

Servant King

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Philippians 2:1-11

As a child we might have desired to be a prince or princess, a king or queen. I used to wish that I was a king, so I could have all the riches and, power to rule and perform justice in the oppressed society. Live in a palace where it is full of guards and servants attending my need.

Today we will look at a different style of a king. Jesus the servant King

1. Not just my interests, but interests of others (v1-v5)

So, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

It is our nature that we want to be someone, to think what we think is right. This was the problem of church of Philippi where they had disagreement in opinion which caused conflict, and division in the church. That is why Paul pleaded with the people to have the same mind, same thinking, have unity, not to be divided. He pleaded with people to have love to cover all the differences. The reason people have disunity is because they persist in the attitude that what they think is right. They don't accept other people's ideas or ways of doing things. The root of these problems is pride.

I know we were all brought up in different environments and backgrounds. The ways we were brought up in the family, school, and culture of a nation were different. But we forget that in a lot of situations it is not whether we are right or wrong but whether we are trying to understand what is really meant by standing in the other person's shoes. That is, see things from the other person's point of view.

A mature person is not concerned about whether he can convince another person that he knows it all or that he is right but that he is able to see things from another person's point of view and work through the differences. He is one that can understand and feel what other person's needs are and take care of them.

Texas Ranger baseball player Josh Hamilton has battled the demons of drug and alcohol addiction. So, when his team won their playoff series in 2010, Hamilton was concerned about the postgame

celebration. He admitted that it's not good for a recovering alcoholic to be in the midst of a "rainstorm" of champagne. But something beautiful happened. Instead of champagne, his teammates stocked the locker room with ginger ale so that Hamilton could be included in the celebration. What a great picture of community and putting others' needs above your own.

This is what Paul meant when he commanded the Philippians to count others as more significant than themselves (2:3-4). Being united to Christ made the Philippian believers members of the same family and gave them a special bond. So, their attitude toward one another was to be expressed in practical ways, that is, unity in love, sacrificial service, and discovering how to help others even when they didn't realize they needed help, or even if it is not for your convenience. The motivation for this type of normal Christian behavior is the example of Jesus Christ. So, we need to have humility like Jesus had. It is only when we are willing to put ourselves down before the other person that we can have unity and love in the church or in the coworkers' team.

2. In humility count others more significant than yourselves (v6-v8)

Here Paul is saying look at Jesus....

V6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, V7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

2000 years ago, Jesus the creator of the whole universe, king of kings Lord of Lords came to earth. What kind of treatment is fit for a King of universe? What kind of celebration and preparation fit for him?

King or Queen of England—guard of honor, all high officials would be eager to meet the king or met the Queen.

Oscar award, red carpet all the glamor, photography taken, scream of the fans. But Jesus was not born in a palace or famous family but in a manger, did not have any servant, not even a midwife to welcome him to the world he has created.

He did not have any guard to protect him but had to run for his life because king Herod was going to kill him. The Holy almighty God, put on the body of a man, not to serve but to serve.

For him to be like man is like you to become a cockroach or even worse, because we were filthy sinners.

I don't think any one of us can be a king or queen but how we want to make a name for ourselves, we want to be someone that people can respect, or look up to. I am not saying that we should not achieve well or become someone others can respect us, but do we seek that status or feeling? What if people did not give you that respect, would you dislike that person and disassociate with that person? Or will you still love that person, the way you treat him will not change for the worse?

James and John, the disciples of Jesus come up to Jesus and demand, "Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask ... Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Even though they've heard Jesus mentioned his suffering and death twice already, they still "imagine a triumphant, majestic scene with themselves sitting in positions of honour at King Jesus' right and left." They want power and prestige, but they've got it all wrong. Jesus tells them, "You do not know what you are asking." James and John think that following Jesus will lead to admiration and high status, but that's not reflective of who Jesus is. Jesus says, "Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant ... For the Son of man came not to be served but to serve." Jesus is still great -- he is still a leader, a king, someone with authority, but in a very different scene than the one James and John have imagined. Jesus is a leader who serves, a king who walks among his people, not one who sits in some throne far away.

Jesus came in the form of man, but he did not lose his Godhood, the character of God. He can still see things from God's point of view. No doubt he saw many of his disciples' weaknesses and foolishness, but he did not scold them all the time or say "you guys are useless, let me do it". He withholds that and trains them patiently.

It is our human nature that we want to be served rather than serve others. But instead, a church should be filled with love and care, because people need that, and this is a sign of a healthy church. Christlike love is seen in good works. We should be able to put down our desire and care for other people's needs. I am very blessed in this church because I can see this happening everywhere and all the time. Just for a few examples, during the covid period, we have seen people giving food to those who were sick and offered to buy things for them.

I have seen people step into the ministries willingly when we don't know who to do it.

As family of God, we can be more active in approaching the new people and make them feel welcome to our church. Even if we don't see other people go and approach the newcomer, we can say, I am willing to live out the love of God, and make the church full of love and care. Are you willing to reach out to those who are alone and in need of a friend? Through you, just one person can change the whole atmosphere.

V8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

He did not just become a lowly person but obedient even to the point of giving up his life for those who are enemy of God, the disobedient people. Jesus was challenged by the law makers and religious leaders of that time for the way he lived out God's word in love. When he healed a lame

man on the Sabbath day, or when he had dinner with the tax collectors and sinners, he was ridiculed by them.

He was hated when Jesus said to the religious leaders, they were hypocrites, telling people to obey the laws they have made yet they themselves don't keep them and inside them they were evil.

In no way was he treated as equal as God. He did not perform miracles for himself but for those who are sick, for those who are hungry, or thirsty, for those who are in low self-esteem because they were tax collectors or prostitutes. When people wanted to make him king because he was able to provide them with food by multiplying them, he moved away from the crowd. At the execution site, He could have jumped down from the cross to prove to those who crucified him that he is the Son of God, the King of whole universe, but he went through death for us.

He came not to be served but to serve.

Illustration of Meghan PPT

Meghan Vogel at the state competition she won the 1,600 in a personal-best, in the 3,200 race she was coming behind Arden who injured her leg, instead of running around her, Meghan put Arden around her shoulder and helped her competitor to cross the finish line together.

Have this in our mind always, may it help us to be humble and have the servant attitude.

3. God will raise you up (v9-v11)

⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Because of the submission and obedience of Jesus, God raised Jesus up to the place where he is highly exalted.

God sees everything, and he will lift you up from your injustice, the way you are willing to submit to others because of unity's sake.

English evangelist George Whitefield (1714-1770) an English preacher. He traveled to North America, where he preached a series of revivals that came to be known as the "Great Awakening". He preached at least 18,000 times to perhaps 10 million listeners in Great Britain and the American colonies.

He learned that it was more important to please God than to please men. Knowing that he was doing what was honoring to the Lord, this kept him from discouragement when he was falsely accused by his enemies. At one point in his ministry, Whitefield received a vicious letter accusing

him of wrongdoing. His reply was brief and courteous: "I thank you heartily for your letter. As for what you and my other enemies are saying against me, I know worse things about myself than you will ever say about me. With love in Christ, George Whitefield." He didn't try to defend himself. He was much more concerned about pleasing the Lord. He became one of the greatest theologians in the classical era.

God will make things right, but you need to die to yourself first. Jesus had all the right for justice, but he let the people misunderstand him, mistreated him. After he was beaten so severely, and nailed on the cross, just before he died he didn't say, "I will remember this" or, "I will be back and pay what you deserve", but said, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Because of Jesus' submission, those who did not admit that Jesus is Lord will have to bow down with their knees and proclaim that Jesus is Lord.

Humility is not weak but strength, because humility does not mean that he is unable to do something, but it is a choice. That is, even if the person is able, he chooses not to pay back for the wrong things others have done to him or he chooses to be low profile when there is success.

Like Jesus as an example

When the soldiers were to arrest him, Peter withdrew his sword to protect Jesus.

Matthew 26:52-54

⁵² "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

Jesus could have sent 12 legions of angels to get him out of this life-threatening situation. A legion is 3000 to 6000 men so is 36,000 to 72,000 angels. But he chooses not to respond. This is strength, this is power.

Ignacio Echeverría, the "skateboard hero" of the London attacks

Ignacio, who had a law degree, was a member of Catholic Action and a great athlete (in addition to skateboarding, he loved surfing, golf, and squash). He had left his native Spain to work as an analyst at HSBC, where he worked to prevent money laundering.

The world remembers him as the "skateboard hero," since Ignacio Echevarría, a 39-year-old bank employee, did not hesitate to confront one of the terrorists of the June 3, 2017 London Bridge attack, using one of the passions of his athletic life: a skateboard.

He could have continued on his way on his bicycle and fled like so many other people, but he got off to confront the killer, saving the lives of several people who managed to escape. He was mortally

wounded when two other terrorists stabbed him in the back.

Ignacio gave his life to save people he did not know, because of that he was called a national hero. Do you want to be great? Die to yourself first, be a servant even it might mean death, not necessarily physical death but die to your pride, die to what you think you know but in reality you don't really know, die to your right, for God will raise you up.

Jesus was the King of universe but he served the disciples so they too should have the attitude of servanthood.

John 13:1-5; 12-17 (NIV)

13 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

²The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Jesus wants us to follow him this way, and you will be blessed when we follow his way.

Galatians 6:9-10

⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Pray that in this Christmas season the season of remembering the king of universe came to earth, we would remember who Jesus is, how he came to earth not to be served but to serve, not to gain glory for himself but in humility he glorified God by his obedience, even to death. May we follow his example and serve one another, because Jesus the King of kings served us first.

Play the song: Servant King