

August 10, 2014

Humility: The Path to Exaltation

Philippians 2:9-11

All Stand and Read Scripture

Philippians 2:9-11

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

Paul has been telling the Church of Philippi and us how we can have UNITY. He tells us how we can achieve unity in verses 3 & 4.

Philippians 2:3-4

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

³ Do nothing ^afrom ^bselfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

How do we get there?

- By not practicing selfishness.
- By not practicing empty conceit.
- By practicing humility of mind.
- By regarding one another as more important than himself.
- By not looking out for our own personal interests alone.

All of these are great ideals on how to live for Christ, but it goes against everything within us. How hard it REALLY is to **regard one another as more important than ourselves**.

Our society says that we are to have self esteem and look after ourselves. "After all, if you do not look after yourself, who will?"

The scriptures do not agree with this approach to life. Once we became Christians, we became a part of the Kingdom of God. We are asked to seek

wisdom through God's Word and learn the Heavenly Father's way to live. He reveals in the Bible how we must live our lives in order to please Him and build up eternal treasures. That is why it is so great to learn God's Word! It gives us whole new perspective on what our life is all about and how we are to live it. It gives us insights that can never be learned from worldly knowledge and wisdom.

It is completely against our worldly nature to **regard one another as more important than ourselves**. This is something that **I do not naturally do**. It is something that **you do not naturally do**. It is something that **no one without the grace of God** naturally does! It is so difficult that, I feel it is safe to say, that no human, has ever **fully** accomplished this attitude toward others.

It requires complete and unwavering **selflessness** and **humility**. The only perfect example of this type of servitude is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is the one that Paul now focuses on...the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ, and Christ alone, gives us the **pattern of true Biblical humility**.

He sums it up in verse 5, **Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus**. Paul says you will NEVER start **regarding one another as more important than ourselves** until we **have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus**.

In last week's message, Paul gave us three things that Christ did that could serve as an example of what true servitude is all about.

V6: In His preincarnate state (before He became man) He was Willing to **Let Go**

although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Jesus did not hang on to heaven. When the Father told Him it was time to go to earth to bring salvation to man, He went without hesitation. Jesus left it all. It was something he could have clung to, but in humility, he chose not to. Christ was willing to simply "**LET GO**" and come into this world!

V7: In His incarnate state (when he became man) He was Willing to **Step Down**

but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

He was willing to give up Heaven to come to earth and become man. He poured himself out to be a bond-servant for man.

V8: He was Willing to **Submit**

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

God's command for all of us is HUMILITY. We all need to be more HUMBLE.

I need to start thinking more about you and you need to start thinking more about me.

We all need to start thinking more about others and esteeming ourselves less. And that is HARD! That is very HARD, because it goes against the very fiber of everything that is within us!

Here is the typical response to this command for humility:

“You say that I’m supposed to go through life never getting what I want and never insisting on what I think is best. I am supposed to go through life and let other people have what they want. And that is what you are expecting of me?”

So you ask:

What would happen if I did that? Good question.

I have the Biblical answer: **God will exalt you.**

Here are some examples;

James 4:10

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¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

It is promised. God says if you will humble yourself, then God will exalt you.

1 Peter 5:6

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you

Peter knew the same thing that James did. We humble ourselves, God exalts us.

Jesus Himself tells us in

Matthew 23:12

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹² Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

The scripture is very clear that the path of exaltation is humility.

Paul gives us the prime example of this in Jesus. Jesus humbled Himself.

V6: He was Willing to **Let Go**. That was His preincarnation.
V7: He was Willing to **Step Down**. That was His incarnation.
V8: He was Willing to **Submit**. That was His humiliation.

And what was God's response?

Philippians 2:9-11

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

What was the result of Jesus' incredible humiliation?

I would like to point out two things:

BODY:

I. Divine Exaltation

Jesus' humiliation was answered by Divine exaltation. Look again at verse 9: **For this reason also, God highly exalted Him.**

Is this the same exaltation that we read in James and I Peter that God exalts the humble?

Yes and No.

It is the same principle, but a different word. This is a word that is only used once in the New Testament. God tells us if we humble ourselves, He will exalt us.

Christ had a greater humiliation than any of us could ever do. So, what Paul does here, is uses a super word.

- God has MEGA exalted Him.
- God has SUPER exalted Him.
- God HIGHLY exalted Him.

God exalted Christ.

The reason God highly exalted the Lord Jesus Christ was to show us that HUMILIATION is the path to EXALTATION. That is what God does.

So, how did God exalt Christ?

Well, no doubt it included

- Raising Christ from the dead; that took place.
- It would have included Christ's ascension into Heaven after the resurrection; that took place.
- It would have included the coronation of Christ that everyone worshipped Him.
- Specifically, verse 9 tells us that Christ was exalted by **bestowing on Him the name which is above every name.**

God gave Jesus the name that is above every name.

What is that name?

Your first answer might be Jesus. But Jesus does not make sense, since He had that name before He was crucified. I believe the answer is hinted at in verse 11: **that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.**

This is the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament "Yahweh" or "Jehovah". Jesus Christ is Lord. That's THE name. Because of Christ's humility, God the Father, exalted His name to Lord. The one who was born in a manger, was mocked, and hung on a cross is none other than Jehovah God Himself.

Paul is actually quoting from Isaiah 45 here:

Isaiah 45:21-23

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***21 "Declare and set forth *your case*;
Indeed, let them consult together.
Who has announced this from of old?
Who has long since declared it?
Is it not I, the LORD?***

(Notice the word LORD is in all caps here. That is Yahweh. He is Jehovah God.)

***And there is no other God besides Me,
A righteous God and a Savior;
There is none except Me.***

***22 "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth;
For I am God, and there is no other.***

***23 "I have sworn by Myself,
The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness
And will not turn back,
That to Me (Jehovah God) every knee will bow, every tongue will swear
*allegiance.****

Who does Paul apply that scripture to? To the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why? Because He is here being declared Lord. Christ Himself is being declared equal to the Father.

This is the exaltation of Christ.

Paul is using this scripture to make a point that humiliation leads to exaltation.

Did the Philippians struggle with Christology? NO!

Did the Philippians struggle with getting along with each other? YES!

Why did Paul bring up the exaltation of the humiliated Christ to the Philippians?

It was because they were proud people.

The cure to pride is focusing on the person of Christ.

ILLUSTRATION:

The world does not think this way. In order to climb the corporate ladder, you must look after yourself. Make sure the boss knows when you work overtime. Make sure you receive the credit for accomplishments you have achieved. Toot your own horn.

Does this work? Maybe. If you want to be exalted in this world, you may have to toot your own horn.

But, one thing I know is that that is **not** what God says about exaltation that really matters. The kind of exaltation that really matters is the kind of exaltation that follows humility. That is what earned Christ this wonderful declaration that He is declared Lord of all.

Humiliation: the path to exaltation. That is the first thing we see in verse 9; it was a Divine Exaltation.

Secondly, not only was Jesus Christ exalted by God the Father, but there is a second result that we will find in verses 10 and 11.

II. Universal Recognition that Jesus will be Declared Lord by All.

Philippians 2:10-11

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus

This is not when the name of Jesus is spoken. Jesus was a very common name. But at the time when the name of Jesus is declared publicly at His return. That is what Paul is referring to here.

The verse continues:

at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW,

Bowing the knee is an indication of homage. It is an indication of worship. It is an act of reverence.

Who is going to bow the knee? Look at verse 10.

When Jesus is proclaimed Lord at His return:

- Not some.
- Not a few.
- Not most.

EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

- Saints in Heaven
- People remaining on earth at the second coming.
- Those under the earth. Those who have rejected Christ.

Every single person will bow their knee to Jesus Christ.

ILLUSTRATION:

Would each of you put your hands on your knees?

That knee will literally, one day, bow down to Christ. Regardless, if you are a Christian or unsaved, your knee will bow to Christ at His second coming.

We will not only bow, but verse 11 says:

¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

Every person who has ever lived on this earth will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Some will do it willingly with great joy.

It will be like Thomas who said he would not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until he could see the imprint of the nails in His hands and put his hand in His side. And what was his response when Christ showed him His hands and His side?

John 20:28b

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁸ “My Lord and my God!”

The unsaved will encounter an irresistible final acknowledgement of the Lordship of the One that they never trusted.

There are **not** many things that can be said on earth with 100% certainty. We cannot say for certain that we will die. Christ may come again before we pass away. But, HERE is one thing that we can say with a 100% guarantee!

Every single person who has ever lived on this earth will bow their knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

You will either do it willingly and joyfully or you will acknowledge Him on your way to your own destruction.

Why will everyone bow before Him and confess that He is Lord?

It is because **He is that highly exalted** and it is because of **how low He humbled Himself**. **Humiliation always leads to exaltation.**

You might ask, “Won’t God be jealous that we are focusing so much attention and worship to Jesus?” NO! Let’s read the last part of verse 11:
to the glory of God the Father.

This is all to the glory of God the Father.

John 5:23b

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

23 He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

We honor the Father by honoring the Son.

CONCLUSION:

Paul wrote this text to exalt Jesus Christ, His person, and His works because

V6: He was Willing to **Let Go.**

V7: He was Willing to **Step Down.**

V8: He was Willing to **Submit.**

But it is more than that!

He is using this as an object lesson on how we should be regarding each other as being more important than yourself.

We can practice humility without fear that it will become a detriment to our lives because of the promise in scripture that God exalts those who humble themselves.

If you have not accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, this is your opportunity to come forward and let Him know that you are ready to become a part of His family.

We are also here with open arms, if you would like to identify yourself as part of this family of God in the Greenwood Christian church.

He is Lord, He is Lord.

He has risen from the dead and He is Lord.

Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,

That Jesus Christ is Lord.