



T R I N I T Y
B I B L E C H U R C H
D A L L A S

The Sermon

Philippians 2:5-11

"A Christian's Attitude"

TRANSCRIPT

Good morning, everyone. If you have your Bibles, can you open them, please, to Philippians 2, Philippians 2. Now, you have probably noticed, I don't talk properly and you're going to have to listen especially carefully today. I've been trying to learn some of the lingo. All the food that I've been enjoying and, as was said, the fact that you have coffee in the church, has made it so clear that Texas is nice. So, I've been trying. I've been getting various corrections in order that we can work through the passage today.

I want to assure you, we – I went to a church in Northern Ireland, about three years ago, that was just a little bit bigger than the group that you have here. God's been very kind and he's blessed us and we've seen some growth. We've seen some people converted in the area. That's why we went. We wanted to see people's lives change. It really is encouraging to come and to see you meeting at such an early stage in the life of this church and to think through what God can do through a handful of committed people who want to see lives transformed and people brought together to worship and glorify Christ.

I have been texting back and forward with the people of our church today, in Northern Ireland, and they have already met and they've spent some time praying for you and for our time together so that despite the language problems, that God would speak to us through his word. So, if you have

your Bibles, open it. Philippians 2 and verse 5. Let me read the passage we're going to study together. Then we'll pray and ask God for his help.

Philippians 2:5 reads, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 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."

Let's pray. Our heavenly father, we do thank you for the person and work of Jesus Christ. We thank you for how clearly it is articulated in this particular passage of scripture. Lord, we recognize that he is beyond our full comprehension and we recognize, Lord, that his work is beyond our comprehension. And yet we thank you that you have revealed in your word so much about it and so much about him. We pray, Lord, that as we wrestle through this, a complex Christology, we ask, Lord, that you would give us eyes that can see and hearts that embrace and want to respond. We ask, Lord, that as we study, that our attitudes would be made new, that they will be conformed to the image of Christ. We ask, Lord, that we would challenge and rebuke us where that is needed. We ask, Lord, that you would bind us close together in love. We ask, Lord, that you would give us insight and that your spirit would work and press this truth upon our hearts so that we may be a transformed people, equipped and ready for the true work of ministry in this place. So, it's in Jesus name we ask it, amen.

This passage is one of the most profound passages in all of scripture. It bursts with theology. A good man, John MacArthur, once said this passage is a Christological gem, a theological diamond that perhaps sparkles brighter than any other in scripture. That's very true. Here, in these few verses, verses 6 to 11, we have so clearly and yet so concisely described

Christ's condescension, how he left heaven and he came to this earth. We have described so clearly Christ's full deity. He is the God man.

You see the Trinity in action all working together to accomplish to accomplish the father's purposes in this world. You see submission being modeled here. You see Christ's exaltation in verses 9 to 11 being so clearly described and you have the be a glory and what we sang at the beginning of our service. You see it preached there right at the end. Here in five verses, we have declared the life and the work of Jesus Christ and you see the inner workings of the Trinity.

Yet, what I want you to do is I want you to keep your Bibles open and look back at the four verses that came just before this passage. Look at what Paul is appealing for in verses 1 to 4. It says in verse 1, "So, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

I want you to think about what Paul is saying in those first four verses. Be of the same mind church. Be of the same love and be in full accord, verse two. He says in verse three, "In your church, there is to be no room for rivalry, no room for conceit." He says as well in verse three, "What we need in the church, primarily, is humility." He says in verse four, "As members of a church, we are to look to each other's interests." Paul looks at this little church in Philippi and he knows them well. He spent six years ministering to them. He says, "You need to get on better. You need to love each other more. In fact, what you need to do is put your awkward brother or sister first in your own mind."

Now, here's the big question. What has that context to do with Christ's deity, his condescension, and his glorification? Paul would say everything.

If you find it hard to get on with other people in the church, what you need, primarily, is a lesson in Christology. If you're one of those people, which I think we all are, who tends to prefer yourself to other people, what you need more than anything is a lesson about Christ. If you run around demanding your rights in the church, what you need is a lesson in Christology. I'm very conscious this is a young church and we, in our church, have gone through growing pains. Often, what causes trouble, causes friction, and what helps us to move forward is getting the dynamics right between each other in the church, adopting the right attitude that genuinely wants what's best for our brother and our sister, that is willing to serve and to care for them.

You see, what we just read, verses 5-11 is one of the richest theological passages in all of scripture. But Paul's primary concern isn't theology at this point. His primary drive here isn't theological, though there's so much theology here. His primary drive is ethical. Paul's concerned about not what you think but what you do. He wants you to change how you think. He wants you to learn something here in your mind so that it will affect how you act and how you walk. Look at what he says in verse 5, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours and Christ Jesus," or maybe better translate that, "I want you to have this attitude." In the church, among yourselves, you need this particular attitude. What he wants us to do is to learn from all the truth that he's about to unlock about Jesus.

Really, what he's doing in verses 6-11 is giving us a Be-Like-Jesus sermon, an Act-Like-Jesus sermon. It's not primarily a passage so that you would know more. It's a passage that calls you to do more. So, you have to read verses 6-11 asking the question not just, "What is it saying about Jesus," but as it tells us about Jesus, "What is it saying about how I should engage with my fellow church members?" I think as we begin to look at verse 6, the first thing that we see about our attitude is that your attitudes should surrender position for the people of God. That's our first point. Your attitude should surrender position for the people of God.

Look at how in verse 6 he describes Jesus before his incarnation. It says, "Who, though he was in the form of God." What Paul is saying here is that Jesus was God. That word form, it means that this Jesus, he possessed the very nature, he possessed all of the attributes of God. Jesus was fully and completely God. You could say God equals Jesus and you could reverse it and say Jesus equals God. In his was everything that makes God God. Nothing is missing. No part is removed. Jesus is fully and completely God's.

Yet, verse 6 continues and it says, "Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God." Now that word equality in the Greek is actually a plural, the equalities, plural. He did not count the equalities with God, "something to be grasped." That's bad English. We don't say that, which is why our passages are a bit – our translations of the Bible always say equality. But the idea is he didn't count the multiple equalities that he had with God.

Here's an idea that in every way, in a plural stack of ways, every quality, every attribute, the multiplicity of all that is God is found in Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus possessed the title and he possessed all the rights of being God. Yet, look again at verse 6, "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped." That word grasped means to hold on tightly to something that you already have. It's not grabbing ahold of something outside of yourself. It's holding on tightly to that which is already yours. Here is Jesus. He is equal to God in every way and yet he doesn't exploit. He doesn't demand because of his position. I have some rights. I have a right to access my bank account. I have a right, as a dad, whenever each of those three children were born, to name my children. I have a right to vote as a citizen of my country.

Here, Jesus has all of the rights of God, because he is God. Yet, this verse says he doesn't flaunt those rights. He doesn't grasp on readily and tightly to those rights that are his rights. You remember how in Genesis 3 in the Garden of Eden, you have Adam and Eve and the devil comes to Eve and says, "Look; if you eat that fruit, you will be like God." What happens is

Adam and Eve, they, who are not like God, they reach up and they grasp ahold of the fruit that they were not entitled to. It was not theirs to grasp. But here, in verse 6, Paul is saying Jesus, in complete contrast, he is entitled to everything that is God. He has every right of being God. Yet, for the sake of his people, he doesn't grasp tightly to those rights. Rather, he opens his hand and he reaches down in order to help.

We have three small children in our house. Pray for us. We have three small children and, often, we see at least the two older ones running around, holding on to their particular tie and screaming that their brother and sister is not allowed it because that tie is theirs. "This is my tie, and so nobody else is allowed to have anything to do with it." Jesus, in this passage, is the complete opposite to my children. He is compelled by love towards the church, to surrender his position for the people of God.

What does that say about us? If we're to have an attitude like Jesus here, in verse 6, what does that say about us? There's a temptation in church life to talk far too much about "my rights." "I have a right to know what's going on." "I have a right here to be heard in this group." "I have a right to an opinion." "I've been here from day one. I have a right to have a position in this church." Don't get me wrong, you have rights. But Paul says your attitude should go beyond those rights and be willing to surrender position for the sake of the people of God.

He says more. Secondly, he says, "Your attitude should adopt the position of a slave for the cause of God." Should be willing to adopt the position of a slave for the cause of God. Look at verse 6 running into verse 7, "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

The Scottish theologian, John Murray, when he tries to wrestle with all that is taking place in this particular passage, he makes the distinction between what he calls the dignity of God and the station of Jesus here. The dignity

of Jesus is what is meant in verse 6 by that word form. Jesus has the dignity of God, the form of God, every quality, every attribute of God. All of God is found in Jesus Christ. He has the full dignity of being God.

But the other part, the station, that's kind of what verse 6 means by the word equalities. This station is really how other people respond to him. Because he is God, there is a response that really he is due. Because he has the full dignity of God, every creature around him should respond to him a certain way. That station is that appropriate response that people make to him because of his dignity. Because he has all of the equalities and all of the attributes of God, people should respond to him a certain way. He should be recognized. He should be afforded respect from others.

What Paul is saying in verse 6 is that Jesus always has and always will have the full dignity of God. Every aspect of God is found in Jesus. All that makes God God, Jesus possesses. But then he says, temporarily, Jesus set aside his station. In other words, the adoration and the respect that he was afforded by the angels in heaven, he allows that to be set aside for a moment. He doesn't ever set aside anything to do with his dignity, anything to do with being God. None of that ever comes off. But for a time, his station changes. He isn't appreciated as being God.

You think of it this way. If an individual runs 100 meters at the Olympics and they win the race and they, in fact, break the world record, that person has the dignity of being the fastest man in the world, the fastest runner on the planet. But imagine after winning that race, after proving himself to be the fastest 100-meter sprinter in the world, he refused to go up onto the podium and refused to take the medal, refused to hear the adoration and the applause of the crowd. He would still be the fastest runner in the world, but he would have set aside the station, the adoration and the respect that should be shown to him because of that quality that is true about him.

See, Jesus, in scripture, very clearly, is never not God. He always is 100 percent God. But for a time, he leaves heaven where he is adored and

recognized as such. Instead, comes to a planet where Isaiah tells us he was despised and rejected. Look at verse 7, "He emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." He made himself nothing. He literally emptied himself.

Now, think very carefully about this. We just said Jesus never set aside anything. He never took off anything. He always was, he always will be 100 percent God. If it waddles like a duck and it quacks like a duck and it has a beak like a duck, it's a – oh, good interaction. It's a duck. Jesus is God. If you have a duck and it has all of those qualities, if you find another bird that doesn't have a beak, it's not a duck. If it doesn't have the waddle, it's not a duck. It needs to have all of the qualities to be a duck.

Jesus, here, always has all of the qualities to be God. You couldn't take something away or he would cease to be God. No part, no quality is ever set aside for a moment. No part or quality is ever taken off his back for a second. Jesus, on earth, was God. Never is anything taken away. He could never lose any aspect of his dignity. Rather, the early church father, Aphamasias, he said, "Jesus became what he was not while continuing to be what he always was." He always was God. He never was anything less than 100 percent God. That's an astounding thought, isn't it?

You think of that baby in a manger, the baby was 100 percent God. You think of the young apprentice learning from his father how to be a carpenter. He was 100 percent God. The man invited to the wedding at Cana, it was God invited to that wedding at Cana. The man who wept by his friend's tomb was very God.

Did you see what the verse says? It says, "God, Jesus, took to himself." See, this isn't a theology of subtraction. This is a theology of addition. When Jesus became man, something wasn't taken away. Something was added. Look at verse 7 carefully. "But he emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." He took to himself the form of a servant. He took on himself the likeness of men. He didn't take off

anything to do with the form of God. Rather something was put on top. He put on top the form of a servant.

Now you might not get this illustration in Dallas, because your weather's so nice. In Ireland, we have excessive amounts of rain. So, when you get up and you get dressed for the day, just before you go out of the door, you go and take your coat and you add it on top before you go out and about your business. This is Jesus, fully, completely, 100 percent God, always has been, always will be, but in his incarnation, something is taken out of the cupboard and added on top. Humanity is added on top.

Here, Jesus, who is and always will be God, added to himself the form of a servant in order that he could save his people from their sin. You know that Greek word as servant, do loss, really means slave. Slave. What he put on was this form of a slave. It's astounding, isn't it? It almost sounds like heresy, except it's God's word that's screaming this out. Here's the king of the universe and he took to himself the role of a slave. The king of kings and the lord of lords. Think about it. The Bible says a slave as he walked around this world. The Bible says it so clearly, doesn't it? He came not to be served but to serve. He's a slave. That's an astounding thought.

You think about the upper room. Remember that story in the upper room? A long, long day. Everybody's ready for their evening meal. They all come into the upper room. There is no paid servant to wash their grubby feet. All the disciples look at each other and there, you can imagine them kind of deciding who's the least among them. They're giving them a nudge, "You should do it. You need to clean our feet." "It's not me. I'm probably third on the totem pole, but you're definitely below me. You should do it." While they're arguing and nudging and staring at each other, standing on their dignity and refusing to take on that role of a slave, it's the leader, Jesus, who takes off his cloak and wraps a towel around his waist and grabs the basin and insists in scrubbing 24 arrogant feet.

Now, remember, this is meant to be about your attitude. What does that say about your attitude? What should we be? This feet-washing attitude is so rare in the life of church. There's so many people in all of our churches across the world that, like those disciples, stand on their own dignity and look around trying to see who's going to serve me today. They refuse others by taking on the hard jobs and the unappreciated jobs and just getting stuck in.

My father, he's a pastor. He started ministry the year before I was born. So, all my life, he's been in ministry. He often talks about basin theology. He says in churches, you either find Christians who are like Pilot and when they hear of their need in the church, what they do is, like Pilot, they wash their hands and they say, "Oh, that's not my responsibility. That's got nothing to do with me."

There are so few people in our churches who have an attitude like Christ, that grabs the basin and is willing to scrub the filthy feet of their fellow, often stubborn, church members. Yet, if our attitude is to be like Christ, you must surrender position for the people of God. You should adopt the position of a slave for the cause of God. Thirdly, you should be submissively obedient to the will of God. You should be submissively obedient to the will of God.

Look at verse 8, verse 8. "Being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." The first part of the story of Jesus is really a downward spiral. His incarnation. He leaves heaven where he is adored and appreciated and he comes down to earth. It's astounding the creator of the world humbles himself and becomes a creature walking around the world. The Bible says he lives in that world, being scoffed at, being cursed, being spat upon.

As we said earlier from Isaiah, he is despised and he is rejected. Yet, we see in verse 8, he being found in human form, humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. He died and he died on

a cross. The most humiliating death available in his particular day, a death that wasn't allowed to be exercised upon a Roman Centurion because it was seen so lowly, beneath the Roman citizen. Yet, Jesus, God himself, is killed on a tree he had made, by creatures he had made. Even worse, on the cross where he who knew no sin was made sin for us.

Where, as he hung upon the cross, the father unleashed upon him all of the punishment and unleashed on him hell that was due to unworthy sinners who had put their trust in him. It's as if the wrath of God that should have poured on my head for my sin, in that moment on the cross was replumbed, re-piped, and it poured instead upon the head of Jesus Christ. The wrath that should have fallen on Andrew fell upon Christ. If you're trusting in God today and trusting in the work of Jesus, the wrath that should have fallen on your head was replumbed and poured instead upon the head of Jesus Christ. He was obedient to the point of death, all the way there. That's the idea. All the way to death, itself.

Verse 8 reminds us that Jesus obeyed his father in everything, even to death, even to death. I think sometimes we have warped pictures in our mind about Jesus and the cross. I think sometimes we image the cross as being something because it's so closely associated with Jesus, something that Jesus longed for, something that he smiled at, something that there was an element of warmth in his face as he thought about it. But there was not a warm face that set itself to go to Jerusalem. It was a somber face that turned like a flint towards Jerusalem.

You think of the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus sweat like drops of blood. There in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says, "Lord, take this cup from me." Death wasn't something that he was excited about. Suffering wasn't something that gave him glee. It was something that caused him horror. He hated what was before him. He was terrified at a human level by what was before him. Yet, how does he finish that prayer? "Father, yet not what I will but yours be done." He willingly surrendered to the whole will of his father.

Let's think about us. Too often in churches, we complain about how we have been mistreated by the church. The problem is in those moments, we have too low a view of the providence of God, that idea that God is able to work through and is working in every single circumstance. His hand, his controlling hand, is in every detail. Robert Murray McShane says, "The average Christian doesn't think enough about God's providence. They don't notice his providence enough in life." That's true. I think the hardest aspect of providence to embrace, the hardest aspect of God's controlling hand to accept is that sometimes God's controlling hand causes us to have to be humble. In other words, it's very hard sometimes to accept that God's hand is still in this situation when maybe in church life we are rejected or overlooked.

It's very hard to accept that there is still a purpose in this when other Christians hurt us, say unkind things about us, criticize us to others. In those moments, Paul is saying here, "We must strive to have a Christlike attitude, one that surrenders position for the people of God, one that is willing to adopt the position of a slave for the cause of God, and one that is submissively obedient to the will of God, understands his controlling hand is still in this circumstance. Fourthly, we should have an attitude that patiently waits for the vindication of God, that patiently waits for the vindication of God." In other words, understands the story isn't done. God will make right.

Look at verse 9. "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". These verses are all about the exaltation of Christ. Verse 9 says our Christ, he was hyper-exalted. That's literally what it says. Not just highly. Hyper-exalted.

In Europe, we have markets where you can go and get small items of goods. Then you have your supermarket that you can go to and get most of your groceries. Then we have what we call the hypermarket where you can get everything and you could spend a lifetime walking around those

shelves. It's a nightmare for a man to go to. But the hypermarket is, to those who love shopping, the biggest and the best.

Here, Paul says, Jesus was raised to the position that is biggest and best. He who was humble, even to the point of death, in verse 8, is now given the highest, the biggest, and the best name. He is given, verse 9 says, the name, as a hint of what is to come. That this name that is given is that Old Testament name, that Old Testament title Yahweh, the covenant promise keeping God. The New Testament Jews so concerned with keeping the third commandment not to misuse the name, they wouldn't speak Yahweh. They wouldn't say that Old Testament title for God, Yahweh. They substituted it with this expression, the name. So, when they talked of him, they talked of the name. Here, Jesus is given that Old Testament name of God, that name of worship.

It goes even further. "Therefore God has highly exalted to 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 in earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." What's maybe hinted at in verse 9 becomes very explicit in verse 11. "All will confess that Jesus is the Lord." He's no human being. He's no baby in a manger. He is the Lord. He always has been God. He always will be God.

A time is coming when every knee will recognize it. Every individual will bow. Every individual will confess with their mouth that he is completely, wholly, God. He is the Lord. He is that promise-keeping God. All will know across the world, now and always, that Jesus was and Jesus is the great promise-keeping God who deserves our worship. Paul is saying the one who went down, down, down, God insisted at the right time that he would raise up, up, up.

Here's what I want you to notice. What was it that rose Jesus, the humble one, up, up, up? A good defense when others accused him? No. Was it a desire Jesus had to climb the ladder and be prominent? Certainly not. Did

he get raised high by proving that he was indeed superior to others? No. What does it say in the text? What does it say in verse 9? "Therefore God exalted him." It was God who bestowed on him. In other words, the point Paul is stressing here is that, again, Jesus did not grasp. He didn't press for himself. Rather, he waited on his father to vindicate his reputation. You don't find self-promotion in Jesus Christ. Rather, you find it is left to his father to promote Jesus Christ. It's left to the Father to vindicate the Son's reputation at just the right time.

Now, if our attitude is meant to be like that, what does that say about us in the church? I think too often we can't wait to get proven right. When we have taken a humble position, we're itching to be exalted. "I need to prove that I was right on that issue." "I need to show just how wrong those others are." "I'm going to be very patient. I'll wait till the next time the elders meet. But if they haven't sorted it out by then, da, da, da, da, da." We're going to have to learn from Jesus here. If we have a Jesus-like attitude, we humble ourselves and we leave it with God to vindicate our personal reputation.

Look, if it's God's reputation on the line, you fight. If it's your reputation, ultimately, that's on the line, leave it with God. In our churches, we need members who will surrender position, who adopt the position of slaves, who are submissively obediently to God's will, who patient wait for God's vindication. Lastly, we need members with attitudes that are motivated by the glory of God.

Did you see how it ends in verse 11? Did you see that last clause? "To the glory of God the father." What drove Jesus in life? What moved him forward? It was this glory of God, his father. Shorter Catechism, the Westminster Shorter Catechism, it begins with that well-known question, "What is man's chief end?" The answer is man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. The Bible is consumed with this being the driving motivator of the believer. Believers are meant to be driven forward in life by that idea that it isn't about me. It's about him.

We're meant to live life in order to lift Christ high. Verses 6 to 11 remind us how in humiliation that led to exaltation, Jesus did it all because it brought glory to his father. If that was the result, if your temporary humiliation, your temporary struggle, and the very real pain that sometimes you do experience in the life of the church, could you not set aside your pride and per fare others? Be of one mind. Have one love. Be of one accord. In humility, count others more significant. Could you not look to the interests of others, all the things appealed for in verses 1 to 4?

The spiritual person prioritizes the glory of God, not the glory of I. The glory of God. If you knew that your temporary suffering, your temporary annoyance with the governance of the church, that temporary feeling of being overlooked, maybe, if you knew that, ultimately, that brought glory to God, would you not endure it for him who endured all for you? I think too often in churches – maybe you haven't experienced it yet in the life of your church, but it will come. Too often in churches, we make it all about us rather than about Christ. What happens is our preferences, our needs get pulled to the surface rather than that ultimately goal of seeing Christ glorified.

A story is told of an English preacher. The English are always very rude. So, that's part of the illustration. An English preacher who was approached by a vocal church member who began into his list of complaints. "This church just isn't welcoming enough. It's very hard for me to make friends among these people. The music isn't what I would like. My family isn't being properly catered to. The sermon is far too long and done in a very strange accent. It's not what I want."

The English preacher said five words, only five words, that got to the very heart of the man's problem. Five words I haven't been brave enough to say in the life of the church, but that did get to the very heart of this man's problem. "It's not about you, stupid." "It's not about you, stupid." Isn't that a kick in the teeth of our preferences? I want that position. It's not about you.

"I think the money should be spent this way in the church." "It's not about you." "I believe that the children should be taught this particular way." "It's got nothing to do with you." "I need to be recognized here." "I've been faithful. Why aren't people responding more to me?" "It's not about you."

We need a lot less me-minded Christians and a lot more with an attitude like Christ. Christians who, for the sake of their brothers and sisters, will surrender position, will indeed adopt the position of a slave, who are submissively obedient to God's will, who patient wait for God to vindicate and who are motivated ultimately by the glory of God. If we have believers operating in that way in the church, who have that type of attitude in the church, church would be a glorious place and the world would be affected by that type of church. Do you remember what 1 John says? "This is how the world will know that you love me, that you love one another." That there would be an evident love and community in the church, because we have attitudes like Christ. Not because it's our official but because we have attitudes like Christ that stands out in a world that is full of people who say, "Me, me, me, me, me."

I don't know. Maybe somebody here isn't a Christian and yet you've come and you've – or you're trying to understand this particular church. Maybe you've been a very religious person. You've always gone to churches, so you're here going to another church. Maybe you have a chip on your shoulder. You've been hurt by churches in the past. You've seen the ugly side of Christians and the ugly side of church behavior. Maybe that's the very thing that's putting you off Christianity, the way too often Christians behave.

Let me honest. We are not perfect. We are works in progress. The church, this side of eternity, is one big work in progress. I would encourage you, do not gauge Christianity by what you see simply in the church. Rather, look beyond the church at the Christ that this is all about.

When you look at one who has this type of attitude, that though he was fully God, had such humility that he came to earth and was obedient even to the point of death, so that his father could be glorified and his people saved, is that not the type of person you want to follow, who you want to know? Do you not gauge the glory of Christ by what you see simply in the church? Rather, look at him and weigh up him and you'll find him never lacking, never disappointing. You will find in him one who we want to be like, one whose attitude we want to emulate. If you're not a Christian, don't get distracted by everything else. Look at and think about the person of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Our heavenly father, we do thank you for him. We thank you for Jesus. We thank you that in him nothing is missing, nothing is lacking, and, in him, we see a humility and a servant attitude that is willing to save, that is motivated by the glory of his father. We pray for any who do not know him. We ask, Lord, that you would kindly draw them to yourself because of the compelling person of Jesus Christ. We pray, Lord, that they will find him while he is to be found, that they would come and discover the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep, that they would come and know the one who is obedient, even to the point of death. We pray, Lord, for all of us as well who do know you. We recognize too often in our attitudes there is much that is wrong and far too much of ourselves. We pray, Lord, that you would give us the strength and, by the power of your spirit, that you would humble us, that you would help us to adopt the attitude of Jesus Christ so that you would be glorified, so that his name would be raised high, here in Dallas and across the world, so that he would receive the glory he is due. We pray it all in Jesus name, amen.

[End of Audio]