

LESSON 68

The Humility of Christ

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11



BIBLE TRUTH

CHRIST IS OUR EXAMPLE AND OUR MOTIVATION FOR GODLY LIVING

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Philippians 2:1–11 from the Scriptures or read story 146, “The Humility of Christ,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Hard to Humble

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one large chocolate bar
- ✓ a bag of candy-coated chocolates

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 20 MIN

Sign the Passage

(Note: This will take longer than 20 minutes if you perform for another class.)

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

On the Throne

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- ✓ Bibles for the class

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Exalted in the Psalms

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class
- ✓ paper and pens or pencils

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Consider others better than yourself—Christians are called to humility. No one, who calls themselves a Christian can put themselves outside of the group Paul describes in Philippians 2:1. Every believer knows the love of God and the fellowship with the Spirit. Therefore, every believer is called to “count others more significant” than themselves (Philippians 2:3).

Paul roots his command in the gospel. Our good works flow out of our love for Christ and what he did for us on the cross. Paul makes that connection for the Philippians here. Our obedience comes from the encouragement of being united with Christ (Philippians 2:1). 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—Not only are we to be motivated by what Christ did for us when he died on the cross, the way of the cross provides the example of how we should live. Christ is our ultimate example of humility. Jesus Christ considered the interests of his Father as more important than his own. Jesus willingly emptied himself of his glory and took on a human nature (Philippians 2:7). In his high priestly prayer, Jesus confirmed the setting aside of his glory when he prayed: “Glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed” (John 17:5). The humility of Christ reached its climax in his death upon the cross. Jesus was mocked, spat upon, and tortured—the greatest humiliation of all known history.

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 (Philippians 2:9–11). 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.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Made Himself Nothing

The phrase “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 1 Corinthians 1:17. Jesus emptied himself of his glory, but not his deity.

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

The core of the gospel is found in Philippians 2:8–9. In verse 8 Jesus dies an unjust death upon the cross and then in verse 9 he is alive again because death could not hold him in the grave.

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.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Philippians 2:1–11 from the Scriptures or read story 146, “The Humility of Christ,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Hard to Humble

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one large chocolate bar
- ✓ a bag of candy-coated chocolates

Tell the class you are going to have a trivia contest. Those who answer the questions correctly get eight to ten small candies. (Have a helper keep an eye out for the first student to share their candy.)

Read through Philippians 2:1–8 and then ask the class the following questions:

- 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)
- Name one person Paul hopes to send to the Philippians.
(Timothy and Epaphroditus—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 asking all the trivia questions, ask those who received the chocolate if they kept it for themselves or shared it with those around them. Ask those who received 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’s humility in dying on the cross.

Have the children who shared their chocolate reward stand. Then award them the larger chocolate bar to share.

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. Read 1 Peter 5:5–6.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 20 MIN

Sign the Passage

(Note: This will take longer than 20 minutes if you perform for another class.)

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.

Have someone act as the narrator and do a poetic presentation of these verses. Work as a class and then perform it for another class. Then ask your children the following questions:

■ **Which verses affected you the most and why?**

(Children may need some suggestions to get started.)

■ 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.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

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.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

On the Throne

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- ✓ Bibles for the class

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

Read together Philippians 2:9–11; Ephesians 1:20–23; and Hebrews 1:4–12 and use them as an inspiration for their drawing of Christ on the throne. Have them leave a space under their drawing to write a Bible verse of their choice from one of the passages.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Exalted in the Psalms

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class
- ✓ paper and pens or pencils

Psalms 72:11–19 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.

Have the children look up Psalm 72:11–19 and read it as a class. Then pass out paper and pens or pencils and ask the class to find something from the passage that sounds like something you read from Philippians 2. After they work for five minutes or so, use the following questions to guide the discussion:

■ **How is this psalm similar to Philippians 2?**

(Both speak of knees bowing before the Lord and the exaltation of his name and both end with praise and the glory of God being lifted up.)

■ **What similarities to Jesus do you see in this psalm?**

(Draw the 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?**

(If the students say they do not know, tell them to place their name in the text to personalize it. For example, “He will deliver Marty who cries out,” or “He will take pity on Emily who is weak and save her from death.”)