

Sunday Sermons – CSI Church, Toronto
Sunday, August 3, 2014

I Must Decrease

I Chronicles 29:13-18

Psalms 32

I Peter 5:5-11

John 3:22-30

John 3:30 “He must increase, But I must decrease.”

I Peter 5:6-10

The saying of John, the Baptist is very familiar to us. That is a relative statement. If Jesus should increase, one must decrease, according to John, the Baptist. Both of them were having disciples. Both of them preached. Both of them baptized people. Cousins were doing almost equally well in their calling. But, one says that the other should increase.

Philippians 2:6f says that 1. Christ did not regard equality with God, 2. emptied Himself, 3. took the form of a slave, 4. born in human likeness, 5. humbled Himself, 6. became obedient to the point of death... . But God has highly exalted Him so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.

Does this philosophy hold good for us in this modern age? When self –esteem is regarded highly enough, how much we should be willing to humble ourselves? What should determine the quantity of our decreasing or humility?

The Bible is clear on the fact that, if our relationship with Jesus is to be set aright, we need to undergo an experience of humility in us.

1. **Humility in Accepting God:** What is the relevance of God in our lives? This will be a serious question for all of us in this age of scientific advancements and self sufficiency. We know that God is Omnipotent (*all powerful*), Omniscient (*knowing everything*) and Omnipresent (*present everywhere*).

David, a man after God’s heart, asks himself, “But who am I and what is my people? All things come from you, and of your own have we given you.” The words are very powerful and make clear his understanding of God. The sentence that we use in our Liturgy. The shepherd turned king admits that humans are aliens and transients, the days are like shadows without hope. But David continues his praise with all the abundance surrounding him (I Chronicles 29:14f).

Everything was given by Him. Our life is a gift from God. If we are breathing smartly, it is only by the allowance and providence of God. If we are enjoying all amenities in this earthly life, it is also the gift of God. If we are something in our life, it is only because of the talents and faculties that God has allowed us in our life.

Above all, through Jesus, Almighty has loved us and cared for our spiritual wellness. Eternal life was granted to us by giving us the best gift, own son, Jesus as a sacrifice for our sins. God has created humans with spirit, unlike other creation.

One posting I found last week in Facebook goes like this.

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“Don’t talk to me, because you are bored. I am not here to entertain you. And don’t come to me only when you need a favor, I don’t like being used.” Is there relevance for God in our life?

Let us in humility accept God in our life as the primary source of life and blessing and as the first priority.

2. **Humility in Admitting the Self:** Psalm 139 is titled as the Inescapable God. Vs. 13 and 14 read as “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.”

Wakefield tells the story of the famous inventor Samuel Morse who was once asked if he ever encountered situations where he didn't know what to do. Morse responded, "More than once, and whenever I could not see my way clearly, I knelt down and prayed to God for light and understanding."

Morse received many honors from his invention of the telegraph but felt undeserving: "I have made a valuable application of electricity not because I was superior to other men but solely because God, who meant it for mankind, must reveal it to someone and He was pleased to reveal it to me."

Paul says “I am the least of the apostles” (1 Corinthians 15:9). “I am the very least of all the saints” (Ephesians 3:8). “I am the foremost of sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15).

Humility and passion for praise are a pair of characteristics which together indicate growth in grace. The Bible is full of self-humbling (man bowing down before God) and doxology (man giving praise to God). The healthy heart is one that bows down in humility and rises in praise and adoration. The Psalms strike both these notes again and again. So too, Paul in his letters both articulates humility and breaks into doxology. Look at his three descriptions of himself quoted above, dating respectively from around A.D. 59, 63, and 64. As the years pass he goes lower; he grows downward! And as his self-esteem sinks, so his rapture of praise and adoration for the God who so wonderfully saved him rises.

D.L. Moody said, “Be humble or you'll stumble.”

John, the Baptist said, “He must increase and I must decrease.” The person who had a ministry accepted the ministry of Jesus.

Let us be humble in accepting the self. Let us have the right proportion of self-esteem, so that God can work through us in this age.

3. **Procurement of Humility in our life:** Peter is very clear on the matter. In his first epistle, he underlines the fact that God gives grace to the humble. If we will submit ourselves under God’s mighty hand, he will exalt us in due time. Discipline ourselves, keep alert. Resist satan, steadfast in faith. He writes in a context of persecution, “after the suffering for a little while, God himself will restore, support, strengthen and establish you.”

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Let us boldly come to the presence of Jesus. Psalmist in Psalm 103: 14, 15, 16 says, we are dust and our days are like grass. Even if we are strong, we are but one gulp of air. So let us be humble in our life. Let Christ grow in us. May the world see Christ through us.

Humility only enables us to stand and work for Christ.

Charles Thomas Studd (cricketer turned missionary) once said, “How could I spend the best years of my life in living for the honors of this world, when thousands of souls are perishing every day?”

In a poem he wrote: “Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

Can we humbly reach out to Christ and say: “Lord you must increase and I must decrease.”

Our life will be blessed if we have:

Humility in Accepting God

Humility in Accepting the Self

Let us procure Humility in our walk of Life so that Almighty can work through us in this age. May the Almighty God bless us for the same.
