

## Reflection Questions: Philippians 2:1-11

For the message, "Imitating Christ's Humility (Part 4)" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on January 14, 2023

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*These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to [MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages](https://MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Pray.** Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

**Read the Scripture text:** Philippians 2:1-11

**1** So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

**5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so 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, to the glory of God the Father.

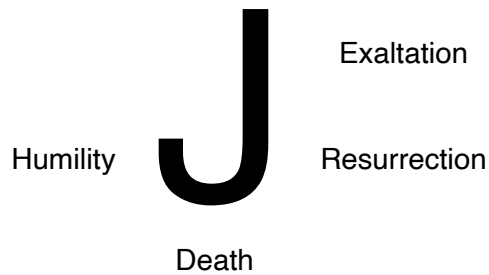
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### **Let's get started...**

- As you look over this passage once again, what was the issue that prompted the Apostle Paul to speak about the example of Jesus humbling himself and being subsequently exalted? What can you discern from verses 1-4 that was going on in the Philippian church that Paul felt needed to be addressed by the example of Christ?

### **QUESTIONS**

1. How easy to you find it to humble yourself with others? When do you find it the easiest, and when do you find it the hardest?
2. In our Sunday study of this passage, the pastor explained the "The J-Curve," a concept developed by Paul Miller in his book, *J-Curve: Dying and Rising with Jesus in Everyday Life*. The J-Curve is a useful tool in reminding ourselves of what God wants to work into our lives, namely, a willingness to humble ourselves even to the point of dying to ourselves (our wants and desires), and trusting God to bring about resurrection. Reflect on the J-Curve below....



- How does this template help you think through various situations in your life, for example, when you find yourself in a disagreement with another person?
3. We know from later in the book of Philippians, Paul's friends and fellow workers in the gospel are having a sharp disagreement with one another: "I entreat Euodia and Syntyche to agree with one another in the Lord" (4:2). We don't know what their disagreement was, but it is affecting the entire church in Philippi. This situation no doubt is behind Paul's admonition in 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others as more significant than yourself. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
  - Using the template of the J-Curve, how might you go about counseling Euodia and Syntyche in their disagreement? In other words, what might the J-Curve of Jesus' humility and God bringing about resurrection inform what you would want to say to them?
  4. In our Sunday study of this passage, the pastor talked about an example of asking individuals to own 100% of your part in an argument or conflict with others. What did he mean by this?

Their Part	Your Part
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Own 100% of your part.

- In what ways is this helpful in helping you to humble yourself in a conflict?
  - What concerns do you have about doing this, even if the other person never owns their part?
  - What questions do you have about this?
5. Paul highlights God's action in not only raising Christ from the depths of his journey of humility, but also God's action in exalting Jesus. Why do you think Paul adds this part? After all, he could've just used the example of Jesus humbling himself to the point of death to teach us the value of humbling ourselves. Why does Paul highlight God's work of bringing life from death, and exaltation on top of that? What are we meant to see? What are we meant to trust God to do?

Conclusion: "He gives more grace. Therefore is says, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." — James 4:10.