

No. 4 'A Christ like mindset'**Read Philippians 2: 5 – 11**

A familiar passage: a joy to read, as we share with the early church, and all Christians since, in the adoration of our saving Lord Jesus Christ. Many believe this to be an early Christian hymn or perhaps one paraphrased by Paul. Paul makes clear its inclusion within his letter is to challenge the reader's attitude. This, says Paul, is who we worship, and why; this is who we are to follow and copy.



True humility is truly difficult to achieve and maintain, especially as it is directly opposed to the self-confidence promoted from all around us. *Pause and reflect on all the different ways we are encouraged to be self-confident, self-sufficient, self-assured, self, self, self. These are the characteristics valued in today's society.*

I suggest humility is as mis-understood today as it was in Jesus' day; it was Jesus' humility that 'disqualified' him from being seen as the Messiah. Humility was and is mis-understood as weakness. *As a group, try to put into words why humility is not weakness? What are the pros and cons of humility? Who can you name who modelled humility, past and present?*

Look back to last week's passage and **read Chapter 2: 3 -4**. This is the attitude of mind of someone who is not conceited, who has the right attitude towards themselves and towards others. We are assured, and are to remember, that it is not that everyone else is superior or more talented, but that Christian love sees others as worthy of preferential treatment. Looking after our own interests is proper, but only if there is equal concern for the interests of others. *Pause and reflect on this.*

Let us now consider the magnitude of what Jesus did for us, from incarnation to the cross. **Read Isaiah 53: 1-6 followed by verses 6 – 8 of our main reading.** 'Equality with God' (v6) – the status and privileges that follow from being 'in very nature God'; the glory Jesus had with the Father before his incarnation; '[not] something to be grasped' – he did not consider all of this something which he could not give up. (v7) 'made himself nothing' – not by giving up deity, but by laying aside his glory and privileges and submitting to the humiliation of becoming human. Jesus is truly God and truly human. *Of course, anything we 'give up' is nothing compared with that of Jesus, but what is the challenge for us being illuminated here? Discuss.*

(v7) 'taking the very nature of a servant' – a servant's labour and efforts are directed into the service of their master - always submissive to their master's will - a servant obeys. *Not something that sits comfortably in our 21st century western culture, yet Jesus left this as an example of his mindset? Discuss.*

Prayer What you have done and continue to do for us is beyond value. Thank you, Lord Jesus. May our response in gratitude, though often broken, increasingly reflect the example you have set before us. Amen.