

## Selfless Service for the Savior p2

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**Bible Text:** Philippians 2:1-11

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Let's go back to Philippians and continue the exhortation we started last time in Philippians 2:1-11. The Apostle Paul writing to the church at Philippi is writing to a church that you would say is a good church. I always like to contrast Philippi with Corinth. In Corinth, Paul had a multitude of problems to deal with. They were very immature, carnal, functioning in the flesh; there was strife and divisions and jealousies. They went so far as to believe false teachers that Paul himself was a false teacher, and refuse, or they were grumbling about supporting Paul's ministry, etc., etc. You go on and on. But the church of Philippi is right the opposite. As a matter of fact, if you right quick look at Philippians 1 and look at verses 3, 4 and 5, he says in chapter 1, verse 3, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you." Now, he didn't say that to the church at Corinth and I'm not saying he wasn't thankful for them but he shouldn't say to the church at Corinth, "I thank God in every remembrance of you." Then he says, "always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now." And also toward the end of the book, he commends them for financially supporting his ministry in a very generous and joyous fashion. So a lot of good things you could say about the church so it's very interesting in chapter 2 as the Apostle Paul is giving us some great theological or this great theological discourse, he does it in view of motivating them to be in unity and have a oneness and be together on their purpose and not have factions and divisions and problems. And it reminds us that the strongest, healthiest, most united churches need to be exhorted biblically to stay the course.

I kind of feel like that's Grace Life of the Shoals. I don't know of any issues or factious people or things of that nature, but let's not deceive ourselves and let's be reminded that the rich doctrines of Christ are certainly to the ends of enriching our minds so that we might know and glory in him and praise him more, but they're also written that they might guide our footsteps. The last thing we want to be as a church is a church that is known for a pulpit of rich doctrine but it's cold intellectualism. The rich doctrine of Scripture is to change our hearts and our dispositions; to refocus our affections; to guide our footsteps.

So let's look at this rich doctrine and, again, the application that it has for our lives. Philippians 2, beginning in verse 1, Paul says, "Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any

affection and compassion, make my joy complete." Now, he's already said he has great joy but he says make it even more full, "by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." Now, this is new material beginning in verse 5, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Now, again, a great theological treatise particularly exalting the deity, that is that Jesus is God of very God, and all of that in the context of exhorting the Philippians to be a harmonious, selfless, serving, united church, and I call this "Selfless Service for the Savior."

Real briefly in review, we talked about how the Apostle Paul went to some lengths showing them that they are equipped for selfless service; that they have been transformed by the power of Christ; and there is great encouragement in that, he says. There is great consolation of love. You have the rich fellowship of the Spirit of God working in your heart and especially when you're under the ministry of the word or getting into the word for yourselves. There are rich new affections in your heart for other Christians and for Christ. There is a rich new compassion in your heart for other Christians and for Christ. He said, "All this transformation has happened, and by the way, is happening." You don't get the whole load the moment you're saved, you begin the sanctification process the moment you're saved but this kind of transformation is there in seed form when you believe and it continues to grow. He says, "So you have been mightily and wonderfully equipped to see the church the way Christ saw the church and selflessly give your life to the end that the church be strong and strengthened and united and focused on one purpose, that is, the glory of God."

Then he gives an exhortation for that selfless service in verses 2 through 4, and he talks about, "make my joy full to the top by being of the same mind." That is, having the same values, not the same lifestyles, not the same personality. Don't go around with this phony mimicking of each other, but all of you with your various occupations and responsibilities in life, have in back of that we're all together to the end of building up Christ's church and seeing him glorified in his church. By the way, when you get to heaven, you won't be husband and wife. When you get to heaven, you won't be sons and daughters and moms and dads, but the church will be in heaven. Do you see what I'm saying? So by no means am I suggesting that true Christianity means you neglect your family. Absolutely not. True Christianity strengthens the family. As a matter of fact, it gives its family its reality and its vitality, but there's been a movement going on where family values have gotten higher than devotion to Christ. You can make an idol out of the family. You can make an idol out of marriage. So we need to remember that the family unit's purpose should be to

the end of, "Let's all serve as a family in our church." It doesn't mean you don't do other things. Certainly you do other things, but the church should be the centerpiece of your heart. He exhorted that kind of value, that kind of glory of God focused, Christ honoring, local church centered, Scripture centered viewpoint and lifestyle.

Well, I could go on and on but that's all review. Let's get to the new material which now he's going to show us the example of selfless service. He said, "You're equipped for it. You are exhorted to it, now let me give you an example of it." Of course, that example is the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, let's look at this beginning in verse 5. In verse 5, he says very clearly to the church at Philippi, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." As if he hadn't said enough already, he said, "Now, I want to put more emphasis on your selflessly striving to serve in the church so that the church is united and one in going forward for the glory of God, and that is by challenging you, better yet, commanding you to emulate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." It's as if the Apostle Paul says to the church at Philippi, "Is there anyone else who is better than Jesus? Is there any more holy than Jesus? Is there any more perfect, more lovely, more excellent than Christ? Is there a better leader in all the chronicles of human history than Jesus Christ?" I mean, if we do not follow the example of Christ, then who do we follow? Is there one wiser or of greater intellect than Christ? Who has more wisdom and who has a better understanding than Christ?" His point is, "You find one better, let us all know and we'll follow him." Of course, to the true believer, it's a slamdunk. It's all over. "Yes, Christ is the only one worthy of emulating, the only one worthy of following."

Colossians 2:3 says, "In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Now, think about that. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But what did this one do who has all the treasure of wisdom and all of the treasure of knowledge? John 6:68, "I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me. I have come down from heaven not to look out for My own self interests. I have come down from heaven that I might selflessly serve my Father's end," and there are two sides to that coin. As Jesus came and selflessly served the heavenly Father's will, he is selflessly serving for the blessing and benefit of the church and that's the point Paul is going to bring out here. As Christ gave his all that he might have the body of Christ, the church, so he's saying you being Christlike, having his values, you having the mind of Christ, you following the example of Christ, expend yourself selflessly for the building up of the body.

Can I challenge you tonight? Do you have that attitude? Do you go into your small group every week saying, "I can't minister to a thousand active people in a church. I can't even know a thousand active people." But you can know 6 or 8 or 12 in a small group. And do you say, "I want to be selfless and strive to build up this small group, minister to the hurting and encourage the ones who need encouraging and visit the ones who need visiting, and even lovingly, compassionately and always with confidentiality, reproofing or rebuking one who is going on in sin. Helping the team effort to enroll new people or win lost people." You know, there are 1001 ways you can get overwhelmed with a church like this with all the choir ministries and all the children's ministries and student ministry and the True Church Conference. A million things to do but one thing you can do is take

the thoroughly biblical structure we have laid out and say, "But whatever else I do, I'm going to make my small group effective and strong for God." And you do that with a selfless spirit, that means you do what Jesus did. He overlooked 1,000,001 things and did what was best for the church. I mean, Jesus could have written a treatise on why we didn't deserve him dying for us, but he did what was good for the church, and he's saying now, "Take that and follow that example."

Now, he says here in verse 5, "have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus." Now, this is a clear instruction for you to develop and maintain an attitude. You see, as Christians, we don't wait for a feeling to float along and then follow it. Let me say that again: we don't wait for a certain disposition to ooze into our lives and then if we feel like it we do it. No, we take truth and then we discipline our feelings to feel the truth. Amen? Your emotions and your affections are to be disciplined also. Amen. We don't wait until we feel it. I mean, that's why we have the wicked perversions and the warped thinking we have today. They are actually, have they already passed the law in California where they can actually lock you up in jail if you try to disciple a young person who was leaning toward sodomy to not go in that direction? They actually have a law that says that's somehow a child abuse type event if you counsel or try to guide a young person out of the wickedness of sodomy. I mean, that's where you get to when people just go by what they feel and what they desire.

No, he says, "have this attitude." You may not feel it but do it. Have you found out in Christianity you act on the truth and the emotions catch up? If you will, now listen, if you will work towards benefiting your small group, you'll begin to love those people. Now, some of them grate you the wrong way. Some of my staff rubs me the wrong way. I mean, they do. I guarantee you I rub them the wrong way from time to time. But we're committed to serve the Lord together. And you learn to love and appreciate and joy in brothers and sisters who are very different from you.

We will never in this church have all these goofy ministries to make everybody's flesh happy. I was told of a church where one Sunday they came in and they had people repelling from the ceilings, coming down on ropes and stuff and landing in the auditorium, and what they were doing, they were advertising that we have a repelling and rockclimbing fellowship if you're into that. One Sunday they had people coming down the aisles on their Harley-Davidson's and they were advertising that we have a motorcycle group and gang that hangs out together if you're into that. Whatever you're into, we're into it. I'll tell you what we are here: we love Jesus so much we'll ride our motorcycles and we love Jesus so much we'll repel and do our rockclimbing but we'll also give that up from time to time so that we can fellowship with brothers and sisters who aren't like us because the church is more important than climbing rocks or riding a motorcycle. Amen? Tell me the power of God's changing somebody and you've got to pamper 50-year-old men like they're little babies in the nursery to get them to come to church. "Come to church and you can drive your Harley. Come to church and you can rock climb your rocks. We can rock climb rocks." What silly, dishonoring of Christ nonsense. Again, nothing wrong with that stuff. I'm not saying that to build the church around we're going to have fun, goof off stuff so that you'll be happy. Look, look at Jesus.

That will motivate you to want to love and serve and be selfless to the end if the church is healthy and going forward for the glory of God. So this isn't a suggestion that you begin feeling this way, this is a command, have this attitude. It's not a feeling you succumb to, it's a responsibility you commit to, and the unity and the going forward of the church depends upon this selfless service.

He says in verse 5 there, "have this attitude in yourself which was also in Christ Jesus," now again, that phrase "have this attitude" is like the earlier statement and command in verse 2 where he said, "be like minded." And I think the picture there is that we all tune into Jesus. We all devote our individual hearts to Christ. Now, here's what Satan tries to do in the church under the guise of unity. He says, "Let's keep unity in the church. Let's get everybody to go along with each other," so what kind of happens is Satan makes sure there is a real loud fleshly troublemaker and this troublemaker wants his or her way and they're very fleshly. They want power and control. They want the attention, and so under the guise, "Well, let's keep unity in the church," people accommodate that loud, squeaky wheel, if you will, and they just sort of let him or her have their way and they kind of go along with the flow and they call that unity. That's not unity, that's succumbing to the flesh. It's idolatry of a loud fleshly person.

True unity, what Paul is talking about, have this attitude, have the same mind Christ had means this, it's like you take a tuning fork and you take 100 pianos and you tune all of them to the same tuning fork, then they're all in unity in their sound. But not because the piano is focused on each other or who's the biggest loudest piano, no, it's because all the pianos were focused on one tuning fork. Well, Christ is the tuning fork for the church and we all look to him. We all yield to him. We all purpose to follow him, and the byproduct is a going forth in unity and achieving our purpose as a church.

Now, he gets richly into the doctrine of the deity of Christ but, once again, he's not teaching the doctrine so that you might only have knowledge but that it might affect your footsteps and that's what separates a healthily church from some churches who are just rich and rich in intellectual teaching but weak in body life. And I'm telling you, the New Testament knows nothing of that. We cannot grow rich in doctrine unless we are striving and humbling ourselves to say that it must affect who we are and how we function, how we live and how we love each other. That's what he's saying. The deity of Christ, this great doctrine, must affect your lifestyle as a church.

So he says in verse 6, "although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped." He existed in the form of God which means he had the inner essence and reality of who God is. He wasn't like God, he was, in effect, God. He wasn't mostly like God, he was God, the deity of Jesus Christ. It says he did not regard there equality with God a thing to be grasped. In other words, he didn't consider that his equality with God was something to hold onto. Listen now, he chose for our good and for his heavenly Father's glory to lay aside all of his divine prerogatives, or you could say his divine rights, to do what was best for his bride, the church. In John 10:11, he says, "I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." That means his church, his bride.

Now, the point is we must walk among one another with this same attitude: laying aside our rights, laying aside our privileges as necessary for the good of the church and for the glory of God. Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, "Learn of Me for I am meek and lowly in heart." Now it's coming and I'm just being honest, I don't see this at Grace Life Church, but I probably if I was preaching in a revival meeting sometime, I would say that, I would say this, "Some of you refuse to do this. You demand your justice. Your feelings have been hurt by another person within the church. You demand an apology. You want restitution. You say the way you've been treated is just not fair and you're going to sit it out, you're going to sour and you're going to pout." Well, have you considered Jesus? Can you just comprehend what he overlooked for the good of the church? Now, his point is, why can't you get over some of these things and just get over them and say, "My life is for the good of the church. I don't care what she said or she did or he said or he did." That's what the apostle is trying to teach us.

I mean, here Jesus is, he created men and they spit in his face. He created men and those men beat him with whips. He made men to start with and they punched him with their fist. He created men and they drove nails in his hands and in his feet. He created men and they thrust a spear into his side. He created men and they hurled abuse and vile and vulgar blasphemies at him while he hung on the cross. He created man and they hung him in agony on a tree and after they did this, he died to save them for the good of those he would save and make his church. Now, the question I think the Apostle Paul would say in this context is this, "Now, what's bothering you? What are you holding on to hold back serving Christ? What has offended you that keeps you from selflessly serving in the church? Have you considered the responsibility, not feeling, the responsibility you have to have the attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus?" Do you know in a church this size with the number of active people that we have, there has to literally be dozens and dozens and dozens of people every week who decide to get over stuff and just go on and serve Jesus for the good of the church and for the glory of God. I mean dozens and dozens. Trust me, I counsel with pastors all the time, I talk to pastors all the time and their office is just a rapid fire Gatlin machine gun of problems and disputes and hurt feelings and jealousies and animosities and party spirits. But a mature church has a growing core of people who've learned to discipline themselves to have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus. To lay aside those prerogatives. To lay aside so-called rights and give yourself to serve the Lord in the church for the good of the church and the glory of God.

Paul continues to elaborate here talking about Jesus is God, but how much of an example he is that should change our attitudes and behaviors. Verse 7, "he emptied himself, taking the form of a bond servant." The idea of emptying means he considered himself of no reputation. He considered himself of no effect. He considered himself the lowest of servants. He considered himself undeserving of any consideration. And he considered himself not worthy of value. He drained off his rights, his divine prerogatives as God, and viewed himself as the lowest slave to the end of the good of the church. In this day, they understood what that meant very well because it was common in this day when your slaves went out and did your work all day long, whatever it was and so many of them

were agriculture oriented, they worked with your cattle or your sheep or your livestock or worked in your fields all day long, and then at the end of the day, after that slave had put in 10 or 12 hours, who knows how long, they were then required to come in and fix you your meal and take care of you as their master before they could retire and take their meal and rest for the evening. Jesus said, "I put on that cloak and walk that reality to the end that I might please the Father and do what was good for the church."

So the point is" this is the attitude Christ the Lord had when ministering to the church, and this is the attitude we must have in our service to the church. 1 Peter 4:8, "Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another because love covers a multitude of sins." Now notice again, this is a responsibility you're assigned. Keep fervent, keep fervent in your love for one another. It doesn't just come in there, not feel a deep love for my brothers and sisters in Christ here at Grace Life. It's there, but it isn't always there the same way but I am to keep fervent in having love. You don't wait for a feeling, you command your feelings with the truth and your feelings will catch up.

Now ladies, if I might exhort you directly a little bit, ladies, this is typically harder for you. It's a little bit more of a challenge for you to dictate to your emotions instead of your emotions dictating to you. Your emotions are not Lord Jesus is Lord. Amen? And sometimes, ladies, you can feel very deeply and very strongly and be very wrong. Now, trust me, I've met too many effeminate men who act like a spoiled woman and they're no fun to be around either. But generally because God made ladies to be the compassionate, cherishing, caring, nurturing one in the marriage and, amen guys? I mean, I get sick and I don't want some of the men I know hanging out, "Get up from there. Go out and do something." Man, I want to be petted and cherished and pampered. That's beautiful but the weak side of that and men have their weak side, trust me, they need a little more compassion and caring at times and mercy at times, but I'm saying all that to say you're challenge to put on this, not to be such a wimpy, fragile, fickle, floating around like a little baby, "I want this and I want that. Well, this turns me on. Well, this turns me on." Well, I'm glad here at Grace Life that God has given me an army of men and women who function on truth not on their emotions. You're a blessing to your pastor. Well, the unity we need in the church depends on enough people purposing to maintain this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus, "although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped," and laid aside all of those things and put on the robe and the cloak of a bondservant.

Just a few cross references that we might admire and treasure our Lord a little bit more. John 4:34, Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. I nourish myself on what is my Father's will for my life." Of course, his Father's will for his life was to die and purchase a bride and care for the church. You see, if you don't understand sovereignty, you miss the truth of the Bible because you've got to understand the church was in God's heart and mind way back before creation. The church was in God's heart and mind all the way through the Old Testament dispensation so when Jesus died, it wasn't just like, "Okay, this is all just beginning, let's see how many we can get saved." Oh no, no, no, when Jesus died it was like, "We know the ones that are ours. We are securing them through the just and

righteous redemption provided by my Son Jesus Christ. I'm securing the ones I have known from eternity past and then I'm going to secure them in time and space history. I'm going to save different ones under the ministry of the Gospel. I'm going to add them to my local churches. I'm going to sanctify them as they grow and mature. I'm going to get every one of them home to glorification." Jesus said, "Of all that the Father gives me, I lose not one." That's good news.

So the church, God having a people for himself for time and for eternity has been in God's heart from the very beginning of time. It's that all of this is being worked out so Jesus said, "My food is to accomplish the will of my Father, that I might righteously redeem these judgment deserving sinners so that they can be righteous children of God both for all time and all in eternity and bring me and my Father great glory for all eternity and bring themselves infinite pleasures for all eternity." As I said this morning, the church is God's reward he gives his Son for his work. "Son, you went to the cross. You accomplished the deed. You took the wrath for the children so now here they are. Here's your reward." When you go to heaven and you're glorified one day, you're Jesus' reward. He can look at you and say, "Look what I accomplished. I got that hell deserving wretch all the way to heaven and he even has my own very righteousness and he gets to be a joint heir with me and co-reign with me over the universe." So Jesus getting his reward is your reward.

Well, I'll just mention John 5:30, John 6:38, Luke 22:42, just some other cross references. But when we think about our Lord and the attitude he put on, we've got to remind ourselves it's a great distance from the portals of glory to the streets of Galilee. It's a great distance from even the rude and rugged roads of Galilee to Golgotha. It's a great condescension. It's a great humbling, a great selflessness. And all those who have the Spirit of God in their hearts, this motivates you to also be a selfless servant for the good of the church and for the glory of God.

You know, as a pastor I get so much stuff that comes across my desk and so many things that come through emails about how to motivate your people, how to get them to serve, and all this stuff. You know, so much of it is just so worldly base. People motivated, get them interested, get them excited, you know, but, man, if you chase that stuff, what are you going to have? I mean, pretty soon you run out. The next exciting thing, the people kind of yawn and say, "Well, we did that, you know?" Then people end up running from church to church to church because you've taught them to look for the next motivating thing. But if you motivate people with this, this will last 20 years. This will last 30 years. This will last 40 years or 50 or 60 years, if you're motivated by this. By the way, I think you are as a church family motivated by Christ and your love for Christ and the example of Christ and the discipline of putting on the right attitude, not letting your feelings run you but you run your feelings. I see it. I watch it. But here's what I want to tell you: you're not special. Just because the average church is excessively subnormal and you're just normal doesn't mean you've done anything. I don't even think we're quite normal but I think you're trying to be. I think I'm trying to be. We're striving to be. Don't compare yourself with folks down at the funeral home when you've got terminal cancer and think, "Well, I'm doing pretty good." Well, in a way you are but, man, your standard is very



low. So let's don't pat ourselves on the back, let's humbly thank God for whatever sanctifying efforts and accomplishments he has had in our church, but let's remind ourselves as Paul is writing to a quite healthy, mature church here: you need to keep going.

Well, he comes to the last couple of things here and just, again, to add reinforcement to this Christ who is such an example of selfless service for the good of the body, for the good of the church, verse 10 he says, verse 9 rather, "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name," and I think that's a beautiful balance and you can't become a...I can't come up with a word. You can't make an idol out of suffering and denial and selflessness because there is a sense in which Jesus gave himself for the joy set before him. He gave himself in his selflessness while he was here in time on the earth so that in eternity he might enjoy the exceeding joy and pleasures of having a kingdom of people he redeemed with his own blood, and that's true for us also. You're serving not just so you can say, "Oh, I spent 50 years and I was so selfless and I gave up everything and I denied myself everything and I gave myself for the good of the church." Yeah, but at the end of that statement you need to have the reality that there is great, great reward in heaven; great blessing and great riches and great pleasures awaiting those who honor the Lord.

Well, Jesus is highly exalted, verse 7 says because he gave himself fully. Now, there's an interesting thing here about this highly exalted. The truth I think that's coming out is this: because Christ so perfectly and faithfully, i.e. selflessly, gave himself to the work the Father gave him and accomplished the work the Father gave him to redeem a sinful people that they might be righteous and be theirs forever, therefore God has even more so exalted his Son than he was even exalted before. God has highly exalted him because he's so wonderfully, selflessly, faithfully achieved the task the Father gave him. Now, here's what I think that means: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit have creation, they make creation and creation brings great glory to God, but then there is a second work that is far superior in wisdom and power and beauty than the first creation, that's the second creation or the new creation which is made up of all those who are born again. We see more wonders, more glories, more the stupendousness of God's great character and person in him redeeming sinners, making them have the very righteousness of Christ and making a new heaven and a new earth where that righteousness dwells and those people dwell with him for ever and ever because, you see, the righteousness we have in Christ exceeds the righteousness Adam and Eve had before they sinned. So there is a greater glory in the coming creation when he gets all of it done than there was in the first creation. Are you with me? It's just a greater thing. It's a bigger work. It's a more wonderful work. So there is more highly or Christ is more highly exalted at the end of all this work of redemption and glorifying his church than he was before he performed all that work and, actually, he's still performing it. Now, it's a finished thing in the eyes of God but in time and space history, he's still completing the church, still growing the church, still sanctifying us as individuals in the church, and one day it will all be glorified.

It says, "given Him a name that is above every name." I think the idea there, the name in the Jewish culture and context represented the character, the attributes of a person, and so now that Jesus has accomplished redemption and when Jesus has finished the work of completely glorifying his bride, his church, his people, then his more of who he is in character, more of his attributes will be seen in that great work he's accomplished. I mean, of all things, I hate to bring something as trivial as a football illustration in here but it just popped into my mind. When we have a football player and he finishes his greatest season and we think, "Wow, he was good before but he has shown us more of what he's capable of," well, that's the idea here. When Jesus gets through with his church, he will have a name that is above every name. Not that his name wasn't above every name before, but there will be more to his character and attributes that are now seen and manifested, us wicked sinners being cleansed and glorified and made his body and with him for all eternity. Do you get that? His name is higher now. It's greater now than it was even before he made all this accomplishment.

Now, verses 10 and 11, "so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth." Now wait a minute, just a moment ago he was in the form of God but didn't regard equality with God a thing to be grasped. Just a moment ago he laid aside and emptied himself, considered himself of no value. Just a moment ago he considered himself the lowest slave but now look at him. Now look at him. These cotton picking liberals who want to interpolate into the text or just draw out the pictures of Jesus they like, well, they would like to make Jesus just an example of caring and loving and taking care of society and while there is some truth to that, but they won't go to this part where the individual Jesus is on his throne and every knee is bowing and every tongue is confessing that, "You," singular, "are Lord of all." Jesus didn't just come to give mankind a better approach to caring for each other. He came to be Lord of all and this one who was servant to the end of his church's good, now is Lord before everyone.

Verse 11, "every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Jesus Christ is Lord has become a phrase that has fallen on almost triviality. It's just, it's almost, it's sad that that word "Lord" almost means nothing anymore. It has just been used so much and thrown around so much, but it really declares the dignity and the true character of who Christ is, that he is the Lord. He is the only and true object of worship.

Now, in the early church when they would see each other in town or come visit one another's house, the first thing they would say is, "Jesus Christ is Lord," just reminding each other of their allegiance and their loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ. But what this text is saying, for all believers who are inheriting the efforts of Christ's grace and blessing and bliss and heaven for all eternity, and for unbelievers who will face judgment and wrath for all eternity, all knees will bow and every tongue will confess, "Jesus Christ is Lord." The point is: one day every single soul, he says, those who are above the earth, saints already living in glory, are going to say "Jesus is Lord," bowing on their knees. Those who are on the earth, everyone living when he returns, will bow their knee and confess "Jesus Christ is Lord." And under the earth, all the dead who are unbelievers will be

brought to life to the end that they might face Christ at the great white throne judgment and there kneel and proclaim with their very tongue, "Jesus is Lord." That's powerful, isn't it? The entire universe of all men who have ever existed will one day be brought to our persuasion. This one who emptied himself, this one who thought equality with God not something he wanted to hold onto, this one who was willing to put on the cloak of a bond slave, this one is going to be crowned King and Lord of all. So he's motivating these saints to get with it and to stay faithful.

Well, let me just end with a couple of cross references. 1 Peter 5:5-6, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time." That's a good verse, isn't it? So be like Jesus and selflessly give yourself for the health and the goodness and the prosperity and the advancement of the church and then the day will come when you will be exalted.

Now, brothers and sisters, there are going to be, I think I could safely say, millions of people who to a significant degree gave themselves up for "good causes." They helped the poor in this part of the world. They did this and they did that and I'm not saying there's not some good to that but listen to me: much of that is going to perish in eternal loss because Jesus isn't first and foremost about social care, he's first and foremost about the care of his church and that's what he gave himself. Could Jesus have not healed everybody who was sick? Could Jesus have not fed everyone who was hungry? But what did he give, he did some of that, but what did he give his primary energies to? What was the focus of his selfless service? He went to the cross to take care of his church and so that ought to be our heart. Yes, you should help those who are hurting around you. You should be generous to the hurting. Absolutely, and do it in the name of Christ, but it's almost like when you take a husband or a wife at a wedding altar and you make a vow to a person, you may help others in town but you'll take care of that wife first. Well, that's the way it is in the church. Our selfless duty in service must be God's church he has added us to first and dedicate ourselves there, and then when we give ourselves there humbly and selflessly, then we can be sure God will be pleased with our efforts and will be exalted at the proper time. Luke 14:11, Jesus said, "For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

So let's come full circle and remember the author's point. Paul writing to this good church at Philippi is saying, "Jesus rendered selfless service for the benefit and the blessing of the church and look how that turned out. He has now been given a name above every name. He's now more highly exalted than before he gave himself that way. So the same is true for you." Romans 8:18 and we're done, Paul said, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

Now, can we be very practical? Our small group enrollment campaign, Operation Andrew, that's just one way you can take a token of your heart, a token of your attention, a token of your time, and say, "I want to selflessly give myself to help build up the church," and one practical way that you can do that that's very biblically sound is by enrolling those that they might come into the Gentile court of the church, the small group

where they might be loved, and they might be prayed for, and they might hear the Gospel, and they might be shared with, and in that environment many come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. And I promise you, put those assurances back up, if you would, Brother Tom. I promise you these are assurances from Pastor Jeff Noblit, if you'll pray daily for an open door, 1. God will open doors. If you'll just say, "God, give me an open door," God will open doors. 2. It won't be hard, it will be easy. You'll be surprised how open people are to talk with you about it. David and I enrolled a lady in the window at Sonic. Of course, he kind of lives at Sonic so he kind of had developed a relationship down there, but she was just open. She was ready. She wanted to talk about it and she enrolled and her child enrolled and we're continuing to go down there and reach out to her. 3. You'll enroll more than one before the campaign is over. Now, why can't you do that? Why wouldn't you do that? Give yourself selflessly to the building up of the church for the glory of God. I guarantee you, you can't be off track by doing this.

Let's stand together in prayer, alright?