

# TAKING THE FORM OF A SERVANT

(Philippians 2.1-11)

December 14th-20th, 2014



## WELCOME & SHARING

Share any announcements...

- . **Christmas Eve Worship, 5:30pm December 24th**
- . **Theology labs, Mondays in January**
- . **Intro to New City Saturday, January 31st 8am-noon**

*Opener Question:* What was your first job?

*Intro:* We're pretty sure they didn't send greeting cards in the 1st century. But Paul did write an awful lot of letters. And one of the themes he returns to again and again is the significance of the coming of Christ. During Advent this year, we're going to be combing through this letters help us understand Christmas.

## STUDY/DISCUSSION

>>READ>> Philippians 2.1-11

- (1) This passage isn't usually associated with Christmas. On first reading, what do you see in this passage that has "echoes of Christmas" or helps us understand Christmas better?
- (2) What does the passage teach about the humility that was a part of the Christmas story? What aspects of the Christmas narrative are examples of this humility/humiliation of Jesus?
- (3) What do you think it means that Jesus emptied himself/humbled himself/made himself nothing? How is this exemplified in Christmas?

- (4) Paul says that we are to have the “mind of Christ”. What can we glean about what Jesus thought, how he approached life, from this passage? (Commentator Alec Motyer says we are treading on holy ground, indeed, since we get to know the mind of Christ).
- (5) In what ways that the world usually “does Christmas” clash with the picture of what Christmas is really about from this passage? What signs of pride or anti-humility do you see around you at Christmas time?
- (6) What scenarios and opportunities will you have this advent and Christmas season to serve others (pour YOURSELF out) and grow in humility (considering others more significant than yourself)? Home? Work? School? Neighbors?
- (7) How does this quote inform and challenge your living and functioning humbly, particularly this Christmas: ““Do not imagine that if you meet a really humble man he he will be what most people call ‘humble’...Probably all you will think about him is that he seemed a cheerful, intelligent chap who took a real interest in what you said to him. If you do dislike him it will be because you feel a little envious of anyone who seems to enjoy life so easily. He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all.” (C.S. Lewis)
- (8) What do think about this quote from Richard Foster? Agree? Disagree? Why?

“The more we pursue it [humility] the more distant it becomes. To think we have it is sure evidence that we don’t. Therefore, most us assume there is nothing we can do to gain this prized Christian virtue, and so we do nothing. But there is something we can do...We SERVE... When we set out on a consciously chosen course of action that accents the good of others and is, for the most part, a hidden work, a deep change occurs in our spirits...Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service, and nothing transforms the desires of the flesh like serving in hiddenness.” (Richard Foster)

## PRAYER

*Take some time and pray together.* You can pray as a large group, break into smaller groups, split up into men and women, etc. If you share prayer requests, post them to he City so that your group can continue to be praying for each other.