

Series: Side by Side  
Message Title: **Why God Honors Humility**  
Date: Sunday, March 25, 2018  
Scripture: Various Scripture Passages  
Speaker: David H. McKinley  
Location: Warren Baptist Church, Augusta, GA

---

## Introduction

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the final week of the earthly ministry of Jesus. From the celebration of His entry into the city of Jerusalem to the procession of His beaten and broken body out of the city to be nailed to a cross; this was the purpose, the mission, the mind set of His coming—to make a way for us to the Father.

This week, I would encourage you to read through Jesus' last week as recorded in the Gospels, but especially Matthew 21-28. If you read a chapter a day, it will take you through Easter morning!

However, the theology behind this week is found not so much in the narrative of the gospels, but in the letter of Paul to the church at Philippi.

There is no single passage of Scripture more sacred and precious to the heart of every believer than that of Philippians 2:1-11.

This passage is known as *the Kenosis* (self-emptying of Christ). In this text, we have movement from Christ’s place in heaven to the path of His walk on earth and then the resurrection and ascension back into heaven.



## **The Glory of Christ in Heaven**

Long before people lined the dusty road leading into Jerusalem to hail Him, Jesus sat enthroned with the Father in Heaven.

“In the form of God”—not a demigod, but in essence God! It is the idea that Christ was and is the same material (unchanging and unalterable) as God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him

was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:1-4 ESV).

Jesus is not the product of God, but the very person of God.

He was and is co-equal, co-eternal and co-essential as the second member of the Godhead. Speaking of the Trinity, try to define it and you will lose your mind, but deny it and you will lose your soul.

Church history is littered with debates about the person and nature of Christ. The following was formed into words from the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. to specifically define the person and nature of Christ.

*We believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty, Maker of all things  
visible and invisible.*

*And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son  
of God, begotten of the Father, the only  
begotten; that is, of the essence of the  
Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God  
of very God, begotten, not made, being of*

*one substance with the Father; By Whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth; Who for us, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; He suffered, and the third day He rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*And in the Holy Ghost.*

Neither John nor Paul leave us here:

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14 ESV).

... “but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7 ESV).

Christ became one of us. The external form changed, but the internal nature did not! Christ refused to use His equality with God for only His advantage. Instead, He humbly laid aside such glory to descend and die for us.

## The Humility of Christ on Earth

Even though Christ had glory in heaven, He stepped down and stepped into our humanity. Christ's mindset was the opposite of entitlement and self-absorption; it was an attitude of humility—submissiveness rather than stubbornness.

Incarnation—Jesus took on flesh with all its limitations, weaknesses (hungry, weary, tempted, etc.).

But the greatest expression of this was not the outward form of such humility, but the inward disposition—the attitude of sacrifice. Christ not only became one of us, He died for us. Jesus faced and experienced the deepest, darkest and most damning of all human realities—death.

“Christianity is the only major religion to have at its central event the humiliation of its God.” —Bruce L. Shelley

The greatest service needed for man was someone to dis-empower death and the

greatest act of love ever known was Christ's descent to do this—dis-empower death and offer life to all who believe on His name.

“But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12 ESV).

The death of Christ was not tragedy because of something gone woefully wrong; it was voluntary because of the love of the Father and the servitude of the Son for us.

Nowhere does the Bible teach that God's plan went wrong and Jesus was the victim. We are the victims of sin's sovereign reign in humanity and Jesus is the victor who came in to lead captivity captive!

Isaiah, the Old Testament prophet, gives us a glimpse of this centuries before:

“He was despised and rejected by men,  
a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.  
Surely He has borne our griefs and carried  
our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken,

smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all... Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief; when His soul makes an offering for guilt, He shall see His offspring; He shall prolong His days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. Out of the anguish of His soul He shall see and be satisfied; by His knowledge shall the righteous One, My Servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the many, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:3-6, 10-12 ESV).

“In the Christian story God descends to re-ascend. He came down, down from the heights of absolute being into time and

space down into humanity... But He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world up with Him. One has the picture of a strong man stooping lower and lower to get himself underneath some great complicate burden. He must stoop in order to lift, he must almost disappear under the load before he incredibly straightens his back and marches off with the whole mass swaying on his shoulders... Or one may think of a diver, first reducing himself to nakedness, then glancing in midair and gone with a splash, vanished, rushing down through green and warm water into the black and cold water, down through the increasing pressure into the deathlike region of ooze and slime and old decay; then up again, back to color and lights his lungs almost bursting, the suddenly he breaks the surface of again, holding in his hand the dripping, the precious thing that went down to recover."

—C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*

## **The Authority of Christ for Eternity**

Here is the coronation of Christ, not with palm branches in Jerusalem, but enthroned in Heaven.



“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” (Philippians 2:9-11 ESV).

“for this reason”—super elevation. Jesus is not just raised; He is exalted!

And in the end, it will not be the adoration of the vacillating tongues of those on the road to Jerusalem, but it will be the voices of all those through the ages declaring, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”

The lordship of Christ was what became the defining controversy of the first century as it was the earliest Christian confession. *Kaiser es Kurios* (Caesar is Lord) was the expectation of Rome, but the Christian community adjusted and responded, *Kristos es Kurios* (Christ is Lord).

Everyone! Think of this: Every voice to ever be heard on this planet will join the chorus of the exalted Christ!

Caesars, Caiaphas, Pilate, Nero, Hitler, Stalin, etc., all the notorious, murderous and defiant dictators and perpetrators of evil will one day bow to the name of Jesus and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Listen to John's instruction:

"Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (John 3:18 ESV).

The questions that linger: Will it be here in willing submission or there in righteous condemnation?

"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 4:7b ESV).

"Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2 ESV).