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## Philippians – The Blueprint for Joy #8

Welcome to OIC. We are glad you are here. We continue our study of the letter that Paul wrote to the church at Philippi. It is a letter of encouragement to the church there and it helps all of us discover what really can bring joy to our lives. We try to be a church where God is honored. We strive to be Christ centered and Bible based. Have you ever thought about the fact that Christianity seems to work on principles that are opposite to the world. To be blessed, we must be a blessing to others, to receive love, we have to give love, to be honored first we have to be humbled, to truly live you must die to yourself, to lead we must be a servant. Today our support text is Philippians 2:5-11.

### Philippians 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Paul will explain to the church at Philippi that the way up is down. The way to be great is to be lower. He has already told the church to live in humility of mind. Now in this section Paul reaches a crescendo as he turns his attention to the powerful example of Jesus. Many scholars believe this is the best passage in the Bible to explain and defend the fact that Jesus is God. In these verses Paul issues two commitments that we must make to live a life that is literally upside down from the world.

### Commitment #1. Imitate Christ's model of humility

#### Philippians 2:2-5

<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete <sup>[a]</sup> by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing <sup>[b]</sup> from <sup>[c]</sup> selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup> do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

The way that you imitate Christ' example is by giving up your rights. Verse 5 builds a bridge between the section that we spoke about last week, verses 1-4 and verses 6-11. The word "this" refers back to the passage in verses 1 through 4 where Paul had urged the believers to have humility of mind, which is to consider others as more important than yourself, to be Christ-centered and not self-centered. In other words, Paul says rethink your attitude and base it on Christ's attitude. Obviously that is not easy. We are going to fail to achieve this many times because we are sinners. Think of it like this: when we became believers God implanted His mind into our minds. The Holy Spirit now lives in us. God should have domain over every aspect of our lives. Let me give you a verse.

### II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

And when you foster this attitude by reading your Bible, listening to praise music, fellowshiping with other believers we can truly model humility. Another support verse is Romans 12:2.

### Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

I think the key is doing something every day that promotes our spiritual growth. Today we can all grow in grace and truth by asking God to give us an attitude adjustment. Maybe you are one of those chronic complainers who needs to see God's perspective. Paul fleshes out his fundamental command in verse 6 through 8 by using Jesus as his illustration model.

### Philippians 2:6-8

<sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.

<sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Before Jesus came to earth He existed in the form of God. Notice Paul says He existed.... Eternally. Paul is really saying that Jesus' nature and character correspond with God's. Jesus has never been inferior to God the Father. He's certainly not a junior partner. It is important to note "he did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped". Jesus was not grasping at something. He already possessed deity. What He is saying is this: **I am not using the fact that I am equal to God as something I will use for my own advantage.** Verse 7 says he emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, being made in the likeness of men. Jesus practiced self-denial and self-sacrifice for our sake. Jesus showed us that the way up is down. As low as your life gets, Jesus has already been there. Verse 8 tells us how far he humbled himself... to the point of death on the cross.

### Commitment #2 Recognize Jesus is the Lord of all creation

### Philippians 2:9-11

<sup>9</sup> For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Verse 9 through 11 show a cause and effect relationship between Christ's self-humility and His exaltation. In fact, Christ's exaltation is a super exaltation, in a class by itself --- above everything. Jesus did not live to conform to the world. In fact, He was despised. He was called "one who ate with sinners and a blasphemer". He did not live to make His name great upon the earth God the Father took care of that. In verse 10 there are 3 regions mentioned. Heaven, earth and hell. The beings in heaven refer to angels and 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 and Satan and his angelic beings. All will acknowledge the lordship of Jesus one day.

1 Corinthians 15:27 NIV

For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

These great verses are a reminder. Worship is a choice for us now. But one day, every human being and spirit being will worship God. Anyone who claimed to be atheist or agnostic will bow to the Lord at this time. The world may not bow to Jesus today but it's going to!! There are 2 ways of honoring Jesus' name – voluntarily or involuntarily. While you are still alive you have a choice. So please don't leave here today without considering your relationship with Jesus.

### **Conclusion**

Surprisingly, the primary application for this passage is for the believer. What Paul is saying is, many believers need to bow the knee and confess with the tongue that Jesus is God in every aspect of their lives. In the course of all of our lives I'm sure there are areas where we have included and excluded God. Sometimes we say God, you can be God in this area but not THIS area

Romans 14:11

For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."

What area of your life have you excluded Jesus from? Could it be your marriage, your family, your work, your church, parts of your personal life? Today, will you invite Him to take over every area of your life because He is Lord and God of everything.