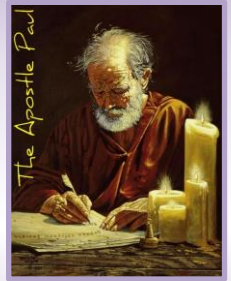


PHILIPPIANS

Joy In Christ



Lesson 06: Humiliation and Exaltation ... [PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11]

PREVIEW

Paul sets forth some of the strongest arguments for the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He argues that Christ shares the same characteristics of God and that He is equal with the Father. Because of Jesus Christ's relationship with the Father, the Father highly exalted Him and gave Him the highest name, which "is above every Name." As all confess the Lordship of Jesus, God the Father receives the glory!

The perfect example of servanthood is Jesus Christ. In Him can be seen the manifestation of unity, humility, and concern for others. Paul has here contributed one of the greatest Christological passages in the entire Bible (John 1:1-18; Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:1-3).

KENOSIS: (2:5-8)

THE ILLUSTRATION OF CHRIST (5)

The command literally reads, "*Think this in you*" which indicates a humble, selfless concern must be a daily practice and that it must originate within a submissive mind and will that are determined to obey God. It is not something God develops within the lives of believers without their knowledge or permission.

The pronoun "THIS" points to the attitude that Christ possessed when He became incarnate in order to die on the cross.

Jesus Christ is often seen in the Scriptures as the supreme example of suffering in the will of God (1 Peter 2:21), of living in holiness (1 John 2:6), of leadership (1 Corinthians 11:1), and of humble servanthood (John 13:15). Theory must be put into practice, and Christ provides the best pattern in that pursuit.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST (6-8)

The world views humiliation as forced embarrassment, and reduction of self-respect. Christ, however, elevated the concept to a positive holy virtue that should be cultivated in the lives of all believers. He completely

manifested it through His incarnation, earthly ministry, and subsequent death on the cross.

CHRIST'S DEITY (6)

A sovereign God cannot be humbled, because there is no one or nothing outside Himself that could force Him into that situation. He could, however, humble Himself as a free choice of his will, and He did just that. In the divine program of redemption, God the Son humbled Himself before humankind.

The phrase 'IN THE FORM OF GOD' refers to the basic essence of the diving being. It denotes the inner nature, not the external appearance. All that God is, Jesus Christ was, is, and ever shall be. What can be said about the Father and the Holy Spirit can also be said of the Son. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, yet there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). God is a Trinitarian oneness. Christians do not worship three Gods, nor are the three persons simply three parts of the one God. There are three distinct persons within the divine being yet an intrapersonal oneness.

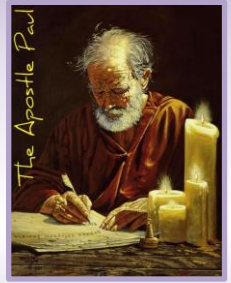
Christ was not the most God-conscious man who ever lived. He was not simply "like" God. Rather, He was "EQUAL WITH GOD." His equality to God extended to all of the essential attributes. The Son is just as holy, omnipotent, omniscient, and sovereign as the Father. The Son and the Father share the same divine nature within an eternal relationship (John 10:30). The Jewish critics understood Christ's claims of equality with the Father, but they rejected them, accusing Jesus of blasphemy (John 5:18; 10:33). The phrase "TO BE" shows that Christ always has been equal to God. If Paul wanted to say that Christ desired to become equal to God, he would have used a different verb form.

CHRIST EMPTIED HIMSELF - KENOSIS (7)

The translation of the two Greek words here literally means "HIMSELF HE EMPTIED" This points to the historical event of the conception when God the Son entered the

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body of the virgin Mary, who was overshadowed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26-38).

Of what did Christ empty Himself? God the Son surrendered the independent exercise of His divine attributes. In the incarnation, He yielded His will to that of the Father. He was God manifest in the flesh. He possessed the attributes, but He used them only under the control of the Holy Spirit and within the will of the Father.

HIS CRUCIFIXION (8)

He was “found in appearance as a man” which deals with external appearance. Christ’s enemies saw Him as a blaspheming man. If they had known who He really was they would not have crucified Him (1 Corinthians 2:8). His half-brothers hurled sarcasms at Him (John 7:3-5). His hometown neighbors gave Him no honor (Mark 6:1-6). Even the leading apostle, Peter, wrongly rebuked Him (Matthew 16:22).

Christ was not humbled by other; rather He “humbled Himself”, voluntarily submitting of His will to the directive will of the Father. Jesus’ humble submission can be seen in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39) and in His arrest, trials and mockeries. Even Pilate marveled at Christ’s quiet acceptance of His predicament (Matthew 27:14). He was the sacrificial Lamb of God, the fulfillment of messianic prophecy (Isaiah 53:7). Christ thus possessed a lowliness of mind; a quality Paul wanted all believers to have (2:3).

HIGHLY EXALTED: (2:9-11)

Christ’s exaltation came as a result of His total submission to the Father’s will. The verb “EXALTED”, used only once here in the New Testament, and only of Christ, means to lift above or to lift beyond. This act of God fulfilled the prophecy that spoke of the exaltation of the suffering servant (Isaiah 52:13), which involved both the resurrection of Christ from the realms of death and His ascension into the very presence of the Father

within the third heaven. Today He is seated at the Father’s right hand (Hebrews 1:3).

Christ’s exaltation involves supremacy over the natural creation because He is its divine Creator (John 1:3). It also involves headship over the church because He is the divine-human redeemer (Colossians 1:15-19). His exaltation made possible the sending forth of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), intercession for believers (Romans 8:34), the conferral of spiritual gifts (Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:7-11), and representation before God (Hebrews 4:14-16).

As part of Christ’s exaltation, the Father gave Him “THE NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME.” The concept of name points to the total person. It refers to the office, rank, and dignity attached to the person because of his or her position. The names of God, for example, reveal His essence and attributes (Genesis 17:1; Exodus 3:14). Since Christ’s given name is above every name, it denotes exalted supremacy over all creation.

The bowing of the knee implies a sincere act of reverence, respect, and submission.

Both the content and the goal of the confession are set forth. First, the content is the name. It can be translated as “JESUS CHRIST IS LORD” or “LORD JESUS CHRIST”. In either case, every tongue will confess the deity, the humanity, and the redemptive office of the Savior. For some (*holy angels and saved men*), this confession represents their worship and praise, whereas for others (*fallen angels and unsaved men*), it designates their total submission to His absolute sovereignty.

Second, the goal of the confession is the glory of God the Father. The time of the confession is not stated. It could occur at the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ or at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment when the old system passes away to make room for the new (Revelation 20:10-21:2).