them and say, okay, they disagree with me. I believe you're wrong.

You would admit that. But he wouldn't go around speaking evil of them. He compassionate, okay, what do you do? I mean, I think of a lot of people in my life who have harmed me.

I mean, when you're a servant of the Lord, like I am, the devil makes you his target. And he doesn't attack you directly, he attacks you through other human beings. And a lot of people have tried to harm me in the last 50 years.

But I'll tell you something, when there has been such a wrong, bad attitude towards me and trying to hurt me, I said, Lord, I'm going to love them. How should I do it? I don't want to force myself to love them because Jesus said, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. And I struggle, struggle, struggle to love them and bless them.

Don't you feel like that sometimes when trying to obey that command towards people who are evil towards you? I said, Lord, I don't want to be like that. I want it to come out naturally. And the Lord said to me, you've got to see them like I see them.

They are lepers, spiritually. They've got leprosy. I don't know whether you've seen lepers.

We see a lot of them in India with their noses eaten up, their fingers all eaten up, all the sores and scars and bodily parts broken. Many of you have seen that disfigured. So ugly.

Let me ask you, those of you who have seen a leper, do you ever hate him? I've seen many lepers in my life in India. I've never hated one of them. As soon as I see them, I feel sorry for them.

I'm sure you felt exactly the same way when you see a leper. Or you see a person terribly discontorted, his body with some sickness. You don't feel angry with such people.

How can you get angry with a leper? Coming begging on the Victoria, you feel sorry for him. And said, these people are like lepers who are doing you evil. If you see them as I see them, you'll see them as lepers.

You won't get angry with them. Just like you see a physical leper, you feel sorry for them. Because their life is gone.

They're ruined. They're no help. And these people are like that.

Their spiritual health is gone. How can you be upset with them? That helped me. See, so the solution is to see everything the way God sees them.

Why is it, for example, so many people have such a struggle to be free from the love of money? They know the Bible says that the love of money is the root of all evil. I mean, they read that. See 1 Timothy.

I don't know whether you know that verse. If you don't know, it came to 1 Timothy in chapter 6. 1 Timothy chapter 6 and verse 10. Now, when you read a verse like this, don't start saying, well, this doesn't apply to me because I don't love money at all.

You start like that, you'll never get anything out of Scripture. If you want to get something out of Scripture, just read it saying, Lord, I'm a lover of money. That's how I went to the Lord years ago.

And I said, Lord, I'm a lover of money. You got to deliver me from it. If you've never said that to the Lord, I'll tell you in Jesus' name, in your entire life, you'll never be delivered.

You live in ignorance that you're a lover of money and ruin your life till you stand one day at the judgment seat of Christ and discover you never loved God. You love money all the time. I went to the Lord honestly and said, Lord, I'm just like other human beings.

Every human being is a lover of money. I've never met a beggar in the world who doesn't love money. Have you met a beggar who doesn't love money? Have you ever met a poor man who doesn't love money? No.

Have you met a rich man who doesn't love money? So everybody's in between. All the rich people love money. All the poor people love money.

We are in between. Everybody's a lover of money. And unless Jesus frees you from it, you'll be a lover of money till the end of your life.

And I said, Lord, first of all, I want to be honest. If you don't confess your sin, He'll never deliver you from it. So I said, Lord, I want to be honest.

I don't want to pretend. I can fool other people. But this is a matter of inward thoughts.

And I said, Lord, I want to admit I'm a lover of money. And it says here that those who love money is a root of all sorts of evil. And I don't want all sorts of evil.

I don't want any evil in my life. And the danger is I can wander away from the faith. Wander away from the faith doesn't mean I turn 180 degrees and start serving the devil.

No. I may just turn 10 or 15 degrees away from the faith and still be a good accepted Christian in a church. But I've drifted away from, it's not straight, going straight towards God.

It's a little bit to the side. You know, I can be like that and yet keep a good testimony in most churches. And I could be a lover of money.

So a lover of all sorts of evil who they drift away from the faith. And they pierce themselves with many sorrows. They get a lot of problems in their life.

Not money. It's not money that's the root of all evil. Verse 10 is the love of money is the root of all evil.

So that's just one example I'm taking. And I see Jesus lived on this earth completely free from it. It's not because he didn't need money.

Do you know that Jesus had the humility? Listen to this. He had the humility to receive a gift from Herod's palace manager. Would you receive a gift from Herod's palace manager? Turn with me to Luke chapter 8 and verse 3. Luke chapter 8 verse 3 is telling us how Jesus and his disciples supported themselves financially.

Because they needed money. All those fishermen had left their jobs. Peter had a wife and mother-in-law staying at home.

He had to send money for them, for their needs. Three and a half years he wandered around with Jesus. How is the family going to be fed? I don't know how many of the other disciples were married.

But they all had financial needs. You can't live one day without money. You need food.

You need lodging. If you go someplace you don't sleep on the streets. Maybe they had to hire an inn to stay in when they travel to other places.

Sometimes we don't think of these things. Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and he was there for a few days. Where did he stay? Was he sleeping on the streets? They needed money to be able to stay.

Where did they eat? They needed money to eat. Where did they get it from? Paul supported himself, teaching tenants. These people, they couldn't carry their fishing boats with them.

Jesus couldn't carry his carpenter tools with him and be a carpenter. How did they support themselves? It says here, they never told anybody their needs. They never advertised their needs to anybody.

They never sent any prayer letters. They never took a collection at any time in any of the meetings. Jesus was so different from today's churches where they all beg and borrow and plead for money and urge people to give and send prayer letters and all this nonsense.

Jesus and the apostles never did it once. There's a little book of mine called God's Work Done in God's Way, which we published last year. I would encourage you to get a copy.

It's very cheap. Get a copy and read it. And if you are too poor even to spend two or three dollars, go to the website, CFC website, and that book is available for free online reading.

And if you are too lazy to read all the pages, read at least two chapters, just two chapters. I would encourage you to do it. Read that within the next one week.

It won't take more than 15 minutes or 20 minutes. You will see how today's Christian world is so different from what you see in the Acts of the Apostles. But many of you may not even have thought about it.

You probably don't see it's different because you haven't read the scriptures properly. I would encourage you to see it. See the difference.

Are you concerned about that, that the Lord's name is dishonored because the work is not being done the way it was done before? Coming back to Luke 8 verse 3, here is how Jesus was supported. Joanna, the wife of Cusa, Herod's palace manager, and Susanna and many others were contributing to the support of Jesus and his disciples from their private resources. Do you know how humbling it is to receive a gift from somebody to support yourself? It's a very humbling thing to receive a gift when you have a need.

If you're a very rich man and somebody gives you a birthday gift, it's not humbling to receive it. No. You say, thank you.

But if you're a person who's in desperate need financially, as these disciples were, and Jesus was too, and somebody gives you a gift, it's a very humbling thing to receive it. And Jesus had the humility. The son of God who created the universe, who needed nothing, had the humility when he walked on this earth as a man to receive a gift of money from Herod's palace manager, sent through his wife.

I'm really humbled by that when I see the humility of Jesus there. I don't know whether you see the glory of Jesus in this thing. You can read that casually and go to the next verse.

Probably you did that all your life. Maybe because you're not so keen on seeing the glory of Jesus in every page of Scripture. But ever since I saw that the Bible was given to me to show me the glory of Jesus Christ, I said, I want to see it everywhere.

Everywhere, particularly in the Gospels. Lord, I want to see your glory here. Turn with me to Luke chapter 24.

Let me show you something there. We read of Jesus walking to Emmaus with two disciples after the resurrection. And, you know, the distance there, they walked for about three hours, by the way.

You say, where does it say it walked three hours? Read carefully. It says the distance was seven miles, Luke 24, 13. You can use a little arithmetic there and find out how long it takes to have a leisurely walk of seven miles.

I think three hours. A leisurely walk is about two miles an hour. And they took three hours to walk from Jerusalem, Luke 24, 13, to Emmaus.

What were they talking about during those three hours? It says in verse 27, Jesus went near them, beginning with Moses, which is Genesis. The first five books of the Bible written by Moses are called the books of Moses. Beginning with Genesis and then with all the prophets all the way to Malachi.

He explained to them what? He gave them an explanation of the 39 books of the Old Testament. And showed them how in all the 39 books, they pointed to him, the things concerning himself. In all the scriptures, and the scriptures are only 39 books those days.

In all those 39 books, he said, you see me here? You see me here? You remember when God told Eve, Adam and Eve, the seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head? That was referring to me, Jesus said. Or you go to Exodus, you remember the serpent lifted up, sorry, the Passover lamb? Crucified, killed to save the elder son in every house? That refers to me. You go to Leviticus, you see the sin offering? That refers to me.

You go to Numbers, you see the serpent lifted up in the wilderness? That refers to me. You see the rock smitten from which water came, Exodus? That refers to me. And all the way to Malachi, you read in Malachi about the son, S-U-N, of righteousness, the son of righteousness, that's me.

All the books of the Bible in the Old Testament were referring to Jesus. And he explained to them, and their eyes were opened. Hey, we've read these books for years, they were good Jews.

They went to the synagogue and heard these messages. But the priest and the rabbi in the synagogue never explained to them and said, this is Jesus. But when Jesus opened their eyes, they began to see Jesus Christ in every book of Scripture.

It's a wonderful thing. And there was a message in it for them. One reason why I compiled that commentary through the Bible, which is in audio on our website and also as a book now, is to show one thing, which I feel a lot of Christians haven't seen, that every one of the 66 books of the Bible has got a message for you for today.

And yet most Christians have never read the 66 books of the Bible. It's something like if somebody sent you 66 envelopes full of money saying, saying, hey, my friend, I've sent you 66 envelopes full of money for your family. Would there be one envelope in that that you would not open? Tell me.

No, you'd open it all the very first day. How many of you have read through the whole, all the 66 books of the Bible? You don't believe they contain a treasure for today. That's why I wrote that book through the Bible, a message for today from every book of the Bible.

That's why I've encouraged everyone in our CFC churches to read just three pages a day. And in one year, you'll finish the book. Three pages is enough.

Meditate on that. Keep your Bible open and refer to it. The purpose of that book through the Bible is to lead you to the Bible.

Don't get stuck with that commentary alone. You go through the commentary to reach the Bible itself. And you begin to understand the Bible better.

And God speaks to you. And you become spiritually wealthy. So Jesus explained all the scriptures concerning himself.

So what I'm trying to say is how much more in the New Testament, how much more that you can see the glory of Jesus. And then you'll be able to say like the apostles point. I've also seen him.

Spiritually, I've touched him. I've heard him. And my heart is captured.

I've seen him and I've heard him. And my heart is humbled like Isaiah said, Oh, I'm such a sinful man. I've seen the glory of the Lord.

I'm sorry, brothers and sisters that many Christians, their Christian life is so boring. Familiarity has brought a sort of a contempt. We come to a meeting and we don't even expect to meet with Jesus.

Oh, another meeting. Okay. I hope the preacher will have something interesting to say.

I know that most meetings you've gone to in your life are boring and dead because the preacher is not anointed. It doesn't lead you to Christ. Unfortunately, it's like that.

What do you do? I was like that when I was a young Christian and I went to these meetings, which if you ask me, honestly, at the end of the meeting, did you meet with the Lord? I said, no, I didn't meet with the Lord at all. The preacher was there. He was so boring.

When I was 21 years old, attending a small assembly when I was in the Navy. I have to be honest and say the whole thing was boring. I didn't get anything out of it.

He explained some scripture. It was all high sounding theological stuff. But I didn't meet with Jesus.

No. But I said, Lord, this is such a dishonor to your name that the church is everywhere. People are not meeting with you.

Please help me that my life will at least bring some people in touch with you, not just that they will learn a doctrine through me. Will you pray that prayer, my brother? You may never be called to preach like me, but you're certainly called to live like Jesus Christ. That applies to all of us.

Why not pray a simple prayer and say, Lord, I want things to be different with me from now on. I may never become a preacher. Never mind.

In my place of work and with my relatives, I want them to come in touch with Christ when they come in touch with me. I want that to happen, Lord. I don't want it to be just me and the doctrine they hear.

Some relative saying, oh, one relative of ours is a fanatic Christian. That's not what I want them to say. They may disagree with my doctrine, but they will see something of Christ in my life.

That's your calling, brothers and sisters. Be gripped by it. As the Father sent me, Jesus said, so send I you.

And like I said in the very first session, it's impossible to live this life without the power of the Holy Spirit. But we must start where Jesus started. Don't try to jump to the 10th grade when you want to start in the kindergarten.

Every child starts in the kindergarten. You can't go up to the 10th grade straight away. Start in the kindergarten.

What is the kindergarten lesson? What does it mean to follow Jesus Christ? Let's start where he started. Okay, turn with me to Philippians in chapter two. I'll show you where Jesus started and where you can start.

I want you to have faith that the life I've just spoken of, you can come to. I've tasted a little bit of it. There's a lot more for me to taste, but I've tasted a little bit of it.

And boy, I'll tell you honestly, I'm not trying to sell anything. My life has been exciting. There's a great verse in Proverbs 14, I think verse 14 in the Living Bible says, the godly man's life is exciting.

And I can honestly say that my life is exciting. I never have a boring day. I'm not, again, I'm not trying to sell Christianity.

Don't think I'm not a salesman. I'll tell you my testimony. My Christian life is exciting.

I don't have a boring day in my life. I may face a lot of problems, a lot of opposition and all that, but my life is exciting. I mean, Jesus' life is exciting.

Every day he looked forward to it. What can I do for my father today? Imagine living life like that in the midst of a world where everybody's disgusted, fed up, complaining, complaining about politicians, complaining about circumstances and everything under the sun. And in the midst of it, there's a man whose life is exciting.

It's not because he doesn't have problems. It doesn't mean that he's got a perfect wife or perfect children. Nobody's learned to trust the Lord to intervene in all situations and to lift him and try and make him live in triumph.

Okay, Philippians 2, this is where Jesus began. And this is where we got to begin too. Philippians 2 verse 5, have this attitude in you, which is in Christ Jesus.

I've often said that with that one verse, you can live your whole Christian life, even if you don't have the rest of the Bible. But if you read it, one verse, any situation you face, are you tempted to lust after a woman? Philippians 2, 5, have the same attitude, which is in Christ Jesus. How did he look at women? Have the same attitude.

Are you tempted to live for money? Have the attitude that Jesus had to money. Are you tempted to do something unrighteous? Have the attitude, which is in Christ Jesus. Are you tempted to hate that guy who's harmed you? Have the attitude Jesus had towards those who crucified him.

Have this attitude, which was in Christ Jesus. It's an answer to every situation of every day of my life. It's a wonderful verse to keep before you all the time.

Whenever you're in doubt, how shall I react here? Here's the answer. Have the attitude in you, which is in Christ Jesus. But for that, you should have read the scriptures to know what Jesus' attitude was in different circumstances.

So I said, kindergarten lesson, where did he begin? He did not begin by forgiving the Pharisees. That was when he was 30 years old. He did not even begin as a carpenter.

No, that was later. He began when he was God, verse 6. Listen to this. Though he was God, he came down and became a man.

He humbled himself. That is the kindergarten lesson in the Christian life. He humbled himself and became a man.

So what's the first lesson in the Christian life? Humility. Though he was God, there's no greater step down than that first step. If he had come down and become a king, God becoming an earthly king, that itself would have been a tremendous step down.

But he goes one step further. God became a man. Second step, again here, verse 7. As a man, he became a slave.

He didn't become a king. He became a slave. Again, another step of humility.

So the first step is God becoming man, humility. The second is, as a man, he became a slave or a bond servant, again, humility. And you think that's the rock bottom.

You can't go lower than a slave. Yes, there was something lower than even that. The Romans did not crucify slaves.

They just made them servants. You know who they crucified? Criminals. Many criminals were sent to jail.

But the worst of the lot were crucified. And so it says the third step, he went down, verse 8, even to the death of the cross. To the level of a criminal, even though he was not a criminal.

So you see, the first step was humility. God is a man, became a man. The second was, as a man, he became a slave.

And the third is, again, humility, that he took the place of a criminal, even though he wasn't. So this is what I've always said. The three secrets of the Christian life are humility, humility, humility.

If you understood that, you understood the greatest secrets of the Christian life. Have this attitude in yourself. This is the introduction to this section, verse 5. Have this attitude in yourself, which was in Christ Jesus, who went down, down, down, in a world where everybody's seeking to go up, up, up, up, up, up.

The whole world is full of people trying to go up. Businessmen are seeking to go up and become bigger businessmen and crush other businesses out of business. Politicians are trying to go up and crush others and get on top of everyone and become prime ministers and rulers.

And Christian preachers are trying to become big and become more and more famous and make their churches bigger and bigger and get a name that they've got the biggest church in the city, etc. Everybody in the world is seeking to go up. You know who was the first person who wanted to go up? Lucifer, the head of the angels.

In a perfect world where there was no sin, where only the heaven and earth existed. Genesis 1.1. In the beginning, God created heaven and earth. There was nothing.

The next thing he created was the angels. And that's described in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. And one was the head of the angels appointed by God, felt, I'm not happy.

There was only one person above him, God, and he wanted to go above him also. And the moment he decided to go up, refused to submit to authority, became proud, and he wanted to go above, he became the devil. The most beautiful angel that God created became the worst of all creation, the devil.

In a moment. Didn't take time. It wasn't a gradual process over 10 years.

It was in a moment. A man who's like a saint today can become like a devil if he has the same spirit of pride and wanting to go up. How would Jesus conquer this spirit that came to the world of everybody to go up and up and up and up, even among Christians, to go up and push other people down and to show that I'm greater and better is by going down.

So Jesus, in order to conquer this one who had the spirit of going up, conquered it by going down to become a man, a slave, to be treated like a criminal. Have this attitude in you, which is in Christ Jesus. What is the result? The Bible says, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God so that he may exalt you in due time.

That's in 1 Peter 5, verse 5 and 6. If you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God at the right time, he will exalt you. Exalt you over what? When I read a verse like that, I ask myself, Lord, what is the thing I want to be exalted over? I have no desire to be exalted over other people in my church or over any church. I have no desire to be exalted in this world as a great man or a great preacher.

Zero. I can honestly say that. What do I want to be exalted over? I want to be exalted over the sin in my flesh, which has ruled me for so many years.

I want every one of those sins to come under my feet. I want to be exalted over that. I want to be exalted over the devil so that the devil is crushed under my feet.

That's what I want to be exalted over. I hope that's what you want to be exalted over as well. Not just to show other people you're a great saint or a great human being or accomplish something great in life.

No. And Jesus demonstrated in his life how God can exalt you. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, 1 Peter 5, 6, that he may exalt you in due time.

Jesus humbled himself for 33 and a half years. He never stopped going down. He started at the place of God, came down, became a man, became a servant.

And the last day of his earthly life with his disciples, he was washing their feet. You can't go lower than the feet of your disciples. That's where he was.

He didn't end his ministry as a director or chairman of some organization. That's what a lot of Christians are looking for. I want to be the director or chairman of my Christian organization.

OK, brother, you go ahead and do that. I want to follow Jesus, who ended up at the feet of his disciples. That's where I want to end up.

On the last day of my earthly life, I want to be at the feet of my fellow believers, washing their feet. Every sermon I preach, I say, Lord, I want my sermons are to be washing feet. That's what every sermon is supposed to be.

It's washing the feet of the disciples. And then he went even down a further down and ended up like a criminal. And because he did that, the father was so delighted with him.

It says in Philippians to see here where it's nine. But this reason for this reason, never forget that. But this reason, God highly exalted him.

And gave him a name, which is about every name. So that in the name of Jesus, every knee will bow in heaven, earth and under the earth. And every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the father.

Why did God give him that position? Because he's the son of God? No, sir. Not because he was the son of God. He was that from eternity.

He was exalted above every name in heaven and earth. And everyone would proclaim him great. But that was not Jesus.

He was not known as Jesus in heaven. He was the eternal son of God. But now we're standing at the name of Jesus.

When did he become Jesus? He got the name Jesus when he came as a little baby on earth. Before that, he was the eternal son of God. But now as a man, as a man, God exalted him to the highest place in the universe.

Because he went down, down, down and took the lowest possible place on earth. Being willing to be treated as a criminal by others. Misunderstood.

Falsely accused. He kept his mouth shut. He would not open his mouth and defend himself so they can do what they like.

Allowed all those people to whip him and beat him and do all types of things and kill him. And he ended saying, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

And God saw that. You think God doesn't see the sufferings of his people? You think God doesn't see how a believer humbles himself in different circumstances? Of course he does. God is keeping a watch over every believer on the face of the earth.

He watches every detail of your life. He knows whether you humble yourself in the different circumstances. Or whether you exalt yourself.

Every single circumstance. You may think nobody's watching us. We're being watched all the time.

All the time. Like these video cameras that are set up in sensitive areas. In airports, in different places.

God is watching us all the time. And he's quick to exalt. At the right time, those who have consistently chosen to go in the way of Jesus are humility.

So what should we seek? Humility. Turn with me to Matthew 11 and verse 29. Jesus said, take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

See, the yoke is a picture of plowing a field. Two oxen plowing a field together. And if one is a senior experienced ox and the other is a new junior inexperienced ox.

The older experienced ox would, as it were, tell the junior one, if you want to plow a straight furrow in this field, look at my example. Just stay under my yoke. Don't rush ahead of me.

Don't lag behind. Don't wear off to the left or right. Just humble yourself and keep pace with me.

And keep going in the direction. Submit to the yoke, which is on your neck. The other end is on my neck.

The senior ox says, and learn from me. That's what Jesus says here. Take my yoke and learn from me.

What do you want to learn from Jesus? There are many things we can learn. I'll tell you what most Christians want to learn. How to heal the sick.

Would you like to learn how to heal the sick? Or how to walk on water? Or how to turn water into wine? Think of the name you'll get among Christians if you could do such things. It's all honor seeking for yourself. Learn from me gentleness and humility.

Those are the two things he said in verse 29. Many people spend hours training their voice to sing a solo in a church. They spend hours training to be part of a choir, singing songs in parts.

How much time do they spend learning humility and gentleness from Jesus? You see the hypocrisy and shallowness of a lot of people who call themselves disciples of Jesus. They're not disciples of Jesus. They're seeking their own honor through Christianity.

Through Christianity, they want to get a name as a great preacher or a great solo singer or great piano player or musician. It's all honor seeking. Jesus said, if you really want to learn something, learn gentleness and humility.

Do you know if there are two things that are characteristic of the entire race of Adam? Two things. It is our hardness. We're all a hard people.

And pride. That's a characteristic of the race of Adam. Think of how hard some men are towards their wives.

How hard some women are towards their husbands. Or unmerciful to someone who hurt them. Or towards their children even sometimes.

Jesus says, you need to be softened up. You need to learn gentleness from me. And think how proud we are when we do something.

How we want everybody to know what we've accomplished. It's all of the devil. Hardness and pride is 100% of Satan.

We are infected of it from the time of Adam. And that's why we hurt one another at home and hurt our husbands and wives and children. Hurt our neighbors and hurt our relatives and hurt people at work.

Hurt people everywhere. Because of our hardness and our pride. And Jesus says, I've come to show you another life.

The life of God which you don't have. And you cannot produce it. You can try to imitate me, the Lord says.

And you'll have this gentleness and humility for a few minutes. But it'll disappear. Get it from me by the Holy Spirit.

And it'll be your permanent possession. The Lord's not trying to train us to be humble and gentle for a little while. You train a dog to behave like a cat.

Tell a dog, now teach a dog through many hours of deep training to say, don't say bow-wow, say meow, meow, meow. And maybe you can make a dog say that. But in a moment of anger, the dog will still come out and say bow-wow.

Because the real nature hasn't changed. And you can get a man to try and behave to be gentle and humble and all that. But the real nature doesn't change.

Wait till some real provocation comes. And your pride and hardness will come out. It's not that, brother, sister.

It's the Holy Spirit coming and changing our nature inside. Where you really become a different person. That is Christianity.

And the world has seen very little of it. Because it will consistently be that. If you tell a dog to behave like a cat, okay, it can try for some time.

But in a moment of provocation, it'll stop listening to you. But if you tell a cat to behave like a cat, say, that's easy. That's what I am.

I think if we partake of God's nature, of the nature of Jesus Christ inside, and the Lord says, now I want you to live like Christ. Say, oh, well, the Holy Spirit's making me like that. I'll do that more and more every day.

That's the answer. And God does that for us when we're humble. When we humble ourselves.

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