

Descending into Greatness

Philippians 2:1-11

Ice Breaker: Share a humbling or embarrassing story about yourself. After you do so: what happened (in your perspective of each other) after you heard one another's embarrassing stories?

BIG IDEA: Jesus' first coming changed an entire culture's view of humility – from one that was defined by self-exaltation (and where humility was viewed as a character flaw) – to a culture that came to view humility as a virtue.

Digging Deeper:

- 1) Read Philippians 2:1-8. What does Paul call the believers at Philippi to do (verses 1-4)? Why would this call to 'defer to others' have been so radical for people living in the Roman Empire in the 1st century?
- 2) What is the rationale behind calling people to this attitude (according to verses 5-8)?
- 3) Describe all of the ways that God humbles Himself (in verses 5-8)? Verbally track God's descent from His throne in Heaven to His death on the cross? Where does Christmas fit in the story of God's descent? How do these verses connect Christmas and Good Friday?
- 4) How would you be motivated to live if you had 'God's descent' fixed in your mind?
- 5) According to Philippians 2:8, Christ's descent took him all the way to death on a cross. Why did God do this – according to Romans 5:8?
- 6) If Christ's descent (and first coming) was ultimately about dying on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven – then how does that inform the way we think about Christmas?
- 7) What role should the cross play in our Christmas traditions and celebrations? What's one thing you can do this Christmas to remember and celebrate Christ's descent?