

A SERMON

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"The Humiliation of Christ."

Text, Philippians, 2:5-11.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant; and was in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also highly exalted Him, and gave Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father."

St. Paul is here holding up before the christians at Philippi Christ as the perfect example of humility. He begins with the exhortation: "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus," and the mind of Christ of which he speaks was His Infinite Humility. The example is one needed no less today than when Paul wrote these words. The christian of today faces constantly difficult situations and obstacles; he meets problems which his mind cannot solve; he faces the most embarrassing situations, and all because he has left all to follow Christ. We know the need of help under such circumstances, when our individuality is crushed and self has been lost in the scramble of life. We need not be released from the task of living, but need His mind to enrich our lives. What could be a greater message of confidence and hope than to look again at the life of Jesus and see him living victorious, yet humbly.

When we think of His Humility, we think at once of His coming among us at all. He, the everlasting God, coming from heaven to narrow Himself to the conditions of a creature; to give up what He was with the Father, that He might live with men. This by itself is a descent which we cannot measure, for human thoughts cannot tell the height and greatness of that majesty from which He came down, or compare His glory which He gave up, with the nature of even a sinless creature, which He took on Him. And this is not all. He might have come and lived with us as Brother, or He might have come and ruled over us as king. But He came and was born among us, only to be poor and to suffer; He came not to rule but to minister to us; He came and died, He humbled Himself even to the death on the cross. And think what He came for. He came because of the sins of men.

Humility is the willingness to be thought less of than you deserve, and to treat others better than they deserve. If this is a true definition of humility truly Christ is our greatest example. Let us briefly see how the world He came to save received Him. "He was in the

world, and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." He came and asked men to come to real life, and they turned their backs on Him. Yet their refusal did not diminish His love for them. A certain young ruler came to Him and asked for the secret of life; Jesus told him he must be humble enough to sell all and give to the poor, we know the story how this young man failed to make the necessary sacrifice, yet his refusal did not diminish Christ's love for him. The Evangelist records the look of Jesus as one of love for this young man. Yes He loved even those who refused His truth. His whole life among men was one long series of misunderstandings, and blank refusals, denials, persecutions, and culminated in a most ignominious death.

Now my friends let us inquire into the real motive which lay behind this life of self-giving. What was it that made such a life possible? Our only answer is love. "God so loved the world," Loved to such an extent that "He gave His only Son," who was willing to come and live life on the plane we call human, in order that we might know the full possibilities of this life. It was love that made such a condescension possible. Love is at the core of christian humility, for it is love which gives value to the christians acts. We are familiar with that great thirteenth Chapter of first Corinthians when Paul shows that the christian motive of love is essential to a valid christian life. Love was the mind of Christ. It was love which knew no bounds that constitutes the earthly ministry of Jesus. True love always demands sacrifice and humility. Love leads one to do for others what they could not do otherwise.

Let us learn to love one another, and bear one another's burdens, and the fact that Christ became man shows us that we can do so only in so far as we identify ourselves with others and live for them. Christ helped us by coming down to our condition and living our life. This is the guide to all help we can give. If anything can reclaim the lowest class in our population, it is living a Godly life among them; not living among them in comforts unattainable by them, but living in all points as they live, save without participation and sanction of their sins. This was truly the method of Christ and may we never lose sight of it.

We have seen how the mind of Christ was dominated by the true motive of love; Divine love which went to any depth to save its object. Now let us note some of the practical problems of our daily lives and see

how great would be our victories if we let His mind be our mind. Our only chance for doing real christian service depends upon this one thing, and without it we cannot live a life of love and sacrifice. There are many men on earth who are mere hindrances to better men; who cannot manage their own affairs, or play their own part, but continually in difficulties. They are a drag on society, requiring the help of more serviceable men, and preventing such men from enjoying the fruit of their own labor. There are, again, men whose tastes are not ours.

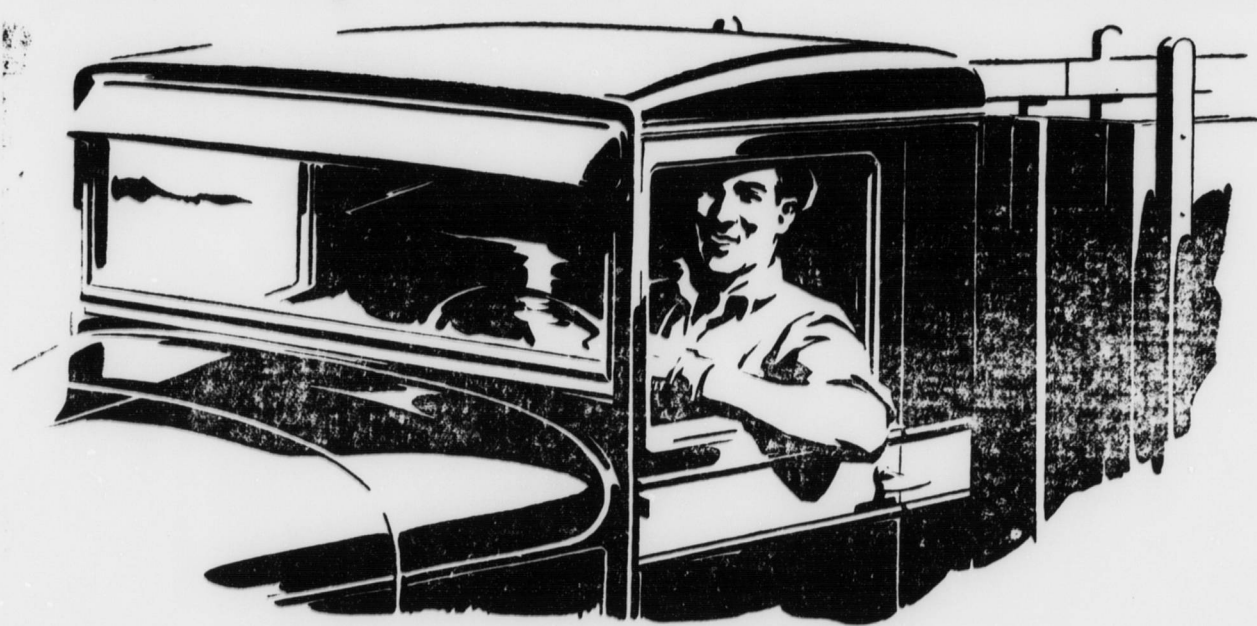
There are men who seem pursued by misfortune, and men who by their own sin keep themselves continually in the mire. There are, in short, various classes of persons with whom we are day by day tempted to have no more to do whatever; we are exasperated by the discomfort they occasion us, the anxiety and vexation and expenditure of time, feeling and labor constantly renewed so long as we are in connection with them, perhaps we have wondered often why should we be held down by unworthy people? Why should we have the ease and joy taken out of life by them, ceaseless

demands made upon us by wicked, careless, incapable, ungrateful people? Why must we love them, sacrifice all for their sakes? Our answer can only be; simply because this is the method by which the salvation of the world is actually accomplished. It was the way of Christ, He is our Lord, and may we never fail to follow in His way. He took upon Himself the form of a servant, humbled Himself, because obedient unto death, the death of the cross. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Can we not see in these words that which alone

is worthy to win in the struggle of life. The kind of life which can leaven the mass of society and bring peace to the hearts of men. It is the life which lets self recede into the background putting the cause of truth ever to the front. My friends here are near to you many who need your help; there are those who would rejoice many a day if only someone would bring them a word of cheer and hope; there are those who are unable because of their sins to choose the higher way of life; and as I have said these are not far away from every one of us. What

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