

Abide in Me

John 15:4

*Bible studies for disciples
who make disciples*



Volume 8 - Number 10

The Week of December 11, 2022

When God Became Jesus

God Stooped

Philippians 2:4-11

This week we look at one of the most profound Christological hymns in the Bible: Philippians 2:4-11. Scholars are in agreement that Paul inserted this beautiful hymn into his letter to the Philippians as a way to infuse depth into his calling that church to live the faith they profess in Christ. This is a hymn of beauty, power, profound theological truth, and provides us with a picture of the goal of our faith — to become more like Christ in every way. Let's look into the meaning of this text together.

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:4-11

As you read:

- Circle each word and/or phrase that describes HOW Jesus emptied Himself, as the Son of God took on flesh and entered humanity.
- Underline each word and/or phrase that describes HIS exaltation after His death.

⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Read Philippians 2:1-4 to gain context for our text this week. What is Paul calling the Philippian church to in these verses? How do these first four verses of chapter 2 function as a preamble to verses 5-11?

2. Verse 6 speaks to Christ's divinity and oneness with His Father. Considering our passage from last week (John 1:1-14), how is it then possible for us to apply verse 5 (having the mind of Christ at work in us)? In other words, how has God equipped us to be Christ-like when He is fully God and we are sinful humans?

3. Verse 7 is a powerful description of the incarnation and speaks of God emptying Himself to be born in human likeness. What parts of the divine nature did Jesus set aside as He emptied Himself? How does this text deepen your understanding of the humility of Christmas in the manger?

4. Verse 8 specifically references how Jesus humbled Himself in obedience as God's Son. The eternal and omnipotent God of creation; the Word become flesh; humbled Himself and became obedient to death in the most humiliating way possible. Remembering the humility we read about in verses 4 and 5, how are we to apply this in our own lives as Christ-followers? How do you define biblical humility and how are you challenged by this calling of God?

5. Verse 8 also speaks to the obedience of Christ to the will of His Father. Read Matthew 26:36-46 with a focus on how Jesus' obedience to His Father's will was on display in the Garden of Gethsemane. How does God test our obedience to His will currently and how can we learn to act in obedience with greater success?

6. Verse 9 speaks of the results of Jesus' humility and obedience — His exaltation. As God the Son had previously emptied Himself, He is now restored to Heavenly glory but with special emphasis here on the name of Jesus. What are some of the names of Jesus that you are familiar with from your study of scripture? Why is the name of Jesus so powerful?

7. Verses 10 and 11 describe a present and future reality whereby EVERY knee will bow and EVERY tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. What do these verses teach us about God's character and power?

8. The passage we study today provides a study through poetry on the nature of true power — that to be exalted we must first be humbled; that the only way up is down; that the only way to save one's life is to give it to the Lord; and that by one man's life offered as a sacrifice, ALL may be saved. How does this biblical truth stand in opposition to our current culture today? How is your faith challenged to live better as a disciple of Christ?

9. This passage is also an encapsulation of the gospel message. In your own words, describe how you see the fullness of the gospel message contained in these verses?

10. How does this passage deepen your adoration of Christmas?

Pray: Lord, thank you for leaving the majesty of Heaven so you could rescue humanity from the power of sin and death. Thank you for humbling yourself and becoming obedient to death on the cross so that I could have eternal life. I bend my knee and confess with my mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord! May you always be glorified through my life. Teach me Lord to have the same attitude in my life as you displayed through your birth, life, death, and resurrection. Amen.

Sermon Notes: *God Stooped*

Philippians 2:4-11