

Expository Bible Study for Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Lesson #6 "True Humility & Selflessness"

• HANDOUT •

► Our last study covered Paul's instructions regarding how followers of Christ were to conduct themselves, including how to stand strong against the external conflicts that were coming against the Church. He told them that Believers were to live in such a way that the world would know they were citizens of Heaven. The Gospel message of Christ would effectively go forth when Believers stood together in one spirit and purpose. Paul encouraged the Philippians not to become intimidated by the enemy, but to remember that, ultimately, the enemy's destiny was destruction, while the Believer's destiny was eternity. In fact, suffering, should be viewed as a privileged way to honor the Lord.

Chapter Two continued Paul's instructions, but instead of focusing on the external conflicts the Church was experiencing, he turned to the internal conflicts that were occurring within the established Church. He cautioned Believers to do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. The key to accomplishing this was to be humble and always be considerate of others.

Now, Paul will go even deeper into the Believer's need for humility, which brings us to our current study.

**The Greatest Example of Humility is Christ Jesus.
What follows is perhaps the Bible's most beautiful Christology.
It is a masterful statement illustrating true humility and selflessness.
Paul begins by addressing the Believer's attitude ...**

► **Philippians 2:5-8** • Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death -- even death on a cross!

Q: What does Paul say regarding the Believer's attitude?

A literal rendering from the Greek text: _____

Q: The scripture which follows Paul's statement about the Believer's attitude, establishes Christ's pre-incarnate status. What are the declarations Paul makes about Jesus in this regard?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Q: What does the word "grasp" mean in the context of Jesus not considering equality with God something to be grasped?

► Look at this statement in 2 Corinthians to help clarify Paul's use of the word "grasped" ...

► **2 Corinthians 8:9** • You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich.

Q: What does it mean in verse 7 that Jesus "made himself nothing?"

Q: When Jesus “took on the nature of a servant” was He exchanging the one thing [His Glory] for another [servant-hood]?

Q: In what way was Jesus a servant? Did He become the servant of Jehovah God like the angels are servants of Jehovah God?

Q: Paul declares that Jesus was made in human likeness? What does the word “likeness” mean?

Q: Paul addresses the profound depth of Christ's humiliation. What facts does Paul include?

Q: When humility is caused by the difficulties a person experiences, as well as the hurtful things done to them by others, it often carries with it a negative connotation. But for Jesus it was a positive gift when he chose to humble himself in order to pay the debt of our sin in our place. In what ways was Jesus' humility made manifest?

1	He humbled Himself by:	
2	He humbled Himself by:	
3	He humbled Himself by:	
4	He humbled Himself by:	
5	He humbled Himself by:	
6	He humbled Himself by:	
7	He humbled Himself by:	
8	He humbled Himself by:	
9	He humbled Himself by:	
10	He humbled Himself by:	
11	He humbled Himself by:	
12	He humbled Himself by:	
13	He humbled Himself by:	
14	He humbled Himself by:	
15	He humbled Himself by:	

Paul concludes his teaching about Christ's Humility by celebrating Christ's Exaltation ...

► **Philippians 2:9-11** • Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 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.

Q: What does the word “therefore” tell us?

Q: How was Christ exalted?

Q: What is the “Name” that is above all names given to Jesus in His exaltation?

Q: What is the purpose of Christ's Exaltation?

Q: Since scripture tells us that the Son's Name is Christ the Lord when did He actually attain the name “Jesus” and what does that Name mean?

Q: The words Paul uses in this Christology are wondrous and marvelous, conveying a majesty almost beyond our comprehension. Are these thoughts and concepts taught elsewhere in scripture or is this unique to Paul's letter to the Philippians?

► Examples of this follows:

► **Isaiah 45:22-23** • “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. *By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.’*”

► **Romans 14:11-13** • For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

► **Revelation 5:11-14** • Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Q: Following the Exaltation of Jesus, Paul close the Christology with “To the glory of God the Father.” What is significant about this closure?

Q: What was Paul's ultimate purpose for composing this Christology which revealed both Jesus' Humiliation and His Exaltation?

**Having completed this remarkable Christology
Paul exhorts the Philippians to pursue their personal spiritual progress ...
This is where we will pick up our study next time.**

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Next Time ◆ Lesson #7 • “Work it Out”

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