

## Study 07

### “Humble Messiah, Part 2”

Philippians 2:9-11



### Dwelling in the Word

1. Prayerfully read through Philippians 2:1-11, particularly focusing on 2:9-11 (ideally in a few different translations) and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

### Beginning the Conversation

1. Verses 10-11 talk about how “every knee will bow... and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” There is a sense of awe and worship at the name that is given to Jesus. As you begin your time of reflection on this passage, start by declaring praise to God — through prayer, song, written word or however it feels most appropriate to praise him.
2. As we have been talking about living a life of humility over the last few weeks, have there been practices that you have been able to build into your life that help you towards living more like this?

### Digging Deeper

1. Philippians 2:9-11 describes how God the Father responded to Jesus’ humiliation, obedience, and death. How did God the Father respond? How would this be shocking and surprising to Paul’s first readers? What does this tell us about God?
2. What did you think about the explanation that the “name that is above every name” graciously given to Jesus is none other than “The Name”, i.e., the personal name of God revealed in the Old Testament, Yahweh (“the LORD”)? Does this change the way you think about this passage?
3. In the sermon, Pastor Tyler noted that the earliest Christian confession, “Jesus the Messiah is Lord” (see Rom 10:9; Acts 2:36; 1Cor 12:3; 16:22), both connects Jesus the Messiah with the God revealed in the OT (Yahweh), but also confesses Jesus as “Lord” in the Roman imperial context in Philippi (“Jesus is Lord” — not Caesar!). What do you think are some of the implications of confessing “Jesus is Lord” today?
4. Isaiah 45:22-23 God declares “For I am God, and there is no other” and looks forward to the day when all creation will worship him. Now in Phil 2:10-11, Paul describes God as sharing this worship with Jesus, who is given God’s own name. What does this reveal about the nature of God?
5. New Testament scholar Ben Witherington comments that as followers of Jesus, “we are to emulate the story of Christ’s self-sacrifice, self-humbling behaviour *and leave the glorification to God after the fact.*” Do you find it difficult to follow Jesus’ path of humble obedience and trust God for the consequences?

### Living it Out


1. How do you imagine God? How does the fact that God is definitively and most fully revealed in the cross of Christ as the Eternal vulnerable and self-giving One, the God of power-in-weakness (see Col 1:15-20) transform the way you imagine God? What impact does this have on your faith? prayer life?
2. If Jesus also reveals true humanity to us, then we are most fully human when we are most fully like Jesus. How does this shift your desire to be like Jesus?



# Humble Messiah, Part 2

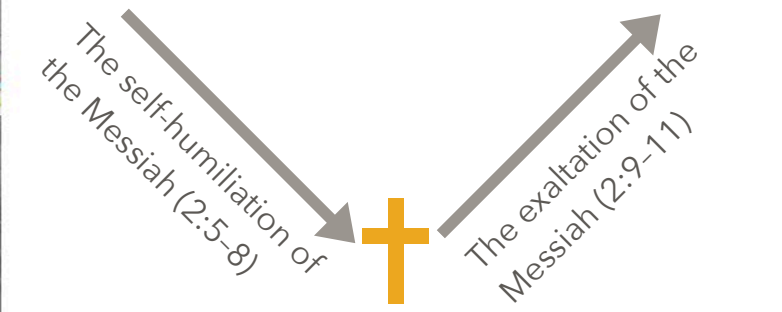
Philippians 2:9-11

October 27, 2024  
Pastor Tyler Williams  
Greenfield Community Church




## Humble Messiah

The passage naturally divides into two parts:



The self-humiliation of the Messiah (2:5-8)

The exaltation of the Messiah (2:9-11)




In your relationships with one another, have the same considered disposition as Jesus the Messiah:

Who, *precisely because* he was in the form of God

*He did not consider* equality with God as a status to be exploited for his own advantage,

But *he emptied himself*, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of human beings; and, looking like a normal human,

*He humbled himself* by becoming obedient all the way to death – even death on a cross!



That is why

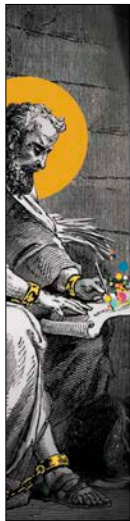
God *elevated him* to the place of highest honour, and *graciously granted him* the name that is above every name,

that at the name granted to Jesus,

‘every knee will bow,’ of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and ‘every tongue will confess’

that Jesus the Messiah is Lord

to the glory of God the Father.



## The Messiah's "Downward Mobility"

Christ "in the form of God"

Absolutely highest status

PREEXISTENCE

(1) "Did not regard equality..." (2:6).

INCARNATION

(2) "He emptied himself..." (2:7).

CRUCIFIXION

(3) "He humbled himself..." (2:8).

Paul's Point: We are to imitate the same humble disposition of Jesus!

Absolutely lowest status



## The Messiah's Exaltation

Paul's Point: Jesus, the obedient crucified one, is now exalted to the highest place as Lord alongside God the Father.

God the Father sharing his glory with the Son

"to the glory of God the Father" (2:11).

DOMINION

"God granted him the name..." (2:9).

EXALTATION

"God highly exalted him" (2:9).

Absolutely lowest status



## Exaltation

"That is why..." (2:9).

- "Therefore also" (*διο και διο και*) - introduces an inference, "for this reason...."
- What Paul is about to say in 2:9-11 is directly connected to what he said previously in 2:6-8.



## Exaltation

"... God elevated him to the place of highest honour and status..." (2:9).

- To raise to a high point of honour, *raise, exalt* (*ὑπερυψωω hyperupsoo*) - preposition *hyper* with verb connotes idea of perfection.
- Due to Christ's obedience God exalted him to a higher level than before the incarnation - Christ now has God's very own name: "Lord" (2:11).



## Dominion

"... and graciously granted him the name that is above every name" (2:9).

- To give freely as a favour (χαριζομαι *charizomai*) - to give freely, bestow graciously.
- As in 1:29 Paul talks about the gift graciously given the Philippians, so in 2:9 God the Father graciously granted Jesus his very own name.



## Dominion

"... that at the name granted to Jesus..." (not "at the name 'Jesus'").

- "Of Jesus" (Ιησου) is a possessive genitive; it indicates the name belonging to or granted to Jesus.
- The name above all names is not "Jesus", but "Lord" (κυριος *kurios*, 2:11) – THE NAME!



# 1

The logic and flow of the entire passage.

- Whatever the name is, it was something that God granted Jesus *after* his death on the cross.
- "Jesus" (the Hebrew name Joshua/ Yeshua) is the name given by Mary and Joseph (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:31).



# 2

The passage culminates with the revelation of the name in 2:11.

at the **name** granted to Jesus ←  
 'every knee should bow'  
 of those who are in heaven, and  
 on earth, and  
 under the earth, and  
 that 'every tongue should confess'  
 that Jesus the Messiah is **Lord** ←



3

Confirmed by the allusion to Isaiah 45:23 in 2:10.

- “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 forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: *‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess’*” (Isa 45:22-23).
- The universal worship ascribed to Yahweh in Isaiah 45 is now shared with Jesus, who is given God’s own name (see also Rom 14:11).



4

The Lord = Yahweh, the personal name of the God revealed in the OT.

- “Lord” (κύριος *kurios*) was the common way to refer to Yahweh (יהוה YHWH), and *kurios* was the standard substitute for “Yahweh” in the LXX.
- Due to translation, “Yahweh” shifted from a name to the title “Lord.”



5

Connects this passage with the confession “Jesus Christ is Lord.”

- The earliest Christian confession (Rom 10:9; Acts 2:36; 1Cor 12:3; 16:22).
- This both connects Jesus the Messiah with the God revealed in the OT (Yahweh), but also confesses Jesus as “Lord” in the Roman imperial context in Philippi (“Jesus is Lord” – not Caesar!).



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## Dominion

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“... ‘every knee will bow,’ of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and ‘every tongue will confess that Jesus the Messiah is Lord’” (2:10-11).

- “Bending the knee” and confessing “Jesus is Lord” are acts of worship, while the scope of the worship paid to Jesus is universal (see Rev 5:13).
- This looks to a day when “all things” will be reconciled to God through Jesus (Col 1:20) and all creation will confess that Jesus the Messiah is Lord.





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## Glorification

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“... to the glory of God the Father” (2:11).

- Ultimately through the exaltation of Jesus, God the Father is glorified.
- “God glorifies himself, brings deserved worship and focus to himself, and draws the nations to himself through the sacrifice and exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord of the universe!” (Guthrie, *Philippians*, 173).



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## Implications

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How we think about God has been radically changed forever!

- God is definitively and most fully revealed in the cross of Christ as the Eternal vulnerable and self-giving One, the God of power-in-weakness (see Col 1:15-20).



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## Implications

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How we think about humanity has been radically changed forever!

- Jesus does not only reveal what God is like, he also reveals what it means to be fully human!
- We are called to have the same disposition of Jesus in his preexistent and his incarnate life: self-emptying and self-humbling obedience.



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## Implications

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As a community of faith who bears witness to this God, we are to be characterized by this humble love towards one another.

- This comes through a “long obedience in the same direction” – a lifetime of humble obedient actions where you consider the interests of others above your own.



## Implications

"Yielding to God, or obedience, is the foundation for embodying humility as a way of life in the footsteps of Jesus. When humility is embodied over time, and not seen as something to be turned on under certain conditions, we build, develop, and sustain healthy and united communities that communicate the countercultural and peace-making nature of the Christian faith in a tense and competitive world." – Dennis R. Edwards, *Humility Illuminated: The Biblical Path to Christian Character*, 47.



## Implications

We have hope in suffering because we know that Jesus was vindicated and we believe that we also will be.

- "Christians are to emulate the story of Christ's self-sacrifice, self-humbling behaviour and leave the glorification to God after the fact. They are to live out of and according to the Christ story" (Ben Witherington, *Philippians*, 102).