

The Exaltation that Comes After the Humiliation – Philippians 2: 9-11

Introduction and Outline

- Scripture Reading: Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12; Philippians 2: 1–11.
- Introduction: Life is full of troubles. What makes you want to open your eyes in the morning and face the challenges of each new day? The only thing that motivates me to open my eyes is the risen Lord Jesus and the promise of His glorious second coming.
- The meanings of Jesus' ascension: 1. The ascension announces Christ will return (Acts 1: 11) ; 2. The ascension shows everything is going according to plan (Luke 24: 26) ; 3. The ascension reminds believers of our source of life (Colossians 3: 3) ; 4. The ascension proclaims the great priest's care (Romans 8: 34) ; 5. The ascension gives us the purpose of life (Philippians 3: 7-8) ; 6. The ascension stimulates our worship(Luke 24: 52) ; 7. The ascension anticipates the believer's exaltation (1 Peter 5: 6) .
- Outline:
 - Title: The Exaltation that Comes After the Humiliation
 - 1. The Exaltation of Jesus (v9)
 - 1a. Exaltation Is the Result of Humiliation
 - 1b. Exaltation Is a Work of God
 - 1c. Exaltation Is a Supreme Honor
 - 2. The Reaction of the Universe (vv10-11a)
 - 2a. The Fact No One Can Avoid
 - 2b. The Expression of Total Surrender
 - 3. The Glorification of the Father (v11b)

The Exaltation of Jesus (v9)

- Review the context: The emphasis of vv 5-11 is exhortation for Christians to “have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,” and have Christlike self-sacrificing humility as in vv 6-8. Is this too hard? Can you do it? May the exaltation of Jesus in vv 9-11 become your motivation!

Hebrews 12: 2“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who **for the joy set before Him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Exaltation Is the Result of Humiliation

- “For this reason also”: causal relationship – Exaltation is the result of humiliation.
Nobody doesn't want to be exalted. Jesus says “Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.” He assumes people want to be exalted, so he says in order to be exalted, one must first be humbled. This implies that the desire to be exalted must be legitimate in some sense. Because——God is enthroned on high (Psalm 113: 4-5), He wants us to seek Him!

But sin has distorted man's desire that they think they can exalt themselves by their own effort. However, the biblical way of exaltation is the way of humiliation! It is to continually humble oneself, seeing oneself as the lowest slave who is wholly devoted to serving others.

Matthew 23: 11 “But the greatest among you shall be your servant.”

1 Peter 5: 6 “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ”

Exaltation Is a Work of God

- “**God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him.....**”: Christ is the subject in vv 5-8; but God in vv 9-11. It even uses the word “bestowed” to emphasize that the exaltation of Jesus, speaking according to His humanity, was granted by God's grace and not earned by Him!

Theological point: The dual nature of Jesus, being fully God and fully man, is very important. If you are confused about His dual nature as the God-man, you will only imitate Christ to a point where you feel comfortable. When more effort is required, you will excuse yourself by saying: “Jesus is God! I can't imitate.” The Bible never asks you to imitate Christ's miracles, but His obedience to God and service to man were all rendered in His full humanity – without any selfishness, complete self-sacrificing, complete obedience to God, complete dependence on the Holy Spirit – this is the ultimate example for us to imitate!

Exaltation Is a Supreme Honor

- “highly exalted”: Superlative degree. No higher position. It's the height only God can reach. (Psalm 97: 9)
- “the name which is above every name”: as “Lord” in verse 11. He is “King of kings, and Lord of Lords.” (Revelation 19: 16)

The meaning of “Lord”: 1. Lord implies position, to be honored; 2. Lord implies authority, authority to command and to judge; you are responsible to obey and to give an account; 3. Lord is the NT equivalent of Yahweh (God's personal name in the OT, rendered as LORD in NASB). Calling Jesus Lord means to recognize Jesus as Yahweh, the one true God! (The following verses contain a prophecy from Isaiah 45: 23 where it is to Yahweh that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, and this prophecy is to be fulfilled in Jesus!)

An unfathomable mystery: The exalted believer will receive a new name too! (Revelation 2: 17; 3: 12)

The Reaction of the Universe (vv10-11a)

- “so that.....”: Result clause indicating the result of Jesus' exaltation ——The entire universe will confess Jesus as the Lord most high!

The Fact No One Can Avoid

- “of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth”: “who are in heaven” refers to holy angels and the saints who have died; “on earth” includes all living people, believers and unbelievers,

as well as some fallen angels; “under the earth” refers to dead unbelievers and some fallen angels who are now kept in pits of darkness. (2 Peter 2: 4)

Jesus’ exaltation is a fact that no one can avoid. You will either worship Him freely and joyfully in heaven, or you’ll have to bow down to Him unwillingly gnashing your teeth in hell. It’s either glad submission or forceful subjection against your will.

The Expression of Total Surrender

- “every knee will bow”: A gesture which usually expresses a subordinate's reverence for the superior in humility and obedience. (E.g., Paul bows his knees in prayer in Ephesians 3: 14.) But there is another kind of bowing the knee, and that is when the defeated enemy falls to his knees in fear and trembling before the conqueror.
- “confess”: This is what believers did at their salvation (Romans 10: 9); For unbelievers, they will eventually bow their knees before Jesus the King and confess with weeping and gnashing of teeth that “Jesus *really is* the Lord!”

The confession of unbelievers bowing their knees in the future may be similar to the demon’s faith, “the demons also believe, and shudder, ” (James 2: 19) for they are well aware that they are God’s enemies. (cf. Matthew 8: 29) When believers worship in heaven on their knees, unbelievers can only beg for mercy on their knees with the demons, but they will not get it since they have missed the opportunities God provided for repentance.

- “Jesus Christ is Lord”: He *is* Lord ! It is an objective fact that the entire universe will confess. Sometimes in evangelism people say, “Ask Jesus to be the Lord of your life”. What they want to express is actually to “*confess* that He *is* Lord.” You have no right to determine whether you will *let* Him be your Lord or not. He *is* your Lord, whether you will confess it or not. When you first believed, you did not *grant Jesus the right to become* your Lord, He *is your Lord*, you just finally came to terms with this fact!

Jesus is Lord. Either He is the Lord who redeems you or the Lord who judges you, and that depends on when you will bow your knees and confess Him as Lord. You can confess *now* and willingly submit to His authority, and He will be the Lord who redeems you. Or, He will be the Lord who judges you, when, on judgment day, you will have to bow your knees, and you will have to confess in the eternal punishment of hell that He is indeed the Lord.

The Glorification of the Father (v11b)

- “to the glory of God the Father”: The voices from heaven and hell all give glory to God the Father through exalting Jesus.

Note the difference of personhood here: The Son loves the Father, obeys the Father’s will with self-humbling, this is the Son exalting the Father; The Father loves the Son, highly exalted the Son, giving Him all the honor and glory; And the glory of the Son does not take away from the Father’s glory at all but instead accomplishes the Father’s glory, that the Father is glorified in the glory of the Son! Ponder: The relationship of the Triune God is the basis of church unity (John 17: 11, 22)!

Application and Summary

- I. Repent and confess the Lord now! How long will you hesitate? Instead of having to admit the undeniable fact that Jesus is Lord in the eternal punishment of hell, why don't you believe Him now and confess Him with your mouth now, that you may have the joy of worshiping Him forever in heaven in the glory of His presence, praising Him face to face that He is the Lord of the lords and King of the kings?
- II. Give up all self-elevating and self-glorifying thoughts! In the kingdom of God, the way of exaltation is the way of humiliation. All we need to do is humble ourselves continuously and serve others sacrificially, and God will exalt us in His timing.
- III. Do you get upset and jealous when your colleagues get promoted? Have you ever thought that you deserve better treatment? Exaltation is God's work, you just focus on your part to imitate Christ and His self-denying humility!
- IV. Back to the question at the beginning. What makes you want to open your eyes every morning and go to work? Jesus "for the joy set before Him, despised the shame" and accomplished God's will in full obedience——Do you set the future joy before you everyday?

Revelation 3: 21“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

Revelation 5: 13“And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.””

Revelation 19: 6“Then I heard *something* like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”