

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11  
HUMILITY; **FROM** THE THRONE, **TO** A BOND-SERVANT

---

I. Introduction: Short summary on Philippians

- A. Written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison in AD61 (Phil. 1:13; 4:22; praetorian guard), to the church he founded on his second missionary journey in Acts 16 AD50.
- B. The church in Philippi was financially supporting Paul and had relatively few problems; however, one problem that the church in Philippi did struggle with was infighting or internal arguments with rivalries and personal ambition which is littered in this epistle Paul writes to them.
- C. As Christians, we are told to be like our Savior, Jesus, to be Christ-like. The Philippians were not being Christ-like in their dealings with one another though. Paul highlights the humility of Jesus as an example for them to follow. This highlight of Jesus' humility is our key point for today as we reflect on what happened that blessed Christmas morning.

II. Body:

**KEY POINT: Jesus is God the Son who sat on the Throne of Heaven and humbled himself by leaving the throne and becoming a bond-servant, even to the point of death on a cross for sin. He did this, so that the justice of God would be satisfied and allow God to reconcile himself to sinners through forgiveness of their transgressions.**

A. Vs. 1-4; Exhortation to the Philippians for Humility

- Same mind
- Same love
- Same spirit
- Self-less
- Looking out for others

B. Vs. 5-8; Exhortation for Philippians to be like Jesus in humility because God the Son humbled himself by not asserting His deity but by becoming a bond-servant.

1. Vs.6; Form of God

- a. Speaking to the woman at the well Jesus told her that God is Spirit and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and Truth. Jesus was referring here to God the Father and the key here being that God is spirit. **If God is spirit and not visible, then what did people see in the Old Testament?**
- b. *μορφή* / “form” indicates the outward appearance of something, visual in nature; something known by the senses<sup>1</sup>. Nobody has ever seen God the Father and thus God the Son, the pre-incarnate Jesus is the only form anybody has ever seen (John 1:18). When people saw God in the Old Testament, they were seeing the pre-incarnate Jesus.

---

<sup>1</sup> 2. The NT contains only a small sample of the wide range of meanings for *μορφή* in classical and Hellenistic Greek (“shape, something known by the senses, esp. physical appearance, form, beauty, loveliness, outward form of appearance, appearance”). Balz, Horst Robert, and Gerhard Schneider. *Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament 1990-: 443. Print.*

## PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

### HUMILITY; **FROM** THE THRONE, **TO** A BOND-SERVANT

---

- c. The prophet Isaiah sees a vision of God Almighty in all of his glory. I read a portion of it earlier. This is a visible form which Isaiah saw and which the Apostle John informs us, was the pre-incarnate Jesus.

**Isaiah 6:1–5;** <sup>1</sup>In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. <sup>2</sup>Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one called out to another and said, "**Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts**, The whole earth is full of His glory." <sup>4</sup>And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. <sup>5</sup>Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; **For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.**"

**John 12:37–41;** <sup>37</sup>But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. <sup>38</sup>This was to fulfill **the word of Isaiah the prophet** which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" <sup>39</sup>For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, <sup>40</sup>"HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM." <sup>41</sup>**These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.**

- d. Appearances as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament are also appearances of God the Son (pre-incarnate Jesus)

- Genesis 16:6-14;
- Genesis 18:1-33
- Genesis 22:9-19
- Numbers 22:22-35
- Judges 13:3-25

2. Vs. 7; Emptied

- **Does not mean** Jesus ceased to be God (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-3 & 14; 5:18; 10:31-33; forgive sins – Matthew 9:6; received worship – Luke 17:15-16)
- **Does not mean** Jesus emptied himself of divine attributes illustrated in receiving worship (Matthew 15:25)
- **Does not mean** Jesus emptied himself of the use of divine power (Col. 2:9)
- **Does mean** that Jesus did not assert Himself as Deity, but instead:
  - **Humbled** Himself as a servant (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45).
  - **Surrendered** completely to the Father's will (Matthew 26:42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 6:38)

3. Vs. 8; God the Son humbled Humility by being born in a manger, in the form of a bond-servant, even to the point of capital punishment as a cursed criminal on the Cross.

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11  
HUMILITY; **FROM** THE THRONE, **TO** A BOND-SERVANT

---

- a. The Word became flesh and dwelt here on earth; not temporarily, as he did in the Old Testament but he took on flesh permanently as one of us, forever.
  - b. 2 Corinthians 8:9; Jesus was a rich man who became poor for us
- C. Vs. 9-11; The obedience of Christ results in exultation. He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father and he will return for His Bride, the Church and take her back with Him to the Father's house where He is preparing a place for her.

**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.

### III. Conclusion

- A. When we measure time, we split it by the birth of Christ. B.C. is an abbreviation for "Before Christ."
- 1. An event so great that time itself is measured by how close or far another event happened is the event of God the Son taking on flesh, God becoming Immanuel, God with us. Some people try to separate Christ from this splitting of time by calling B.C. "Before Common Era" but the separating event from the common era and the previous era is still the birth of Jesus. Many babies were born before, during, and after this time but we only celebrate this one birth, thousands of years later, because there is no greater significant birth than God the Son becoming a bondservant.
  - 2. We need to ask why God humbled himself, leaving the throne, taking on the form of a bond-servant. **The reason we celebrate the Birth of Christ is because of the Cross of Christ.**

Jesus said that he did not come to be served, but to serve, and give himself as a ransom.

**Matthew 20:28;** <sup>28</sup>just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

The significance isn't the birth only, but also the death of Jesus. This verse in 2 Corinthians that summarizes this better than I can.

**2 Corinthians 5:21;** <sup>21</sup>He [God the Father] made Him [God the Son, Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him [Jesus].

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11  
HUMILITY; **FROM** THE THRONE, **TO** A BOND-SERVANT

---

In the celebration of Jesus' birth this year, do you know him only as the baby in a manger or do you also know him as the ransom for your sins?

Do you know for sure, that if you were to stand before God today, that you would spend eternity in heaven?

You can know for sure.