

## **He Must Increase: John 3:22-36.**

Jesus's followers were increasing while John's were decreasing; John's disciples seem alarmed but John wasn't bothered. John had an opportunity for envious comparison, competition and conflict with Jesus.

John is the "friend of the bridegroom" at the "wedding" between Jesus and Jesus' followers. In the Jewish wedding customs of that day, the **friend of the bridegroom** arranged many of the details of the wedding and brought the bride to the groom. John's illustration explains that he, as the "friend to the bridegroom" he had served his God given privilege of introducing Jesus to His bride, the Jews and he was fulfilled.

Jesus should become greater and more visible, and the servant should become less and less. He was preferred before Him and was before Him. John knew *who Jesus was; from heaven* and thus *above all*. Jesus is different from everyone else because He came from heaven. Not only is Jesus *different*, but **He who comes from heaven is above all** - Jesus is *greater* than everyone else.

**Colossians 1:16** - *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

*Because* Jesus is the man from heaven, there is a heavy price to pay for rejecting Him. If you reject the Son, then you receive the wrath.

John is humble and submissive; to be humble is to **know God, know yourself and be who you are**. To submit is to **willingly allow someone else to lead you, an equal or a superior (position)**. John is literally saying, He is the Leader and I follow Him, my ministry of introducing Jesus to the world is done, am happy.

God instituted order from creation for our own good; that children submit to their parents, wives to their husbands, all of us to each other, to established authorities, to God and amazingly, Jesus to the Father. This world became upside down when sin came in; children became disobedient to their parents, wives disrespected their husbands, we all didn't want to respect each other and established authority, only God was perfect and that's why Jesus came down to put the world right-side up.

**Proverbs 22:4** - *By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honour and life.* **Matthew 11:11** - *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

**Philippians 2:5-8** - *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

It's hard to be submissive and humble because we are disobedient and proud in Adam; we're by sinful nature stubborn, envious, jealous, ambitious and malicious.

*“Now we remain under a curse because we inherited the nature of Adam. We are all born with a desire to resist authority and to assume that submission is our worst enemy.” K.P Yohannan.*

Interestingly, in our sinful nature we teach and lawfully enforce submission and humility in every institution, e.g in family, in schools, companies and security forces.

And we have to continuously choose the way of the Cross so that the Spirit can transform us to Christlikeness. When we struggle to yield to those in authority whether our equals or superiors we are really fighting with God. To be humble and submissive is to be godly and Christ-like.

**Ephesians 5:21** - *submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

**Galatians 2:20** - *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

**James 4:7** - *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

*Be humble or you'll stumble. D.L. Moody.*

John 3 is a "MUST" chapter; *“...you must be born again (**John 3:7**).” “...so must the Son of Man be lifted up (**John 3:14**). “He must increase (**John 3:30**).”*