

## Name Above Every Name!

- Phil. 2:9-11
- The last time we were with Paul in Philippi, we saw the great humiliation of Jesus Christ, as He laid aside His rights to uninterrupted glory, took on the form of a servant, and became a man. Not only that, but He humbled Himself in obedience to the Father all the way to death on a cross. The great humiliation of Jesus. Today we look at the rest of the story, the great exaltation of Jesus Christ, for God has highly exalted Him and restored Him to His rightful place in glory. You may remember that last time we looked at the story in John 13 when Jesus humbled Himself to wash His disciples' feet. It has been noted by many theologians and biblical scholars over the years that what Paul gives us as a theological truth in Philippians 2:5-11, Jesus demonstrated in the upper room on the night He was to be betrayed. Look at John 13 with me, while keeping your finger in Philippians 2, so you can see the parallels.
- John 13:3. / Philippians 2:6 "who though He was in the form of God."
- John 13:4 / Phil. 2:7, "but emptied Himself," (or, made Himself nothing)
- John 13:5, "...He began to wash the disciples' feet..." / Phil. 2:8, "by taking the form of a servant."
- John 13:12, "...and resumed His place." He had left the head of the table, which was His rightful place, took the posture of a servant and washed His disciples' feet, and then returned to the place which was His. He acted out in John 13 what Paul describes for us in Philippians 2. After humbling Himself by washing His disciples' feet, He prays in John 17:5, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed." Jesus Christ makes it plain here that He was and always is God. And having completed what the Father had sent him to earth to do, having subjected himself to humiliation on the cross, and having been resurrected on the third day, upon His ascension into heaven, He returned to His rightful place. He sat down in the only place that was suitable for Him. At the right hand of the Father. The writer of Hebrews says, "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs." (Hebrews 1:3-4)
- Let's look at verses 9-11 of Philippians 2 this morning, under two main points: the past exaltation and the future exaltation of Jesus.
- **Past Exaltation**
- Therefore God has highly exalted Him. That has already happened, and we know what the therefore is there for. Jesus obeyed the Father all the way to the cross, making purification for sins. Therefore God has highly exalted Him. That's a word that is used only once in the New Testament: God has "super-exalted" Christ. He has exalted Him beyond measure. There is no higher place, no greater exaltation than what the Father has given to His Son.
- The Name. What does this mean, "and bestowed on him the name that is above every name"? Ahh, that's a question that has been studied since the first century. Is it the name, "Jesus?" Some would argue that it is, since the next verse Paul writes is, "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow." Jesus, remember, means "He saves." The angel told Joseph, "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Some say that is the name, and it took on a special significance after His ascension. But others say that was the name given to Jesus at his incarnation, his name as a man, and yes, it is a wonderful name. But this text says a name was "bestowed on Him" which indicates it is a name He didn't previously have. The movement of this passage is upward, and the climax occurs in verse 11, where Jesus is declared to be Lord. Walter Hanson writes, "At the incarnation, the name Jesus was given; when God exalted Jesus he then gave him the name *Lord*." One cultural argument for this is that it would have been shocking for the Philippians, or for anyone in the Roman empire, to refer to *anyone* other than Caesar as Lord! But there's a biblical argument to be made as well.

- The name of God is used more than 7000 times in the Bible, and we know it as Jehovah, or Yahweh. That was God's personal name, and it was the one that the Jews would not utter, nor would they write it out completely, out of reverence for the name, reverence for God. In Isaiah 42:8, God says, "I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other." The Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, translates LORD, God's name, as *kurios*. It is the name that is used here as Paul says, "every tongue (will) confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." God also said in Isaiah 45, "I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God." (verse 5). And He repeats that theme through the chapter, that there is no other God, and then in verse 23b, "To me every knee shall bow. Every tongue swear allegiance." What is Paul doing here except connecting the Old Testament promise by God to its fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ, who is Lord? It is as if Paul is saying to all who will understand it, "The One whose name you could not even breathe because it was too holy has come to you! He has not come as a conquering King, not yet, but as a suffering servant. His name is LORD, and He has defeated the power of darkness, and he has set the captive free, and he has led his people out of bondage in triumph over sin and the grave and death itself. He is Lord! The name that is above every name is LORD, the Lord who has purchased our pardon with His own blood. May His name be exalted!
- Everywhere Micah and I went in Moldova last week, we went in His name. That's all that matters. The people at Passport Control just cared that my name and picture on my passport matched my picture and my name on my ticket. They didn't care that I was there for His name. But the men we spoke to in every conference we did couldn't have cared less about our passports or the names we have been given. They wanted to know that we had come in the name that is above every name. They wanted to hear about Him and how they could exalt His name with their leadership at home and at church and in the culture. That's all that matters. That name.
- You know what is most shocking for us in this? For you and me? It's that we KNOW Him. This King of Glory. We who were His enemies now seated at His table. We know Him. And because of that, we will have seats for His future exaltation. They may not be front row, but every seat will have a view.
- **Future Exaltation**
- We steward this day in light of that day, as Shawn likes to remind us. And that day is more certain than tomorrow. Tony Merida writes, "History is not like a treadmill, going nowhere; rather, it's all moving toward that day." That day is coming, and this is what will happen when the LORD is revealed to all creation. What will happen on that day?
- Every knee will bow. This is the universal nonverbal response to the Lord on that day. Kent Hughes says that "every knee" is a reference to every rational being in the universe. EVERY knee will bow. In heaven: angels will bow. On the earth: men and women, boys and girls, will bow. Under the earth: dead human beings and fallen angels will bow. No creature will be excluded. Every knee will bow. No one will be able to take a pass. Some will bow in humble adoration. May we be in that number. Others will bow with grinding teeth and stiff submission. Always the rebel. May we not be in that number.
- Every tongue will confess. This is the universal verbal response to the Lord on that day. What is the confession? "Jesus Christ is Lord!" Some say that is apostolic shorthand for the Gospel. "For what we proclaim is not ourselves," Paul wrote, "but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants." (2 Cor. 4:5) He wrote in Romans 10:9, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." What will happen on that day? Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. But this will not be a confession unto salvation for most. It will be too late.
- Caiphas will confess this. Nero will say these words. Genghis Khan will do it. Hitler will confess this. Stalin will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every single soul ever created in the image of God the Father will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Think of the person you think most unlikely to confess this, and he or she will be there. On their knees, confessing this truth. And if that person

you are thinking of does not repent this side of death, their confession will seal their own condemnation. They will be condemned by their own words in proclaiming that the One they now confess as LORD they despised and ignored every minute they were alive. Are they still breathing now? Then, there's still hope that God will save them.

- And this is all, Paul writes, "to the glory of God the Father." This was the plan from the beginning, when there was no beginning and time did not exist, and God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit made a way for the salvation of men and women who had not yet been created. He decreed it. Jesus completed it. The Holy Spirit applied it. All for the glory of God.
- What should we do with these towering truths? Five things.
- **Study this.** Read the Scriptures with the Lordship of Jesus and the Glory of God in mind.
- **Know this.** In all your getting, the Bible says, get knowledge. Don't just fill a notebook with this. Fill your heart with it. Know these truths.
- **Believe this.** Knowing is not believing. Settle them deep in your soul. Believe these truths.
- **Live this.** We can study and know and believe something without living it, can't we? Narrow the gap, day by day, between what you know about God and what you practice. I heard a man says years ago, "I've gotten to the place in my life where I have told the Lord that I don't want Him to have to deal with my disobedience anymore. Just my ignorance." Now, let's be honest. God will always be dealing with our disobedience, as long as we live in these temporary houses of flesh. But may we, by His grace, narrow the gap. May our living be closer and closer to the truth that we know and believe, that Jesus Christ is Lord and we are His servants.
- **Proclaim this.** We have not been given these great truths just for ourselves. There's a whole world out there that needs to hear it from us and see it in us, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- **Prayer**