

Humbleness - The Image of Christ

John 13:1-10

Intro:

1. I have kidded around for years about presenting a message on humbleness & how I achieved it!
2. Of course - you can't achieve humility - & once you think you have it, you don't!
3. True humbleness, however, comes by being transformed into the image of Christ - He was not only the humblest, but in His humility, the greatest!
4. Then He says in **Matt 23:11** - **the greatest among you will be your servant.**
5. So - what is the humbleness of Christ?

I. v3-5 - An Example of What Humbleness Is

A. **v3** - He was the greatest.

1. He was entrusted with all of creation.
 - a. In fact - He was the source of creation.
 - b. **Jn 1:3** - **Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.**
2. He came directly from the Father.
 - a. **Jn 1:14** - **The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**
 - b. **ILL: Gabriel comes to Mary** (Lk 1:26-39). In Lk 1:35 - The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."
3. He returned directly to the Father. **ILL: The Ascension** (Lk 24:50-53).

B. **v5** - He was also the humblest.

1. The custom of foot washing.
 - a. The lowliest servant was assigned to do it as the guests came in the door.
 - b. It was a common courtesy with a practical purpose - like the oriental custom of leaving your shoes at the door.
2. This event was in the context of an argument over which disciple was the greatest! (**Lk 22:24-27**)
3. What was the Lord's answer? **The greatest serves!**
 - a. **Mk 9:35** - **If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.**
 - b. **Phil 2:5-11** - **Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, being the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 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.**

II. v6-10 - An Example of What Humbleness is Not

A. The religious climate of Jesus' day is very much like it is today.

1. The Sadducee.

- a. Would execute the Lord to keep their political positions. ILL: Caiaphas' statement that Jesus would have to die for the nation. (John 11:49-52)
- b. Ultra liberalism today: becomes so lax doctrinally that no real standards really exist. You behave according to whatever the social norms of the day are.

2. The Pharisee.

- a. Would execute a person for practicing medicine on the Sabbath Day. ILL: Cripple at the Pool of Bethesda. (Jn 5:1-15)
- b. Ultra conservatism today: becomes so stifling, rigid & legalistic that faith becomes nothing more than obedience to standards & rules.

3. Do you have freedom in Christ? Of course you do. But how far does the freedom go?

B. v6-8 - Here is the message to the liberal modernistic attitude - you must accept the service to have fellowship with the servant!

1. ILL: The Christian Church of Fremont's Pilgrimage to the Creation Museum.

- a. I was impressed about how really stupid modern society has become.
- b. Our sophisticated society has determined that if there is a god - this is who He is & this is how He does things.
- c. God must fit into the scientific method or He doesn't exist.

2. v8a - Peter said, "No" to the Lord.

- a. It appears that the Lord wasn't fitting into Peter's mold - Peter wanted the Lord to fit into his concept of what was right.
- b. Do you do the same thing?
- c. Instead of conforming to the Word of God & the Lord's image - do you try to fit the Lord into your mold of who He should be & do?

3. It doesn't work that way! The Lord said, "I'll do this my way, Peter"!

- a. Matt 16:21-23 tells us Peter would not have had the Lord go to the cross!
- b. The Word of God must be your standard - not society's determination of what is right or wrong.

C. v9-10 - Here is the message to the legalistic conservative attitude - only what the servant serves is necessary!

1. v9 - When Peter understood - He wanted to over do it!

2. You could become so conservative that you place unnecessary burdens on your freedoms in Christ.

D. So - what's the middle ground? True humbleness is a relationship with Lord Jesus involving both love & respect for Him.

1. In one direction - love Him enough to relish your salvation & enjoy the freedoms you have in His grace.

2. In the other direction - respect Him for His authority over you as Lord by staying within the scope of His will for you.

True humbleness is conforming to the image of Christ. When that happens - you become free indeed!