

**The wealthy Christian should think:** “When I think of my brother in India, I am very impressed with him and I hold him in high regard. I think he is clearly a better Christian than me. No Christian is tested beyond his ability to resist, and since my brother in India must endure much hardship, he is clearly a better Christian than me. I want to learn from his example, he has much to teach me.”

**The poor Christian should think:** “When I think of my sister in the US, I am very impressed with her and I hold her in high regard. I think she is clearly a better Christian than me. According to Jesus’s words in the parable of the talents, resources are given to those who are able to multiply them for the Kingdom of God. Clearly, since my sister in the US has been given so much, she must be an excellent manager and multiplier of resources. She is clearly a better Christian than me. I want to learn from her example, she has much to teach me.”

**E. Speaking with Christ-like Humility.** Imagine a Christian community that sincerely practices Christ-like humility and speaks to one another with this kind of humility?

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#### Announcements:

Christian Unity Service today at 3pm! St. Jane Frances de Chantal...  
Wednesday’s Men’s Breakfast  
Wednesday’s Evening Study Group, the Doctrine of the Triune God  
Website changes... [www.churchinbethesda.org](http://www.churchinbethesda.org)

## Weekly Grace:

### Driving Challenge... living humility.

Leave earlier, drive slower, smile at people...

### Shopping Challenge... living humility.

Park further, walk longer, pick up the produce...

### Argument Challenge... living humility.

Quick to listen, slow to anger, slow to speak... (Jas 1)

# 2010

JANUARY 2010... CIVIL DISCOURSE



SUNDAY #4  
JANUARY 24, '10

## Welcome!

Our Father who art in Heaven  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
On earth as it is in Heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those  
Who trespass against us  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil  
For thine is the kingdom  
And the power and the glory  
Forever and ever. Amen.

~ Opening Prayer, Scripture Reading  
Philippians 2:5-11, pages 804

~ Ancient Words  
~ Beautiful One  
~ Mighty to Save

~ “Humility” Mike Lee

~ Give Thanks  
~ Sharing the Bread & Cup

~ Prayers of the People  
~ Weekly Grace

~ Your Love, Oh Lord  
~ Closing Blessing

## Humility

### I. TOUCH YOUR NEIGHBOR:

I always like to start my messages with everyone touching the person to their right on the shoulder and the person on your left on the shoulder.

### II. INTRODUCTION

Humility is a rarely discussed topic in churches and I think a topic that is often misunderstood. In terms of sushi, humility is the gizzard shad - very challenging! Many of our earlier brothers and sisters have made Christ-like humility the goal of their life. Their efforts testify to the difficulty of this undertaking. This is very hard, this is graduate level Christianity. Understanding what true Christ-like humility is is not difficult, but practicing it and living it are lifelong challenges.

### III. “STANDARD” HUMILITY

**A. Four Kinds of Submission:** Strength, Smarter, Status and Being Right. The Bible discusses submission and humility where we are to humble ourselves to people who are stronger than us, smarter than us and who are right when we are wrong.

**Example** - we are to humble ourselves before God.

**B. Being Humble to Physical Strength.** Jesus says: "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and

consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.” See Luke 14:31-32.

**Example** - being humble to a bouncer.

#### **C. Being Humble to Those Who Are Wiser or More Knowledgeable.**

Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said: "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me." (Job 38:1-3)

**Example** - being humble to your favorite teacher or professor.

**D. Being Humble to Those Who Are in a Higher Position.** Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. See Daniel 5:19

**Example** - being humble to a police officer, judge, your boss

**E. Being Humble to Those Who Are Right.** The leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is just." See 2 Chronicles 12:6

**Example**, from traffic - when we run the stop sign by mistake and we almost hit another car, its easy to be humble.

### **IV. CHRISTLIKE HUMILITY**

**A. The Biblical Basis: Philippians 2:5-8.** *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross!*

**B. Four Kinds of Submission in Reverse** - Jesus on a Cross. Think about Jesus on a cross. Jesus took on human form and submitted to illegitimate human authority. Jesus is stronger than any earthly government. Jesus is smarter than his crucifiers. Jesus has the name above all names, and Jesus is right and committed no crime. Yet, he submitted

**C. Four Kinds of Christ-like Humility and Submission:** Stronger, Smarter, Status and Being Right. Jesus asks us to imitate his example on the cross.

**Jesus asks us to be humble when:**

To be humble and submit we are stronger. To be humble and submit when we are smarter. To be humble and submit when we are of higher position. To be humble and submit when we are right.

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Returning to the traffic example, how humble are we when we have the right of way and the other person runs the stop sign and cuts us off? Or when someone is tailgating us?

**An Inspirational Example** - Paul Achieves Christ-like Humility: *After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done." Acts 21- 10-14*

### **V. GETTING THERE**

**A. BOUNDARIES:** Don't bite off more spirituality than you can chew. See Boundaries by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend.

**B. Spiritual Growth Must be Based on Real, Received Love:** See Nouwen, Life of the Beloved. See also Joseph Biuso, Brian Newman and Gary Wilde, Receiving Love.

**C. Spiritual Growth Must be Intentional:** Spiritual growth does not happen by accident, it happens through hard work and practice, which eventually results in a renewed mind and a changed way of living. See the Dallas Willard trilogy - (1) The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life In God, (2) The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives, (3) Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship With God. These books should be read in that order.

**For Periods of Spiritual Dryness and Darkness:**

I recommend "Disappointment with God" by Philip Yancey. Consider also the work of St. John of the Cross, "The Dark Night of the Soul."

**D. Practicing Christ-like Humility** - Truth as a Double-Edged Sword. *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.* (Hebrews 4:12) *Honor one another above yourselves.* (Romans 12:10b)

**Example:** There are two Christians, the first one is very wealthy living in the US, and the second one is very poor living in India. There are two biblical principles: (1) the parable of the talents (give this talent to the one who had 10 talents); and (2) no Christian will be tested beyond their ability to endure.

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