

Dear Friends in Christ,

Ever met someone with an attitude? We might think of someone who is grumpy or mean. There are different attitudes.

I remember reading about a reporter was standing near the corner of the goal line during a football game in which the quarter back, John Elway, was leading his team to score. On one of the last plays, John Elway kept the football and ran for the end zone. He was tackled by a defender, but not before he fell into the corner of the end zone and scored the touchdown. The reporter, standing nearby, looked into his eyes. He said there was a look he would never forget. John Elway had a ferocious look that said no one was going to stop him from his goal.

Our Savior King Jesus had such an attitude as he entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. I am not saying that he looked all fierce like sports hero trying to score. Never-the-less, Jesus had an attitude that no one would stop him from serving his heavenly Father and reaching his goal.

Along with the attitude of commitment were other attitudes. He demonstrated humility and afterwards he accepted his exaltation. Some people want nothing to do with glory. Jesus accepts his role as King, and the glory that goes with it, for our sake.

This is important for you and me. We may on certain days at certain hours have the wrong attitude. Jesus through his work makes it so that we have the right attitude. As we begin Holy Week, we see that **The King of Kings Has an Attitude.**

### **1. He humbled himself to save us.**

Mark Twain the famous writer and humorist wrote the tale called, “*The Prince and the Pauper.*” In the story Prince Edward is bored with life in the English palace, so he swaps places with a pauper or poor boy named Tom. Things do not go well in this unplanned adventure.

Jesus, God’s Son, was not bored with life in heaven when he came down. It was part of a plan to help us. Jesus humbled himself to save us.

A. St. Paul explains that Jesus took on the “**nature of a servant.**”

1. This is remarkable since the apostle tells us that Jesus was in very nature God. In the letter to the Hebrews it says that Jesus is “**the radiance of his**

**glory, the exact representation of his being.”** (1:2) Before Palm Sunday, Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John. They saw the glory of God radiating from Jesus.

2. Jesus did not look like God most of the time, he hid that glory. The miracles he did were for others, not himself. He was hungry in the wilderness when tempted by Satan and remained hungry until his Father fed him. This is what it means when Paul says that he took on the nature of a servant. He came to serve.

This begs the question, “Why did Jesus do this?” “How did this help us?” B. The answer is that Jesus humbled himself and became a servant so that he could suffer and die in our place.

1. We think of the confession we make in the Apostles Creed. “*He suffered under Pontius Pilate.*” God cannot suffer or die. He is immortal. Jesus as the God-man could suffer and die. He did.

There are many movies out about Jesus and most of them include scenes from Good Friday. With the technical abilities that exist they can get the movie goer to sense the awful suffering that Jesus went through.

Unlike the Gospels, St. Paul does not linger on the details of Jesus suffering and death. He goes from the fact that Jesus is God to the fact that he became a humble servant, to the fact that he suffered and died. St. Paul focuses more on the fact that Jesus is God and that God died for us.

2. Why did God’s Son go through this death on a cross? Remember that as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the people shouted, “**Hosanna**” which means “**Save, I pray!**” Some people wanted him to save them from the Roman occupiers in Palestine. Others, like the disciples, were looking also for a spiritual salvation. Remember when Peter said in the boat, “**Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!**” (Luke 5:8) Each one of us can say, “**Save, I pray!**”

Jesus came voluntarily to be a servant. You and I are born as creatures and servants. Jesus served all selflessly. We want to serve only self. Did your parents ever have to ask you more than once to clean your room or do your chores? Did you ever have to get after your kids for not doing what they were suppose to do? We are born servants, but we are also born sinners. We often rebel and we need saving. We need forgiveness with God.

There is Jesus, God’s Son riding, into Jerusalem. There is God on Good Friday dying on the cross for your sins. There is God being laid in the tomb of Nicodemus for you. God’s Son saved you by paying for your sins.

## 2. He was exalted for us.

In Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* at the end of the story, Prince Edward switches places again with Tom the Pauper. Not only is he returned to his rightful place, but he becomes King of England.

St. Paul informs us that Jesus, God's Son, died, but then was exalted. Just as Jesus was humbled for us, so he is exalted for us.

A. What does it mean that God exalted Jesus? Paul does not mention the details of Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven, but he is thinking of them. What he does speak of is the meaning of Jesus being exalted.

1. Paul comes out and says that Jesus has the greatest name in history! What is the name that has been given to Jesus? SAVIOR! Jesus has the name of Savior because he paid for all sins at the cross. Everyone who believes in Jesus has forgiveness of all sins and eternal life. To acknowledge Jesus now in faith is to have salvation. To ignore Jesus now is to refuse salvation. In the end however, no one can ignore Jesus.

2. The Apostle tells us that in the end every knee will bow before Jesus. Every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord. This is Judgement Day. We who believe in Jesus will do it joyfully. Those who do not believe will bow down and acknowledge him sadly. On Judgement Day, Jesus will be completely exalted.

Trans: St. Paul writes these things so the Philippians will continue to humbly serve Jesus in their daily lives. This is something you and I need to do.

**B. "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus." (5)**

1. Note that he says, "**In your relationships with one another.**" We don't only struggle to serve the people of the world who often despise us for being Christians. Because of our inborn selfishness we struggle to serve those who are our brothers and sisters in Christ. If you are down about this or embarrassed, don't be. St. Paul points to the solution. He points to Jesus.

2. Living a Christian life is not complicated. It is all about Jesus.

a) What that means is that as we sincerely try to live the Christian life and fail, we can turn to him for forgiveness. He offers forgiveness in multiple means. You have the word in devotions and sermons. You have assurance in your Baptism. You have personal contact with Jesus in Holy Communion. In every case you are assured that he is with you and is not angry.

b) What Jesus also means to us is that his loving and humble mindset is something we can copy. Your teachers didn't want you copying other

peoples home work. Copying Christ is not cheating. We are free to learn from his example in the Bible and then we can duplicate it in our lives. We also have the example of other heroes of faith that serve as examples.

c) We might confess as Christians that we know what to do and we know why we should do it, but we are lazy, weak or struggling. The love of Jesus in Scripture is what moves us. If we are having difficulties in specific situations or in general, we need to get back to the Bible. The Word of God is dynamite for our souls, because in it we see the love of Jesus for us. Jesus love moves mountains. When we know and feel his love, then we will love and serve. The Christian cannot react differently.

Conclusion: A famous story from the life of Martin Luther. He walked around depressed about many things. Finally, his wife Katie put on her mourning clothes. Luther noticed and asked her who had died. Katie responded, "The way you are acting I though Jesus Christ was dead." She was making the point that Luther was carrying on as if Jesus hadn't reached his goal and was not our King.

Not only do Christians at times fill with self-pity, but we can also be filled with pride in self. Therefore, the Apostles Paul's words are important for us at all times. Our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. We humbly serve our Savior who humbled himself to death and was exalted for us. We rejoice in his winning salvation for us. We have a positive attitude.

You could say in the end we always carry a Christian attitude, because The King of kings has an attitude. One that is good for us. Amen!

Second lesson - Philippians 2:5-11 (NIV 2011)

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.