

## LEARNING TO BE HUMBLE

Tony

### Scriptures:

Zechariah 9:9  
Mark 10:35-45  
Matthew 5:39-44  
Matthew 6:14  
Matthew 7:1  
Numbers 12:3

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on the colt of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9)

Soon we will be remembering Palm Sunday and Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. The crowd shouted praise and threw their cloaks and branches ahead of Him. Jesus was not a king returning from great victories, but the crowds knew about His enabling teaching, miracles and healings. They wanted Him to be the conquering King who would oust the Romans and reign over Israel. Jesus chose the colt because an earthly victor would have ridden a horse, reserved for Royalty and high ranking military officers. Jesus was coming in humility because He had a humble heart. His incarnation was an act of humility and ultimate sacrifice. Before His arrest, Jesus had washed the disciples' feet. This was normally the job of the least of the slaves. He did this in order to demonstrate God's desire and pattern for the Christian life and leadership.

On the cross Jesus didn't cry, "I forgive them", but "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." (Mark 10:35-45)

James and John wanted exaltation and admiration, but Jesus said that true greatness is being the "slave of all". (Mark 10:44)

So what would humility look like in a believer's life? Jesus taught us in His sermon on the mount:

1) Turning the other cheek.

"...but I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matthew 5:39)

2) Going the second mile.

"If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." (Matthew 5:41)

3) Pray for your enemies.

"...but I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matthew 5:44)

4) Jesus also talked about forgiving those who have sinned against us (Matthew 6:14) and not to judge others (Matthew 7:1)

R. T. Kendall writes, "Jesus practised what He preached. He never grieved the Holy Spirit. He fulfilled the law as He promised. He was the greatest man of prayer there ever was. He became nothing when He became obedient to death on the cross. May God grant that what Jesus taught us may grip us."

Reflection: Since I was ordained in 1972 there has been a shift in the nature of leadership in the church. The emphasis of leadership has moved away from humility and service. Moses, perhaps the greatest leader of the Jews, is described in Numbers 12:3 as "the most humble of men", and Jesus laid down His life for the salvation of many, including us. The leader, in some instances, has become the preacher/manager, a person normally out of reach to the ordinary members of the congregation. He receives vision from God to which members sign up and finance. This model is often effective in winning converts and increasing church membership. Members are disciplined and pastored in a small group. Most often it is the leaders of such groups who are the humble servants, and a small group naturally creates a friendly and deepening mutuality.

**Prayer:** Father forgive us that we often forget that humility is part of the cost of discipleship. Grant that Your Holy Spirit, planted within us when we first believed, may awaken us to the temptations of seeking position, and empower us to walk the path of humility that Jesus walked. Amen.