

Philippians 2:5–11

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[0 : 0 0] Again, today's scripture reading is Philippians 2, verses 5 through 11. Please stand for the reading of God's word. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Amen. Amen.

Can you all hear me? Yes. That's good. I was going to ask Laura to come back up there and keep praying. I saw the sun hide while she was praying. It's nothing but shade out here.

My name is Milton Taylor. I serve here as co-director of youth ministry alongside the Golden Child, Jeremy, who pulled me to the side and said, don't embarrass me today.

[1 : 3 0] So I'll try not to, brother. Let me say thank you to everyone who have prayed for my family in this time and sent texts, calls, you, Dave, for coming and being there at the funeral and actually saying a word of encouragement.

I said thank you. This has been a rough week, a long week, and the Lord has been my strength, and he's been my strength through the medium of you all. So I truly appreciate that.

You all probably got your Chicago, Christ Chicago Connection email and read it like a normal day and clicked on the order of service. And you saw call to worship, Dave Helm, and you're like, that's normal.

You continue to go down and you see sermon, Milton Taylor. You're like, wait, what? Or did I just do that? I was the only one? No, so the Lord has given me a word for us all.

Let me pray for our time together, and then we'll get right into it. Lord, we thank you for this day that we have never seen and will never see again, but we will give an account for every word and every deed that's done in this body.

[2 : 4 3] Lord, I pray for the hearts of your people, that the ground of their heart is tilled, that you may penetrate it with your word. I pray for every mind that is free and just without thought or hindrance to hear from you today.

Lord, I pray that you use me, that we are challenged, that we are encouraged, and ultimately that you are glorified. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Amen. Have you ever noticed the first thing people do when they see a newborn baby is try to find out who does the baby resemble?

One would sing, he looks like he has his mother nose and mouth. Another would sing, he has his father chin and forehead. Some would sing together, look at those hands.

They look just like granddaddy Taylors, don't they? It's even been said that couples married for a long time begin to resemble each other. That people who live with each other for a long time begin to unconsciously mimic each other's facial expressions.

[3 : 54] That this mimicry becomes a facial bodybuilding literally shaping the way we look. Who do you resemble? I don't mean do you look like your father or do you look like your mother, your grandfather, your grandmother.

I mean spiritually. Who do you resemble? In Romans 8, 29, it reads, For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

God's plan has always been to make you like Jesus. His plan from the very beginning has always been to make human beings like himself.

Remember a couple weeks ago, there was this expectation of their conduct. Their conduct was to resemble their citizenship. And last week we moved to expect or from expectation to exaltation, this call to action.

And today, our text before us, it progresses. Here we will see Christ as our example. He is who we ought to resemble. That's what I want to argue from this text.

[5 : 09] That what we, we, Christ is whom we ought to resemble. Christ is who we should mirror, pattern ourselves after. And I'm going to show this to you by parting this text in two points.

Point one, adopting the mind of Christ through humility. Adopting the mind of Christ through humility. We'll see this in verses five through eight.

And if it's all right with you, I'm going to hold on to point two until we get there. That's cool. So looking at our first point, adopting the mind of Christ through humility. And here's three ways in which we ought to do so.

Number one, through submission. Number two, through serving. And number three, through sacrifice. And the key to all three of these things is humility.

That's what Paul is seeking to give us here. An illustration of humility through the life of Jesus. The premier example of humility. And we see it here in verse five.

[6 : 12] Paul says, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus. In other words, adopt the same attitude of that of Christ.

What attitude? The attitude that he's about to show us in the next few verses. The example that he's about to illustrate from the life of Christ. He's going to go.

He's going to reach into eternity past and go into eternity future. But it's to say to us that the ultimate example of humility in the universe is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Let me give you a little context. Paul is writing to the Philippian church for a few reasons. One of those reasons is he's encouraging them to humble themselves. To maintain the unity of faith.

He hits here that it's something going on in the congregation of the Philippians. And what's going on is that there's some pride. This pride is leading to disunity.

[7 : 15] And the disunity was having a negative impact on the gospel witness. And so Paul said, look, I got to do something about this. And the way he chooses to do so is through the illustration of the greatest example of humility.

The only true example that gives us spiritual power from the inside out to exercise humility ourselves. Because Jesus himself actually lives in us.

So as we seek to resemble Christ, let's look at the three ways in humility. As far as humility that should manifest itself in our life. The first is submission.

The manifestation of humility will come in and through submission. Look at the text. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ.

Who he's referring back to Christ. Though he was in the form of God. What is Paul doing here? Paul is telling us that Jesus Christ existed in the form of God.

[8 : 20] How extraordinary that statement is. Don't let that rest on your hearts lightly. Another version says that he's existing in the form of God.

Which is present tense. Meaning he has always existed in the form of God. Paul. This is Paul saying that Jesus Christ is in fact God.

He shares the very nature of God. The Greek word here for form is *morphe*. Meaning that Jesus Christ, the pre-existing one, before he took on flesh, existed in the form of God.

He was all God inwardly and outwardly. Inwardly or outwardly reflecting, inwardly reflecting in his nature.

Outwardly in the sense of his outward reflect of glory. Jesus Christ is God. But that's not Paul's point here. Let's look at the text.

[9 : 22] It says, who though was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grabbed. He was equal with God.

And yet he did not use that equality with God to his own advantage. He didn't hold on to it. God the Father was calling God the Son to do something.

And he submitted himself to it. When in fact he was equal to the Father. He's the Son of God and he's not taking hold of that.

He was willing to let it go when he submitted himself to the Father. Question. Are we willing to take, to not take hold of the authority we have in our own life when the Father is requesting something of us?

I won't sit here and say a bunch of things that the Lord may be requesting from you because you know what he's requesting. I know what he is requesting from me.

[10 : 23] But the question is, are we submitting to that request from the Father? The Son, equal to the Father, submitted himself to the Father to do his will.

And that's the first aspect of humility that Paul wants us to see here. That we are to resemble Christ in our submission to the Father. Let's look at verse 7.

But emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man. What does that even mean?

He emptied himself. Did he empty himself of his deity? No. We know that's foolishness, heresy even.

Because he existed in the present tense in the form of God. So he can never stop being God. It is a profound thought, though. I don't know what it means that he emptied himself.

[11 : 32] But I do know what the text says. It follows with by taking the form of a servant. So maybe Paul is saying that he emptied himself by becoming something that he was not.

He emptied himself by taking on humility. He stepped out of heaven's glory and that in itself was emptying.

He voluntarily took on humanity. But not just any type of humanity. The text says that he took on the *morphe* of a servant.

The form of a servant. And that is our next point. From submission to service. The humility that is to be manifested in our life is not only by submissiveness, but it must also be through service.

Jesus took on the form of a servant. Let me say it like this. Jesus became a slave. As we're thinking about resembling Christ in our servanthood, you recall Mark's gospel.

- [12 : 44] Chapter 10, Jesus is headed to Jerusalem for the last time. And as he approaches, as he's approaching Jerusalem, a conversation begins to take place between his disciples. And they're arguing about who will be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus is less than two days away from Calvary and John and James is asking him to do something for them. Actually, they should be asking, what can we do for you? But Jesus goes on to give them instruction on being a servant. Mark 10, starting at verse 42, it reads, Jesus turns reputation on his head by saying, you must see yourself as a slave. And in serving, you will be great. And then he gives himself as the ultimate example in verse 45. He says, for even the son of man come not to be served, but to serve. And he gave his life as a ransom for all.
- [14 : 13] That's who he is. That's who he became. He never stopped ceasing to be who he was, but he became something that he was not. A man. A slave. But he became something. Let me say this. Church. We're called to serve. Obviously, we're called to serve God. But we're also called to serve the body of Christ. And that's going to look different for us all. But never think of yourself too highly that you don't see yourself as a slave. And here's the key. Ask yourself this question. What rights do a slave have? None. A slave belongs to someone else. A slave is doing the will of someone else.
- [15 : 15] A slave seeks to serve. This is the second aspect of humility that Paul wants us to see. That we also resemble Christ in our service to others. The last way in which we could resemble Christ or should resemble Christ in our humility is in and through sacrifice. Let's look at verse 8. Let me wipe this sweat. Verse 8 reads, Donald Barnhouse, pastor of 10th Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. He wrote these words. He said, love that reaches up is adoration. Love that reaches out is affection. But love that stoops is grace. In order to be humble, you have to start high. This is the incarnation of Christ. Note that the incarnation was not part of his humiliation.
- [16 : 26] Because the incarnation endures even to the exaltation. But it's the incarnation that made it possible for his humiliation. You caught that? His incarnation is not a part of his humiliation. But it's his incarnation that makes it possible for him to be humiliated. His humiliation starts with his suffering. His obedience to death. Here, there's this contrast between Jesus and Adam. Adam and Eve is grasping for likeness with God, which led to their disobedience. Jesus has likeness with God. And he's not grasping for it. He's grasping for humility. He's obedient to the point of death. He's grasping for us. He who has the highest position known. He who existed in the form of God.
- [17 : 30] Equal with God. Now because of his humility is at the lowest point possible. And that's death on a cursed cross. Why did he do it? He humbled himself. He sacrificed himself for sinners. For you. For me. So yes, we should resemble Christ in our sacrifice. But no. Our sacrifice does not have the redeeming power of the sacrifice of our Savior. But God will use whatever we find ourselves in sacrifice of for his people.

Whether you're giving up your time, you're giving up your money, whatever you're giving up of, the Lord will use it in the lives of his people. Let's look at verses 9 through 11.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. So that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

[18 : 36] And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. If I tell you to look back on what we just talked about concerning humility, you would probably say, Jesus did this, so I should do this.

Jesus did that, so I should do that. But as our text takes a turn, you would expect to see or to find that there's more ways in which we should resemble Christ.

But here's the surprise of the text. This is not an example of exaltation, but one of allegiance. If verses 5 through 8 was how we ought to resemble Christ in humility, then verses 9 through 11 is how we ought to respond to Christ's exaltation.

And that's our point, too. How we ought to respond to Christ's exalted. Remember, love, Stoops. Love that Stoops is grace.

Jesus did it for you. Now you do it for him. He bit the knee. Now you bow. The text says, therefore, it starts there, right?

[19 : 48] Therefore, that can be paraphrased like this. As a result of Jesus' humility and obedience and paying the sin debt of mankind, God brought him from the lowest of lows to the highest of highs.

Jesus Christ was always the God, the son. He had to pass the test of obedience while living in the body, though. He had to and he did live a sinless life in the midst of every temptation we can ever think of.

And as a result of his fulfilled mission on earth, God, the father, named Jesus, Lord. To his glory.

Every knee shall bow. Every tongue confess. Paul is drawing upon Isaiah 45 and 23. It reads like this.

By myself I have sworn. From my mouth has gone out in righteous a word that shall not return. To me, every knee shall bow. Every tongue shall swear allegiance.

[21 : 01] Now look at verses 10 and 11. So that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

To the glory of God the father. That which was rightly given to God is now rightly given to Jesus.

But what's different from Isaiah 45 is the additions we see here in verses 10 and 11. In Isaiah, it was every knee should bow. Every tongue shall swear.

But here Paul expresses that to Jesus, yes, every knee should bow. But let me tell you where. In heaven and on earth and under the earth.

This is both universal and spatial. The totality of this exaltation is from everywhere. Your citizenship will be based on your response to the Lord Jesus exalted.

[22 : 03] Will you bow? The text tells us that one day, every person who has ever lived will bow. To their knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

For those of us who have surrendered our lives to his lordship. This is our way of life in the here and the now. However, those who die without surrendering to his lordship.

Will bow their knees, but not in heaven. Those who die without surrendering. Moreover, they will bow, but not because they were forced to do so.

Instead, they will finally bow, confessing that Jesus is Lord. The son of God, their redeemer. And they will admit that they rejected his saving grace.

Having traded humiliation. Having traded humiliation. Having traded obedience to God's word. Heaven's glory. For living their life on their own terms.

[23 : 13] They will be eternally separated. From the son. As I close. I want to take this section and make it a did you know.

Did you know. That the Roman citizens bowed. Before the emperor. It was a common gesture of supplication and reverence.

How much more. For he who has been given the name above every name. Did you know that some.

Or most scholars believe that this passage was a hymn. Song. By the early church. That's why some of your Bibles you see it. They have it set out.

As in a poetic fashion. Because it was something that became a creed. That was recited. And then became a hymn. That was sung.

[24 : 10] Christ church. This. Is our creed. This. Is our hymn that we sing. The hymn that we sing is that we will follow.

The ultimate example of humility. And bow. Bow. Because Jesus Christ. Is Lord. Let me pray. Father.

We thank you. For your word. Your word. Have we hidden in our heart. That we may not sin against you. Lord. I pray for those that have not.

Surrendered to you. That their knees won't have to be broken before you. And their confession that you are Lord. But they will confess it in the here and now. And they will worship you as exalted Christ in heaven.

Lord. I thank you. For we who are. Surrendered to you. I pray that we examine our life. And see how we live in a bow posture.

[25 : 15] That our days in and out are in service to you. Submitting to you. Of the people.