

**"Humility"**

**Philippians 2:5-11**

What is your favorite television show? How about your favorite movie? Many of us complain about the quality of some of the newer TV shows, and like many of you, we, too, will often flip through channels to find our favorite re-runs of shows of yesteryear. Just the other night I asked Linda if she realized that the episode of "Seinfeld" that we had just watched was 20 years old. I personally still find the writing and acting of "MASH" to be far superior to any of today's television. (That show is almost 40 years old.) Lately I find myself referring to "Everybody Loves Raymond" when meeting with couples planning to be married. I can watch some of these shows over and over, even knowing the dialog almost by heart. It is the same with some movies. Every Thanksgiving and Christmas we have a ritual of watching certain movies year after year. Like little children we also do not seem to weary of hearing certain stories read over and over.

I pray that is the same with what we have just heard read again to us this day. How many times have you heard the Christmas story from Luke? How many times have you read the Passion Narratives from the Gospels? I trust you have never wearied from hearing over and over the greatest love story of all times. There are lots of things to do right about now. It is a late Easter after a long winter and we probably are all behind in yard work. Preparations for spring and summer may be behind schedule. There are lists of projects that we may be anxious to begin as soon as the weather breaks for good. If you have children, then you are never without something to do. Yes, we are all very busy people; but I hope not so busy that we don't take the time to make this week very special and meaningful. Just like the favorite movie, no matter how many times we see it we still find something new in it. I know that is the same with the story of God's love for the whole world. We will do ourselves an eternal favor if things are in their proper places this week that we might then fully appreciate the impact of our Lord Jesus Christ going to the cross in our behalf. This story has a most marvelous ending, and even more powerful if we have read it in its entirety.

St. Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." We want the mind of Jesus, I hope. Having his heart is truly a desire. What was Jesus' mind and heart? Paul says he humbled himself. He left the comfort of heaven, the royal throne of the everlasting kingdom, to step into our lives having given up all his heavenly royalty. He came to care for us, the whole world, and not just a few of us, but all of us. Jesus wasn't selective in loving people as it really seemed that he was drawn to the most sinful. He didn't just weep with people, either, because he also found occasions to make a joyful party even better. Jesus took on our flesh, and in his humility and humbleness he was obedient to his Father in heaven. Jesus did not follow his own map for life on this earth, but took the route his Father wished him to take. We know where it led, and we know how he suffered and died. And we already know he rose again from the dark, dead, cold tomb. He did that out of love for you and me. He thought of us before he worried about himself. He bore the pain we caused him in our disobedience, and never did he take his eyes, heart or mind off of the goal. We who believe in him will have life eternal. Jesus came that we would live forever with him where there will be no more sin, no more pain, no more suffering, no more death. Only light and love forever. From his humility God exalts his Son when everyone will bow before him and sing his name in praise and honor forever.

C.S. Lewis wrote, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less." That is exactly what Christ did for us. It was less about him and most about us. In order to do that, though, Jesus knew who he was and why he had to do what he did. That is true for you and me as well. God created you and loves you. You are the apples of his eye no matter what others or you might think. God gave you all the gifts you need in life to be a shining light of his love to the world. God made you in delight, and his eyes, because of Jesus, you are perfect. Knowing that, we then realize we have a task. It is not about only us. It is also about others. We who are blessed with Christ's love, esteemed by his redeeming love, have a mission to care for others just as Christ does for us. We are all somebodies, made that way by God, but we are not the only somebodies. This week will help our minds, our hearts and our bodies become more like

Jesus, and the more and more we hear the story the more we will in humility have the mind of Christ. God make this week holy for us all. And may we keep God holy this week and always. *If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Amen.*

The Rev. William L. Kay

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