

# Worthy Citizens Serving a Worthy King

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, I'm Natalie and this morning we're going to be reading from Philippians chapter 1 verse 27 to chapter 2 verse 11.

! Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving for you.

You are not going side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ, you should not only believe in him, but also suffer for his sake. Engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

[ 1 : 26 ] Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

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 made himself nothing, 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.

Good morning, everyone. Welcome if you're visiting. It's wonderful to have you here. My name is Martin, and it's my privilege to be sharing, speaking from God's word for us this morning.

Microphone is being adjusted. I'm not as tall as Alex. Now, at the Louvre in Paris, the most famous painting is the Mona Lisa.

[ 3 : 14 ] Has anyone been to see it? Yeah? A few have. I haven't. I've never been to Paris. But I'm told, I understand it from looking at photos, that the Mona Lisa, it's displayed in its own climate-controlled case, behind 600 kilograms of bulletproof glass, and it's hung on a spacious dark blue panel, within which, on that panel, if you look at it from a distance, the Mona Lisa itself is, you know, approximately looks like the size of a postage stamp relative to the panel as a whole.

Now, in the room that the Mona Lisa is currently housed in, there are many other paintings hung on other walls, close together, around the gallery.

But the Mona Lisa stands... It's alone, on its own, on this single panel. And, in fact, plans are underway, and a renovation has begun to move the Mona Lisa to a room of its very own, which they hope to do by 2030.

You see, when it comes to a painting of that significance and that level of beauty, such a masterpiece, it's best viewed on its own, uncluttered by any distraction or adornment or, you know, other paintings that might attract your eye, but there it is on its own, in this vast blue space around it.

The curators recognise that this great work of art is best viewed just by itself. And the Bible passage before us today feels, to me, a little bit like the biblical equivalent.

[ 5 : 08 ] What we have in Philippians chapter 2, the first half of Philippians chapter 2, is a text of such grandeur and profundity that I am a bit reticent to add any of my own commentary to it.

I wonder whether the best thing I might do would be just to read the passage again and then stand here in silence for 30 minutes as the word of God just hangs in the air.

About 30 years ago, when my dad, who's not a believer, he was remarrying, he invited me to read a Bible passage at his wedding ceremony and there wasn't going to be any sermon or anything like that.

There was just, he invited me to do a Bible reading and this is the passage I chose, Philippians chapter 2, verses 1 to 11, a passage which stood alone. I've been preaching sermons in churches for around about the same period, around about the past 30 years, just about my entire adult life.

I've preached many times, or multiple times, rather from Philippians chapter 1 and Philippians chapter 3. As far as I can remember, and judging from the notes on my computer, I've never actually preached on this passage.

[ 6 : 28 ] As we come to Philippians chapter 2, we really are standing on holy ground. And yet there's also, I could say, I could think of no better way to launch 2026 than with precisely this text.

So why don't we pray again and ask for God's help as we come to meditate on it. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And we thank you for the scriptures which testify to him. We thank you for this passage that we come to consider now at the start of a new year.

I ask please that you would guide me, that the words of my lips would be pleasing to you. And Father, please guide the meditation of all our hearts, that we might honour Christ and emulate him.

And we ask this in his name. Amen. Well, the passage before us, we're actually looking at chapter 1, Philippians chapter 1, verse 27, to chapter 2, verse 11.

[ 7 : 44 ] And in the Greek text, this passage consists of just four sentences, which are the four sections I've divided this talk into.

The first two sections contain exhortations to us. The third and fourth sections are about Jesus, focus our attention on Jesus Christ, who is the basis of the exhortations given in the first two sections.

And also, as we come to that second half of this talk, I would say this suggests the central passage of this entire epistle. So let's start with the first two sections, Paul's exhortations to us.

I've given the first half of this talk the title, Worthy Citizens, because of the first part of verse 27. It would be great if you could have your Bibles open in some form, so you could follow along with me. We'll be looking closely at the text.

Chapter 1, Philippians 1, verse 27, only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Now, grammatically, this is the main clause of that sentence that runs from verse 27 to verse 30.

[ 8 : 56 ] But thematically, I think it hovers over the whole first half of our passage, up to chapter 2, verse 4, at least. The first few verses of chapter 2 are just as much about having a worthy life, a life that's worthy of the gospel of Christ, as the last few verses of chapter 1.

So taken together, these two sections, these two sentences, show us what it looks like to have a worthy life as we face out towards the world and as we face in toward one another in church.

So let's think about that opening exhortation and then we'll think about the two spheres within which we must apply it, within the world and within the church. Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

The first word there, only is there for emphasis. NIV translates that as whatever happens. Paul had just announced his hopes that he would be released from prison.

He's in chains in Rome. He'd announced his hopes that he would be released so that he would be able to come and see the Philippians again. But Paul says, whatever happens, that is whether I come and see you or whether I remain absent, whatever happens with Paul and whatever happens to Paul, Paul says, The key verb there is significant.

[ 10 : 21 ] It can have a general meaning, which is how the ESV translates it. Let your manner of life. That's the verb. That's how it's translated. Let your manner of life. But usually in verses like where Paul is expressing that idea in his epistles, he'll use a different verb, which literally means to walk.

Like walk worthily of the gospel of Christ or something like that. But here only, in all of Paul's epistles, he uses a different verb that can have a very specific meaning and that meaning is to live as citizens.

To live as citizens. It's related to a family of words that includes the word that Paul will go on to use in chapter 3, verse 20 of this epistle, where Paul says, Our citizenship is in heaven.

It's actually the family of Greek words from which we get in English our word politics. So we could translate the first part of verse 27 this way, Only live as citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Live as citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippi, this city, was a wealthy and strategic town in Macedonia. The Emperor Augustus, in the first century BC, after a victory there, he had settled veteran soldiers in Philippi and made it a Roman colony.

[ 11 : 46 ] And as a Roman colony, its members were Roman citizens. So they had all the rights and all the privileges associated with Roman citizenship and along with that, the loyalty that was expected to the Roman emperor.

But the believers in Philippi had a higher citizenship. They had a higher allegiance. They were citizens of heaven. The gospel they had received declared not that Caesar was Lord, but that Jesus is Lord, that Jesus is the world's rightful ruler, that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.

He's the promised king over God's everlasting kingdom. And Paul calls on these believers, no matter what happens, to live according to that citizenship, to live worthily of the gospel of Christ, the declaration that Jesus is king and Lord.

And then Paul expands on what that entails. So first in verses 27 to 30, in terms of how they as the church face outward toward the world. And then, as I said, in chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, as they as church relate with one another together.

And notice for each of these exhortations, notice how emotionally invested Paul is in the Philippians and how they're doing. Verse 27, he says, so that I may hear of you.

- [13:11] He wants to hear about them, that they're doing well. Chapter 2, verse 2, he says, complete my joy. Paul is emotionally invested in how the Philippians are going. He longs to hear that they're doing well in precisely these two areas of life.
- So firstly, let's think about the Philippians, the church facing out. To live as citizens, worthy of the gospel of Christ, as we face outward toward the world, involves three things.
- The three things Paul lists in verse 27 and 28. standing firm in one spirit. It says that I may hear that you are one. Standing firm in one spirit.
- Two, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel. Three, not frightened in anything by your opponents. Standing firm in one spirit means that we are united.
- And what unites us is the gospel of Christ. It means we are clear on the gospel message that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour.
- [14:15] He died for our sins and rose again. We are saved by grace. We are counted righteous by faith in Christ. Jesus is Lord and he will come again to bring justice and life and a new creation.
- To stand firm in one spirit means we are united. United on the central truths of the gospel. Some of you will know I've been working with AFES, the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, the past 19 years.
- And during that whole time, we've had the same national director, a man by the name of Richard Chin. He was national director for 23 years. He's actually just stepped down as national director.
- And there's a new one, Pete Sorensen. But Richard Chin, the whole time I've been working, he's been the national director. And the most important thing Richard Chin did throughout his entire time as national director was to keep preaching the gospel, to keep the AFES centered on Jesus.
- Whenever Richard stood up to speak, whether it was at our annual staff conference with a couple of hundred staff from around the country gathered together, or whether it was at national training event with 2,000 plus students gathered in Canberra, whenever Richard stood up to preach, you knew he was going to preach Jesus Christ.
- [15:34] That was his message. We had a national fellowship with a growing number of staff, with 60 plus staff teams around the country, with more university campuses, complex challenges, diverse personalities, differing views on various things, and yet enabled in God's grace to stand firm in one spirit because we were united around what mattered most, that is the gospel of Christ.
- And that's what we need too, if we're to stand firm in one spirit. In our Sunday services, in small groups, in our kids and youth ministry, and in our own hearts, we need to keep preaching what is central, Jesus Christ.
- But it's not just enough that we stand firm in one spirit, that's the first of three things. Secondly, we also must strive side by side for the faith of the gospel. The gospel is a message.
- It's an announcement. It's good news. And it must be declared. It must be proclaimed. Paul calls us to united, collective action in contending for the gospel of Christ.
- Paul calls us to gospel teamwork. God calls us to gospel teamwork. And not just striving, contending for the gospel, but striving for the faith of the gospel.
- [17:09] Our goal is not just that we proclaim it, but that people believe it, that people come to trust in their saviour. The Philippians as a church were called to this, and we as a church are called to this.

Now, hasn't it been wonderful over the past few years, if you've been part of this church in that time, hasn't it been wonderful to see all the gospel teamwork that has gone into our Christmas carols nights?

To see friends and family members and people from around our community come and hear the good news as we strive together for the faith of the gospel. What a joy that's been.

I've been reflecting recently on how the Lord has blessed us as a church, of how well the Lord has resourced us as a church. I mean, there's the richness of being part of an intergenerational church with all ages present, because that means no matter who walks through these doors, they can look around and think, there's a place for me here.

And beyond that, there are so many gifted people in this church with all kinds of diverse gifts that Christ gives to his body. Just think of all the school teachers we have here who are gifted at teaching children and youth and young people.

- [18:31] Think about the people in this church who are administratively able, who can manage the church affairs and the church finances. There are numerous people able to teach God's word in small groups, preaching to youth.

Dave is going to go on paternity leave sometime in March. I don't start working here till April, formally. And I was chatting with Dave about, what are you going to do for preaching?

in March. And he said, oh, that's fine. We've got plenty of guys who can preach. And that's true. God has blessed this church abundantly. There are people with trade and technical skills of various kinds who can fix the church floor when it caves in.

There are people who excel at serving others, at just looking out for the personal needs of others and meeting those needs. People who pray at home behind closed doors when only God sees.

And stacks of musicians, and all of this God has given for our common good so we can serve one another in love. And he's also given it so that we can strive side by side for the faith of the gospel.

- [19:44] Even think about where God has placed this church geographically. Like, we literally are at a crossroads. We're amidst some of the growth corridors of Newcastle, with new housing developments going into the north, to the west, to the south.

ones that have been built, others that are planned. I mean, God has placed us where we can reach people with the gospel.

We've got Paul with us from Hamilton South, who I reckon once every couple of months, he comes up to me and says, is there anyone who can come and help me evangelise my community? Begging for others to come and strive side by side with him.

And people around us are searching and questioning. More and more people in our society are reeling from the emptiness and moral confusion of this secular age.

They have nothing to grasp a hold of, no firm ground to stand on. They are reaching. People are ready to walk into church looking for something that is true and good and meaningful.

- [20:56] What more could we ask for? As a church, we have everything we need to strive side by side for the faith of the gospel, to bring Christ to the people he came to save.

But if we're serious about striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, we also need to be ready for opposition, which is the third thing Paul says as we face outward toward the world.

Verse 28, not frightened in anything by your opponents. Now, the Philippians were no strangers to suffering. They knew how Paul had suffered for preaching the gospel when he was among them.

When he was first with them, Paul had been arrested, severely beaten with rods and thrown in prison. Now, as he writes this letter to him, he's in chains in Rome. They knew how Paul had suffered.

But Paul says to them, verse 29 to 30, it's also, you Philippians, it's been granted to you that for the sake of Christ, you should not only believe in him, but also should suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

- [ 22:06 ] The Philippians were facing the same threats that Paul had faced. But when we suffer for the sake of Christ and when we endure it without fear, Paul says in verse 22, that in itself is a sign, a clear sign to our opponents of their destruction, but of our salvation, of your salvation, Paul writes.

See, suffering for Christ is a demonstration that this world is not supreme, that this world has a ruler, that there is a judgment to come, that there is a future world to look forward to, there is a life to come, which is why you are able to suffer without fear.

It's why you're able to suffer, being unafraid of your opponents. You can say to them, you have no power to take away from me what matters most. Now, Muhammad says in the Quran that Muslims mustn't form alliances or bonds with unbelievers, except if they're afraid of them, they're allowed to do so.

Muhammad says in the Quran that Muslims mustn't utter blasphemy and deny Islam, except if they're forced to, that's okay, they can externally, you know, outwardly utter blasphemy, but as long as in their hearts, they still believe.

That is, the Quran permits Muslims to deny God out of fear. But Jesus says to us, we have nothing to fear.

- [ 23:44 ] Don't fear those who kill the body and after that have nothing more they can do to you. We have nothing to fear. We're citizens of heaven. Even if there were something to fear for some Christians somewhere in the world, yet in Australia, admit it, our opponents are so small.

They're trivial. Who are we afraid of? What can they do to us? Let's not be frightened of small opponents. Let's stand firm in one spirit, holding to the gospel.

Let's strive side by side for the faith of the gospel and let's not be frightened in anything by whatever opponents may materialise. That's worthy citizenship as we face outward toward the world.

But there's another dimension to our citizenship that's equally important and that is our life together as we face inward toward one another in the church.

Chapter 2, verses 1 to 4. Paul begins by reminding us as he comes to this of what we have in Christ. Chapter 2, verse 1. So if there's any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy.

- [ 25:04 ] Now, it seems to me that that phrase in Christ belongs with all five of the blessings that are listed in verse 1. So if we were to expand the sentence, it would read, so if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort from love in Christ, if there is any participation in the spirit in Christ, if there is any affection in, you get the idea.

Now, of course, Paul points, Paul's point is, in all of these things, that they are ours in Christ. They are found in Christ.

So if you're in Christ, these five blessings of verse 1 are rightfully yours. Are you afraid? Then draw encouragement from the sure knowledge that in Christ, God is for you.

God himself is your defender. Is your soul troubled? Are you downcast? Then find comfort in Christ in the unfailing love of God he has shown you in his son.

Are you lonely or weak? Remember God's promise that you have his spirit dwelling with you. You're never alone. Are you despised, abandoned, neglected?

[ 26 : 26 ] Know that God cares for you. He has set his affection on you. You are in his heart. Are you helpless or ashamed? Find solace and strength in the mercies shown to you in Christ.

To be in Christ is to enjoy all these blessings. The one who enjoys all these blessings in Christ has been filled by God. And when you bring together in a community, in church, people who have been filled by God in Christ, people who have found everything they need in Christ, then something wonderful becomes possible.

With our needs fully met in Christ, we are empowered to live together as Paul describes in verses 2 to 4, that is, in the unity of humility.

In the unity of humility. Verse 2, there's unity. Verse 2, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Unity was highly prized in the ancient world. For Jews, Greeks, and Romans alike, unity was expected between brothers, between siblings.

[ 27 : 47 ] Psalm 133, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity. That's why conflicts and division in church can be so painful and disorienting.

Because this is the very place where we may justly expect, rightly expect, to find peace. The unity Paul describes in verse 2 is not just agreement for agreement's sake.

It's not just, you know, all get along and, you know, agree on whatever it might be. When Paul desires that the Philippians be of the same mind and have the same love and be of one mind, he's not just calling them to think the same as each other.

He's calling them to think in a particular way. The unity has a centre. There's a specific frame of mind, a specific attitude, a specific way of thinking which all alike are to have and that's what he goes on to describe in verses 3 to 4.

Verse 3, do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others.

[ 29 : 03 ] In a word, the centre of our unity is humility. It's not just here that humility safeguards unity, it's that our unity consists in humility.

There are many ways in which we as God's people can and ought to be different from one another and that's fine. We have different gifts, different personalities, different circumstances, we have different personal life stories.

Paul in his epistles even calmly accepts differences of doctrine and practice in matters that are secondary. But humility is a mindset and a quality which all alike are to share.

We are all called to humility. What is humility? Well, as described in verses 3 to 4, humility involves both our attitude and our actions. First in verse 3, the attitude of humility, count others more significant than yourselves.

Now think about that for a moment, count others more significant than yourselves. Isn't that a little extreme? I mean, we're told today in our society that we must love ourselves and stick up for ourselves but even if we reject the egocentrism of our society, isn't verse 3 an overstatement?

[ 30 : 33 ] Because aren't all people equally significant in the sight of God? You know, objectively, before God, aren't we all made in God's image? You know, if I count others as more significant than myself, isn't that objectively false because we're all equally significant?

But think about it a different way. Consider a husband's perspective. Does a loving husband consider his wife to be equally significant?

Of course not. She is more significant. He cares more about her than he cares about himself.

Consider a parent's perspective. Their children are more significant. A loving father or mother cares more about their children than they care about themselves.

Consider even a bodyguard's perspective or a soldier's perspective. Willing to put their lives on the line to protect the lives of others. Their duty requires that they count others as more significant than themselves.

[ 31 : 56 ] See, we can understand in the context of relationships that it can be completely fitting to consider someone else as more significant than yourself.

God is to extend that same attitude to all our fellow believers.

As citizens of Christ's kingdom, each of us must consciously adopt the attitude of humility toward everyone else here and all our brothers and sisters in Christ, you matter more to me than I matter to myself.

You matter more to me. You matter more than me. of course, in the context of church, it ought to be completely safe to adopt this attitude toward one another because, verse 1, all our needs are fully met in Christ and because, verse 2, everyone around us is adopting this same attitude too.

The word translated as others in verse 3, count others more significant than yourselves, is the plural form of the word one another. It's the plural form of a word which means one another.

[ 33 : 20 ] It doesn't really translate into English that way, count one another's as more important than yourself, but that's the word. That word one another is a very significant word in biblical ethics, in New Testament ethics, because the biblical vision of the good life is one of mutuality, where we are all serving each other, it's life together.

Church is not a place where some are humble and others superior, church is to be a community where all adopt the attitude of humility, where all of us reject selfish ambition and conceit and count one another as more significant than ourselves.

But humility doesn't stop with how we think, it extends to our actions. We have the action of humility in verse 4, let each of you look to the interests of others.

Let each of you look to the interests of others. That means actively pursuing what is good for other people, actively pursuing their interests. The action of humility is difficult even for those who adopt the attitude of humility and I think the action of humility is difficult for two reasons.

One is just a heart reason, this is probably the biggest reason, our own sinful desires keep pulling us back towards selfishness. But there's a practical reason why the action of humility is difficult as well.

[ 34 : 49 ] The practical reason, it's just much easier for me to be aware of my own interests than it is for me to be aware of the interests of others. See, I don't need to look very far to know what I want.

I'm constantly aware of what I want, but it takes effort for me or for any of us, to understand and consider the interests of others. I need to know something about them.

I need to know their situation, their needs, their preferences. I need to know them well enough so that I know what they need, what's going to be good for them. That's what the gospel of Christ calls us to.

A mutual life where each of us actively pursues what is good for our brothers and sisters, which means we need to make an effort at least to know one another well enough that we can actively pursue what is good for our brothers and sisters.

Now let me just say, if on an honest self-assessment you recognise that you are someone who is consumed with your own interests, please let this part of God's word draw you back to a better preoccupation.

- [ 36:08 ] Your worries and troubles may be very great. Trust God that he will help you in them. Accept the support and love of your brothers and sisters here as you meet those worries and troubles.

But also ask God's help to listen to those around you, to notice their needs, to learn the things that will encourage them and bring them joy. ask God to give you the ability to serve others in love.

Now this is what we're called to as citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ, facing out with one mind to strive together for the faith of the gospel, facing in with one mind humbly to put each other before ourselves.

And the reason this is what we're called to is because this is the perfect model and example we have in our King, the Lord Jesus. Verse 5, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

When Paul exhorts us to be of the same mind and to have the one mind, the mind we are to have is actually the mind of Christ. He is the perfect example of humility.

- [ 37:30 ] Both the attitude of humility, verse 6, and the action of humility, verse 7 to 8. Listen to the Jesus, the example of Jesus. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, verse 6, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, 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.

In verses 6 to 8, there's a sequence of three verbs with Jesus himself as the subject. He did not count. He emptied himself, or he made himself nothing.

He humbled himself. First, Jesus Christ did not count equality with God something to be grasped. The same verbs used there as in verse 3, where in humility we are to count others as more significant than ourselves.

Well, Jesus, who is in the form of God. Now, that's a unique expression Paul uses here, because he is reaching for language that reflects both that Jesus is God, and that he's distinct from God, from God the Father.

In the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.

- [ 39:04 ] Verse 6 expresses the most profound and wonderful truth about God. When a husband considers his wife as more important than himself, when a mother considers her children as more important than herself, when a believer counts their brothers and sisters in Christ as more important than themselves, we are echoing something that is true of God himself.

Something that's true of God himself. God the Son did not count equality with God the Father as a thing to be grasped. God the Son said, he did not grasp after and greedily hold on to the rights and privileges of divinity.

Instead, he made himself nothing. Literally, he emptied himself. He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Notice there that Jesus emptied himself, not by subtraction, but by addition. He emptied himself not by losing something, but by gaining something here, or taking something on.

He emptied himself by taking the form of a servant. Notice the word form again. Jesus became a servant, fully expressing what it means to be a servant. And the first step in this was that he was born in the likeness of men.

- [ 40 : 40 ] He became fully human, like us. Jesus emptied himself, not so much by surrendering divinity, but by taking on humanity.

Notice that the logic of verse six to seven requires Jesus' pre-existence as fully God. Because taking the form of a servant, that is being born as a man, is something that Jesus himself did.

Jesus himself willingly took on. It's not something that happened to Jesus. It's something Jesus chose for himself. Jesus didn't passively receive his humanity.

He actively took it on himself so that he might take the form of a servant. He was born as a baby. His body as a baby, as an infant, was handled by others, clothed, fed, bathed by others.

He grew as a boy. He grew into manhood. He grew and learnt. He ate. He drank. He breathed. He slept. Fully human. Is there any more stunning, unexpected demonstration of the heart of God, of the humility of God, than that God the Son should become a man?

- [ 42 : 04 ] or perhaps just one. Being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The greatest act of humility. The humility of the Son toward God the Father, expressed in obedience, humility of the Son expressed towards us in service.

Both accomplished through his death on the cross. That wonderful, terrible death of deaths. death of God.

When all the righteous wrath of God, that is due to my sins and is due to your sins, when it was absorbed and suffered and satisfied in the body and the soul of our Savior, he emptied himself by taking on humanity, by taking up the cross, by taking away the sins of the world, by taking on himself the punishment that is their due.

Perfect humility, sublime humility, a humility that can never be equaled, but a humility which will eternally be echoed in the lives and the praises of the people Christ has saved.

- [ 43 : 46 ] Jesus, who emptied himself to be the humble servant of God the Father and the humble servant even of us, is the one that God has exalted.

So when you feel how good it is what Jesus has done for us, then you feel how good it is, wonderful beyond our comprehension. You realise how fitting verses 9 to 11 are.

God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that's 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.

Remember in verses 6 to 8, Jesus is both the subject and object of the main verbs. He did not count, he emptied himself, he humbled himself, but in verse 9, God the Father is the subject, God is the subject, Jesus is the object.

Verses 6 to 8 describe what Jesus did to himself, verses 9 to 11, what God has done for Jesus. And what God has done for Jesus is made him supreme over all.

- [ 45 : 05 ] The name above every name, the worthy king of all creation before whom all will one day bow. How good it is that the one who emptied himself is the one whom God has exalted.

How good that is. See, what kind of kingdom is the kingdom of God? It's a kingdom in which the government and the rule and power and honour and glory is bestowed on the one who is the humble servant of all.

The one who gave himself and gave everything he has and everything he is to serve others. And what a very different kind of kingdom it is when the one on the throne is honoured and praised and obeyed and worshipped precisely because he's the servant of all.

Exalted because he emptied himself. the Venezuelan president, Nicolas Maduro, has just been seized by the US army, taken to the states awaiting trial.

It's alleged that he's guilty of crimes against humanity, of arbitrary imprisonment of political opponents, of violence, of torture, of murder. It's alleged that he ran and supported drug cartels, the president of a country.

[ 46 : 25 ] If those things are true, then whatever you might think of America's intervention, it's certainly true that he is a man not fit to rule. But God has given the highest place and the highest name and the rule over all to the humble one.

One who never abuses his position, never seeks his own advantage, one who is never corrupt, the one who emptied himself, has been exalted by God.

The obedience and worship of all people belongs to him. And this is to the glory of God the Father.

It is to the Father's glory that our God is the God who exalts the humble. Now, when we strive side by side for the faith of the gospel, we are striving that people will know and love and trust in and worship the one who emptied himself for them.

And when we count others as more significant than ourselves and when we look to the interests of others, we honour our saviour by emulating him. We bear witness to the beauty of Christ.

[ 47 : 44 ] We demonstrate the quality of his kingdom. will you pray with me that God will do just that amongst us.

Lord God, Heavenly Father, you have exalted your Son as name above all names, as the one before whom all peoples and all nations will bow.

You have exalted your Son as worthy of all praise and all honour. He is worthy of all we are and worthy of all we do, for he is the one who emptied himself, who humbled himself to serve and to save.

we thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for all the blessings we have in him, encouragement and comfort and your spirit and affection and sympathy.

May you be pleased to make us worthy citizens of his kingdom, who gladly and joyfully serve our king. In Jesus' name we pray.

[ 49 : 09 ] Amen.