



TEXT SUMMARY

In this week’s text, [Phil 2:5-11](#), we examine Paul’s quotation of what was probably a well-known hymn about the humiliation and glory of Christ.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

1. Context: Although Paul’s letter to the church in Philippi is widely regarded as joyful (the words “joy” and “rejoice” appear many times), there were apparently some issues in the congregation. What can we infer from these excerpts from Paul’s letter?
  - 2:1-4
  - 3:1-2
  - 4:2
2. Our text says several things about Christ. For every place you can find His name or a pronoun referring to Him, what does our text tell us about Jesus?
3. Our text portrays the series of downward steps in Christ’s humiliation and suffering. What are those steps?
4. Where is the turning point in this text? Where does it pivot from Christ’s humiliation and death to His exaltation?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

Paul was not afraid to use provocative language. In our text he uses expressions that would have been shocking in his day. Some scholars think the words “even death on a cross” were added by Paul to the lyrics of the hymn. Crucifixion was such a gruesome spectacle that it was considered ill-mannered to use the word in polite company, and yet Paul dares to add those words to his quotation. The hymn concludes with the politically charged expression “Jesus Christ is Lord,” which flew in the face of the politically correct expression of the day: “Caesar is Lord.” How would Paul’s words here be different (much weaker) if he had shied away from using such provocative language?

