

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

14:59

It's said, "Everyone has their 15 minutes of fame." That means you will stand on top of the world and be important for a short period of time. But as with all good things they come to an end. That's why those standing at 14:59 are on the verge of losing everything. They've jumped the shark. They're about to lose all relevance and influence in this world. So what do you do with the limited time that you have?

For Jesus and the Palm Sunday procession it looks like he's there at 14:59. He's either headed for the throne, on the rise, or on the verge of losing all influence and fame. From here it's down hill. As Jesus upsets the authorities, sets aside use of his power, and allows himself to be crucified. You can't get any lower or less influential than dead and in the grave. If this is Jesus 15 minutes what did he do with them? How did he carry himself? Paul explains that it wasn't just during Holy Week but throughout his life, Jesus humbled himself to the point of death even death on a cross.

How do you use your 15 minutes? Walk around like it's never going to end? Assume a position of importance higher than we really are? Or serve? Paul uses Jesus as Savior as well as example for us to follow when he says, "*Have the same mindset as Christ.*" That doesn't mean we can't enjoy our 15 minutes, the riches, goods, and life that God gives. That doesn't even mean we will lay down our lives for other people. But we instructed to serve one another just as the Son has served us and not just for our 15 minutes.

Paul takes us to the manger. Jesus although creator and ruler of this world "The very nature God." came into this world to an unwed teenage mother. He grew up in poverty and even later in life he says, "*the son of man has no place to lay his head.*" (Matthew 8:20) It wasn't becoming human that was humbling - otherwise there would be something wrong with his creation. It was the manner in which he came. "*He did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*"

In other words. Jesus being in the very nature God did not count equality with God something to cling to, to steal away, exploited for his own advantage. Jesus of Nazareth, who could control the weather and raise the dead, did not use his divine power to his own advantage (to feed himself, comfort himself) but allowed himself to be arrested, tried, whipped, mocked, and even crucified as a common criminal. He didn't hold on to his 15 minutes of fame for all it was worth. In fact during the height of his fame when the crowds proclaimed, "hosanna" *the Pharisees complained, "the whole world has gone after him!"* and yet Jesus didn't manipulate them to serve him, call for destruction and violence. When they thought Jesus would keep riding on and up to more power, remove Pilate, Herod, and then Caesar, Jesus only steps lower as he gets off a workhorse not a war horse. He came as King, Creator, God and yet he steps down to serve, to work, and to die. It was all down from here. Rather than clinging to equality with God, Jesus let go of everything. Made himself the servant of all.

Paul points the Philippians to the humiliation of Jesus. He encourages them to look to Jesus and become more like him. The Philippians were important people. Philippi was a prosperous Roman Colony. The majority of them would have been citizens of Rome, not slaves. They were important and prominent people with power and influence and yet service to one another wasn't below them. While Paul thanks them for their generosity in support of the ministry he also urges them, have the same mindset as Christ wherever life may lead. One day may be a Roman citizen and another you're in prison writing a letter to the people of Philippi. Paul too, had his 15 minutes as he was brought before the courts, jailers, and even Caesar himself proclaiming Christ as Lord and servant of all.

In the same way Paul calls all of us, not just the powerful and influential to serve one another. That means *value others above yourselves, & not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.* What do you do with your 15 minutes? Look to the interests of yourself, serve self, or serve others? Rather than serve we often strive to be like God. That was the original sin, thinking we can be like God. We may assume and display an appearance of divinity but we are not divine. We may aspire to equality with God. Occupy the highest seat of praise and lord it over others. The problem with Pride is that it is extremely self-centered. Only interested in the things of self. It doesn't listen to others because they are below me and are therefore unimportant.

This can happen in the church - theological snobbery, the pompous opinions, (it's often bad when it comes to choice and style of music to be used in worship). Pride is at its worst when it comes to works. It's pride that says, "Be more like me...I'm proud to announce I've finally perfectly humble." or "There isn't much for me at this church." It's pride that constantly looks for other people to serve them rather than looking to serve others like Christ. That's because the "I" or "me" is the greatest idol we serve. Our pride looks instead of to God for assurance of salvation and forgiveness, we look to ourselves and our works, what we've done with our lives. When we commend

ourselves and pat ourselves on the back for some special gift in ourselves... we steal and rob God of his glory and make ourselves an idol. Unlike Jesus, "*did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,*" we grasp for the divine, we set aside the form of a servant and take from him. We love the limelight. We love shining a little brighter than the next guy. We prefer to win arguments, make a splash, get the accolades, be known. That's the very opposite of humility.

When our 15 minutes we would have been humiliated had it not been for Jesus.

During his time he only moved closer to the end. He ran faster. He worked harder. He worked his way down lower.

What looked like a King coming to claim his throne, his kingdom, only ended up in humiliation. They had the wrong idea about what kind of king Jesus was. Even Jesus' own disciples didn't get it (may we sit at your left and right in your kingdom). They hail him as a hero but he wouldn't act like the hero they imagined or even wanted. They call him Savior but he couldn't save them from the situation or suffering. Instead of removing the Romans - he removed the Jewish money changers from the temple. He wasn't what they wanted or expected because he pointed out that the problem isn't with others, it's not with the Romans. It's with them.

After pulling people off their high horse, unsettling their security, he steps even lower. Jesus exalts humanity. Not that humanity became God but God became man. He took on flesh for us and our sake. He suffered, died, and was buried. That's Holy Week but not Easter. Jesus physically rose from the dead as the God-man. He's body still bears the marks of service even in eternity. Isaiah writes, "See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" (Isaiah 49:16). He still remains the risen God-Man for all eternity. Jesus in perfect humility spent his 15 minutes of fame working toward his cross. When that time had gone, his hour had come, he selflessly served prideful people who were only interested in what God could do for them. Jesus humbled himself.

God exalted him and gave him the name which is above every name. So that one day everyone will confess, Jesus is Lord over all. They will either humbly confess Jesus is Christ or they will be humiliated and admit their arrogance. When Jesus ascended into heaven he set aside the form of a servant. He now rules and reigns over his church. That's a 15 minutes without end.

Jesus doesn't disappoint even when we disappoint him. He doesn't save us from suffering but he saves us through our suffering. He reminds us the problems we have are temporary and they will come to an end. Until then, he sends out his servants. Forgives sin. He gives us his perfectly humble life in exchange for our pride. For all the times we've exalted ourselves over others. Demanded my way. God even allows us to serve one another. It's amazing how the church works when people seek the needs of others ahead of their own. When everyone is looking out for others. Everyone is taken care of. Each person has a part. If only Paul had an illustration of how the body of Christ works?!

But this is only the beginning. We still have a long week ahead of us. Palm Sunday begins and ends almost without notice. Jesus will announce, "My hour has come." It wasn't just an hour or 15 minutes that he served - he gave his whole life for you. As we enter Holy Week - look as Jesus serves. And then listen as Paul urges, *Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.* (Romans 12:3)

The reason Jesus had to go to the cross was because you and me. His 15 minutes are up. Now he rules over all things to the glory of God. See the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus and rejoice. It was all for you. Then serve even as he has served us. Amen.