Be Humble or You'll StumbleTranscription

Hello, and welcome to this teaching from Skip Heitzig of Calvary Albuquerque. We pray that God uses this message to reach people around the world with his love. If this message encourages you, we'd love to hear about it. Email us at mystory@calvaryabq.org. And if you'd like to support this ministry financially, you can give online securely at calvaryabq.org/give.

Humility is that slippery quality that once you think you have it, you don't. Paul demonstrated how Jesus' voluntary humiliation was compensated by the father's lavish exaltation. In the message, be humble or you'll stumble, Skip shares that though humility comes at a price, without it there will be no unity. Now, please turn in your Bible to Philippians chapter 2, as he begins.

Would you please turn your Bibles to the book of Philippians, please, chapter 2? Philippians chapter 2. So there was five guys on an airplane, a small little aircraft. There was a boy, and there was a preacher. There was a doctor, a lawyer, and the pilot. So they're flying this little private airplane, and midway in the flight some problems happen. So the pilot shouts back mayday, mayday! This plane's going down!

As you can tell, there's five passengers aboard but we only have four parachutes. And so you guys decide who's staying. But I'm out of here. And the pilot jumps out with a parachute. So the doctor immediately says, well I've saved so many lives in my lifetime I deserve to live. So he grabbed a parachute and the doctor jumped out.

Then the lawyer said, well I'm the smartest guy in the world, so I deserve one. He grabbed a pack and jumped out. So now there's two people left, and one parachute. There's the preacher and there's the little boy. So the preacher says to the little boy, look. You have your whole life ahead of you. Me, I've lived a good long life. And when I die I know I'm going to heaven. So you take the last parachute and you jump. And the little boy smiles, and said, relax Reverend, the smartest guy in the world just jumped out of the airplane with my backpack.

[LAUGHS]

What's the moral of that story? The moral of that story is Proverbs chapter 16, which says pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Be humble or you'll stumble. Be humble or you'll stumble. Be meek or you'll get mashed. Be selfless or you'll get squished. That's the moral of that story. Pride is the oldest sin in the universe, and it shows no signs of growing weaker with age. It's been around a long time and it's going to be with us for some time.

C.S. Lewis said pride is the chief cause of misery in every nation and family since the world began. Think of it. It was pride that took Lucifer out of heaven. It was pride that took Adam out of paradise. It was pride that took Saul, King Saul, first King of Israel, out of the kingdom. It was pride that took Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, out of Babylonian society. It was pride that took Haman out of the Persian court. It was pride that changed angels into demons. It is pride that changes friends into enemies. Pride ruins everything, and here's why.

Pride is the cancer of the soul. And if it's left undiagnosed and untreated, it will destroy spiritual life. So the antidote is humility. That's the cure for this age-long disease, humility. And that has been the theme in

chapter 2 of Philippians, as Paul writes to this church. It's been all about staying humble. Verse 1 of Philippians 2, I'm bringing you back over what we covered.

Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, any fellowship of the spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind. That's humility. Let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interest of others.

So sacrifice over self, humility over vanity, preferring one another over being prideful toward one another. You see, to get along with people you have to adjust. You have to be interested in them. You have to esteem them as important. And if we dare to shine the spotlight off of ourselves for just a minute, and onto others for awhile, we will discover that unity is the result of our humility. That's been the theme of this apostle.

Now after that principle, he now gives us an example. Verse 5, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Because Jesus, is as we have seen, the ultimate example. He is God. But he entered time and space in a human body. Jesus left heaven's magnificence to come to earth's mess. He left glory to face gory. He went to the cross. That's where Paul left us in verse 8.

But now there is a change. Now Paul wants us to know that all of that self-sacrifice and humility was rewarded by God. That's also part of his teaching. It was rewarded when Jesus was exalted. So the theme was the humiliation of Christ. Now it's the exaltation of Christ. So look at verse 8 once again. You need verse 8 to understand verse 9, because of the first word in verse 9. But let's look at verse 8.

And being found in appearance as a man, He, Jesus, humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has also highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven, of those on the earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We told you last week that this was one of the first hymns of the early church. Most scholars believe this was the first creed of the early church, where they would take theological truths, write them out, and then the church would sing them. So that's my commission to the worship team. Let's put-- let's put these truths to music. I love this little creed, this little hymn that was sung.

So according to this little hymn, they started with Christ preexistent glory and went all the way down to the low point, which is the cross. And then from the low point to the post incarnation glory and dominion of Jesus Christ, all in just a few versus. What I'd like to do in looking at these verses with you, is show you three fundamental facts about humility, three fundamental truths.

First of all, one you already know, humility is sometimes painful. In fact, it usually is. You know, it's hard to just humble yourself before a person. You've got to swallow some pride. That hurt. It's going to put you out a little bit, and it's painful. And that is part of the thought in verse 8 concerning Christ being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient-- and watch this-- to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Jesus' birth was miraculous and Jesus' life was extraordinary. But it's Jesus' death that is the epicenter of redemptive history. And I've noticed that when people think about Jesus, worldly people I'm talking about not Christians as much, but worldly people, when it comes to thinking about Christ they prefer the Jesus of Christmas. They like that Jesus. It's the little baby Jesus, you know, the angels are singing. They shepherds are there. The wise men come.

But that is not the focus of the New Testament. The focus of, in fact, the whole Bible isn't the manger, but the cross. It's not the Jesus of Christmas. It's the Jesus of Calvary. It's not the baby in the manger. It's the body on the cross. Even Jesus in Revelation 13 is referred to as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. That is it was always in God's mind from the beginning that the epicenter of all history, all redemptive history would be the cross.

Hey, even when Jesus was born, remember they brought gold, frankincense and what?

Myrrh.

That's embalming fluid. Did you know that? Myrrh is embalming fluid. So think about Mary getting embalming fluid. Thanks, I guess. I mean it could be sold and you could use the money for something. But embalming fluid, myrrh, it was a very costly embalming fluid. We know that because when Jesus died they took 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes and placed that on Jesus' body and buried him in a tomb. So even from his birth, it was pointing to his death. And we always need to keep that framed in our hearts.

Did you know that if you were to read the four gospels and count the chapters that speak about Jesus' first 30 years of life on Earth, you'd only find four chapters that even mention what was going on in the first 30 years of his life. But did you know also that 85 chapters speak of the last 3 and 1/2 years of Jesus' life? So what do you think they're focusing on, last 3 and 1/2 years? Of those 85 chapters, 29 of them focus in only on the last week of Christ on the earth. And of those 29 chapters, 13 deal with the final day of his life.

So if you were to count up verses Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; you'd find 579 verses that are focused in on and deal with the last 24 hours of Jesus' life as he goes to the cross. So all pre-New Testament history looks forward to the cross. All post-New Testament history looks back to the cross.

Graham Scroggie, a British commentator said, cut the Bible anywhere and it bleeds. He's right. You could cut the Bible in Genesis 22, Abraham sacrificing his son. It'll bleed right there. Because it anticipates God sending his son on that same mountain. If you cut the Bible in Psalm 22, which is a poetic description of the crucifixion, it bleeds. If you cut the Bible in Exodus 12, speaking of the Passover, it bleeds. If you cut it in Leviticus 5, the sin offering, it bleeds. Cut it in Isaiah chapter 53, it bleeds.

It's all about the sacrifice, all about the cross, so much so that even when John the apostle gets a vision of heaven and looks at the lion of the tribe of Judah, he said, and I looked and behold a lamb as though it had been-- what, tell me? Slain. In heaven, you could see marks on this lamb as though it had been killed. Have you ever thought of this? The only work of man you'll see in heaven are the marks of crucifixion on the body of Jesus Christ.

And he'll wear that as a badge of honor and glory because that's how you got there, a lamb as though it had been slain. So for Jesus, humility was painful. Because for Jesus it meant crucifixion, the most degrading, the most embarrassing, the most excruciating form of death at the time known to man. Crucifixion was invented by the Persians. They were pantheistic. They believed the earth was sacred. They didn't want people to die on it. So they raised them up on a pole that's how they invented crucifixion, because of that belief.

Later on the Romans took crucifixion and they perfected it. What I mean by that is they managed to let crucifixion become the death that was preferred for capital punishment for non-citizens. Because it deliberately delayed death for hours and even days. So people got the maximum torture before they died. Jesus was humble enough to go to death on the cross. Why? Why such humility? Why?

Why lower yourself from heaven to earth, and then from earth to the cross? Why go that low? Because it's that humility that provides the one thing you and I need more than anything else in the world, forgiveness. Forgiveness. Well, why would God go to that extent to forgive us? Answer, love. Because he loves us. For God so loved the world that he gave. You can still ask questions like, why does God love us that much? That I can't answer. I don't have a good answer for that. Because I know us. I certainly know me. And why God would love me that much, I don't have a good answer for us. It's just a decision he made. And I'm glad he did.

One of my favorite hymns is called The Love of God. Some of you have heard of The Love of God by Frederick Lehman, written in the 1800s. The love of God is greater far than ink or pen could ever tell. It stretches to the farthest star. It reaches to the lowest hell. But here's my favorite line in the song. Could we with ink the oceans fill, and were the skies of parchment made, were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade, to write the love of God would drain the oceans dry. Nor could this scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky.

The unfathomable love of God in sending his son to pay the penalty for sin so that we could be forgiven. For Jesus, humility was painful. Now let's apply that. For you and I, humility is going to be painful, not as painful as it was for Jesus, probably not. It says in the book of Hebrews, we have not resisted to the point of shedding blood. But it's going to cost nonetheless.

It hurts, as I said, to swallow pride. It's going to cost you comfort to be humble. It's going to cost you perhaps your reputation if you humble yourself. It could cost you a whole lot of misunderstanding. It's going to cost you time. It's even going to cost you money. So humility is sometimes painful. But here's the second fundamental truth about humility, and this is really the crux of these verses, humility is always hopeful.

Beginning in verse 9, it's a complete reversal of verses 6 through 8. So verse 6, 7, and 8 it's like, Jesus went down, down, down, down, death on the cross. Now beginning in verse 9, it's he went up, up, up to the highest possible level, verse 9. Therefore, God has also highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven, and those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father. Notice the word, therefore.

Therefore, in verse 9, refers back to the thought in verse 8. So here's the thought. Because Jesus humbled

himself before the Father, the Father has exalted Christ. This is what the Father has done for Jesus. What has he done? Highly exalted him, highly exalted him. The words highly exalted, it's one word in the Greek. It's huperupsoo, which means hyper-exalted. Huper-- hyper or super exalted, it means to lift up and over. So Jesus said, I'm going low, low, low. And God says, I will lift, lift, lift. I will hyper-lift, I will super exalt Jesus.

A thought struck me as I was going through the study this week. I'm going through this. I'm looking at what God's estimation of is of Jesus in exalting him. And this thought struck me. God the father's treatment of Christ, view of Christ, estimation of Christ is the polar opposite of the world's estimation of Christ. For the most part it is. So here's an example. When Jesus came to heal, the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue in Luke 8, it says they laughed him to scorn.

When Jesus said, no man can serve two masters. You can't serve God and money. We are told the Pharisees sneered at him. When Jesus raised up Lazarus from the dead, the leaders plotted to put him to death. When Jesus stood before that same crowd, the Sanhedrin in Matthew 26, they spat in his face. They beat him. Others struck him with the palms of their hands. And when Jesus was given by them to the Romans, it says they struck him. They mocked him and they led him away to be crucified.

So how did the world treat Jesus? With rejection and extermination. How did God treat Jesus? With hyper-exaltation, super-exaltation. Now the focus of Paul is the upward trajectory after the cross, the upward trajectory of being exalted. God highly exalted him. What I want to do is sort of expand your knowledge of that and let you know that the exaltation of Christ came in four phases.

First of all, there was the Resurrection. Jesus died at the hands of sinful men. But it says in Acts chapter 2, Peter says, this Jesus whom you crucified God has raised up to new life. Resurrection, first phase of the exaltation. Second phase, his ascension into heaven. The disciples were there when it happened. They stood on the Mount of Olives. They're standing there with Jesus. And suddenly he starts like floating up and they're watching him.

Bye. He vanished out of their sight. He left. He ascended up into heaven where he sits at the right hand of God. Which takes us to the third phase after the resurrection after the ascension, his dominion. Jesus after the resurrection said, all authority in heaven and on earth is given to me. So Jesus took his rightful place of dominion with the Father in heaven.

And the fourth phase was a new position for Jesus, intercession. Intercession, here's what I want you to think of. Jesus is not inactive. He's not just sitting around heaven looking at the Father going, so what do we do today? Are we just going to hang out together? No. He's very busy. He's very active.

Jesus died on the cross. He acted as savior by becoming the sacrifice. Today he is playing the role of the great high priest. So this is what the book of Hebrews says in chapter 7. He, Jesus, always lives to make intercession for us. You know what intercession is, right? He's praying for you. How does that make you feel? Jesus Christ is praying for you, speaking about you to his Father. Can you lose with that?

I mean I don't know how you feel when somebody goes, hey, I've been praying for you lately. You go, thank you. That makes me feel really good. Jesus is saying to you, I've been praying for you lately. He ever lives to make intercession for us. So his work of redemption is over. His work of intercession is ongoing. He is our heavenly attorney, no lawyer jokes here. You can't get a better attorney. Mary is not your heavenly

attorney. The saints are not your heavenly attorneys. Jesus himself is the one who talks to the Father on your behalf. Humility is always hopeful.

Look at verse 9 again. God has super exalted him, huperupsoo, he has highly exalted him, and given him-- does it say a name? It says the name. Thank you. The name, definite article. He has given him the name, which is above every name. In other words, God the father has given Jesus a designation, not a common name, but some superlative name that marks Jesus far and above all others, all comparison. Now what is the name that is above all other names?

Well, you could say, well it says in verse 10, it's at the name of Jesus. Yes, but that was his name at birth. And that was-- I mean when you hear Jesus today, everybody knows who we're talking about. But 2,000 years ago if you say Jesus, you know what they're going to say to you? Which one? It was such a common name that Jesus had to be called Jesus of Nazareth. Because there was Jesus of Cana, Jesus of Capernaum. There were so many different people named Yeshua, Jesus was such a common name.

So when Paul says God has given him a name. The name above all names. We're told what that name is, but not until verse 11. It's not the name of Jesus, his common earthly name. It says, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is what?

Lord.

That's the name. Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father. Here's what I want you to see. Here's what Paul is saying. God the Father, is calling Jesus Christ the Lord. This is monumental. In the New Testament, there are two uses of the term Lord. The first term is sort of a term of respect. It's the equivalent of sir, small l for lord. So you might say to a master of a house, lord. But you use it in the small lower case l. It's a term of respect, sir.

The second and most common usage is God the Lord. Because the term Lord was a typical Jewish term for referring to God. And here's why. Jews had long believed that the name of God was ineffable. That is unpronounceable. You, as a human being, should never utter the name of God. And because of that, we still don't know how the original name of God is to be pronounced. We only have four letters in Hebrew, four consonants. That's all they left us. And that is the equivalent of Y-H-V-H, or Y-H-W-H.

Some might say Yahweh or Yahveh, or Yahuwah, or Jehovah. We don't really know how it's pronounced. Because when they got to the name of God, they didn't pronounce it. They would either bow and say, Hashem, which means the name. Or they substituted it with the Hebrew term Lord, Adonai, Adonai. So much so that even today the English translation of your Old Testament, most modern translations, will render the Hebrew tetragrammaton, the YHVH, as Adonai or the Lord. It says in English the Lord, the Lord.

So the Lord was there designation for God. So God is giving Jesus the Supreme divine title as the Lord of all. Now this was predicted. This isn't something that should throw you, like really, God, the Lord is calling Jesus. God the Lord, yep. It had been predicted back in Daniel chapter 7. Daniel gets a vision of the son of man, the son of man was a title Jesus called himself, right? Listen to the vision.

To him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom. His dominion is an everlasting dominion. His kingdom is

the one which will not be destroyed. That's a description of lordship. That's a description of sovereign control for the son of man. It had been predicted. It was also preached, Peter in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost, says this Jesus, God raised up being exalted to the right hand of God. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.

Not only that, but it will be proclaimed. It will be proclaimed. John gets taken up in a vision and sees heaven. And he hears all the angelic hosts, and all the people who are in heaven praising God. And we are told in Revelation 5, they say, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them I heard saying, blessing and honor and glory and power be to him who sits on the throne and to the lamb forever and ever.

It is the wholesale worship of the Father and the Son as Lord. Now when Jesus comes back, Revelation 19, he's coming with a sign. He's coming up with his own name that is written on him like in a banner, and you remember what it's going to say? King of kings and--

Lord of Lords.

Lord of Lords. So, I just want you to get this. The reward for Jesus' humility is being super exalted by God the Father with this designation as the Lord of all. In fact, you know this verse really well. You know if you were out on the street you could finish it if I were to say, hey, that at the name of Jesus every, and you go, knee shall bow and tongue shall confess. You know this verse.

What you may not know is Paul is quoting this verse from the Old Testament. This isn't new material. He's not saying here's something cool, every knee will bow, every tongue will confess. Let's sing that. He's quoting Isaiah 45. Now listen to it in the original, from the Old Testament, Isaiah, chapter 45. I am God. Here's the quote. "I am God and there is no other. Unto me every knee will bow and every tongue will confess."

So here is God with that name, giving it to Jesus Christ. That is the name of Jesus, every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Now as amazing as this passage is theologically that really isn't Paul's point. Paul's point is ethically he's using Jesus as an example for us. So what Paul is trying to say is look, here's the principle. God exalts the humble. God exalts the humble. 1 Peter chapter 5, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you-- you-- in due time. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.

Humility is sometimes painful. But humility is always hopeful. You're going to be raised up when? In due time. What time is that? I've been down here in humility-ville for a long time and it hurts. In due time, God knows just the right time to raise you up, to lift you up. Here's the grand point. Trust God enough with your life that you don't live for people's affirmation, but you wait for God's exaltation.

You see, some people just live to be affirmed by people. Pat me on the back. Tell me I'm nice. Tell me I look good. I need that all the time. I need that. But I'm saying trust God enough with your life rather than having to live for people's affirmation, you will wait for God raising you up, God's exaltation. That's Paul's grand point. Humility is sometimes painful. Humility is always hopeful. It will be rewarded.

Here's the third and final truth. Humility is ever needful. Now could we just step back from this whole passage and understand that what Paul has been saying is that this is how we ought to treat each other, we ought to treat each other a certain way, back to verse 3. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind humility. Let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look not only on his own interests, but also on the interests of others. That's verse 4.

Then it says let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus. He got really low. God raised him up really high. Now I want you to think about this. Here's the fun. I'm kind of boiling-- each time I'm just boiling this down a little further. If Jesus Christ can humble himself, you can humble yourself. What do you mean? You know, somebody gets in our face. We kind of puff ourselves. You know who I am. Hey, reality check here.

If Jesus Christ can humble himself, you can humble yourself, buckaroo. What do you mean Jesus? Yeah, if he's Lord of all and God the Father designates him as Lord over all, so much so that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. If that guy humbled himself, guess what. I think you can give up a little pride. And the other point complementary that if God the Father in due time exalted Jesus, and has stated the principle over and over again, five times in the New Testament, he will exalt the humble. Then he'll exalt you. If God can exalt Jesus, he can exalt you.

So here's the principle. The way up is down. The way down is always the way up. Hey, fastest way to get down-- and I don't mean get down with your bad self-- I mean you want to go down, just puff yourself up. It might not be today, but you're going down. And if you want to be raised up, you go low. You humble yourself before it happens to you, and it will. So the way up is down, is way down is always the way up.

Jesus said, Luke chapter 18, whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted, principle of scripture. Question, how do I know when I've arrived at humility? Well, that's the thing about humility. You never do. Because what you think you have, you haven't. Right? Humility is that thing. The day you think you have humility that's the day you lost it.

So you're walking around and going, man I'm really getting good at this humble thing, out the window. So following Jesus will cost you sacrifice and service. But following Jesus, and obedience, and humility also pays. God will reward humility, and it will bring unity. It will improve the lives of people around you. When you and I look out for other people's interests, it makes a dramatic impact.

I want to close with this true illustration. It happened just this last week. So at the beginning of the service, you saw the little video announcement of Feed New Mexico Kids, right? Holly was on the screen talking about it. So what that showed me is that there is a lot of self-sacrificing, loving people here, who are willing when they go to the grocery store to spend a little bit extra and think of kids who don't have something, and make sure they have something.

And God has so blessed that and so rewarded that that last week she gets a call from a ministry leader here in town saying, I want to give. I've been given a huge donation of cookies. I want to give. I want to share this donation with you. She goes like, how many cookies are you talking about? He says, I want to give you 350 pounds of cookies. She goes, OK. I'll take them.

So she gets a truck and brings the cookies, picks them up and drives them here to the church. When she

gets to the church a staff member comes up to her and says, hey you came at just the right time. Somebody heard about feed New Mexico kids on the radio and they just donated 160 quarts of milk, stable milk, shelf-stable milk. The expiration date hasn't arrived. It's good milk.

So she just thought about that. She goes, what kind of a God is it that we serve who is that merciful that he sees-- you know, New Mexico as the number-one state in the United States for childhood hunger. But he thinks that kids this year ought to start their school year off with some milk and cookies. I love that. It makes a dramatic impact in people's lives.

How much is God into humility? How much is he drawn to humility? Well in Job 22, we are told God saves the humble. In Psalm 10, God listens to the humble. And in Isaiah chapter 57, God says, I dwell with the humble. I think he's into it. I think he responds to it quicker than just about any other attribute. When you're humble, broken, needy you go low. God says, I like that. He's drawn to that.

One final thought, I mentioned Adonai is the Hebrew word for Lord. But it's uniquely written. Adonai has a personalized ending and it just doesn't mean the Lord it means my Lord or the Lord who is my Lord. Adonai, he is my Lord, sovereign over my life. So when Thomas saw Jesus after the resurrection, he said, my Lord and my God. He personalized it.

The first step toward God, if your life is not in his hands yet, the first step toward God is humility, never pride. You never walk up to a guy and go, do you know who I am? I work really hard at getting you to like me, [BUZZER SOUND]. Wrong approach. I am sincere, devout, deeply religious; [BUZZER SOUND]. Not a good approach, not a good tact.

If you go, God, I've got nothing. Ah, what's that? I got nothing. I'm broken. I'm a sinner. I need you. I need forgiveness. I have nothing to offer. But I will receive what you want to give me. God says, now I'm all about that. He'll respond to that. God saves the humble. He listens to the humble. He dwells among the humble. Because he knows the truth. And that is the truth. He is the Lord and you are not. You need him.

And if you have never personally asked Jesus to be your Lord, your master, your savior; that's what you need. You can't say, I was raised in the church all my life. I went to church. I went to mass. I have people in my family who are in the ministry. Have you personally surrendered your life to Christ is the issue, is the issue. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Theirs is the Kingdom of God. You come humble. You come broken. You come needy. You ask for forgiveness. Bible calls that repentance, and you'll be saved.

Father, we just want to close, bowing heart and head, mind and body, pushing out distractions, focusing in on you for these last few seconds, these few moments, and we think about us before you. Right now we're not thinking about the person sitting next to us. We're thinking about us before you. And we're making self-examination in the light of what we have read.

We just read about the God who existed before incarnation coming to this earth, taking on humanity and going to the death of a cross, humiliating, degrading, excruciating. But from there, you Father, exalting Jesus as the Lord to have dominion, the king of kings and the lord of lords, this Jesus highly exalted.

And we wonder is this lord our lord, our personal savior. Have we personally received Jesus? It's a

transaction that must take place. As Jesus said to a religious man, unless you are born again you will never see the Kingdom of God. New birth is given upon faith, trust, belief in Jesus. So with your eyes closed for a moment, your heads bowed, I want to ask you a question, is he your Lord, personally? Not your mom's, not your dad's, not your uncle's, not somebody else you know; is he yours? Not husband, not wife, not child; is he yours?

Is he your Lord, your master, your savior? Have you asked him? Do you walk with him? Do you believe in him? If not, why not? Why not now? Why not turn to him? Why not make an admission? I need you, God. I need you. I need your forgiveness. I need your love. I need your help. If you're willing to do that, I want to pray for you. I need to know who I'm praying for. I want you to raise your hand up in the air if you're willing at this point to give your life to Christ, maybe for the first time sincerely. God bless you, and to you to my left. Thank you for that. Raise it up high enough so I can see it, and I'll acknowledge you.

God bless you to my right. Who else? Who else? Raise your hand up. Raise it up high enough so I can acknowledge you. If you're in the balcony, raise your hand up. Place it up. And you're saying, I need God. God bless you right up here in the front, on the side, on my left side, right up here in the front.

If you're in the family room, put that hand up. God bless you. Right over here, right over there, I see your hand. Thank you. Thanks. And right there, in the middle, yes ma'am. If you're outside, there's a pastor outside. Raise your hand up out there. He'll acknowledge you. We have a team in the hub if you're in the overflow, raise your hand up as well.

Well, Father I am praying for not these hands but these humans, these people. Each life so precious, so unique, but they have one thing in common. You love them. And Father, you sent Jesus, the exalted Lord to die for them, to bring them into your kingdom forever. As you reveal yourself to them, Lord, I pray in this surrender they would find peace, in this surrender of their lives they would find a level of joy that is deep in their core that is transforming to them. I pray, Lord, that they will leave today knowing as they receive Christ and invite him into their hearts, they would know they're forgiven. In Jesus' name, amen.

Let's all stand. We're going to close with a final song. And as we do, I'm going to ask those of you who raise your hands to do something else. And that is get up from where you are now standing and find the nearest aisle and walk right up here to the front, where I'm going to lead you in a prayer to receive Christ. We're going to get this transaction done right now. And we don't do this to embarrass you. We do this to celebrate with you and to come alongside of you. So if you raise your hand, you're in good company here. You're with God's people.

You come up and I'll lead you in a prayer receiving Christ into your heart.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Come stand right up in the front. If you're in the balcony, come down the steps. If you're in the family room, come through the door on the right side. If you're outside, he'll bring you inside. If you're next door, they'll bring you over here.

If you're in the front, there are only 3, 4, or 5 steps for you to take. If you're in the middle, in the middle of an

aisle, just say, excuse me. This is our favorite time right now, right now. God bless, you guys.

Lay down your heart and come as you are. Come as you are.

Glad you came, welcome. Welcome. Welcome. Please come all the way up, all the way up, awesome.

So lay down your hurt. Lay down your heart. And come as you are.

Yeah, it's party time right now. This is celebrate time. God bless you. Thank you. Come right on up. Awesome. It's great to see you.

Come as you are.

Anybody else? Maybe you didn't raise your hand. That's OK. Some of you are looking at this and you're out there and you know you need to be up here. You know deep inside that life hasn't produced what you hoped it would by now. And it's left you empty. It's left a lot of pain in your wake. And God is saying, I can forgive your past. I can give you a do-over. I'd love to do that. But I won't do it without your will. He is working in you, and he has brought you here today to hear this message. And he wants you to surrender your life to him. He's knocking on the door. He's knocking.

Open the door. Open the door. And we'll give you another few moments, and you make your way up here. Find God's love and God's forgiveness. Anybody else?

Come as you are.

[APPLAUSE]

You're not too far. Lay down your hurt. Lay down your heart. Come as you are.

[APPLAUSE]

Just in case there's a few people going, I'm smarter than that. Yeah, you're sort of like the guy in the story, the smartest man in the world just jumped out of the airplane with my backpack. And are you willing to jump into eternity without the right parachute, just with your little backpack? Not a good plan.

Awesome, you guys, awesome. Way to go. Good thinking. Those of you who have come forward, do you mind scooting over here a little bit? Let's come, and all get together. Come on this way. It's all right. We're family, or we're about to be. So I'm going to pray out loud. I'm going to ask you to say these words out loud after me, asking Jesus to come in your heart and take over, OK? So let's pray.

Say Lord, I give you my life.

Lord, I give you my life.

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I am a sinner.

Please forgive me.

Please forgive me.

I believe in Jesus--

I believe in Jesus--

--that he died on a cross--

--that he died on a cross--

--that he shed his blood for me--

--that he shed his blood for me--

--and that he rose again from the grave.

--and that he rose again from the grave.

I believe he's alive right now--

I believe he's alive right now--

--as Lord of all.

--as Lord of all.

I turn from my sin.

I turn from my sin.

I turn to Jesus cross as my savior.

I turn to Jesus as my savior.

I want to live for him as Lord.

I want to live for him as Lord.

Help me, in Jesus' name, amen. And welcome to God's family.

Though the path to humility is a hard one, it will always be rewarded. Did this message encourage you to develop this attitude in your own life? Let us know. Email mystory@calvaryabq.org. And just a reminder, you can give financially to this work at calvaryabq.org/give. Thank you for listening to this message from Skip Heitzig of Calvary Albuquerque.