

Philippians Sermon Series: An Exploration of Christian Joy

Sermon-based Small Group Guide - Week of Sunday, February 10th

Sermon Title: Building Up to the Great Letdown Scripture Texts: Philippians 2:3-11

Welcome

Greet everyone as they arrive and check in with one another. Provide refreshments if possible.

Discussion

Story Questions

Compare and Contrast the 2 leaders John described in the sermon: Arnold Schwarzenegger and Henri Nouwen. Consider their qualifications, strengths, appearance, position and leadership style.

Have you ever been in a role that you weren't qualified for or your qualifications were irrelevant?

What qualified Jesus for his leadership role?

Scripture Exploration

John began the sermon with a picture of a ridge beam (truss beam) at the peak of a roof to make a point about versus 2:3-11 in relationship to the entire letter to the Philippians.

Why did he use this illustration?

Read Philippians 2:3-11

How does Jesus exemplify what Paul means in verses 3-4? What stories from the Gospel can you think of where Jesus showed humility?

What is the difference between humility and being a "doormat"?

How would things change if you consistently applied verses 3-8 in your family? Church? Work? What specific choices could you make to choose to serve from a place of humility rather than qualification in these places?

Sermon Questions

John equated following Jesus' example of humility with being a slave and emptying ones self.

"You and I cannot know true freedom until we become the slave of Christ." - John Sowers

What does he mean?

What are we emptying our selves of? Why?

Slave – one who empties their self into the lives of others

John asked these 2 questions in the sermon:

Who are you going on your knees for to serve?

Who is God calling you to serve in the name of Jesus Christ?

What is your answer to these 2 questions?

What motivates you to get down on your knees? What motivates you to serve?

John extended an invitation to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and commit to follow him.

What is your response to this invitation?

Group Prayer

Consider getting down on your knees to pray. This is a position of humility. (If anyone cannot get down on their knees encourage another posture of humility such as palms up, open to God.)

Philippians 2:5-11 is considered to be an early hymn this is a statement of Christian faith. Open your prayer time with this scripture– read it together or have one person read it.

Go out there and live it!

The following quotes and application suggestions are from [radicaljoy](#) a study guide written by InWord Experience, Sammamish Presbyterian Church

“Humility is a “learned discipline” – it does not come to us naturally. This means that we have to consciously act on what we know in order to see changes in our relationships and transformation in our hearts.”

Practice Humility

“You’ve been officially hired as “God’s ambassador” for the week. Your mission is to “look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” In every situation you encounter, be intentional about representing God’s kingdom. Take the low position. Be kin when you might normally be crabby. Begin every human interaction you have with this question in mind: “How can I help this person?” At the end of the day, give yourself a review. What parts of the job were difficult? Where did you excel? What made the difference between the two? Did you remember to try this?”

Need some motivation?

Read Matthew 25:31-46

Watch one of the following movies:

Pay it Forward – a boy changes an entire community through his sacrifice

About a Boy – Hugh Grant is a selfish bachelor who learns what benefits come with taking responsibility and “acting” in the lives of others can give

Millions – doing unto others versus doing unto yourself

Pray

“Dear God, Give me a new heart. This one is old, tired, empty and hard as stone. Give me a heart that is humble and meek, thankful and trusting. Teach me not to be too proud to be weak. Give me a heart that knows I am nothing on my own, but that in my weakness, your power may be shown. Give me a new heart, Lord, one just like yours. Amen.
-(Adapted from lyrics by John Wyrosdick)”

Remember

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
Philippians 2:4