



“The Humiliation & Exaltation of Christ”
Philippians 2:5-11
The Joy of Unity: The Book of Philippians

I. THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST

Verse 5: “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus...”

II. THE DEITY OF CHRIST

A. He existed in the form of God

Verse 6: “existed in the form of God...”

“Form” – Greek *morphē* – outward appearance that expresses inner essence. Jesus possesses inwardly and displays outwardly the divine nature of God himself.

B. He possessed equality with God

Verse 6: “did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped...”

Jesus is equal with God (cf. John 1:1, 5:18, 10:33, 20:28), but he refused to cling to his exalted position in heaven.

Dwight Edwards: "Out of love for us and the joy set before Him, He released His grip on equality with the Father and began sliding down the rope of humiliation. Christ had a perfect right to hold on to what was His. But He did not cling to His rights. Rather He let go of them with all five fingers."

III. THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

Paul traces Christ’s downward descent...

A. He emptied himself

Verse 7 – “emptied himself...”

In what sense did Christ empty himself?

- A.H. Strong: “He stripped Himself of His expression of deity, but not His possession of deity.”
- John Calvin: “Christ, indeed, could not divest himself of Godhead; but he kept it concealed for a time ... he laid aside his glory in the view of men, not by lessening it, but by concealing it.”
- Charles Spurgeon: “He emptied Himself of all His honor, of all His glory, of all His majesty, and of all the reverence paid to Him...”

B. He was made in the likeness of men

Verse 7 – “made in the likeness of men.”

Verse 8 – “found in appearance as a man.”

In the incarnation, Christ added a human nature to his divine nature.

Hypostatic Union: Jesus possesses two complete natures united in one Person. He is *fully* God and *fully* man at the same time.

- The two natures are preserved without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation.
- Jesus Christ is now... and forever will be... *the God-man*.

The incarnation further clarifies how Jesus “emptied himself” – he voluntarily subjected himself to the limitations of being human. He chose not to exercise his divine attributes apart from the will of the Father.

C. He took the form of a bond-servant

Verse 7 – “taking the form of a bond-servant...”

D. He willingly died on a cross

Verse 8 – “He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Spurgeon: “The lower He stoops to save us, the higher we ought to lift Him in our adoring reverence. Blessed be His name, He stoops, and stoops, and stoops, and, when He reaches our level, and becomes man, He still stoops, and stoops, and stoops lower and deeper yet.”

IV. THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

A. Exalted by God the Father

Verse 9 – “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him...”

B. Received the name above every name

Verse 9 – “and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name...”

C. Every knee will bow before him

Verse 10 – “so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth...”

D. Every tongue will confess that he is Lord

Verse 11 – “and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

V. CONCLUSION

Christ’s attitude exemplified humility, obedience, and sacrificial love. Are you following his example?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION ITEMS:

- 1.) How has your attitude been this past week? When you find yourself struggling with a bad attitude, what helps you snap out of it and get a better perspective?
- 2.) What is your favorite verse in the Bible that talks about the deity of Christ? Look it up and share it with the group. (If you need a hint, try John 1:1, 5:18, 10:33, or 20:28.)
- 3.) What amazes you the most about the humiliation of Christ described in Philippians 2:7-8? What amazes you the most about his exaltation in verses 9-10?
- 4.) What main lesson or application are you going to take away from the sermon this week?