

Big Idea: Humility is the key to finding true community.

Primary Scripture: Philippians 2:1-11

Supporting Scripture: Mark 10:43-45

CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)

- Summer is supposed to be the best time of year.
 - No school. Staying up late. Sleeping in.
- And for a lot of you, that means the annual family road trip.
 - Which sounds amazing... *in theory*. You're going somewhere fun, the whole family together, making memories.
 - Then... you actually get in the car.
- Within the first ten minutes, it starts... with the playlist. Because *someone's* going to control what gets played for the next six hours, and *everyone* has a very strong opinion about who that should be.
 - And look, if you're lucky, you get a fair shot. But if you lose that battle? You're spending six hours listening to your mom's throwback playlist. We're talking early 2000's pop.
 - We're talking *NSYNC* and *Britney Spears*. On repeat. For six hours. Through the mountains. With no cell service to escape into.
- Then there's the seating situation.
 - And if you're a middle child... well... you already know. You didn't *choose* the middle seat. It chose you.
- And when you finally, *finally* arrive... the battle isn't over. Because now it's about the beds.
 - Someone's getting the actual bed. Someone else is getting the pullout couch. You know the one. The one that's been folded up in that couch for three years.
- And don't even get me started on what to do once you're there.
 - Someone wants the beach. Someone else wants to stay at the hotel pool. One person just wants to sleep.
- And the parents, who thought they were getting a relaxing vacation, are now refereeing non-stop.
- What was supposed to be the best trip of the summer has turned into a full-on negotiation for survival.

- It's kind of funny when it's a road trip. But selfishness has a way of showing up everywhere, and it tends to ruin the things we care about.
 - When everyone's only thinking about what *they* want, even the best situations become exhausting.
- We can usually see it clearly when *someone else* is being selfish. We know exactly how it feels to be on the wrong end of it.
- But when it's us? We've got reasons. We tell ourselves we're just being real, just standing up for ourselves, just making sure we don't get left out or taken advantage of.
- There's something in all of us that says if we don't fight for our own needs, nobody else will.
 - So we take over the playlist. We call the good bed. We make sure our voice is the loudest in the room.
- But here's what we don't always see in the moment.
 - Every time we do that, we're choosing our *comfort* over our *community*. And it costs us more than we realize.
- We're in week two of **Get Real** and in Philippians 2, the Apostle Paul points to someone who had every right to demand His own way, someone who was literally God, and instead chose to humble Himself. To serve. To put everyone else first.
- And Paul says that's not weakness. That's what creates the kind of community we're all looking for.

SCRIPTURE (What does God's Word say?)

- In Philippians 2, Paul is writing to address something he's seeing in the church at Philippi, something that's threatening to tear apart the community he loves.
 - Selfishness. People looking out for themselves first. Prioritizing their own interests. Letting their own comfort drive their decisions.
- Paul can see from a prison cell that if they don't deal with it, it's going to cost them something they can't get back.

¹ Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? ² Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind

and purpose. ³ Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. (Philippians 2:1-4 – NLT)

- Paul is saying if any of this stuff is real to you, if Christ means anything to you, if you've experienced any of God's love or comfort or community... then live like it.
 - And living like it starts with **humility**.
- But then Paul shows them what humility looks like in its purest form.
 - He points to Jesus.

⁵ You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. ⁶ Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8 – NLT)

- Jesus is God. He could have arrived on earth with power and spectacle and made everyone bow.
 - Instead, He was born in a stable. He washed His disciples' feet. And then He died on a cross for people who didn't deserve it.
 - This was the entire attitude of Jesus from beginning to end.
- That's the model. That's the standard Paul is holding up.

INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)

1. Selfishness is our default setting.

- Paul says it plainly. Don't be selfish. Don't try to impress people. Think of others as better than yourselves.
- We naturally look out for ourselves first.
 - That's not a character flaw unique to you. That's just instinct.
- Humility requires intentionality. It requires effort.
- Paul understood that we it actually requires something supernatural.
 - You can push yourself to be a little less selfish for a while.
 - But the kind of humility Paul is describing, the kind that looks like Jesus, is something God has to grow in you.

2. Jesus is our model for humility.

- Paul shows them what humility looks like.
- The example he chooses is the most extreme one he could possibly give.
 - Jesus is God... the one who spoke the universe into existence.
 - He chose to come down in the most humbling way imaginable.
 - Born in a stable.
 - Spending His years serving people who couldn't do anything for Him in return.
 - Dying a death reserved for criminals.
 - Every single step pointed away from Himself and *toward* others.

⁴³ "But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:43-45 – NLT)

- The most powerful being in the universe had every opportunity to use His power for Himself.
 - He chose to use it for others instead.
 - He did it on purpose. Intentionally. Knowing exactly what it would cost.
- That completely reframes what humility is.
 - It means humility isn't weakness. It isn't passivity. It isn't thinking poorly of yourself.
- Humility is caring so much about others that you stop tracking what you're owed. And Jesus is the clearest picture of what that looks like in real life.

3. Humility is what builds real community.

- Think about the best group you've ever been part of. A team, a friend group, a family trip that actually went well.
 - I'd be willing to bet that somewhere in that group, there were people who were more focused on everyone else than on themselves.
- One person like that can shift the whole temperature of a room.
- Paul's point is that this isn't just a nice personality trait. It's what makes real community possible.

- Selfishness always promises to protect you. But what it does is isolate you. And humility, the Jesus kind, is the only thing that breaks the cycle.

ACTION (How could we live this out?)

1. Listen before you speak.

- This week, in your conversations, make it a point to listen first.
- Paul says in this passage to value others above yourselves.
- One of the most direct ways to do that is to show someone that what they think matters to you.
 - And listening, *really listening*, is how you do that.
- Before your conversations this week, ask God to help you see the people in front of you the way He sees them.
- When you start praying that, something shifts. You stop walking into conversations thinking about what you want to say, and you start walking in genuinely curious about the other person.

2. Serve someone in secret.

- Find a moment to do something for someone without letting anyone know you did it.
- Then don't post it. Don't mention it. Don't drop hints. Let God be the only one who knows.
- Jesus didn't wash His disciples' feet for the credit. He did it because that's what love looks like when it's not keeping score.
- You're not doing it for them to notice. You're doing it because God sees it, and that's enough.

3. Apologize to one person.

- Think of someone you've been selfish toward recently.
- Before you do anything else, bring it to God.
 - Tell Him specifically what you did and ask Him to give you the humility to own it without defending yourself.
- Then go to that person and say sorry.
 - Be specific. Don't just say, "I'm sorry if I hurt you." Say, "I'm sorry for this specific thing. I was being selfish, and it wasn't okay. Will you forgive me?"

- No excuses. No “but here’s my side of it.” Just own it.