

1. The Divine King Humbled Himself to the Torturous Death We Deserved (Philippians 2:5-8)
 - a. His willingness to humble Himself by being made human and taking the lowliest position of Servant
 - i. He was willing to touch the leper to bring wholeness, to be counted with sinners, to serve the lowest
 - ii. For Jesus to remake what Adam had lost meant that He had to humble Himself, though He had equality with the Father, and be made a man to give up His rights and His autonomy to serve selflessly the Creation which rebelled against Him (Philippians 2:5-8)
 1. He emptied Himself of His rights, considering others as more important than Himself
 2. The Master became the Servant and "came to serve" (Matt 20:28)
 - b. He was willing to humble Himself even to the point of death
 - i. This willingness was shown most powerfully in His unwillingness to serve Himself
 - c. Jesus was unwilling to serve Himself, protect Himself, comfort Himself, or defend Himself or His honor upon that torture machine of shame "for the joy set before Him" (Hebrews 12:2)
 - i. It's one thing to be willing to enter suffering, but to be unwilling to escape suffering when you have the opportunity is another thing altogether.
 - ii. When we are in the throes of suffering is when our will is the weakest, but we see that in the throes of suffering Jesus was unwilling to get down off of that cross and to avoid the wrath of His Father for the glory of His Father to save you...and to save me.
 - d. He was *able* to save Himself, but was unwilling to save Himself
 - i. From the injustice of man's rage, the barbaric beatings that He endured, the shame of nakedness and powerless defeat before crowds of pitying eyes
 1. The Roman Cross was...*excruciating*...so horrific that a word had to be created to describe it: "out of the cross"
 2. It was humiliating – naked, at eye level, on the public road, full of the shame
 - ii. He had the power, but He was unwilling to avoid the wrath of men and, even more terrifying, the wrath of God
 1. 2 Cor 5:21 – "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."
 - a. God did it! God "delivered Him over for our transgressions"! (Rom 4:25)
 2. Nobody had the authority to take His life, only He had the authority to lay it down...and He laid it down willingly (John 10:17-18) to break the curse of Adam: sin and death
 3. See Jesus...willing to bring the leper all the way in with a touch of grace...unwilling to include Himself but rather to suffer outside the gate, excluded from the kindness of God and the glory of His people in that moment
 - iii. Robert Murray McCheyne quote:

"He was without any comforts of God - no feeling that God loved him - no feeling that God pitied him - no feeling that God supported him. God was his sun before - now that sun became all darkness...He was without God - he was as if he had no God. All that God had been to him before was taken from him now. He was Godless - deprived of his God. He had the feeling of the condemned, when the Judge says, "Depart from me, ye cursed...who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." He felt that God said the same to him.

Ah! This is the hell that Christ suffered. The ocean of Christ's sufferings is unfathomable...He was forsaken in the [place] of sinners. If you close with him, as your surety, you will never be forsaken..."My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" [The answer?] For me - for me."

2. God Super-Exalted Jesus for His Perfect Humility by Raising Him from the Dead (Philippians 2:9-11)
- a. **Isaiah 53-54** – If My Servant submits to the anguish of death He will make many righteous and enlarge His days and His tent
 - b. It was because He was unwilling to save Himself, to protect Himself, making Himself completely vulnerable to the torture of men and the wrath of the holy God that He defeated Adam’s curse.
 - i. His unwillingness to serve Himself reversed the curse of Adam, the defeat of our greatest enemies: sin and death, and the restoration of Creation to the newness of the glory of the Son of God
 - ii. Because He was unwilling to consider Himself as equal with the Father or better than you (!) that He died a death “forsaken by God” and by His atoning blood, as the Lamb of God, paid down the debt of sin for all who would entrust themselves to God through Him (1 Pet 1:20-22).
 - iii. We are “reckoned righteous” because Jesus was handed over for our trespasses and was raised for our righteousness. (Romans 4:25)
 - c. Because He was unwilling to take up His rights, God “super-exalted Him” (Phil 4:9-11)
 - i. The resurrection of Jesus was God’s dual work of crowning the Divine King (authority) and of vindicating His atoning work for our sins (justification)
 - ii. By atoning for your sin in your place Jesus took the sting out of death, for the sting of sin is judgment and in Christ there is no more judgment but “justification” before God
 1. Because He lives, He can save all those who close to Him in faith
 - d. Thus, our confidence is in the Risen King who pays down our debts against God and presents us as blameless and spotless before the throne of Holiness through His own blood and the powerful testimony of His risen life!
 - i. He is highly exalted and given the name above all others!!
 - ii. We serve a King who died for us and was raised to represent us before God in purity and in power, not because we are worthy but because He is gracious
 - iii. Therefore, we approach the throne of grace with confidence in our King who lives to intercede for us for all of eternity
 - e. Our King lives to hold us secure, not because we’re righteous but because He is merciful:
 - i. God did it all by His own grace: We are called to trust Him (Rom 3:23; 5:6-10; 6:23)

Romans 5:6-10 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person - though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die - ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
 - ii. Christianity is the only religion where God justifies sinners according to His own sovereign grace by satisfying His own wrath at His own humiliating expense without any winsomeness of the objects of His love!
 - f. The Divine King JESUS is the POINT of all human history! His resurrected life honors Him and gives Him First Place in EVERYTHING!
 - i. All of this gives us great confidence in the living Savior, not in our moral goodness or purity!
 - ii. He was raised “so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:10-11)

Conclusion:

He was unwilling to escape the torturous wrath of God and man. He submitted to death which you owed and now He lives to hold you secure in the presence of God! He has conquered death because He has conquered sin, the cause of the curse! God raised Him from the grave justly and for our justification. God declared that His payment was sufficient to cover the debts of our trespasses, even flawlessly successful to open the way to God through Him. This great truth and the security for the heart of the believer lies in the fact that Jesus is the God who humbled Himself to death, and lives today to rule and reign over our lives with justice. Not only that He reigns over all, so we need not fear following Him, but also that this powerful risen King is present with His people for our good. The Divine King lives today to represent all those who trust in Him in the presence of the Father. We stand secure because our King stands secure. We are accepted because He is accepted. We are honored because He is honored. We are wrapped up in the identity of the living King and in Him we find all the promises of God find their "YES!"

Remember that the gospel is not saying that if you are good enough, God will accept you. The gospel means "good news", not "good advice on how to be a good person." It is the *announcement* of the good news that in His mercy God has done everything...everything necessary to make a person righteous before Him and to restore all that was broken by the curse. He has dealt with sin and death and judgment by sending His Son who was willing to humble Himself and unwilling to serve Himself. In His humility He has swallowed death and removed its sting of condemnation by His great mercy. Mercy was unwilling to be satisfied until He had swallowed up all misery through the power of His risen life, for He had the power to take up again (John 10:7-18). Turn from trusting and expecting that your performance will make things better. Instead, entrust yourself to your risen representative King, O burdened sinner, for in Him you find life, joy, and peace. Closing with the words of John Calvin:

"Every good thing we could think or desire is to be found in this same Jesus Christ alone. For he was sold, to buy us back; captive, to deliver us; condemned, to absolve us. He was made a curse for our blessing, sin offering for our righteousness; marred that we may be made fair. He died for our life; so that by him fury is made gentle, wrath appeased, darkness turned into light, fear reassured, despisal despised, debt canceled, labor lightened, sadness made merry, misfortune made fortunate, difficulty easy, disorder ordered, division united, ignominy ennobled, rebellion subjected, intimidation intimidated, ambush uncovered, assaults assailed, force forced back, combat combated, war warred against, vengeance avenged, torment tormented, damnation damned, the abyss sunk into the abyss, hell transfixed, death dead, mortality made immortal. In short, mercy has swallowed up all misery, and goodness all misfortune."

-John Calvin, preface for Pierre Robert Olivétan's 1534 French translation of the New Testament

Intro:

The leper questioned the *willingness* of Jesus, not the ability of Jesus, to heal him. Luke has been revealing to us the great authority of the Divine King over all things, nature, spirits, illness, and then His willingness to help was questioned. Sure, He may be able to help, but does He have the heart to help? Is He willing?

Well, Luke showed us how willing Jesus is when He not only healed the leper, but reached out and touched him, risking the contagion to Himself to bring the man all the way into the community. Jesus is willing to include the outcast who believes in Him. The Divine King, though Creator of all that is, humbled Himself willingly to touch the leper. But, as I meditated on these things during this Holy Week, and contemplated the words of God through my brother preacher Ted Hamilton down south, what struck me was Jesus' unwillingness. He was unwilling to serve Himself; unwilling to seek His own comfort; unwilling to rescue Himself from the wrath of God and the shame of the cross that you and I might be made alive in Him. Through His perseverant unwillingness to save Himself He broke Adam's curse and was raised from the dead, proving that His authority was over more than mere nature, but over death and the curse of sin itself. Jesus lives today having broken Adam's curse, defeated sin and death, representing those who trust in Him to the Father because He was unwilling to be safe, protect Himself, seek His own comfort, and prove Himself superior. My King has scars and they plead of His great love for me.

Let's look at Jesus' humility to death and God's exaltation of Him to life and honor through His resurrection from Philippians 4:5-11.