

3 Philippians 2 v 1-11, 19-30

JOY AND HUMILITY

The story so far

Paul is writing to the church in Philippi, thanking God joyfully and confidently for their faith and praying that they would abound in love, to God's glory.

For the believer, to live is Christ and to die is gain—so the Philippians (and we) can live with joy, even in difficult circumstances, standing firm in faith together.



talkabout

1. What is humility?

- In what circumstances does your society celebrate humility? In what ways does it see humility as negative?



investigate

Humility is the central theme that runs throughout Philippians 2. The actual word “humility” is found in verse 3, but the concept is seen throughout this entire section.

▶ Read Philippians 2 v 1-4

Each “if” in verse 1 can equally accurately be translated “since” or “because.”

DICTIONARY

Consolation (v 1): comfort; solace.

Conceit (v 3): hunger for your own honor and praise.

2. What do the Philippian Christians enjoy (v 1)?

3. If/since this is true of them, what does Paul appeal for (v 2-4)?

4. How do verses 2-4 define what it means to have “humility” of mind?

➤ Read Philippians 2 v 5-11

5. Why is Jesus the supreme example of humility (v 6-8)?

DICTIONARY

Bestowed on (v 9):
gave.

• How does this make verse 5 a great challenge to us?



6. How did God the Father respond to the humility of God the Son (v 9-11)?

- How does this encourage us to live with “humility” of mind?



explore more

▶ Read Luke 18 v 9-14

How does Jesus teach here what Paul does in Philippians 2 about pride, humility, and exaltation?

What does this teach us about the link between our humility and our prayers?



apply

7. Think of some specific ways in which living with this kind of attitude would mean blessing for those around you in...

- your church?

- your home?



- your workplace?



getting personal

Given this example of Jesus, it is clear that none of us can ever humble ourselves too much. None of us may ever say, "Enough. I deserve better, so I will stop here."

How does this challenge you? When do you find it hardest to live with Christ-like humility?

True humility will never be forgotten by God. He will see it, note it, and reward it. No one ever truly humbles themselves before God without being exalted by God, in this life or in the life to come.

How does this encourage you? How will it change how you live in those times when it is hard to be humble?



investigate

Read Philippians 2 v 19-30

8. How does Timothy show us what humility looks like in real life (v 19-23)?

DICTIONARY

Kindred (v 20): family-like.
Furtherance (v 22): advance.

Minister (v 25): here, meaning one who attends to, or looks out for.

Deficient (v 30): lacking.

9. Likewise, how does Epaphroditus show us what humility looks like in real life (v 26-30)?

10. How should the Philippian Christians think of and treat Epaphroditus (v 29)?

➔ **apply**

11. Who is held “in high regard” (or “honored,” NIV/ESV) in your church, and why? Would Timothy and Epaphroditus be? Why / why not?

12. Do you find their examples more or less challenging than the example of the Lord Jesus? Why?



getting personal

What would it look like for your life humbly to be given to God in a manner worthy of Paul’s commendations of Epaphroditus? Be specific.

↑ **pray**

Use verses 6-11 to praise the Lord Jesus Christ. Work through each verse, thanking him for who he is, what he has done, and where he is now.

Share an aspect of Timothy or Epaphroditus’ humility that you would like God to grow in your own life, and use your answers as the basis of your prayers for one another.

