

Palm Sunday

Philippians 2: 5-11

April 13, 2014

My Fellow Redeemed In Christ,

Humility. Sounds Like A Wonderful Quality.....Especially In Other People. Really, Who Wants To Be Humble? Sounds Like A Nice Idea But In Practice It's Not So Cool. If You Want To Be Walked All Over By Other People And Taken Advantage OfWell, Then Be Humble. I'm Afraid That Our Culture Doesn't Think Very Highly Of Humility.....Instead, We Are Taught To Seek Self-Fulfillment And To Look After Our Own Needs First. And So, There's Lots Of Interest In Self-Help Books And Programs That Are All About Us.....Ways To Make Ourselves Happier, Better Looking, More Fit, Smarter, And Successful. But There Is Little To No Interest In How To Serve Others In Humility....Now Since You And I Know All About Original SinWell, We're Not Surprised By Any Of This.....But As Followers Of Jesus Christ We Know A Different Way.....A Way Of Humility.....The Humility Of Jesus Christ.....And In Him We See That **"The Humble Are Exalted"**.

I. I'm Not Sure That Even Christians Fully Or Correctly Understand The Humility Of Jesus Christ.

A. His Humility Is Not To Be Found In His Simple Way Of Living Or Even In His Horrible Suffering And Death. What Makes The Humility Of Jesus Different From All Other Human Beings Is This: He Had A Choice. Unlike Other Human Beings He Is God.....God In Human Form. The Humility Of Jesus Christ Is This: He Didn't Have To Experience All Those Horrible Things.....He Could Have Stopped Them Anytime He Wanted To Stop Them.....But He Chose Not To...This Is His Humility.....As Paul Says: **"Though He Was In The Form Of God....Made Himself Nothing, Taking The Form Of A Servant....He Humbled Himself By Becoming Obedient To The Point Of Death, Even Death On A Cross" (Vv. 6-8, Esv).** You See Jesus Could Have Used All His Great Power To Satisfy His Own Needs.....That Was What The Devil Tempted Him To Do In The Wilderness...And If He Had Given In Jesus Would Have Been Just Another Self-Centered, Self-Serving Sinner..... But His Unique Humility Is Especially Seen In His Suffering And Death. If You Had Been Jesus How Long Could You Have Endured The Mocking And Unspeakable Pain Before You Would Have Used Your Great Powers Not Only To Stop It But To Punish Those Who Were Making Fun Of You And Hurting You?Listen Again To Our Gospel Lesson: **"If You Are The Son Of God, Come Down From The Cross....He Saved Others; He Cannot Save Himself,.....Let Him Come Down Now From The Cross, And We Will Believe In Him."** (Vv. 40, 42, Esv). Unlike Anyone Else, Jesus Could Have Come Down From The Cross.....You See That's His Humility. He Chose Not To Use His Great Power For Himself. He Stayed On Cross Because Of Love.....Love For His Father Who Sent Him To Suffer And Die For The Sins Of The World.....And

Love For Us....If Jesus Did Not Have A Choice...We Cannot Say That He Loved Us....We Can Say That He Loved Us Only Because He Had Choice...He Chose Us And Our Needs Over His Own Needs.....And So Paul Says: **"...He Humbled Himself By Becoming Obedient To The Point Of Death, Even Death On A Cross" (V. 8, Esy).** You See? No One Took Jesus' Life From Him.....He Laid It Down Of His Own Free Will..... This Is The Humility Of Jesus Christ. And In This Way He Became Our Savior.....Sin Paid For, Death Defeated, Life With God Restored.

B. But Paul Reminds Us That In His Humility Jesus Not Only Became Our Savior But Also Our Example To Follow **"Have This Mind Among Yourself, Which Is Yours In Christ Jesus" (V. 5, Esy).** What Is The Mind Of Christ? Humble Service To Others As Just Two Verses Before Our Text Paul Explains: **"Do Nothing From Rivalry Or Conceit, But In Humility Count Others More Significant Than Yourself. Let Each Of You Look Not Only To His Own Interests But Also To The Interest Of Others (Vv. 3,4 , Esy).** Experience Teaches Us That This Is Easier Said Than Done. It Takes A Lot Of Practice To Do This And The Best Place To Start Is Right In The Home With Our Own Family. * Husbands And Wives.....You Can Have This Mind Of Jesus As You Serve Each Other In Love....Making Sacrifices For Each Other...Putting The Needs Of Your Spouse Ahead Of Your Own Needs. * Parents Can Have This Same Mind Of Jesus As You Make Sacrifices For Your Children.....And * Children Can Have The Mind Of Jesus As They Serve Their Parents In Loving By Honoring Them And Obeying Them As God Commands. * And The Same Can Be Said In Our Life Together As The Family Of God Here At Messiah Lutheran Church....Serving One Another By Thinking Of Others Instead Of Our Own Needs. * And This Same Attitude Can Be Put Into Practice At Work Or School, In Our Neighborhoods Or With Friends. No, It's Not Always Easy...We Might At Times Grumble And Complain. We Can Become Resentful And Lazy, More Self-Centered And Self-Serving Than We Want Admit. But Then We Think About Jesus.....Our Dear Lord And Savior.....And How He So Humbled Himself For Us. .. Then We Are Renewed In Our Humble Service To Others.

ii. But.....That's Not The End Of The Story.....There's More As Paul Says:... **"Therefore, God Has Highly Exalted Him And Bestowed On Him The Name That Is Above Every Name, So That At The Name Of Jesus Every Knee Should Bow In Heaven And On Earth And Under The Earth, And Every Tongue Confess That Jesus Christ Is Lord, To The Glory Of God The Father" (2: 9, 10).**

A. On The Third Day Jesus Was Raised From The Dead....And He Ascended Into Heaven And Now He "Sits At The Right Hand Of The Father" As We Confess In The Nicene Creed. This Means That Now Jesus, As A Human Being, Always And Fully Uses His Powers As God. He Always Had This Power Ever Since His Conception In The Womb Of The Virgin Mary. But Prior To His Resurrection He Did Not Always Or Fully Use That Power.....Now He Does. This Means That Whatever You Can Say About God.....You Can Say About This Man, Jesus Christ. The Same Man Who So Humbled Himself On That

Cross Now Rules The Entire Vast Universe..... Including This Little Planet Earth. The Same Jesus Who Died For You On That Cross Is Now With You Each And Every Day.....And This Means That Jesus Is No Longer Humble.....He Now Fully Shares In The Glory Of God. And One Day When He Returns To Judge The Living And The Dead.....You Will See Him In All His Glory And Power As God In Matthew's Gospel: **"When The Son Of Man Comes In His Glory, And All The Angels With Him, Then He Will Sit On His Glorious Throne" (25: 31, Esv).** And On That Day All Of Creation Will Acknowledged Jesus As God And Savior Along With The Father And The Holy Spirit As Paul Says: **"That At The Name Of Jesus Every Knee Should Bow In Heaven And On Earth And Under The Earth, And Every Tongue Confess That Jesus Christ Is Lord, To The Glory Of God The Father" (V. 10, Esv).**

B. We Can't Even Begin To Imagine The Joy.....The Wonder.....The Glory Of That Day When We First See Jesus Christ In All His Glory With Our Own Eyes. What A Sight That Will Be! And We Will Not Be Afraid Because We Know That Jesus Is **"...The Lamb Of God Who Takes Away The Sin Of The World!"** This Is What We Have To Look Forward Too....Death Is Not The End...We Will Be Raised From The Dead....To Have A Body Like He Has Had For Two Thousand Years As Paul Says Later In This Same Letter.. **"We Await A Savior, The Lord Jesus Christ, Who Will Transform Our Lowly Body To Be Like His Glorious Body" (3: 20, 21, Esv).** We Will Have An Immortal Body That Will Never Get Tired Or Sick Or Old Or Die! Sin And Death Will Be No More. We Will Share In The Glory That Belongs To Jesus As Paul Says Christ As Paul Says In His Letter To The Colossians: **When Christ Who Is Your Life Appears...You Also Will Appear With Him In Glory (3: 4, Esv).** This Is What Awaits Us....This Is Our Hope.....And So When We See Him We Will Gladly And Joyously Kneel Before Him And Confess Him To Be Our Lord.....And Even Those Who Have Not Believed In Him Will Do The Same.....But They Will Be Forced To Their Knees To Confess What They Would Not Confess In This Life.....But .It Will Be Too Late. And Then We Will Enter That New World That Will Never End...Eternal Life.
Conclusion: Yes, **The Humble Are Exalted.** After Humbling Himself For Us To The Point Of Death, Even Death On A Cross.....Jesus Was And Is Exalted To God's Right Hand. And As We Humble Ourselves In Service To Others The Day Will Finally Come When We Too Will Be Exalted With Jesus And Share In His Glory. Amen! Come Lord Jesus! Amen..