Becoming Like Christ: Philippians 2:1-11

Background Information:

American culture has a lot in common with the Greco-Roman culture of Philippi. For example, the people of Philippi would've associated "lowliness" and "servitude" as negative attributes to be avoided.[1] Generally speaking, most Americans don't attach anything honorable to being lowly or subservient. Perhaps, that's the reason why so many women growing up in post-women's liberation America want to remove "obey" from the marriage vows (especially if "obey" is only slated to be said by the bride).

Textual Tidbits:

Word translated as "robbery" in KJV & NKJV for verse 6 is also translated as "a thing to be grasped" in NIV & NAS or "something to cling to" in the NLT. This is because the Greek word for robbery used in the verse is connected with a desire to obtain or maintain something of something at any cost.

Questions:

1) Based on your reading of verses 5-8, what do you think motivates Jesus to be and do what verse 8 describes him as being and doing? Why do you believe this?

2) Read verses 3 & 4. Although verse 3 ends with a command that God's people think more of others than of themselves, verse 4 opens with a command for God's people to "not only look out for themselves." Given your understanding of these verses, do you believe God wants God's people to ignore their own needs and wants in order to meet other people's needs and wants?

[1] " Humility – The Scandalous Virtue," *The Word in Life Study Bible New King James Version.* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993) 2143.

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3) What do you think should be our motivation for humbling ourselves? What evidence from the text supports your believe?

4) According to verses 9-11, God chooses to give Jesus special honor as a result of Jesus humbling himself. What if anything does that suggest that God will do for our fellowship if we choose to humble ourselves?