

THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11



Christ is our example and our motivation for godly living.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Consider others better than yourself. Paul's command that we live in humility, considering others better than ourselves, flows from the gospel. Good works need to flow out of our love for Christ and what He did for us on the cross. Paul makes that perfectly clear. Our obedience comes from the encouragement of being united with Christ. Our comfort comes from His love and our fellowship with the Spirit of God. When our obedience flows out of our love for Christ, obedience is not a hardship but a joy, and it results in our experience of joy through others.

Christ is our example in humility. This passage first confirms the deity of Christ and the harmony within the Godhead. There is no competition between the Father and the Son. Jesus willingly emptied Himself of glory and took on the nature of man. He never ceased to be God while laying aside His glory to take on the body of a man. In His high priestly prayer, Jesus confirmed the setting aside of His glory when He prays: "Glorify Me in Your presence with the glory I had with before the world began" (see John 17:5).

Paul tells us to look to Christ's example of humility and follow His willingness to make Himself nothing.

God exalted Christ over all. Because of Christ's unmatched humility and obedience in dying on the cross, God exalted Him to the highest place and made the name of Jesus unmatched in greatness. One day every knee will bow and recognize the kingship of Christ. On that day no one will stand in opposition before Him. Even those who denied Christ in this life will know and confess to their shame that Jesus Christ is Lord. We who have been saved will know Him as the author of our salvation. But those who rejected him will know Him as the eternal judge who sentences them to eternal fire. The gospel opens our eyes that we might worship Him freely without fear of judgment.

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WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jesus gave up the glory of heaven to come down to earth and become a servant. Philippians 2:8 tells us that He became obedient to death, even death on a cross. God, the creator of the universe, humbled Himself and took our punishment upon Himself. Jesus was fully God and fully man. Because of His deity, not being born in sin, He could remain utterly sinless and perfectly obedient. Because of His humanity, He could take our place upon the cross as a man and absorb the wrath our sin deserved.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMANUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

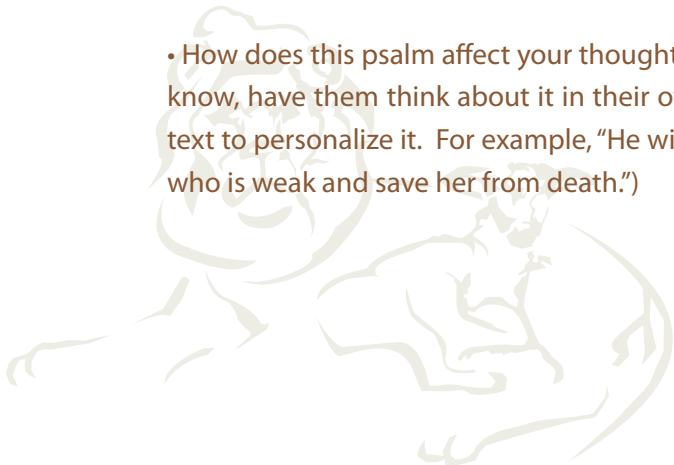
Bible Passage: Psalm 72:11-19

Connecting the passage to Christ:

This passage in the book of Psalms is remarkably similar to the exaltation of Christ in Philippians 2:9-11. Both speak of knees bowing before the Lord and the exaltation of His name. Both end with the praise and glory of God being lifted up. Jesus is clearly the king mentioned in this psalm.

Questions for reflection:

- What other similarities to Jesus do you see in this psalm? (Parents, draw your children out. They should notice that Jesus took pity on the weak and the needy, that He saved us all from death, etc.)
- How does this psalm affect your thoughts and heart? (Draw out your children. If they say they do not know, have them think about it in their own personal devotions. Tell them to place their name in the text to personalize it. For example, "He will deliver Marty who cries out," and "He will take pity on Emily who is weak and save her from death.")



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SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

SIGN THE PASSAGE

Supplies:

Invite a deaf interpreter to teach you the American

Sign Language for
Philippians 2:6-11.

If you are not able to bring in a person with these skills, work with the class to make up your own hand motions for these verses.

Then have someone act as the narrator and do a poetic presentation of these verses. Work as a class and then join with another classroom and perform for each other. Then ask your children the following questions:

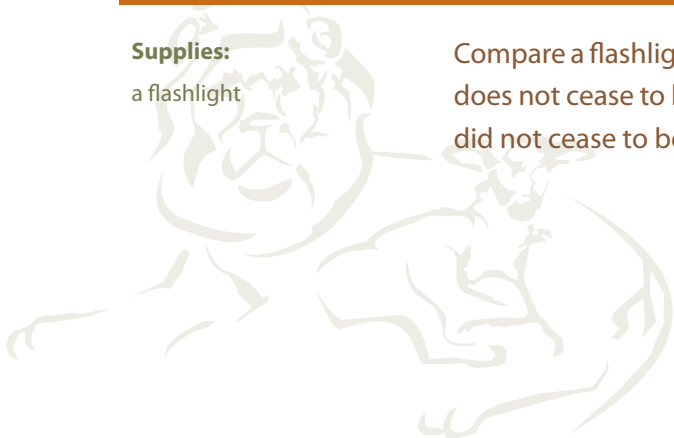
- Which verses affected you the most and why? (Draw out the children here.)
- What did Jesus give up to become a man? (Jesus gave up his glory and majesty and became a man. Only on a few occasions (his transfiguration and resurrection) did Jesus allow His glory to be displayed.)

THE FLASHLIGHT

Supplies:

a flashlight

Compare a flashlight with Christ. The glory of the flashlight is its light. The flashlight does not cease to be a flashlight when you turn off its glory. In the same way, Jesus did not cease to be God when he emptied Himself to become a man.



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HARD TO HUMBLE

Supplies:

ten large chocolate bars
and a bag of smaller
chocolate bars

Tell the class you are going to have a trivia contest. Those who get the questions correct get two blessings. The first blessing is that they get the chocolate bar, and the second is that they get to give the candy away to someone else as a demonstration of Christ's example.

Read through Philippians 2:1- 8

Then ask the class the following questions. When someone answers correctly, give them the chocolate bar and then tell them to break it in half and share it with someone else.

Who wrote the book of Philippians? (Paul.)

Where was Paul when he wrote the book of Philippians? (Under house arrest in Rome)

Why did Paul rejoice in the Philippians? (Because of their partnership in the gospel)

What religious title and office did Paul hold before he was converted? (Pharisee)

How was Jesus obedient? (He died on the cross.)

Who will bow their knee to Christ? (Everyone)

Who does Paul hope to send to the Philippians? (Timothy and Ephaphroditus - Count as two answers.)

What was Paul's name when he approved of the persecution of Christians? (Saul)

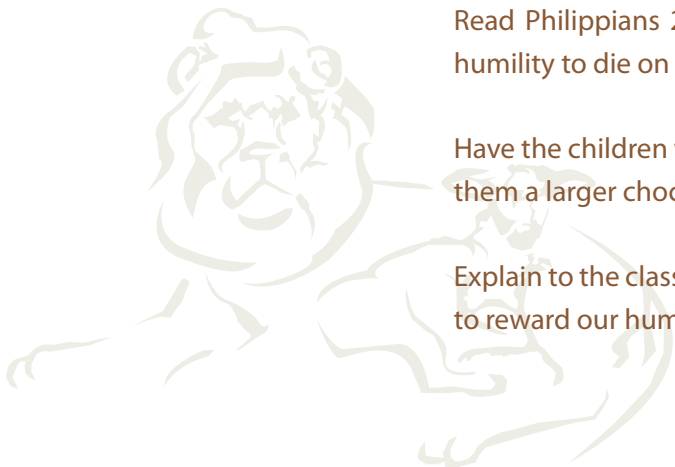
Why was Paul sent to Rome? (He appealed to Caesar.)

After the trivia questions are done, ask those who shared their chocolate if it was easy or hard for them to share. Ask those they shared with how they felt to receive the undeserved gift?

Read Philippians 2:6-11 and ask the children what God did as a result of Christ humility to die on the cross.

Have the children who shared their chocolate reward stand and award each one of them a larger chocolate bar.

Explain to the class that just as God rewarded the humility of Christ, so He promises to reward our humility as well. God promises to pour out His grace on the humble.



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PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

Draw a picture of Christ on the throne with glory and rays of light coming from the throne.

FOR THE OLDER GRADES

COMPARE THE PASSAGES

Supplies:

Paper and pencils

Have the students look up Philippians 2:9-11, Ephesians 1:20-23, and Hebrews 1:4-12 and compare them. Have them write an answer to the following question on their paper.

How did the Father exalt Jesus for His sacrifice on the cross?

Talk about their answers and then draw them out as to why these passages should motivate us to worship Christ.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Make Himself nothing – The words to “make nothing” is best translated to make empty. So when Jesus made Himself nothing, He emptied Himself. The same Greek word is translated emptied in 2 Corinthians 1:17. Jesus emptied Himself of His glory, but not His Godhood.

