

## **The Mind Of Christ – Part 2**

### **Philippians 2:5-11**

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In Philippians 2:5-11, Paul says, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...” —“Kurios” —“...to the glory of God the Father.”

We saw that this is one of the greatest passages in the Word of God on the person and work of Jesus Christ. We see in this beautifully laid out the humility and exaltation of Christ.

Now I want to quickly refresh you in verses 5-8. We saw in verse 5 the illustration of the mind of Christ. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” This mind of Christ is a reference to the attitude or outlook of Christ. Just as Jesus humbly gave His life upon the Cross to serve others, so we should have the same attitude or outlook and humbly give ourselves to serve others.

In verses 6-8, we saw the humility of Christ. We saw His sovereignty, in verse 6. He was “in the form of God [but] did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.” We also saw His humanity, in verse 7. He “made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men.” And we saw His humility, in verse 8. “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

Now we come to the third section, the exaltation of Christ, verses 9-11.

The reason I’ve given you this outline is because I want you to see these verses in context. This is one of the greatest sections in the Bible on Christ. Theologians call it a “Christological text.” It exalts Jesus Christ.

So we see His illustration of humility, verse 5, we see His humiliation, verses 6-8, and now we will see the exaltation of Christ, verses 9-11. We move from His humiliation to His exaltation, from eternity past to eternity future. We also learn an important Biblical principle: exaltation always follows humiliation. The overall and arching theme of this text is that he who humbles himself shall be exalted. He who exalts himself shall be abased. God’s principle is that He lifts up the humble. So as Christ humbled Himself, now in verses 9-11, He will be exalted.

As we break down our text, I want to point out four facts about Christ’s exaltation. Fact number one is that the source of Christ’s exaltation is God the Father. Verse 9 says, “Therefore God

also has highly exalted Him.” So God the Father has “highly exalted” God the Son. The source of Christ’s exaltation was God the Father.

It means that this text supports the idea of the Trinity. We have God the Father and God the Son. We don’t have a reference here to the Holy Spirit, but we know that God is three-in-one: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

So the source of the exaltation is God the Father. It is the Father’s response, a reward for the Son’s humble obedience and submission. The principle is in 1 Peter 5:6. “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He...”—that is, “God”—“...may exalt you in due time.” That is in God’s own appointed time. The same is true of you and me. If you want to be exalted, then humble yourself. You want to be humbled by God, then exalt yourself. That’s the Biblical principle.

Now what exactly do we mean by exaltation, in verse 9? It says, “God...has highly exalted Him.” The verb “exalted” is only used here in the New Testament and only of Jesus Christ. It literally means “to lift above” or “to lift beyond.” And notice that Christ was “highly exalted.” The Greek word is “huper.” We get our word “super” from it. It means that Jesus Christ was super exalted by God the Father. In other words, there is no one higher than Jesus.

Years ago Alistair Begg made a statement that I’ve never forgotten. He said, “It is impossible to have a thought about Jesus that is too exalted.” I was so struck by that. I thought, That’s amazing! It is impossible to think too highly of Jesus Christ.

Now it is possible to think too highly of me. Some people have come up to my wife and said, “It must be amazing living with Pastor John.”

She just smiles and says, “Oh, it’s amazing all right.” I put my pants on one leg at a time, just like you do.

And it’s also very possible for me to think too highly of you. But it’s impossible to think too highly of Christ; there is no one above Jesus Christ. Christ is the exalted, glorified, risen Savior. How marvelous that is.

In Colossians 1:18, Paul says, “In all things He...”—that is, “Christ”—“...may have the preeminence.” It’s not “prominence” but “preeminence.” That means there is no one higher than Jesus Christ.

The Father’s exaltation of Christ fulfilled a prophecy of the Old Testament suffering servant in Isaiah 52:13 where the prophet said, “Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.” So in the beginning of this chapter, we saw that Jesus left heaven, in the seven steps down, and now in our text, we will see the three steps back up in the exaltation of Jesus.

The exaltation of Christ involves three steps up from the grave to the glory of heaven. It starts

with Jesus' Resurrection. He came from heaven; was born of a virgin; lived a sinless life on earth; died a voluntary, substitutionary death on the Cross; His body was crucified, slain, dead; and He was buried in the grave. And we all know what happened three days later. As the song says,

"Up from the grave He arose;

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes.

He arose a victor from the dark domain,

And He lives forever with the saints to reign.

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

So the first step of Jesus' exaltation, His coronation, is His Resurrection. We have the Incarnation, and the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 1:19-20, Paul said, "...the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when he raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places." So God the Father raised Christ from the dead and then set Him at His own right hand, which is the place of authority in heaven.

After Christ was crucified and buried, no sinful hands ever touched His body. Nor will there ever again be any sinful hands touch His body. Jesus Christ is now risen from the dead.

And His Resurrection was a physical, bodily resurrection. He conquered sin, death and the grave. Jesus' Resurrection was God the Father's stamp of approval on the work of God the Son. Jesus died and said, "It is finished!" or "Tatelestai!" or "Paid in full." And God the Father said "Amen" to that and raised Jesus from the dead, ever to testify of His finished work.

The second step up is Jesus' Ascension. So you have His Incarnation, when He became man in the womb of the Virgin Mary; you have His Crucifixion, where He died on the Cross for our sins; and then you have His Resurrection—these are all historic facts—and now you have His Ascension.

How did Jesus get from earth back to heaven? The Ascension of Christ is both an Old Testament and a New Testament truth. In the Old Testament book of Psalms, chapter 16, verse 10, it says, "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol..."—or "hell"—"...nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." So Jesus would ascend on high. Then in the New Testament, Mark's Gospel records it in chapter 16, Luke records it in chapters 9 and 24 and again Luke records it in Acts 1.

I like the story in Acts 1 where Jesus was with his disciples after His Resurrection on the Mount of Olives by the city of Jerusalem and began to physically ascend back up into heaven. That

must have blown the disciples' minds! The Bible says that "A cloud received Him out of their sight." Then some angels showed up and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?"

If I was one of the disciples, I would have said, "If you just saw what we just saw, you'd be looking into the heavens too! Did you just see what happened?!"

Jesus came into the world through the womb of the Virgin Mary. His conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary was miraculous. With that, God forever sanctified life in the womb. From the womb to the tomb, the Bible teaches the sanctity of life.

And then Jesus died and rose. And how does He get back to heaven after coming through the womb of the Virgin, living a sinless, miraculous life, dying on the Cross and raising from the dead? He just, physically, bodily, visibly just goes right back up into heaven. And the angel said, "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." Jesus will come back physically, bodily and visibly, and it will also be gloriously. As he ascended gloriously, He'll come back gloriously for His church, as well as to come back to set up His kingdom at His Second Coming.

Jesus' Ascension into heaven marked the end of the period of Christ's humiliation and was His entrance into the state of exaltation. Never, ever again will sinful hands touch Jesus Christ, and never, ever again will Jesus Christ be crucified on the Cross. Jesus is not on the Cross any longer; He's in heaven, He's victorious. And as Jesus Christ ascended bodily, He will come back just as they saw Him go to heaven.

John saw the post-Ascension Christ. In Revelation 1, he saw Jesus' "eyes like a flame of fire." He said, "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow." He said, "His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters...Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword," which was symbolic of the power of His Word, the fiat of the Son of God.

In Revelation 19, again we see Jesus with His vesture dipped in blood as "King of kings and Lord of lords." He's coming back in power and glory. So John, on the isle of Patmos, was able to have a peak of the post-Ascension Christ as He is now exalted in heaven. What a marvelous truth.

The third and last step up is Jesus' exaltation. We have His Resurrection, His bodily Ascension and then He is exalted in heaven. We know about the Resurrection, we hear a little bit about His Ascension, but it culminated in Jesus arriving in heaven and sitting down at the right hand of God the Father, the place of authority. The exaltation is a cosmic coronation of Jesus Christ in heaven.

Hebrews 1:3 says, "...when He had by Himself purged our sins..."—that's His Crucifixion—"...sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." So after Jesus was crucified, He is now exalted at the right hand of God the Father. Thus Jesus, in His exaltation, received more than

what He surrendered in His Incarnation. Think about that. Jesus, in His exaltation, now receives more glory, more majesty, more power, more splendor than when He was in His Incarnation. So He restored Himself, the Father raised Him from the dead, ascended Him back to heaven and seated Him on His right hand. Now Jesus is super exalted.

What is Jesus sovereign over? First, Jesus is sovereign over two categories. He is sovereign over all creation. The stars do what He wants them to do. He is in control of the whole cosmos. Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." And He is the Head and sovereign over all the church, the body of Christ.

No man on earth is the head of the church. When Jesus told Peter, "On this rock I will build My church," it was Peter's confession that "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus Christ is the foundation and the Head of the church. He is the living Head to whom we are united. So He is the sovereign Lord over all the church.

When Jesus got to heaven, as He promised, He sent the Holy Spirit. So you have God the Father, who sent God the Son, who was crucified, resurrected and was ascended and exalted in heaven, and then He sent God the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit showed up in His fullness, and the church was born. So Jesus is the dispenser of not only the Holy Spirit but of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the church, as well as being the sovereign Lord.

And what is Jesus doing in heaven? In John 14, He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again..."—that's the promise of Jesus—"...and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." So Jesus is in heaven right now preparing your eternal home. It is going to be amazing. This is why we used to sing,

"A tent or a cottage, why should I care?

They're building a palace for me over there;

Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,

His coffers are full, He has riches untold.

I'm a child of the King,

A child of the King;

With Jesus my Savior,

I'm a child of the King!"

He's building a house for me in heaven. That's what Jesus is doing. And He will come again, as He promised, as the angels told the disciples on Mount Olivet, in Acts 1, and "receive [us] to [Himself]; that where I am, there you may be also," John 14:3.

Jesus is now our prophet—He speaks for God to man; He is our priest—He intercedes for us and ever lives to make intercession for the saints; and He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. So we get all that from the first phrase in verse 9: “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him.”

The second fact about the exaltation, in verse 9, is the name of Christ’s exaltation. “...given Him the name which is above every name.”

The challenge of verses 9-11 is when Paul starts in verse 9 with “therefore.” Because of what we read in verses 5-8, when we read verse 9, that says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,” the text doesn’t stop until you get to verse 11. So in the Greek it’s almost like one, long sentence. It has a few commas, so you’re barely taking a breath until you get down to “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” That’s the statement. So it’s one, long statement, and it’s kind of hard to break up.

Verse 9 says He’s “given Him the name which is above every name...”—and in verse 10—“...that at the name of Jesus...”—or “Yeshua”—“...every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth...”—and verse 11—“...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...”—the word is “Kurios,” which is the equivalent to the Old Testament “Yahweh” or “Jehovah”—“...to the glory of God the Father.”

The debate that goes on—which I think is unnecessary—is “What is ‘the name which is above every name’? Is it the name ‘Jesus’?” This is where it gets a little tricky. We respect and reference the name “Jesus.” The name “Jesus” in the Old Testament is the name “Joshua,” or “Yahushua,” and means “God is salvation.”

When Mary became pregnant with Jesus, the angel told her what His name would be. They would name Him “Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” So what a blessed name is the name “Jesus.”

But this is what you need to understand to understand the name of Jesus. When the Bible uses the phrase “the name” or “the name of the Lord,” it’s not talking about a particular name like “Jesus” or “Joshua” or “David” or “Joseph” or “John” or “Mike” or “Peter”; it’s talking about the person and who they are. All that they are is included in their name. The Bible says, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”

So when we speak of the name of Jesus or we pray, “in Jesus name,” what do we mean? We don’t mean the actual name of Jesus; we actually mean the Person of Jesus, who is Savior and Lord, who is Incarnate, who was crucified, who was resurrected, who ascended and who is exalted in heaven. That Person, that Man, Jesus, is what we bow our knee to and confess to.

It’s like the police department knocking on a door and saying, “Open up in the name of the law!” What’s the name of the law? It’s the authority and the power of the police department.

So here we have “the name of Jesus,” who is the Savior and also Lord or Jehovah. The way

Charles Erdman put it is, “‘The name of Jesus’ does not mean any word, any title, any appellation, but it denotes all that Jesus is now known to be as the Son of God, Son of Man, as the divine Savior and Redeemer.” Certainly there is power in the name of Jesus, but when we use that expression, it means who Jesus is in the Person of Jesus.

Unsaved people can’t just go around using the name of Jesus. When some “itinerant Jewish exorcists” tried to cast out demons in the book of Acts “by the Jesus whom Paul preaches,” the demon said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” I would have said, “Doesn’t matter; see you later!” and I would have taken off running. But the demon in the man jumped on them and overcame them. So it’s not just the actual name of Jesus; it’s who He is. It’s His position, His power, His nature and His character.

And it’s also that He is Lord. In verse 11, the statement comes to its conclusion and says, “to the glory of God the Father.” It’s so marvelous. The word “Lord” is the equivalent to the Old testament “Yahweh” or “Jehovah.” It’s taken from Isaiah 45:22-23. “I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath.” That’s a passage from Isaiah that is quoted by Paul in our text referring to Jesus and His exaltation.

Fact number three about the exaltation is the response to Christ’s exaltation. It is twofold in verse 10 and the first part of verse 11. “At the name of Jesus every knee...”—it’s universal—“... should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth—three places—“...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” So the first response is that “every knee should bow,” which implies reverence and submission.

When I hear atheists mocking the idea of God, when I hear people mocking Christianity, mocking the Bible, mocking Jesus Christ, using His name as a vulgar swear word, I think, Some day you will “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” One day your “knee [will] bow.” It won’t bow to salvation; it will be in condemnation. If you bow your knee now, it is in salvation. If you bow your knee after your die, it is in condemnation.

In this confession that Jesus is Lord and bowing the knee to Him, Paul doesn’t tell us when this will happen. It might be at the “great white throne.” It might be right before the millennium. We don’t know. But it will happen and it will be universal.

And notice the scope will be in three places. First, it will be in heaven, Revelation 4:9-11. All the holy angels and redeemed men and woman who have died will worship Him. “The 24 elders,” representing the church, are worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ with all the angels. Then in verse 10 of our text, secondly it will be “of those on earth,” which includes both the saved and unsaved. This does not imply that they will go to heaven. It implies that they will be subject to Christ and His authority. The third place is “those under the earth.” Even fallen angels and all unsaved in hell will profess that “Jesus Christ is Lord.” There is not going to be any rebellion in hell. No one’s going to get out. No one’s going to rebel. They’ll actually “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”

The second response is that “every tongue should confess.” Again, it doesn’t say when, but we do know the content of their confess, in verse 11: “that Jesus Christ is Lord.” In the Greek it would read, “Kurios Jesus Christos” or “Lord Jesus Christ.” He is God. He is Lord. He is Jesus, the Savior. He is the Christ, Mashiach, the Anointed of God. So we now know that Jesus died to be our Savior.

Now if you die without professing or confessing Jesus as Lord, it’s to your condemnation. But if you bow your knee now and believe in Jesus Christ, it’s to your salvation. Romans 10:9-10 says, “If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

So don’t expect to be saved after you die. “Now is the accepted time...Now is the day of salvation.” And you can’t rightfully take communion without having Christ in your heart. Eating a cracker or a wafer is not the real thing if you haven’t partaken of Christ by faith.

My fourth and last point is the goal of Christ’s exaltation, “the glory of God the Father.” Verse 11 says, “to the glory of God the Father.” Everything God does is for His glory. He will not share His glory with anyone else. The work of God the Son on the Cross had the ultimate purpose of the glory of God the Father.

When you read Ephesians 1, there are three times where it speaks of blessing from the Father, blessings from the Son and blessings from the Spirit, that are “to the praise of the glory of His grace.”

What a marvelous truth that even though man sinned and rebelled against God, He devised a purpose and a plan of redemption, all “to the praise of the glory of His grace.” God is going to get greater glory by His plan to redeem mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ. And we, as His people, should give Him glory.

In closing, verse 5 says, “Let this mind...”—this “outlook,” this “attitude of humility”—“...be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Let’s be like Jesus, who sacrificed and offered Himself and gave His life for others.