

Series: Humble King	Reference: Philippians 2:1-11	Title: Heaven	Date: 12.24.18
Website Writeup:			
Heaven & Earth meet in one divine moment at a certain time & place in history; the birth of Christ. Humility & Power co-exist in the same person, the person of Jesus declared to be the Lord of lords & King of kings.			

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We've been in a Christmas series titled Humble King which will come to a close this coming Sunday. The paradox of the Humble King falls with power on all our lives. Humility & Power co-exist in the same person, the person of Jesus, an infant who grew into a carpenter, declared to be King of kings & Lord of lords. Centering our series on Philippians 2:1-11, today we hone in on vv8-11.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:8-11).

As we noted in the very first sermon of this series, the word *humility* comes from the word *humus*, which means *of the ground*. Why would God choose to reveal Himself in such a grounded, humble, vulnerable, earthy, indisputably *normal* way? God incarnated as man.

Maybe that's because **Heaven's a place for the humble**. Christmas morning, if it's anything, is the celebration that Heaven & Earth intersect at a certain time & place. At this intersection, a baby's born – the flesh-and-blood nexus between the place God dwells, *Heaven*, and the place we dwell, *Earth*. The worlds of spirit & nature come together in a very concrete way. In humanities mind, an imaginary line has been drawn disregarding the spiritual nature of the human condition & the spiritual reality in which we live. We often think only in terms of nature - what we can see, taste, touch & observe with the naked eye, and not of the divine/spiritual. But in Jesus Divinity becomes flesh. Embraceable. Knowable. Real & down to earth. Maybe God knew we wouldn't listen without this physically tangible earthy person with whom we can interact. This person whom history could see being born, then watch live, suffer, die, then rise from the grave.

For believers then & today, the uniqueness of this one-of-a-kind child goes far beyond hair color, facial features, or genetics. This child – Jesus – embodied the essential character of God & the essential design of the human being. He was God-and-Man, wrapped into one.

This brings us to the most powerful Christmas truth of all. God comes to us in the humble, in the small, in the meek, in the invisible, in the virtually nothing & the mostly

nowhere to show us how greatness, love, success, family, community, healing, hope, and a meaningful life actually work.

If it's a place for the Humble, **Heaven's also a place for the Weak.** We can't read the Christmas story without realizing how very weak & vulnerable God's great gift to the world actually is.

Kings – mighty leaders who hold military power, control of the masses & economic purse strings – will be after this baby's soft, pudgy frame.

His mother & father, on the run, vulnerable & helpless, as they seek to protect their child from those who seek His life.

And as for defending Himself? A baby can only smile & gurgle in the face of a threat – and the infant Christ was no exception.

In coming to us this way, God's showing, *He loves weakness.*

Have you lost power, control, or the ability to support your own life? Take heart; God loves to work in weakness, you're in a good place. Vulnerability ushers us into the presence of God.

If it's a place for the Humble & the Weak, then **Heaven's also a place for the Helpless.** Blessed are the helpless, He says. He knows what it's like to be helpless. Blessed are the forgotten, He says. He knows what it's like to be forgotten. Blessed are those who can't lift their hand to their mouth, who are too ashamed to answer the phone, or who can't get a new job. Blessed are those who can't get out of bed due to depression. Desperation is a doorway for this King of the Helpless. Blessed are you when you are helpless, because it's then in which you have an opportunity like no other to learn to be loved by God.

This Christmas Day is a day to meditate on the God who challenges every power structure of this world by His humility. God coming in the virtually nothing & the mostly nowhere. No king, no queen, no president, no prime minister, no celebrity has been able to leave the kind of mark on the world that a small infant born homeless in the ancient land of Palestine has left.

The High King of Heaven has endorsed the state of desperation by His very coming to the world. And if you are in this place - to you, He reaches out His hand. This Christmas, as one year closes & another begins, it's the hand of the humble which can reach out & take His once again. Because, as Thomas Merton once said, *Pride makes us artificial & humility makes us real.* Real earthy vulnerable people with nothing to hide before a real earthy God - a Humble King of Heaven....Trust. Believe. Humble yourself. And do it all before the King of Heaven who loves you – and holds your future in His hands.