

The Humility Of Christ

Rick Railston

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As was pointed out in the sermonette, on the Passover we focused obviously on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We often go through the details and back in the old days, a lady was telling me last night that at headquarters (if you were attending back then) one minister would go through every excruciating detail of every part of the torture Christ went through, from start to finish. I'm not saying that's wrong to do but if at every Passover that's our focus then obviously there's a lot more to it than just that—although Christ horribly suffered for all of us. What we don't often think about and focus on is a quality that Christ had that made His sacrifice possible. One that comes to mind is love because love overrides everything, and because of Christ's love for all of future humanity, He gave His life for all of us and that is certainly true. There is another aspect that just resonates if you look at Jesus Christ—what He did, what He said, what He didn't do—that jumps out of the Bible at you—at least it does to me. We're going to look at that quality today and we're going to see what God's Word says about that quality. This is not my opinion, it's what God's Word actually says. So the title of the sermon is:

The Humility Of Christ

If Christ didn't have humility, He wouldn't be the sacrifice—He couldn't be the sacrifice. He wouldn't be willing to offer Himself as a sacrifice if He didn't have the deepest humility of any being that has ever walked the face of this earth. Let's look at some biblical evidence of the humility of Christ today. We're going to have five points.

1. Christ came to exalt His Father, not exalt Himself.

That takes humility. When Christ came and lived on the earth, He could have said, well, look at Me, I'm God on earth, I'm God in the flesh, you'd better do what I tell you, you'd better listen to Me—He didn't do that. When you stop and think about it, that is a remarkable fact—that He did not point to Himself and as God in the flesh, He could well have done that and nobody would think anything of it but He chose not to do that. He could have focused on His own glory but He did not—He did just the opposite. He placed His Father above Himself. Humanly speaking, what a lot of people would do if they were in that situation is they wouldn't say anything about the Father and all of the focus would be on themselves. Christ did just the opposite—He placed the Father above Himself and His focus was on God His Father. Let's see some scriptural evidence—let's go to John 10:29. You can't get away from this—it is over and over in the gospels that Christ did not exalt Himself, He exalted and focused upon His Dad, His Father. John 10 as we know is the parable of the sheepfold and Christ said He is the good Shepherd.

John 10:29 *My Father, which gave them me, [meaning gave Him His sheep, Christ's sheep, that's us] is greater than all; [pretty all-encompassing statement] and no man is able to pluck them [Christ's sheep] out of my Father's hand. (KJV)*

We're in God's hand and Christ is the Shepherd. Now look at chapter 14 and verse 28. Now He applies it to Himself—He is telling us His relationship with His Father.

John 14:28 [Christ says] *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, [this was the night He was betrayed] and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: [why?] for my Father is greater than I. (KJV)*

This is a statement that someone with vanity and pride would not make—they wouldn't dare make that, but He says My Father is greater than I am. Let's go back, still in John, to chapter 8 and look at verse 28. Notice what He says, who is directing Him, who is directing where He goes, what He says, what He thinks:

John 8:28 *Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. (KJV)*

We see that He and God were in instant total communication. God taught Him what to say—You need to say this, You need to do this—that's what Christ is telling us. He could have kept His mouth shut and not said anything and taken the glory to Himself—the words that came out of His mouth, He could take those to Himself, but He did not do that. Let's go to John 20—this is [the account:] some of the disciples had gone to the tomb and Mary Magdalene was among them and they found the stone rolled away—and look at verse 17—Jesus is talking to Mary Magdalene:

John 20:17 *Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, [notice this] and your Father; and to my God, and your God. (KJV)*

Christ is clearly saying that God the Father is His God, and He is, with all humility, putting Himself under the Father by saying My God is God Almighty—God the Father. We see here in this first point with all humility Christ did not exalt Himself—He exalted God, His Father, and He looked to His Father, and they were, as we pointed out in previous sermons, a team, but as we're going to see even more evidence today in the subject of humility, that Christ always—even before He became a human and certainly after His resurrection—He always looked to His Father as being superior to Himself.

Let's look at the second point. People could say, yeah, okay, Christ did that while He was on earth because He was a human, and the Father was spirit, so, yes, He would look to the Father, but let's see what happened after Christ's resurrection—after He was resurrected. We know after His resurrection, guess where He went:

2. Christ went to stand on the right hand of His Father and the right hand (if you look at history or look in the Bible) is always an honored, glorified position—but it is always subservient to the one on the left.

Let's go to Mark 16:19. We see at the moment—this moment—Christ went to heaven and wound up in a certain place. We need to establish that, and the New Testament is full of references to this, so there's no question about it.

Mark 16:19 *So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

Let's jump to Acts 7. This is the account where Stephen, the deacon, was giving a history of Israel, and the Jews were agreeing with it and agreeing with it until he got to the point that he talked about Jesus Christ, saying, you guys murdered Him and because of your sins, Christ had to die. In Acts 7, as He was being stoned, notice their reaction to the truth. Sometimes when God's truth is brought to people, those people—the bringers of truth—either get run out town, beaten, stoned or killed. In this case, Stephen was both stoned and murdered.

Acts 7:55 *But he [Stephen], being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, [notice this] and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,
56) And said, [he's saying to all those around him, the ones with rocks in their hands] Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. (KJV)*

It's said some of them were so incensed they bit him. They just turned into animals—they couldn't handle it. He saw (obviously this is in a vision, but he saw a true vision), God was on His throne and Christ, now resurrected, standing this time on the right hand of God. Let's go to the next book—Paul writing to the Romans, chapter 8, verse 33. I'm only going to cover just a few of them—there are so many. This is all after Christ has been resurrected. Paul poses a question:

Romans 8:33 *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? [the ones He has called] It is God that justifieth.
34) Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (KJV)*

From the right hand of God. Now, another letter that Paul wrote in Colossians 3; let's go there. He's talking about a time that hopefully all of us will be there to experience.

Colossians 3:1 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (KJV)*

This is after Christ had been resurrected. Now let's go to Hebrews 10—talking about Christ offering a sacrifice once and for all for sin. No more sacrifice is necessary—the blood of bulls and goats can't take away our sins.

Hebrews 10:12 *But this man, [referring to Christ] after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever [what did He do?] sat down on the right hand of God; (KJV)*

In glory and in honor, coming from His Father. Jump to chapter 12—Paul is making the statement that Christ is the forerunner of all of us coming to the same place.

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus the author ... (KJV)*

The margin in the King James says the “beginner” and I believe that is a better translation because we know God is the author of all but it fits in with the next phrase:

2 continued) ... and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, [all of that pain and suffering] despising the shame, [being mocked and ridiculed] and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (KJV)

It is God's throne—He is on the right hand of God His Father in an honored, glorified position of what He has done. We see that Christ, when He was physical, said God is greater than all, God is greater than I am. He foretold that He was going to sit on the right hand of the Father, then the apostles tell us in the New Testament that that is where He is to this very day—sitting on the right hand of the Father. Then people say, well, okay, but what happened before creation? What happened before Christ became a human being? Some say they were the same, they were equal—that's not what the Bible says. Let's go to John 6—we're going to see in this one simple verse that Christ has always been at the right hand of God—always been there, which makes sense. He was there before He became a human, He's there after He became a human—John 6:62.

John 6:62 *What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? (KJV)*

We've seen that He ascends up to be on the right hand of God—that's where He is right now and this tells us that's where He was before. It all makes perfect sense—the Bible is consistent. Christ says when He was a human, we're told after He was resurrected, He looked to His Father, His Father was His God, He sits at the right hand in an honored position and we're told where He was before He became a human being—sitting or standing on the right hand of God. Think about that—how would any of us like to sit or stand at the very right hand of God? What a position! Honor and glory and the Father is sitting right next to you—right on your left, He's just right there. What an

honored position. Yet, it is a subservient position and it's one that has always been. They are both God but the Father is in authority—not in character or in nature but in authority the Father has always been in the superior position. Christ, when you think about it, in all humility, has accepted that and loves it and wants it that way.

Let's look at a third point:

3. We're going to talk about His example when He was on this earth.

He met some opposition that none of us have met. He met some accusations that none of us have had to deal with. Then He met physical violence that none of us have had to deal with. We want to look at how He handled that. Was it from a position of, I'm going to break your necks with a rod of iron or was it from a position of humility? Look at what Christ taught at the beginning of His ministry. He hadn't set many examples at this point—we can turn to Matthew 5—His very first recorded sermon. Notice the emphasis and notice what He taught. As we read these, we have to ask the question, did He do what He said? We've seen so much hypocrisy in the Church where someone will say one thing and do something entirely different. Christ is not that way—He did exactly what He said all of us should do.

Matthew 5:5 *Blessed are the meek: [they do not exalt themselves] for they shall inherit the earth.*

9) *Blessed are the peacemakers: ... (KJV)*

It takes humility to make peace because to make peace (or in Matthew 18, going to your brother, if there's a problem) you open yourself up—you become vulnerable in saying, look, I may have done something to offend you, or there's trouble between us and I want to seek peace. You open yourself up to criticism and that takes humility. So blessed are the peacemakers and their reward is they're going to be called the children of God.

11) *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, [which they did to Christ] and persecute you, [which they did to Christ] and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (KJV)*

They said Christ had a demon, they said Christ was from Beelzebub, they said all kinds of horrible things about Jesus Christ.

12) *[He says, when they do that] Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. (KJV)*

Any time the prophets brought the truth of God to Ancient Israel, guess what Israel did—they opposed them, they ran them out of town, they stoned them and they killed them.

The Old Testament is full of that, and then look at what they did to Jesus Christ and look at what they did to the apostles—the record is pretty clear—you bring new truth and you get persecuted for it, that's what the Bible says.

38) Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39) But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: ... (KJV)

Guess what—when somebody does wrong to you, I was taught if somebody punches you, you punch them back but harder. That's the way my Dad ruled his life but that's not what this says. Resist not evil—that takes humility.

39 continued) ... but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. [that takes humility]

40) And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. (KJV)

Don't fight him for the last penny, as we see quite often today in this litigious society where everybody sues everybody. The President is being sued and he is suing people—what a horrible example.

41) And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

43) Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. (KJV)

Yep, went to military school, trained in the military—that's what you do, you kill your enemy. Those of you who've been in the military know firsthand—you shall hate your enemy.

44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, (KJV)

That's hard to do when somebody is cursing you and slandering you.

44 continued) ... do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (KJV)

That takes humility because the human reaction is, how dare they do this or say that about me—wonderful exalted me—how dare they do that. It takes humility to just close your eyes, bow your head and say God have mercy on them, they don't know what they're doing, they think they're doing the right thing and please bless them—that takes humility.

45) [If we do this, love our enemies] That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: [remember Christ is talking] for he maketh his sun [interesting

He didn't say *the* sun, but *His* sun—He owns the sun] *to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (KJV)*

This is the model of behavior that Christ outlined in His very first sermon, so we have to ask the question, did He do what He said He was going to do or did He do what He said anybody should do? Or did He say one thing and do something else?—as we often see in this world. We're going to see if Christ lived what He taught. Let's go to Isaiah 53:7 and see a prophecy that He would live what He taught; not fighting back, not returning evil for evil, not accusing.

Isaiah 53:7 [Prophecy about Jesus Christ] *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth [to justify Himself]: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (KJV)*

He did not fight back, He did not accuse, He didn't open His mouth. Now let's go to the New Testament, Matthew 26—this is the night He was betrayed and the disciples are standing and Judas the betrayer walks up to Him.

Matthew 26:49 *And forthwith he [referring to Judas] came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and [he had the gall] kissed him.*
50) *And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they [this whole mob that was with the Roman soldiers and the minions of the High Priest] and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.*
51) *And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. (KJV)*

We learn in other gospels this was Peter.

52) *Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. (KJV)*

Notice Christ's power.

53) *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? (KJV)*

This is a few ten thousands of angels to come at His bidding and He could have just come down and turned them into cinders but He did not. If you remember other accounts of the gospel, Christ put His hand over the ear and it was whole, and He healed the man and then allowed Himself to be taken—what humility! Look at verse 60, I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation.

60) *But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness [the High Priest had paid men to lie], they could not use anyone's testimony. Finally, two men came forward*

61) *who declared, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"*

62) *Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?"*

63) *But Jesus remained silent. (NLT)*

He did not accuse, He did not fight back, He did not deflect the question. Some people are really good (when asked a question) at deflecting it, and say, what about this or what about that?—Christ didn't do that. He could have said, what about your sins?—then started naming them; He could have done that but He did not. Christ didn't accuse or fight back.

63) *... Then the high priest said to him, "I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."*

64) *Jesus replied, "You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven. [whoa, He just calmly said, this is who I am]*

65) *Then the high priest [just went ballistic] tore his clothing to show his horror and said, "Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy.*

66) *What is your verdict?" "Guilty!" they shouted. "He deserves to die!"*

67) *Then they began to spit in Jesus' face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him, jeering, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?" (NLT)*

Christ admitted who He was, but He did not fight back. He didn't even deflect the blows by the accounts we receive in the gospel—He just took it. Let's go to Matthew 27—the same night but Matthew's account. We'll begin in verse 12. Notice His response to accusations—this is something that all of us would do well to learn from.

Matthew 27:12 *And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.*

13) *Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? (KJV)*

All these accusations, can't you defend yourself? Why don't you defend yourself?

14) *And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. (KJV)*

We see another example—He did nothing and He did not fight back, He didn't accuse, He didn't berate, He didn't put down—He kept His mouth shut and didn't fight back.

Let's go to Luke 23:10—I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation. The High Priest and all those who want to suck up to the High Priest were all leading the charge against Christ. They were in their righteous indignation.

Luke 23:10 *Meanwhile, the leading priests and the teachers of religious law stood there shouting their accusations. [at Christ]*

11) *Then Herod and his soldiers began mocking and ridiculing Jesus. (NLT)*

Not only was He being accused but He was being mocked and ridiculed. How did they do this?

11 continued) *Finally, they put a royal robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. (NLT)*

There is no record that Christ fought back, there is no record He hurled any accusations, there's no record He even defended Himself. Let's go to Matthew 27—all on the same night, Christ is under great pressure, Satan is there stirring the pot, Satan is influencing the minds of the High Priest, the leading religious elders, Pilate, and all the civil authorities. I'll read this out of the New International.

Matthew 27:27 *Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around Him. [for the purpose of intimidating and mocking]*

28) *They stripped Him [how would you like to be stripped with a bunch of soldiers standing around you with swords and clubs] and put a scarlet robe on Him,*
29) *and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on His head. (NIV)*

That in itself is torture because the thorns that grow in the Middle East in that area could be a couple inches long, and you weave a crown of thorns and jam it on somebody's head, it's going to make cuts serious enough that we would say they needed stitches. Going on in verse 29 ...

29 continued) *They put a staff in His right hand. Then they knelt in front of Him and mocked Him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.*

30) *They spit on Him, and took the staff and struck Him on the head again and again.*

31) *After they had mocked Him, they took off the robe and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him away to crucify Him. (NIV)*

Christ said nothing, Christ didn't fight back, He didn't make any accusations. He could have called for help but He knew that was not part of the plan. He was setting an example for all of us. We would do well to follow in His footsteps because when we fight back we are no better than those fighting us. When we accuse we are no better

than those who accuse us. When we are slandered and we slander back we are no better than those who slander us.

So we see here, closing out this third point, that Christ was attacked, accused, ridiculed, slandered and He never fought back.

Let's go to the fourth point. After all this was done, after His life on earth ended and after He had set the example that we just read about, and what we commemorated on Passover evening, and what we studied up until the time of Passover, after Christ humbled Himself then we have to ask, what was the reward? What happened then? So the fourth point is:

4. Christ after humbling Himself is then exalted—by whom?—by God Almighty.

Let's go to John 8 and read verse 54—Christ knew that if He lived the perfect life, guess what was going to happen? This is early in His ministry so He's looking forward now—it hasn't happened yet but He knew this was the plan.

John 8:54 *Jesus answered, [Notice this about humility—He talks about the issue of whether He should honor Himself or honor God] If I honour myself, [and He had plenty of reason to honor Himself] my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, [He's talking to the Jews back up in verse 52] that he is your God: (KJV)*

We see here that Christ affirms that the Jews worship the Father. Christ is saying, you say He is your God and I'm telling you (Christ is looking at the Jews), My Father, the God you worship, is going to honor Me. If I honor Myself it means absolutely nothing but the God you worship, My Father, and, as we're going to see, My God—Christ's God—when He honors Me, that's everything. Peter understood this—let's go to 2 Peter 1:16. After it was done—this was written after Christ's resurrection—Christ was exalted by God because He humbled Himself.

2 Peter 1:16 *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. (KJV)*

He's saying this isn't some fable that somebody dreamed up centuries ago—we saw it with our own eyes.

17) *For he [Christ] received from God the Father honour and glory, [Christ received honor and glory from His Father] when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (KJV)*

He is referring to the fact that when John the Baptist and Christ walked out of the water, (Christ was baptized) a voice from heaven came and said, this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. It occurred again at the Transfiguration when four of the disciples, including the man who just wrote this, said that a voice came from heaven and said exactly the same thing.

This was not some heraldic angel—this was God Almighty speaking from heaven because He was honoring—whom?—His son. God so loved Jesus Christ that He gave Him for all of us, so why wouldn't the Father directly honor the Son and say, this is My Son in whom I am well pleased. Why would He send an angel to say that? He wouldn't.

If it was an angel, the angel would have then said, God in heaven wants me to bring this message and He wants me to say to you, this is His Son in whom He is well pleased. God so loved Christ and Christ meant so much to Him, rather than send a messenger to say it, He did it personally, and we would do that for any one of our children. What about the one you've lived an eternity with, who gave up his godliness to become a human being and is living this life—why wouldn't you do it personally? Obviously He did and anybody who says differently doesn't read the Bible and doesn't understand the Bible. Let's go to Revelation 11 and see if Christ was exalted—Revelation 11:15. In the sermonette we went here.

Revelation 11:15 *And the seventh angel sounded; [this is a time yet future] and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; (KJV)*

When it says here, *the kingdoms of our Lord*, that obviously refers to God the Father and of His—God's—Christ ...

15 continued) ... and he shall reign for ever and ever. (KJV)

We see here that all the Kingdoms of the world belong to *both* of Them. It is consistent because both are our Creators, both of Them are our Saviors, both of Them are our Redeemers, and They have done so much together, so it's only natural and consistent that the Kingdoms, when this time happens—hey, the whole world belongs to God—we're being told the Kingdoms of our Lord and of Christ—very consistent.

Let's see how this happens because the Bible defines the Bible—the Bible tells us how this is going to happen. Let's go to 1 Corinthians 15—this is the scenario by which this happens—it hasn't happened yet. We'll begin in verse 27. There's a lot of *He's* and *His* in here so we need to separate them. As we go through, when you read it several times it becomes very clear. Paul doesn't write like John does, in very short, clear sentences. Paul has these long paragraphs and long sentences and sometimes you have to sit and think, okay, let's piece this together.

1 Corinthians 15:27 *For he [refers to God] hath put all things under his [Christ's] feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, [all things are put under Christ] it is manifest [or apparent] that he [God] is excepted, which did put all things under him [Christ].*

28) And when all things shall be subdued unto him [Christ], then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [God His Father] that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (KJV)

So we see here, that even going into the future, Christ (both are God) is exalted, Christ is honored, Christ is at the right hand of the Father, and God says, I am going to put everything under Christ's feet. We are told that the only thing He didn't put under Christ's feet was Himself—He's Christ's boss in that regard, He has greater authority than Jesus Christ. Then when Christ has everything put under His feet, He hands it over to God His Father, in honor of His Father. That makes perfect sense—it is consistent in the Old Testament, it is consistent in the New Testament and God is not the author of confusion—God is consistent.

We see here that Christ, through what we've studied so far and all the scriptures we've seen so far, Christ Himself was subject to a godly principle (and we're talking about the subject of the humility of Jesus Christ); what is that godly principle?—Proverbs 15:33. It is also repeated in Proverbs 18:12 for emphasis. Christ is a living example of this godly principle.

Proverbs 15:33 *The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; [notice this] and before honour is humility.*

Before Christ was honored, He was humble. He was humble as a human being walking this earth. He is and always has been humble in the sense that He sits or stands at the right hand of His Father, in a glorious, honored, but subservient position, and they both like it that way. That is Their design—it isn't our design—it is Their design. There's a lesson in this design. The lesson is that we need to learn from Them; we need to learn that no matter how glorified one is, humility has to be there, and before we are glorified with eternal life, we have to be humble.

God doesn't want any rebels in His Kingdom—He doesn't want an eternal rebel—He's already had that with Satan. He doesn't want to generate any new rebels, so we have to prove in this life that we will humble ourselves, we are not seeking personal aggrandizement, we are seeking to humble ourselves before God and Jesus Christ. No matter the trials that come, no matter what happens to us—if we are exalted or abased, we will become and be and remain humble. All we should want is to do the will of God and to please God—that's all.

Satan wasn't content with that. He said, I'm going to rise above the stars of the Most High—I'm going to be like God, I'm not content with being down here. Christ was perfectly content when He said the Father is greater than all, the Father is greater than

I. When He says, My God is your God—My Father is your Father—perfectly content to say that. God wants us—as human beings we’re being tested right now—are we going to do that?—or, at the first chance we get a little power, are we going to stretch those muscles and let everybody know about it? We can’t do that—God watches.

That leads to the last point—it brings it back home for us. Christ set an example of humility for us and Christ had that humility referenced to His Father for an eternity and when Christ was on this earth He didn’t fight back, He didn’t accuse. When He was slandered He didn’t try to fight back and tell them they’re wrong or anything like that—He didn’t say a word. He had all power and He could have called legions of angels down to wipe people out—He didn’t do that, He didn’t use the power He had. Is there a lesson in that for us? Of course there is. That leads us to the fifth point.

5. If we follow Christ’s example and humble ourselves, God will exalt us.

God will exalt us in due course, according to His time frame. Part of that, if we humble ourselves, God will exalt us, but also, if we exalt God in this life, He will exalt us in the next life. God is watching us—are we going to exalt Him or are we going to deny Him? We can deny God in many ways. We say, I’m a Christian, we say we’re a part of the Church of God, the body of Jesus Christ, yet if we behave like the publicans and sinners and tax collectors, and the people on TV—if we behave that way, use that language, have those thoughts, are we not denying God and Jesus Christ by our behavior and thoughts?

If we exalt God in this life then God’s going to say, look, I proved you in this life—I watched you while you had opportunity to exalt yourself. I watched you when you had opportunity to fight back. I watched you when you were slandered and accused to see what you were going to do. Over the last several years you have proven to Me that you are going to be like my Son who walked this earth because He didn’t fight back—He didn’t justify Himself, He didn’t bring force, He turned the other cheek, He walked the extra mile, and God is saying to us, I’m watching you (all of us, me, mostly) to see if you are going to humble yourself as My Son did, and if you do. I will exalt you as I have already exalted My Son. Let’s go to Revelation 1:5—this is what will happen to us if we follow in Christ’s footsteps and develop true humility.

Revelation 1:5 *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, (KJV)*

What does that mean—He is the faithful witness. Look at all the verses in the Old Testament and then look at what Christ said in His very first sermon. Christ had the opportunity to live His words or had the opportunity (it’s not an opportunity) the danger of being a hypocrite—saying one thing and doing something else. He was the faithful witness because He is the Word and the Word talked in the New Testament and the Word said what we’ve read today and He was faithful in that He witnessed to us how it should be done.

5 continued) ... and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (KJV)

Because of that—if we humble ourselves as Jesus Christ humbled Himself—this is what's going to happen in verse 6:

6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; [God is the Father of Jesus Christ and we will be made kings and priests unto God] to him [God] be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (KJV)

If we follow in Christ's example then we will be made kings and priests—think about that. What an opportunity but we have to demonstrate that we would not let that go to our heads. How awful would it be in the Kingdom of God that we became puffed up as kings and priests.

I heard a very high-ranking minister say in Worldwide, you know what really upsets me (he was an evangelist) all the good jobs are already taken. Meaning by that, I want to rule and exalt myself and I want to be up here but all these up here at this level are already taken, so I can't get there so I've got to accept one of these lower level jobs because Moses and Abraham and the prophets and the Apostles all have these jobs that I should have, but I'm going to have to accept something down here. If we put ourselves in God's place, how would you analyze that attitude?

That tells you that this individual wanted the job to exercise power and authority and exalt himself. I would say that if that's our motivation, we are in danger of not being there. The last thing that God wants is some minion out here with jack boots and a swagger stick and a club, exalting himself—blowing a whistle every time somebody stepped out of line, yelling and screaming. In other words a spiritual first sergeant or drill sergeant after God's children. That's not going to happen. Notice chapter 3:21—this is Christ's promise. Notice Christ's humility even in the future.

Revelation 3:21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne [what an honor, but notice this] even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (KJV)*

Christ is saying, I sit at the right hand of the Father and if you (all of us) overcome then you can sit at My right hand, as I sit at My Father's right hand. You see here that we will never be exalted like Jesus Christ—ever, for an eternity, but what an honor to sit at Christ's right hand—now think about that. Us human beings, here now, sitting at Christ's right hand? If we sit at Christ's right hand with all humility, we will never be jealous of Jesus Christ—oh, I want to be there—or be jealous of God as Satan did—oh, I want to rise above Him—no! We prove in this life that if we humble ourselves as Christ did then God will exalt us, in His time, in this next life. That's the end of the fifth point.

Let's conclude—I want to conclude with a scripture—we want to take it in whole because in Philippians 2 there are so many principles, that sometimes it's easy to pull a verse out and you can make a whole sermon of one verse. Here we see verse after verse that leads us to a profound conclusion. I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation. Remember the subject is humility and Christ's humility and something we are all focused on at this time.

Philippians 2:3 Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. (NLT)

Let's stop here. What we're being judged on right now is that very sentence—do I think of others better than myself, do I put others ahead of myself. I've done (over the years) a lot of marriage counseling and one of the principle problems when there are marriage kerfuffles—people are yelling and screaming and throwing things and doing stuff they shouldn't do—is the mates don't esteem the other better than themselves. They're looking out for themselves—they want their mate to do exactly what they want them to do, when they want them to do it rather than dedicating themselves to serve their mates and to esteem their mates better than themselves. In Philippians 2:3 we're being told—be humble, think of others (that includes your mate) as better than yourself, and if you do, peace breaks out and people start getting along, and accusations don't go back and forth—as Christ set the example.

4) Don't look out only for your own interests [don't be selfish and narcissistic], but take an interest in others, too [and what they are doing]

*5) You must have the same attitude [the King James says *mind*] that Christ Jesus had [same mind, same spirit, same attitude]*

6) Though he was God [Christ] ... (NLT)

... He did not demand and cling to His rights as God.

Let's stop there (for a moment). When it was time for Christ to be born a human being, Christ could have said, I don't want to do this—I created human beings—I don't want to be a sweaty, stinking, burping human being—I don't want to let go of my Godhead and come down to ... this. He could have done that but He didn't because He knew God's plan. We need to have that same attitude: Though He was God, (in verse 6) He did not demand and cling to His rights as God:

7) He made Himself nothing; He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form.

That in itself is humility—it's the prime definition of humility, for God to say I'm not going to be God anymore, I'm going to be a stinking human being but I'm doing it for you and everybody that's ever lived—what humility.

8) When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. (NLT)

He died as a criminal—He was mocked, He was accused, He was told he was from Satan, or had a demon, and He died between two criminals, and He Himself was viewed as a criminal by those who opposed Him.

9) Therefore, God elevated Him to the place of highest honor and gave Him the name above all other names,

10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, [notice this] to the glory of God the Father. (NLT)

God is always there, above all. God is always there supervising everything. So when all of this plays out, Christ is exalted above all, except His Father, and He turns it all over to His Father so that God is glorified above all, which is consistent from the start of the Bible to the end of the Bible, from creation until now—that relationship has been the same for an eternity.

If you put it all together, what did Christ do? He humbled Himself so that He could exalt His Father. Think about that—He humbled Himself for the express purpose of exalting His Father because after it's all said and done and He gives up the Kingdom to the Father and says, My Father, I've done the work You've asked me to do—here it is, to Your honor and glory. Then He sits down at His Father's right hand as His exalted Son.

How does that relate to this time of year? This time of year we memorialize what Christ did, and during the Days of Unleavened Bread one of the meanings is to put sin out of our lives. Christ never had to put sin out of His life because He never sinned. What we have to do, because we sin, we have to put it out—it came in, we have to get it out. The Days of Unleavened Bread symbolize our getting rid of leaven, getting rid of our sins, getting rid of what's going on between our ears, getting rid of what comes out of our mouth, getting rid of our actions and deeds. During this time that's what we focus on.

Overriding all of that is the example of Christ's humility—that He gave up being a God, to be in human form with the express purpose of honoring His Father, dying for us that we could be exalted as He is now exalted. That's the plan. The Father exalts the Son, the Son exalts us, if we follow the Son's example. As we go forward during the Days of Unleavened Bread keep in mind the humility of Christ, and keep in mind that our job is to follow in His footsteps.