

1. **Introduction:** A further look at Philippians 2:5-11 plus additional verses.
2. **ESV Philippians 2:5-11:** *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.*
 - Paul begins by saying, *“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.”* In describing Jesus’ mindset, Paul begins with humility.
 - Jesus is the ultimate example of proper humility. His humility was not meekness or weakness, nor was it being self-effacing or submissive. Humility, like that of Jesus, is an attitude of spiritual modesty that is characterized by gratitude and is free from arrogance and entitlement.
3. Jesus, *“being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.”*
 - The second Person of the Trinity, without loss of one iota of His divine nature, took to Himself a human nature, becoming the God-Man, Jesus of Nazareth, one Person with two natures. His divine nature was unchanged by acquiring a parallel human nature.
 - Jesus made no attempt to incorporate His divine attributes into His human nature. In His human nature, He was 100% human. He remained 100% divine in His divine nature. No mixing or interfering between the two natures.
 - The two natures were independent of one another, but both were controlled by His divine “mission control system” (divine “I”). The two natures did not interfere with one another.
 - His human nature was a real human nature, subject to all the frailties of humanity except without sin. That meant His human nature was subject to death. He made no attempt to use His divine nature to avoid death or sickness in His human nature.
 - He was one Person with two non-interfering natures. He could switch between natures. Both natures were controlled by His divine “mission control system” or “I.”
 - One example of a switch (Mk 4:35-41): Jesus, in His human nature was exhausted and He slept in a boat. A great windstorm arose. The disciples feared they would drown and awakened Jesus. Then, in His divine nature, He calmed the wind and waves by simply saying *“Peace, be still.”*
 - The key Greek word in Verse 2:7 is difficult to interpret and is translated various ways.
 - Examples: “He emptied himself” in the ESV, “made himself nothing” in the NIV, “made himself of no reputation” in the NKJV (a footnote that says he emptied himself of his

privileges), in the AMP “emptied Himself without renouncing or diminishing His deity, temporarily giving up the outward expression of divine equality and His rightful dignity.”

- It is vital that “what Jesus emptied Himself of” be rightly understood. It must not be taken to mean that Jesus emptying Himself in any way affected His deity.
- The point is that Jesus presented Himself as an ordinary person in an ordinary family. Neither He nor family members had any special reputation to set them apart from others. For Jesus, that later changed as He began His ministry (remember the spectacular turning water into wine).
- A king, voluntarily putting aside his crown and dressing as a peasant, remains king.
- Jesus humbled Himself (1.) by taking the form of a man and not a more glorious creature like an angel, (2.) being born in an obscure place to parents of a despised people, (3.) He first appeared as a helpless child rather than a mature man, (4.) He submitted to the obedience appropriate to a child, (5.) He learned and practiced the trade of a carpenter, (6.) He had a long wait before launching the ministry He came to do, (7.) his disciples were not of high distinction.
- (8.) Jesus was humble in the way He taught, (9.) in the weakness, hunger, thirst, and tiredness He endured, (10.) in the total obedience to His heavenly Father, (11.) in submission to the Holy Spirit, (12.) in willingly submitting to death on the cross, (13.) in the shame, mocking, and public humiliation of His trial, scourging, and death sentence, (14.) in enduring the physical and spiritual agony of the cross.
- Crucifixion was a shameful death not permitted for Roman citizens. One who was crucified was considered by the Jews of Jesus’ day to be particularly cursed by God (Dt 21:23, Gal 3:13).
- From the highest height of heaven, the Son became incarnate as Jesus and ended His earthly life at what seems to be the furthest point from His throne in heaven, enduring the most despised death of all, condemned as a criminal to die on a cross.
- But God recognized the successful completion of Jesus’ earthly salvation mission. He ***“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.”***
- This statement is a recognition that Jesus is divine and that in His incarnate state, He exhibited a character and person above all others.
- The whole world of people is to brought in submission to Jesus Christ. This is not a declaration of universal salvation. It means that every personal being will ultimately confess the lordship of Jesus Christ either in faith with great joy or in agony and resentment of what might have been.
- The combined effect of every person’s voice confessing and their knees bowing conveys the image of complete submission to Jesus.

4. **Philippians 2:12-13**: *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

- Paul uses the word “therefore” both in verse 2:9 and in 2:12. “Therefore” means “because of this.” Paul uses the word to point to two parallel results that flow from Jesus’ example.
- First, because Jesus, though fully God, humbled Himself and became obedient even to death on a cross, **therefore** God exalted Him (v. 9) to the highest category.
- Jesus demonstrated the power of humility and obedience by His behavior. **“Therefore”** each believer is to work out their salvation (v. 12) in humility and obedience as God works in them.
- The salvation God bestows is largely in latent form. In humble obedience, believers strive to cooperate in making the consequences of God’s inward salvation outwardly manifest.
- Paul does not in any way imply that a person through work can earn their own salvation. A person’s salvation is the gift of God based on Jesus’ salvation work. It is given by His grace through a person’s faith.
- God’s gift of salvation is based on what Jesus did for us. When a person, by grace through faith, becomes a believer, their immediate change is mostly internal in the spiritual heart. Before they believed, they had misconceptions about God and self.
- The things a person is doing before receiving salvation will not immediately disappear. Many things will continue, often without recognizing they are sin.
- It will take continuing work of the Holy Spirit, as well as time and effort on the part of the new believer for the changes in the spiritual heart to be evidenced in thoughts and behavior.
- God has provided for all that. He begins with the gift of saving faith to enable belief. Upon belief, He declares the believer legally righteous or justified before Him. He sends the Holy Spirit to indwell the new believer who begins the work of sanctification.
- He gives sustaining faith to carry the new believer through the whole process of sanctification.
- The sanctification process continues until it is completed. That usually occurs at mortal death when the Holy Spirit eliminates the residual sin nature thus eliminating any inclination to sin.
- The completion of sanctification is called glorification, making the soul holy so that it is ready to live in the presence of God. **“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord”** (Heb 12:14).
- The body goes back to the earth and the glorified soul goes directly to God.
- In Paul’s mention of fear and trembling, he means we should live with a fear of failing to work out the salvation God has given. Complete salvation is given but, initially, it is

largely latent and must be made manifest by the believer working in coordination with the Holy Spirit.

- Paul's concept is that since God has done and is doing a work in each believer, each believer has a great responsibility to work diligently to make manifest outwardly that which God has worked inwardly and latently. Strive for righteous thoughts and behavior.
 - **Philippians 2:14-16**: *Do all things without grumbling or disputing,¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.*
 - The grumbling and disputing referred to is mainly directed at God and His requirements for righteous living, and secondarily at other believers and the unbelieving world.
 - Through accomplishing the work of God having a non-complaining spirit, we demonstrate that we are true believers in Christ.
 - ***“Be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”***
 - Paul means that believers should not be like rebellious Israel, who were constantly complaining and disputing with God during their time in the wilderness.
 - Christians stand out in the world as lights stand out in the darkness. That is true. The question is how bright and how consistently do they shine?
 - Lights make things visible, are used as warnings and guides, are used to convey cheerfulness, and are used to make things safe. Being in surrounding darkness should be a great incentive to shine brightly.
 - ***“Holding fast to the word of life”*** is the goal to be diligently sought. Achieving that goal will enable a believer to be found with Jesus and Paul of the Day of Christ.
 - It will greatly please Paul proud to know that his effort in presenting the gospel was not in vain.
5. **Next**: Philippians 2:17-18 in which Paul gives information about himself as an example.