



Transcendent Joy: Learning How to Rejoice No Matter What

Message #9: **How to Live a Worthy Life** (Philippians 2:9-11) – December 18, 2022 - Pastor Jeff

- Most people prefer the upside of life rather than the downside. In world, up is viewed as the direction for winners and success and down is viewed as the direction of the weak or marginalized. But Paul uses Jesus Christ's incarnation (God putting on flesh) as an example of why believers need to pursue humility for the sake of others and the church's unity.
- The Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that the way up is down. It's an oxymoron in our culture, but it's a truism in God's. Greatness is not measured by self-will, but self-abandonment for the sake of others. It is descending into greatness.
- The Christmas story is about a humble earthly descent and an honored heavenly ascension by Jesus Christ. He's not only our example, but He's our Savior and Lord.
- Paul reveals two reasons why every knee must bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

① No one deserves a greater supremacy than the Lord Jesus Christ (2:9)

- Paul begins his look at the exaltation of Christ by calling attention to the cause of this exaltation (v. 9a: *"for this reason"*)
 - Jesus experienced a radical reversal from His earthly descent from heaven to his heavenly ascent back into heaven. He went from the sovereign throne of Deity to the shameful cross of degradation and death.
 - Jesus went from being 100% God to know being 100% God and Man at the same time. His example of humility led Him to display an unprecedented surrender (v. 7a: *"He emptied Himself"* without forsaking His Deity), slavery (v. 7b: *"taking the form of a bond-servant"* serving His Father's will and undeserving sinners), submission (v. 8: *"He humbled Himself by becoming obedient..."* to His heavenly Father's will), and sacrifice (v. 8: *"...to the point of death, even death on a cross"* which paid the debt of sinner's sin).
- Jesus' example reveals that the way up is down since Jesus said, *"the greatest among you will be your servant...he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven"* (Matt. 23:12; 18:14; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6)
- We see His supremacy in His exaltation (v. 9a: *"God highly exalted Him"*). This super (word for *"highly"*) points to His incomparable sinless obedience, his resurrection (Acts 2:32-33), His ascension (Heb. 4:14), His coronation (Eph. 1:20-21); His intercession in heaven (Heb. 7:25).
- We see His supremacy in the name God gave Him. Jesus is given many names (Son of God, Son of Man, Christ, Jesus, etc.), but Paul tells us God *"bestowed upon Him the name which is above every name"*. this name is *"Lord"* (prophesied in Isa. 45:21-23; announced at His birth (Luke 2:11); confirmed in His ministry (John 20:28; Acts 2:36; 10:36; Rom. 14:11; Rev. 19:6) and part of our confession for salvation (Rom. 10:9-10, 13; Acts 16:31)

② No one deserves a greater submission than the Lord Jesus Christ (2:10-11)

- There is only one true response to the Lord's unsurpassed exaltation and that is that *"every knee will bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..."*
 - He will receive the right acknowledgement He deserves from every life willingly or unwillingly (*"every knee will bow"*)
 - He will receive the right admission He deserves from every voice (*"every tongue will confess"*)
- Who is included in this universal act of submission? *"those who are in heaven"* (the angels and company of the redeemed); those *"on earth"* (the church and the unchurched, saved and unsaved); and those *"under the earth"* (the damned in hell, the demons and the Devil himself)
- Why does Paul share this amazing story of the incarnation? Because it is all *"to the glory of God the Father"* (v. 11)
- Some applications:
 - The exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ is a motivation to live humbly. If Jesus is to be exalted, we must dethrone self.
 - The exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ is a motivation to trust God through our trials. Jesus endured the cross and the Father strengthened Him.
 - The exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ is a motivation to gospel proclamation. The fact that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess willingly or unwillingly compels us to warn the unsaved to flee God's wrath to come and to embrace God's love through the sacrifice of His Son.
 - The exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ is a motivation to be saved. You cannot be delivered from your sins by your good works which are never good enough. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can rescue from God's wrath and your condemnation. Read Isaiah 45:22-23