

Contagious Joy

Part 8 – Do You Really Want to Be Like Jesus?

Philippians 2:5-11

May 17, 2009

When you give your life to Jesus, what is really involved? If we really want to be like Jesus, it involves a transformation that makes him the Lord of your life! Let's take a closer look at what Lordship is all about.

I. The Exhortation (v. 5)

Have this attitude in yourselves like Jesus

- A. Some scholars think it was a hymn sung by the early church. This verse introduces one of the great Christological passages in the New Testament
- B. *Yourselves* refers to the whole church, not just specific individuals.
- C. Jesus is the illustration of that kind of humility. He wanted his readers to remember that the very qualities he had been advocating were observable in the Lord Jesus. What a contrast to the triumphal entry just a few days earlier.
- D. Yet in gentle humility He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel. What a contrast to the wrangling over who would be the "greatest" in the kingdom (Luke 22:24). MacArthur, J. (2001). *Philippians* (120). Chicago: Moody Press.

II. The Emptying: Jesus was a selfless servant (v. 6-8)

- A. *Who, although existed in the form of God* (v. 6a)
 - 1. "Existed" (NASB) or "being" (NIV) is in the present tense in the Greek text and points to the Lord's continuing existence with the full nature of God. His full deity is not

something Jesus Christ gave up or laid aside when He became a man at the Incarnation. He had it from the beginning. Regardless of circumstances remains the same.

2. **Form:** *Morphē* (**form**) refers to the outward manifestation of an inner reality. The idea is that, before the Incarnation, from all eternity past, Jesus preexisted in the divine **form of God**, equal with **God** the Father in every way. By His very nature and innate being, Jesus Christ is, always has been, and will forever be fully divine. MacArthur, J. (2001). *Philippians* (122). Chicago: Moody Press.
3. The Greek word *schēma* is also often translated “form,” but the meaning is quite different from that of *morphē*.
 - *Morphē* is the essential form which never alters;
 - *schēma* is the outward form which changes from time to time and from circumstance to circumstance. For instance, the essential *morphē* of any human being is humanity and this never changes; but his *schēma* is continually changing. A baby, a child, a boy, a youth, a man of middle age, an old man always have the *morphē* of humanity, but the outward *schēma* changes all the time. (Barclay, *Philippians*, p. 35–36)
4. **Christ’s Deity**
 - **Col. 1:15**
 - **John 1:1, 14**
 - **John 17:5, 24**

B. *Did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped*
(v. 6b)

1. 'Equality with God' is not that which he desired which was not his, but precisely that which was *always* his. Fee, *Paul's Letter . . .*, pp. 207-8.

Table Talk:

1. Describe the “kenosis”. What were the steps of emptying that Jesus went through?
2. How is humility demonstrated in your life?
3. What areas of your life have not come under the Lordship of Christ?
4. If we were truly to be like Jesus, what changes would have to occur in your life?

2. Word means to have the exact equivalence. Like an isosceles triangle. *“Christ is the exact likeness of the unseen God. He existed before God made anything at all, and in fact, Christ himself is the Creator who made everything in heaven and earth...” Col. 1:15-16a (LB)*
 - He was fully God; He was and is. He was God without effort. He was not in danger of losing His place in the Godhead.
 - Jesus Christ did not regard His former manner of existence something that He wanted to hold onto!
 - *“...his true nature is characterized not by selfish grabbing, but by an open-handed giving...” Hawthorne, p. 85.*
3. He had all the rights and privileges of God, which He could never lose. Yet He refused to selfishly cling to His favored position as the divine Son of **God** nor view it as a prized possession to be used for Himself.
 - Example: He refused to turn stones into bread in order to feed Himself (Matt. 4:3-4). Yet He graciously multiplied the loaves and fish so the hungry multitudes might be fed (Mark 6:38-44; 8:1-9).

C. *Emptied himself* (v. 7a)....The Kenosis

1. **Emptied** (*kenoō*): to empty completely. It is translated “nullified” in Romans 4:14 and “made void” in 1 Corinthians 1:17. “made himself nothing” (NIV), or “laid aside His privileges”. From this word we get the term “kenosis,” which refers to the doctrine of Christ limiting Himself when He became a man.
 - Jesus Christ **emptied Himself** completely of every vestige of advantage and privilege, refusing to assert any divine right on His own behalf. He who created and owned everything forsook everything. ^(MacArthur)

- Believers are obligated to follow their Lord's example by emptying themselves of everything that would hinder their obedience and service to Him. The humble believer is aware of his rights and privileges as a child of God but refuses to cling to them. He empties himself of all claims to any earthly benefits that those rights and privileges might seem to merit.

2. He laid aside 2 things

- **His glory** John 17:5
- His **independent** use of his relative attributes. (Mt. 4:3 and Mark 13: 32)
 - a) Example: Absolute: Holiness; Relative: Omniscience
- Humanity was added without lessening or diminishing His deity. He retained undiminished deity and gained perfect humanity (John 1:14)
- He never used His deity outside of His father's will or to benefit Himself

3. 4 areas of change

- **Place** of dwelling ...from heaven to earth (John 6:51; 16:28)
- **Possessions** ...from riches to poverty (II Cor. 8:9; Luke 2:7; 9:58)
- **Power**/Glory ...Heavenly glory to obscurity (John 17:5)
- **Position** ...From equality with God in form (morphé) to servanthood/man (Mk. 10:45; John 14:28)

4. **Summary:** All the above changes were temporary except for the last which is permanent. He ascended back into heaven, received back all His riches, is again clothed with the glory of God, is once more on the throne of the

this picture?' There was silence.

Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, 'We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one.' But the auctioneer persisted. 'Will somebody bid for this painting. Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?'

Another voice angrily. 'We didn't come to see this painting... We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!' But still the auctioneer continued. 'The son! The son! Who'll take the son?'

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. 'I'll give \$10 for the painting.' Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

'We have \$10, who will bid \$20?' 'Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters.' '\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?' The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. 'Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!' A man sitting on the second row shouted, 'Now let's get on with the collection!' The auctioneer laid down his gavel. 'I'm sorry, the auction is over.'

'What about the paintings?' 'I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!' God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on the cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is: 'The son, the son, who'll take the son?'

Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son. About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands...

He said, 'Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.' The young man held out this package. 'I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.'

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. 'Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift.'

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. 'We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for

universe. But He retains the human form. Having assumed our human nature and form, He takes it back to heaven, so that as man He sits upon the throne of God (Acts. 7:54-56; Rev. 1:17-18; 5:6; 22:16). The incarnation is permanent.

- He gave up the independent exercise of divine attributes;
- In a word, He restricted the benefits of His attributes as they pertained to His life and voluntarily chose not to use His powers to benefit Himself.

D. *Taking the form of a bondservant* (v. 7b)

1. "**Taking**" (Gr. *labon*) does not imply an exchange, but adding something. The Lord did not lay aside the form of God. He did not cease to be God. He didn't just put on the slave's clothes, but rather became a slave in the fullest sense.
2. A *doulos* (**bond-servant**) owned nothing, not even the clothes on his back. Everything he had, including his life, belonged to his master. Jesus did own His own clothes, but He owned no land or house, no gold or jewels. He owned no business, no boat, and no horse. He had to borrow a donkey when He rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, borrow a room for the Last Supper, and even was buried in a borrowed tomb.
3. Among other things, a **bond-servant** was required to carry other people's burdens. As the supreme **bond-servant**, Jesus carried the burden that no other man could carry, the sin-burden for all who would believe. "*The Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him*" (Isa. 53:6).

E. *Being made in likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man* (v. 7c-8a)

1. "Likeness" (Gr. *homoiomati*) does not mean exactness (Gr. *eikon*). Even though Jesus had a fully human nature, that nature was not sinful.
 - *Schēma* (**appearance**) is the source of the English word "scheme." *schēma* refers to outward shape or form; not to actuality but to **appearance**.
 2. It shows that Jesus Christ was not just willing to change His behavior for others, but He really did so by becoming a man who was a servant.
- F. *He humbled himself* (v. 8b)
1. **Humbled Himself** (*tapeinoō*) which has the idea of lying low. Jesus lowered **Himself** not only relative to God, but also to other men.
 2. The most dramatic and poignant time of Jesus' self-abasement was during crucifixion. He was mocked, falsely accused, spat upon, beaten with fists, scourged, and had part of His beard painfully plucked out. Yet He was never defensive, never bitter, never demanding, never accusing. He refused to assert His rights as God or even as a human being.
- G. *By becoming obedient to the point of death* (v. 8c) *Even death on a cross* (v. 8d)
1. It was a form of execution from which Roman citizens were exempt. Only the worst criminals among the slaves and foreigners underwent crucifixion. Hanging on a tree was a sign to the Jews that the person so disgraced was under the curse of God (Deut. 21:23; cf. Gal. 3:13). *New Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Crucifixion," by D. H. Wheaton, pp. 281-82. There were many ways by which He could have been killed. He could have been beheaded, such as John the Baptist was, or stoned, or hanged.
 2. "The test of the submissive mind is not just how much we are willing to take in terms of suffering, but how much we are willing to give in terms of sacrifice." Wiersbe, 76.

know He's got everything under control. Nothing escapes His care or concern...because He is Lord. I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future!

3. **Commit:** I commit all of my life to Him. He calls the shots because He is God, has come to earth, died for me and rose again. Because He has done those things, He has the right to determine what's right in my life and to direct me. I'm seeking to live according to His plans. Don't use the word Lord lightly. *"If you confess with your mouth, 'JESUS IS LORD', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."* Rom. 10:9
- B. Conclusion: The greatest need in America is to rediscover the phrase used for centuries as the test of a believer: JESUS IS LORD.
1. It may look like the other side is winning right now, but Jesus is Lord.
 2. You may think you cannot cope any more, there is too much pressure, but Jesus is Lord.
 3. You may think your problems are too great and you can't handle them, but Jesus is Lord.
 4. Circumstances may pile up against you and people may thwart you and fight you, but Jesus is Lord.
 5. When you're discouraged – Jesus is Lord.
 6. When you're tired, when you're worried, afraid – Jesus is Lord.
 7. When you don't think you can go on another mile. Say it!
 8. When you're grieving and you don't know why somebody has died – Jesus is Lord.
 9. When you're lonely – Jesus is Lord!
 10. Make it the theme of your life.
- C. **Do you want to make Him Lord today?**

- Lord: "master, ruler, number one, the one in control, total sovereign, king." Lord in New Testament times was a word used for Caesar. It was used in the Roman Empire because the Emperor was treated as god. They worshipped the Caesar as god. The Romans would say "Caesar is Lord." It became a test of loyalty in the Roman Empire. When Christians refused to say that and would only say "Jesus is Lord," they were put to death – thrown to the lions, made to fight gladiators... Many of them lost their lives simply by one phrase – Jesus is Lord.
- Everyone stands there throughout history, everyone will acknowledge it is true. Every nationality, every age group, every male, every female, every religion will say "Jesus is Lord." All of the politicians will be there and say "Jesus is Lord." All of the rock stars will say "Jesus is Lord." All of the scientists, professors, businessmen, and homemakers will say "Jesus is Lord." **Everyone** will admit it.
- **The issue is not, will you admit that Jesus is Lord? You will one day. The issue is simply, when?** You will either admit it now or you will admit it later and find you have been wrong and made a big mistake. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. (Warren)

D. **The result:** *to the Glory of God the Father* (v. 11b)

IV. The Consequences

A. What does it mean to call Jesus "Lord"?

It means that I...

1. **Acknowledge:** I acknowledge that He really is God. He's more than a man or a prophet. He really is God. He is the Lord. It is a test of my commitment to Him.
2. **Believe:** I believe that He has everything under control. Although everything looks bleak, Jesus is Lord and I

3. He went to a cross and voluntarily laid down His life for us. Why? He didn't have to. He was God. He could have called 10,000 angels and stopped the process at any point. He did not have to go to the cross. Nobody put Him there without His permission.

Why did He allow Himself to go to the cross?

- **To demonstrate God's love.** *Romans 5:8 "God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."*
- **To pay for my sins.**

III. The Exaltation: He reigns supreme (v. 9-11)

In the second half of this hymn, Paul presents four aspects of the Father's exaltation of the Son: the reward (2:9a), the recognition (2:9b), the response (2:10–11a), and the result (2:11b).

A. The reward: *God exalted Him* (v. 9a)

1. Literally: super-exalted (Gr. *hyperypsozen*) Him.
2. The purpose is that every person will bow in submission to His authority (cf. Isa. 45:23 where all bow before Yahweh). He has given Him the place of top honor in the universe. He's honored above all else – the highest place.

3. It involved four steps upward:

- His **resurrection:** *"Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him."* (Mark 16:6)
- His **ascension:** *"Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God'."* (John 20:17).
- His **coronation:** *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."* (Matt. 28:18). *Having*

ascended, Jesus "is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven" (1 Peter 3:22)

- His **intercession**: *Christ, who died and was raised for us and "who is at the right hand of God... also intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:34; 26).*

B. **The recognition**: *Name above all names* (v. 9b)

1. He has been given a new name. The name "Jesus" in New Testament times was a very common name. It wasn't unusual – like John or Jim today. "Jesus" means "salvation is of the Lord." The Greek word is Joshua. That is why they had to distinguish which Jesus it was they were talking about -- Jesus of Nazareth, etc. Even when He was born He was given many names: Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
2. **Bestowed** (*charizomai*) which conveys the idea of giving freely and generously

C. **The Response**: (v. 10-11a)

1. **Every knee will bow** (v. 10)

- Greek word introduces a purpose clause. Paul is therefore saying: "Jesus is given the name which is above every name for the purpose that, or with the result that, **every knee will bow**,
- The beings **in heaven** that Paul referred to evidently are believers who have died and whose spirits have gone into the Lord's presence.
- Those **on earth** are people still alive on the earth.
- Those **under the earth** are unbelievers awaiting resurrection. Hades (the same as Sheol, the Old Testament term) is the place where the spirits of the unbelieving dead go until God resurrects them and judges them. The ancients thought of Sheol or Hades

as being under the surface of the earth, probably because that is where their bodies went in burial.

2. **Every tongue should confess**

- The affirmation, "Jesus Christ is Lord," was the earliest confessional formula of the church God will by this universal confession receive glory. Jesus Christ's purpose is, always has been, and always will be to glorify the Father (1 Cor. 15:27).
- **That the hope of God is that every intelligent being in his universe might proclaim openly and gladly that Jesus Christ alone has the right to reign.**

3. **Jesus is Lord**

- Acknowledging Jesus as Lord must include submission and obedience, because, by definition, the title of Lord assumes it.
- **The centrality to the gospel of the lordship of Jesus Christ is abundantly clear. In the New Testament, He is called Lord some 747 times. In the book of Acts, He is referred to as Savior only twice, but as Lord 92 times. The first known creed of the early church was "Jesus is Lord!" (MacArthur)**
- He is not advocating "works" oriented righteousness. If there is not true obedience is it really genuine?
- **A. W. Tozer wrote, "We are not saved by believing in an office, nor in a work. He is Lord, and those who refuse him as Lord cannot use him as Savior. Everyone who receives Him must surrender to His authority, for to say we receive Christ when in fact we reject His right to reign over us is utter absurdity. It is a futile attempt to hold onto sin with one hand and take Jesus with the other. What kind of salvation is it if we are left in bondage to sin?"**