

# BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

## Realizing the Surpassing Value of Knowing Jesus Christ Our Lord

### *Becoming Like Christ: What Can I Expect?*

Philippians 2:1-13

**Introduction:** It is a natural question to ponder that in the course of becoming like Christ what can we expect in terms of transformation of our character and temperament? How much progress can be made? What can we expect God to change in our basic nature and what will we (and others) likely have to live with the rest of our days? What is really possible?

#### Sermon Outline

#### I. The Miracle: It is not *change* but *exchange*, Not I but Christ

- A. We must constantly bear in mind the phrase, “not having a righteousness of my own” (Phil 3:9).
- B. God does not undertake to rehabilitate our sinful behavior arising from our fleshly nature...He offers crucifixion and resurrection. Many believers remain frustrated and fail at this point because they hope to improve their unsavory behavior without dying to self.

#### II. Christ-like Humility is Prerequisite to Spiritual Maturity

- A. Have this attitude in yourselves which also existed in Christ Jesus (2:6-8)
  1. There were certain things which were true of Christ in His essential, natural being which He voluntarily set aside in order to meet our need
  2. Even more so in us humility is essential to further development of Christ-like character because in terms of spiritual and moral qualities we have nothing worth grasping and holding on to.
- B. Consider these passages:
  1. Matthew 5:3-9, the beatitudes
  2. Galatians 6:1-3, is any man thinks he is something when he is nothing...
  3. James 4:6-8, God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble
- C. Genuine humility is developed by faith through the awareness of these truths:
  1. “What do you have that you have not received?” (I Cor 4:6-7)
  2. God’s love places a premium on the needs of others (2:3-5) above our own
  3. The development of humility and the awareness of our own depravity progresses in direct relationship to the other (Rom 7:18)

#### III. Humility is Developed and Lived Out in Community

- A. There is no solo spiritual journey. The journey to becoming like Christ is always traced in the context of a faith community and the world
- B. Consider the verses regarding humility in the side column———>
- C. We are called to walk alongside each other
  1. “...look out...for the interests of others” (2:4)
  2. “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Heb 10:24)
  3. “restore such a one [who sins] in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal 6:1-2)
  4. “confess your sins to one another so that you may be healed” (Jam 5:16)

**Conclusion:** True followers of Jesus Christ, those who want to be like Him, are characterized by humility arising out of deep sense of who they are without Christ, of what they have received from Christ, and who they are in Christ. They are safe to be with.

#### HUMILITY

tapeinofrosu,nh, hj, h` in the NT, as a quality of voluntary submission and unselfishness humility, self-effacement (AC 20.19), opposite u`perhfani,a (arrogance, pride); in a negative sense, as a misdirected submission in cultic behavior self-abasement, (false) humility, self-mortification (CO 2.18, 23)

*Acts 20:19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;*

*Ephesians 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;*

*Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; James 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.*

*1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.*

**My Own Righteousness:** Read the Law → Decide to Obey → Temptation → Ask for Help → Struggle → Pass/Fail

**Righteousness from God:** Abide in Christ → Tempt/Direct → Surrender → Holy Spirit Works → Christ-like Action

**Small Group Questions:**

- 1.) In what way is the development of Christ-like character miraculous?
- 2.) Why is it impossible to rehabilitate the natural nature of human beings?
- 3.) List some things about yourself that you really like, or talents you possess at which you are truly good. How did you come to have those attributes or abilities? Why do you suppose you were drawn to those particular activities?
- 4.) Why is it sometimes necessary to give up things (temporarily or even permanently) that we do so well in order to grow in Christ-like character?
- 5.) Why is it prideful to hesitate or be reticent to step in and do those things for which you are well equipped and gifted? Should you know within yourself what it is that you do well? Is it pride to do what you are gifted to do with enthusiasm and joy?
- 6.) Is it a mark of humility to put forth a face of shame and lowliness because you have become aware that you are a great sinner? What kind of response(s) does this often invite?
- 7.) Should you be willing to help others with issues you have overcome even though you still fail in many ways?

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