

# More of Christ, Less of Me

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[ 0 : 00 ] Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 through 11.

! He was not going to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? I'm about to say something that is going to sound strange to you, that may not even sound right to you, but bear with me because I will give an explanation for it.

If you have your notes, you want to pull those out, what I want to say to you is this. Jesus had no self-esteem.

[ 1 : 43 ] Jesus had no self-esteem. I'm not suggesting or saying that Jesus had a low self-esteem.

I'm not suggesting in any way that Jesus didn't like himself or that Jesus had a problem with his self-image. What I'm saying is that Jesus had no self-esteem.

And what I want to say as well is this. And neither should you. Neither should you. Now let me explain. In an article entitled The Self-Esteem Myth, Albert Moeller, who's president of Southern Seminary, said the following.

A mixture of often contradictory ideas frames the popular imagination and to a great extent the contours of the American mind.

One of the most cherished of these ideas is of fairly recent vintage, though its philosophical roots go far back into the American experience. This idea can be called simply the self-esteem myth.

[ 2 : 51 ] The idea that an individual's self-esteem is central to success, happiness, performance, and behavior. This idea that self-esteem is an essential part of a healthy personality is now virtually institutionalized in American culture.

A quick visit to the bookstore will reveal a myriad of titles loosely arranged under the category of self-help. The entire educational structure, especially at the elementary level, takes self-esteem as a basic imperative for the educational process.

And in the article, Moeller writes about a team of researchers who has taken a closer look at the idea of self-esteem and how much it actually does factor into a person's happiness or level of achievement that they attain to or their behavior.

And this is what the researchers found. And again, let me quote. He said, For one thing, these scientists discovered that many of the advocates of self-esteem have no idea what self-esteem is, and they have no means of measuring it.

They found, these researchers found, that telling children that they are doing well when they are actually doing poorly is a destructive lie that misleads the student, and if anything, leads to even further frustration on their part.

[ 4 : 13 ] And then he concludes, the researchers conclude saying this, We have found little to indicate that indiscriminately promoting self-esteem in today's children or adults just for being themselves offers society any compensatory benefits beyond the seductive pleasure it brings to those who are engaged in the exercise.

And then, Moeller concludes the article by reminding us Christians of this, The Christian worldview completely reverses the cycle.

The Christian finds satisfaction not in a sense of self-worth, but in knowing the one true and living God. Human beings are indeed made in God's image, and every single human life is thus worthy of respect and dignity.

Nevertheless, the gospel makes clear that the Christian's identity is found in Christ, not in self. As a matter of fact, this is one of the most transformative and liberating realities of the Christian faith. It's not about us, he says, even as we are the recipients of God's grace and mercy. The dictionary defines esteem in this way.

[ 5 : 31 ] It defines esteem as being to regard with admiration. To regard with admiration. So, self-esteem therefore means literally to regard yourself with admiration.

Now, if you went to someone and you asked them, Who do you admire? And that person responded, Well, I admire myself.

How would you think of that person? This person is self-centered. This person is a narcissist. And you'd be correct, because who talks like that?

Now, I don't want you to get me wrong, because I'm not saying that confidence is a bad thing. And confidence is a great thing, but confidence is not the same thing as self-esteem.

Confidence is different because confidence is something that you get, you earn it. For example, a student who studies for a test feels confident when they take the test, because they've earned that confidence, because they're prepared.

[ 6 : 37 ] An athlete who is ready for a game is ready, is confident because he's practiced, or she's practiced. Confidence is good. I don't want you to misunderstand me.

And as Christians, we should be confident, but our confidence is in Jesus Christ, and who he is, and what he has done for us.

And so, like Christ, we must not seek to esteem ourselves. Right now, what our world, I think, needs most is the church to be the church.

The way that it has been commanded and called to be in Scripture. But unfortunately, many churches have bought into the therapeutic, moralistic deism of our times, which makes everything about the people in the pews, and not about the Lord, who we are supposedly gathering together to worship.

It makes worship about you, and not about Jesus. And that's tragic. Especially in a world that's growing darker and darker every day. We had how many school shootings last week?

[ 7 : 46 ] And it's tragic that now we just, well, it's almost like it's to be expected. How sad is that? Our world is dark, and it's growing darker.

And right now, what it needs is the church to be the light that God has commanded and called it to be. To be sharing the gospel. To be living out the gospel that people would see there is a much better way.

Right now, what our culture needs most is a counterculture. A counterculture. Too often, the church copies the culture of the world, or the culture that it's in, instead of copying and adapting itself to the culture that embodies the gospel.

Christians want the church to be another place where they can have their self-esteem puffed up. Where I can feel good about myself. And again, we're not having people come in here so we can tear them down.

But for them to see that because of who Jesus is, you can have confidence in this life. You can know that your life has meaning. Your life has purpose. That you have had your sins atoned for.

[ 8 : 55 ] That you can be forgiven. That you can have everlasting life and be in relationship with the Almighty God. These are great things. But you couldn't do them on your own. The purpose of our gathering then is not for ourselves.

So who then and what are we here for? I want you to look at Matthew chapter 18, or 28, excuse me, verses 19 through 20. To answer that question, Jesus says, after he's resurrected from the dead, and as he's about to ascend back into heaven where he'll seat at the right hand of the Father, says this to those gathered disciples, go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you, and behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.

And so these are Jesus' final instructions to his disciples, which includes us. So say if you're going to be gone for a while, say you have children and you're going to leave them with a babysitter or whatnot, or you're going to go on vacation and you're going to have somebody come and house it

for you.

You leave final instructions for them, right? This is what you need to know. And here is information for where you can contact me at. So Jesus is doing kind of the same thing.

Listen, this is what I want you to do while I'm gone. And listen, I am here with you. And I will be with you as you do what I've asked you to do. You don't have to try to do it in your own power.

[10:28] I will supply even that. Self-esteem will not help us accomplish the mission that Jesus Christ has given us. In fact, I believe it will deter us from that mission.

To accomplish our mission, we need to follow our example, who is Jesus Christ, who, again, had no self-esteem.

You might be asking yourself a couple different questions at this point. Maybe you wouldn't dare ask them aloud. Maybe you've thought them in the past. Maybe you're struggling with it now.

Maybe you've heard somebody else express this question in one form or another. But it's this. Why should everything be about Jesus and not about me? Why should everything be about Jesus and not about me?

And so this morning, we're going to answer that question by going through this text. Now, if you remember, this text is best illustrated by a V shape. And so it begins with Jesus in heaven, the eternal word of God by which all things were created.

[11:38] And then he descends to the world by taking on the human flesh. He's incarnated. He becomes the God-man. And then in verse 8, we come to the very bottom point of the V, where we see that Jesus' coming resulted in his dying on the cross.

And then it takes an upward trajectory from there, and it ends with the confession and exaltation on behalf of all of creation, bowing the knee before Jesus and declaring that truly he is Lord of all. For four Sundays now, we've looked at this passage through a microscope. We've dug into the importance of Christ's full humanity and full deity.

We've seen that he's 100% man and 100% God, two natures, one person, why that is so important and foundational to the Christian faith.

We've seen how foundational that truth is to the church and that it must be guarded, it must be defended at all costs. And there is much more treasure here in this passage.

[12:44] We could spend many, many more Sundays and not plumb the depths of it. But today, we are going to switch scopes.

We've been looking through the microscope at the doctrinal implications of this text. And so today and next week, we are going to take a look at this passage through a telescopic lens and see how we must apply this text, this truth, to our everyday lives and why it's so important that we do as a church.

So why should everything be about Jesus and not about me? Well, if you recall, in this church that Paul is writing to, the Philippians, they are experiencing an internal conflict between two of its primary members.

A couple of ladies within the congregation are at odds with one another. These women have labored, Paul said, side by side with him in the past in advancing the gospel, but now they were in conflict.

Over what? We don't know. Maybe they showed up to church one Sunday and they were wearing the same clothes or one of them sat in the other's pew and you know how outrageous that is when somebody sits in your spot.

[14:12] Shouldn't they know better that that is your pew? Maybe it's something like that. Maybe it's something much deeper and less petty. But let me tell you that all such conflicts within the church are petty conflicts.

Whatever it was, whatever they were upset about, at its root, it was selfishly motivated. And as many conflicts in the church tend to be as well, selfishly motivated.

We heard in one of our men's nights a month or two ago of one such selfishly motivated conflict that Tom Holland shared with us.

Now this is another church in another place, but it could happen tragically just about anywhere. And what happened was that there was a potluck, ham was the main course, and there was a deacon going through the line with the pastor's son right behind him.

Or right in front of him. Right in front of him. And the pastor's son was handed a pretty big piece of ham by one of the women of the church.

[ 15 : 25 ] And then she pulled out another piece of ham and it was much smaller than the pastor's son that she placed on the deacon's plate. Now he was upset by that, right? And he stopped. Well, why does he get a bigger piece than me?

The lady thought he was joking. Well, he wasn't. He ended up grabbing her arm, which ended up causing a great big kerfuffle that ended with punches being thrown.

How tragic is that? That's terrible. Now let me tell you, if any of you tried to hurt Jack, you don't have to be worried about me. You've got to be worried about my wife, Danny, right?

She will come after you. I might show a little bit more grace. But that's not something that we ever want to see in our churches. And we laugh about it, but how terrible is it?

Because such conflicts deters the church from its mission. And it discredits the church and its community. Could you imagine once this community gets hold of this news? I'm not going to go to church there.

[ 16 : 24 ] Those people are hypocrites. Those people don't practice what they preach. Those people are no different than the rest of the world. There is nothing different about them. And so, worst of all, it dishonors Christ.

And we can't stand for that or allow that to happen. In verses 6 through 8, Paul speaks on the remarkable humility of Jesus. That he set aside his divine prerogatives.

And through his incarnation, he added humanity to his deity. And was obedient to the Father all the way to the cross. As Paul is exhorting the Philippian believers to be united to one another, he presents Jesus and his death as the supreme example for how they must be united.

For how this counterculture is achieved. Instead of living to esteem oneself, the Christian is called to imitate Christ. So, Paul begins by stating, Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus.

You can't truly begin to understand why everything shouldn't be about you until you have a new mindset. Or you've been given a new outlook. That mindset that seeks to esteem oneself must be transformed.

[ 17 : 56 ] And so, as I was thinking about developing a new mindset, I was reminded of a time where I was in high school. And I had an epiphany, if you want to call it that, in high school.

That, you know what? In order to pass classes, all you've got to do is get a D. Oh, I thought I was brilliant. One of these people are wasting their time studying, you know, and paying attention in class and taking notes.

When all I've got to do to pass this class is to get a D? And I can do that in every class? And I can do that every year of high school? And I can go to college? And guess what? I can do it in college too.

And so, I thought I was smart. So much more time now for socializing, for doing the things that I wanted to do. And then that first report card came. And I'll never forget, sitting across the table from my father at the kitchen table.

And I was explaining to him how brilliant I was. Listen, Dad, this is smart. I am, you know, I'm passing these classes. What's the big deal? As long as I'm passing, you should be happy with that.

[ 19 : 06 ] And as I'm explaining how ingenious this plan is to my father, I see his face just getting redder and redder and redder, turning deeper and darker shades.

And to the point, finally, I was done. And my father was silent. And then he looked at me and he had a pen in his hand and he stood up and he threw it at me. Now today, you know, he would be called by child services or something for that.

But he threw his pen at me and then he looked at me and he said, Michael, just see how well you do in this world with that outlook on life.

And he turned around and he marched down the steps. And I was frozen. And my sister was nearby spying and she was frozen too. And we were, I don't know what I do. You know, he didn't get it, I guess.

No, I saw what he meant. I needed to have a new mindset. He was right. That is not a good outlook on life. And so it needed to change.

[ 20 : 04 ] And so do our mindsets need to change. We are being bombarded by a world who tells us it's all about you. But it's not about you. And it's horrific to make life all about yourself.

Because let me tell you, you are a terrible God to serve. And I know that from my own experience. Human beings are not worth serving.

Human beings cannot provide the meaning and purpose and joy and hope in life that can only be found in Jesus Christ. So the scripture is calling Christians to have a new mindset that imitates the mindset of Christ.

Now, what did that mindset involve? Well, we see a few things. By again, looking at Jesus as our supreme example. In verse 6, we see that it involves a humble renunciation.

A humble renunciation. Verse 6 again. Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.

[ 21 : 13 ] The phrase here makes two statements about Jesus. First, that he was preexistent and the second person of the Trinity.

And secondly, that he is divine. He is divine. Preexistent, he's divine. He is the second person of the Trinity.

We've spent a lot of time on this important doctrinal truth, so it's sufficient at this point in our study to state this great truth in this way.

There never was a time when Jesus didn't exist. He had no point of origin. He is Alpha. He is Omega. He is Creator, not created. Period.

John 1, 1 through 3, let's look again. It states this very clearly. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

[ 22 : 09 ] All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that has been made, or that was made. And so here Paul reiterates this truth when he states that Jesus existed forever in the form of God.

Form there, in the Greek, that's morphe. And it refers to the outward manifestation of an inward reality. The outward manifestation of an inward reality.

The idea is that before the incarnation, from all eternity past, Jesus preexisted in the divine form of God.

Equal with God the Father in every way, and Jesus is, always has been, and forever will be fully divine.

Then we are presented with this astonishing truth about Jesus, that He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.

[ 23 : 17 ] Now this is very counter to our culture, isn't it? We come out of the womb as graspers, right? Give me, give me, give me.

Mine, mine, mine. Me, me, me. The gods depicted in Greek mythology used their deity to their advantage, didn't they? Making it all about themselves.

But Jesus did not consider being God grounds forgetting, but forgiving. In passages like John 3.16 and Romans 8.11, we encounter the amazing love and grace of God towards us.

John 3.16, you know it by heart, for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. Romans 8.11, if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

We understand this? That God the Father has sent His Son who willingly gave His life and willingly shed His blood to atone for our sins and then He gives us His Spirit to those who believe as a down payment on the promise that as Jesus was resurrected with a glorified body, the first fruits, so one day you and I, those who believe, will be too.

[ 24 : 53 ] That's awesome and great news. I know I may be one of the younger people in this room, but as I've gotten older, the more I've longed for that resurrection body.

Amen? Amen. 1 Corinthians 13.53 says, this perishable body must put on the imperishable and this mortal body must put on immortality.

I'm all about that. I can't wait for that. You know, in Thanksgiving and Christmas time, you eat a lot. Amen.

And it's good food and you can't help but eat and who's going to exercise when it's cold outside and stuff like that, right? And so, amen. Back in December, we had some kind of function here and it was after all of these, all of this feasting and somebody took a picture of me in my profile and I saw it and I had to take a double look.

It was like, what? Who ran and snuck a pillow up underneath my shirt before that picture was taken, right? What is going on here? I can't wait for that resurrection body.

[ 26 : 09 ] I can't wait to eat in heaven. I can't wait to not have to exercise to burn it off. The things that we will do there, it will be awesome. We will see God as He is.

We won't need the Son because His glory will light the place up. So why should everything be about Jesus and not about me? Well, simply because Jesus is God and you aren't.

We aren't. Jesus has given while we've sought to snatch. Jesus could have clutched and held on to His rights and stayed in heaven, but He lived open-handedly instead and showed us what benevolent love, generosity, and service really look like.

So let me ask you a question as a point of application. Do you have a hard time letting go? Do you have a hard time letting go? And now I'm not speaking so much about material possessions, but I'm talking about letting go of your right to be mad with someone when they have crossed you.

I'm talking about giving up your right, your privilege to stay angry with them and instead choosing to forgive them and let it go so that that relationship can continue to move forward and be healthy.

[ 27 : 35 ] Is that not what Jesus has done for us? While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

While we had made ourselves His enemies that Jesus came and He died in our place for our sins.

And so if He's willing to do that for us, then shouldn't we also be willing to let go of the petty grudges that we hold against those who offend us? But instead, love them and forgive them even when they haven't asked for it.

that's hard. But I believe that that is exactly what Scripture commands us to do. It's counter-cultural. And when people in the world see that, it testifies to the truth that the gospel is the great news that it is, that it truly can transform a person's life.

And again, we live in a culture that is increasingly hostile and increasingly divisive. And so what a great opportunity that we have to show the world what the gospel is capable of doing in a community, the unity that it's able to produce.

We also see this mindset in Jesus by His humble incarnation in verse 7. But He emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant being found in the likeness of men.

[ 28 : 54 ] And I like how the NIV translates this verse. It says, He made Himself nothing. He made Himself nothing. A good way to understand this verse is to say, remaining all that He was, He became what He was not.

He didn't surrender His deity, but He added His humanity. I want to share a quote with you from John MacArthur that I think explains this truth well.

He says, In light of the profound reality of Jesus' full and uncompromised deity, His incarnation was the most profound possible humiliation.

For Him to change in any way or to any degree, even temporarily, by the divine decree of His Father required descent. The infinite became finite.

The sinless took upon sin to Himself. The very heart of the gospel of redemption is that the Father made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

[ 30 : 04 ] A great illustration that I found that I think helps us to better understand in a small way what Jesus has done for us in a great way comes from a man named Brian Chappell. And he uses an illustration of his time in Africa as a missionary in one of the stories that he encountered there.

He says, in this particular part of Africa, the chief is the strongest man in the village. As the chief, he also wears a very large headdress and ceremonial robes.

One day, a man carrying water out of the shaft of a deep well fell and broke his leg and lay helpless at the bottom of the well. To get down to the bottom, one would have to climb down using the alternate slits and go all the way down to the deep part of the well and then climb back up with this person in their arms or over their shoulder.

Because no one could carry the helpless man up like this, the chief was summoned by the people. When he saw the plight of the man, he lay aside his headdress and his robe and brought him to safety.

He did what no other man could do. That's what Jesus has done for us. He came to rescue us and he laid aside his heavenly glory like the chief did his headdress in order to save us.

[ 31 : 32 ] Now, did the chief ever cease to be the chief when he laid aside his headdress? Of course not. Did Jesus cease being God or have his deity diminished in any way when he came to rescue us?

Of course not, he says. So not only did Jesus lay aside his divine prerogatives, but in verse 7 it says that he took the form of a servant, or some of your translations will say a slave.

A slave in the Greco-Roman world was deprived of the most basic rights. And so Paul is telling us that Jesus gave up his sovereign rights in order to become a slave.

He didn't just come in the flesh, but he stooped down to the lowest possible position. Not coming to be served, but to serve.

There's a great illustration of this in John 13, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, right? All things were into his hands.

[ 32 : 44 ] Knowing that he had come from God and was going back to God, he rose from supper. He lay aside his outer garments and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.

Then he poured water into a basin and he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. Now you got to understand that this was the job reserved for the slave or servants of the household.

And this was the job that was given to the lowest slave or servant in the household because this was a dirty job. Remember, this was 2,000 years ago and they didn't have Nikes and Adidas and shoe, closed-toed shoes like we do.

They had sandals and they walked around in dirty, dusty places and they didn't bathe quite as frequently as we do in America.

So their feet were dirty, were smelly and were gross, quite literally. Yet here's Jesus, whom all things has been given into his hands, who is God, who is down on his knees washing and cleaning the dirty feet of his disciples, right?

[ 34 : 05 ] Getting in between their toes and scrubbing out that junk. Why would he do such a thing? Jesus, who in the very nature is God, whom all things were created through, washing the feet of these men, feet, right, who were created through him, water that was created through him, and he does it humbly as a servant.

That's countercultural. You see, Jesus wasn't seeking to esteem himself, but he was teaching something to his disciples, that they should esteem one another.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Even love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. When a church embodies that kind of selfless love for each other, their neighbors and even their enemies, others, again, it's not a self-esteeming thing, it will result, if they do this, it will result in them being esteemed by others.

See this? If we are living like this, if we're esteeming one another, if we are loving each other as Jesus has loved us and taught us to love one another and even love our neighbors and even love our enemies, you know what's going to result?

People from outside of this church will look at this place and they will esteem us. How do I know that? Well, look in Acts chapter 5, verses 12 through 13, this is exactly what was happening to the early church.

[ 35 : 36 ] Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among them by the people's hands of the apostles and they were all together in Solomon's portico, this church, and now the rest dared join them, but the people, even those who dared to join them, held them in high esteem because they knew that these people were legit.

They practiced what they preached, they weren't hypocrites. And they loved each other and their community in a supernatural way that could not be explained apart from the fact that Jesus truly was the Christ.

So imagine what would happen, I think Paul is presenting to the Philippian church, imagine what would happen if these two prominent ladies would just empty themselves and give up their rights for the good of the church.

church. Imagine what would happen if all of us, all of Christ's church took this posture. If each person sought not to be elevated to a higher position, but instead sought to humbly serve others as Jesus did.

Man, the gospel would go. God, the be about Jesus and not about me. Well, because you can't make the difference that you want to have in this world apart from Jesus Christ.

[ 37 : 08 ] And I'm fairly confident that you want your life to have an impact and that you want God to use your life and you want God to use this church, but it won't happen until we become less self-centered and more centered on Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, what does this mindset include? Well, as we see from Jesus' humble crucifixion in verse 8, and being found in the form of God, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross.

And so we've reached the bottom of Christ's descension. He was born in a stable to a poor family. The first 30 years of his life were lived in relative obscurity in a podunk town out in the middle of nowhere that nobody cared about.

He was known and despised for being a friend of sinners, and he was innocent of the charges that were brought against him, and he was crucified between two thieves.

There he endured the agony of the cross. He endured the shame of it, the abandonment of it. He bore the wrath of God towards our sins, and he did it willingly, voluntarily.

[ 38 : 41 ] He chose to do this. And so this passage isn't one where we should come to and pity Jesus in any way, as if he had no choice.

He knew the cost. He humbled himself, and he did it for you. He did it for you. You know, if ever you don't feel loved, if ever you don't feel special, then it could very well be because you're not reading your Bible enough.

How can you come to that and not see and feel the love of God and how special you are to him when you see what he was willing to do to you, for you?

So how dare we ever think that in the church of Jesus Christ, it should ever be primarily about us?

So how can I put an end to this way of thinking?

Hopefully that's where you're at. How can I put an end to this way of thinking? Well, let's look at one final verse together. 1 Corinthians 4, verses 1-3. This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

[ 39 : 58 ] Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. But with me, it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court.

In fact, I don't even judge myself, the Apostle Paul says. Here's the thing. I think we are all looking for that final verdict, aren't we?

I think every day we wake up looking for that final verdict that says to us, you know what? You're okay.

You're important. You're valuable. We look for that ultimate verdict in every day of our lives, in every situation we're in, and in all the people who surround us.

Every day, what you and I do is we put ourselves on trial before the world. How am I doing? Does my life mean anything?

[ 41 : 00 ] Is what I'm doing making a difference at all? Paul, how are people responding to me? Do they see that I'm a valuable person? Do they see that I'm somebody that they should love or that they should care about?

Every day we put ourselves on trial looking for that final verdict from our culture. people. But here's what Paul is saying to us through the Holy Spirit.

He knows that people cannot justify him. They can't. He admits that he can't even justify himself.

But he says that it's the Lord's opinion of him that matters.

And it is only his opinion that matters. So how do we get away from esteeming ourselves? Well, you see that Jesus did not esteem himself, but what has he done for you?

And the ultimate verdict has been declared. If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, right, your sins have been paid for. You don't got to work for your salvation, you can't.

[ 42 : 06 ] You've been declared not just not guilty, but innocent of your sins. And when God looks at you, he sees a righteous person.

Not because of who you are, or what you've done, but because of Jesus, and who he is, and what he's done. So that ultimate verdict has come in. And what matters most is what Jesus says about you.

And when you understand that, and you're not trying to live for yourself, you're not trying to esteem yourself, the more you can live as the disciple that Christ has called you to be.

The more your life will make sense, the more your life will be joyful. Not saying it'll be easy, but it'll be joyful, because you know that for you, the verdict is in, and the best is always yet to come for Christians.

So let's live our lives like that.