

The Incarnation: Lord of All

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good morning again and welcome to faith. As we come to the end of this series, we began in the beginning of December looking at the incarnation. I would like for us this morning to come face to face with the ultimate decision that is the most important decision for every single one of us here today. It's a decision that causes us to come face to face with the reality of what Jesus accomplished when he came to this earth and when he died on the cross. And I would like for us, if you have your Bibles, to turn with me to the book of Philippians chapter number two.

And we will be spending our time in the last three verses of what we have been studying all month, but I would like for us to at least look back to Philippians chapter two, verse nine, to get an overview. And we'll be looking at the last part of this passage that we have been studying together in. Let's go back to, let's see, let me go to verse nine. Therefore, God also has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow of those in heaven and of those on earth and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Lord God, this morning, I pray that as we open your word and as we look at what was accomplished in the humiliation of our Lord and Savior, Jesus

Christ taking upon himself the nature of a slave, the form of a servant coming to this earth to identify with us, being fully man, fully God, so that he could pay the ultimate price on the cross for us.

And Lord, be with us this morning. I pray that your Holy Spirit would be working in each and every heart and mind today. For it's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. What I want us to do is look at those last three verses, verses 9, 10, and 11, and look to see as we realize that as the culmination of these verses, now remember, Paul was talking to the Christians in Philippi, and they were rather self-absorbed, rather selfish. They were living the Philippian dream, and Paul is saying, now we need to remember, we need to have the same attitude that Jesus Christ had. Jesus Christ was selfless. He didn't think that being equal with God was something to be held on to, something to be grasped, but he was willing to leave that and to come to this earth and die on the cross in our place. And so as we culminate this series of messages and look at Philippians chapter 2, verses 9 through 11, we started in verse number 5, but verses 9, 10, and 11, that we see that Jesus Christ has been declared Lord of the universe. And this is something that we see throughout Christianity. As a matter of fact, in Acts chapter 2, verse 36, when Peter preached there in Jerusalem, he stood up and says to the crowd, God has made this

Jesus whom you crucified, Lord and Christ, Lord and Messiah. And it's central. We see it over 750 times in the New Testament that Jesus Christ is called Lord. And as we look at verses 9 through 11 in Philippians chapter 2, what I would like for us to do is as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, I want us to see four facets of his lordship unfold right here in verses 9, 10, and 11.

[4 : 3 5] And the first thing that we see is what we've seen is we've seen Jesus Christ humbled, coming to earth, becoming a human being, and we saw him humiliated. But what we see here in verse 9, therefore God also has what? Highly exalted him. So we see Jesus reigns as Lord, in the utmost position. So today, 2016, near the end of 2016, Jesus Christ is still Lord.

He is still our Savior, and he reigns in the utmost position. As a matter of fact, this phrase, used only this time in the New Testament language, literally what we see here is that God has super super-exalted Jesus. He has super-eminently exalted Jesus Christ as Lord. He's given him the highest position, the utmost position. Now think about that. Jesus Christ, over 2,000 years ago, came to earth as a human being. Now what is different about Jesus today than from eternity past? Jesus Christ was fully God for eternity past. We see Jesus in Genesis 1.1. We see Jesus throughout the Old Testament.

And Jesus did not have his beginning when he was born in that stable, in that feed trough, there in that little town of Bethlehem. He was God forever. But Jesus Christ took upon himself, the Bible says, the nature of a man, the nature, the form of a man, literally became a human being, fully God, fully man. And what's different about Jesus today is, you remember, when Jesus left this earth, after he was resurrected, he went back to heaven in a resurrected what?

body. He went back to heaven in a resurrected body. So Jesus retains his humanity, in other words.

And the Bible tells us, and we believe, that one day we are going to be transformed and given a similar body that Jesus had when he left this earth. And so that leads us exactly to what we've seen in the last few weeks that Jesus Christ was humbled when he came to the earth. Bible said he even was humbled even to be a little bit lower than the angels. And he humbled himself and became subject even to his creation. He obeyed mom and dad. Can you imagine obeying mom and dad that you created? But yet he subjected himself to his human parents, all the while honoring and being obedient to his heavenly father.

[7 : 42] So the picture is, when we get to Philippians chapter 2, verse 9, he's gone from the humiliation of man that we talked about in the last few weeks, and now he reigns in the utmost position. So he's gone from the humiliation of man to the honor of God. Therefore, verse 9 says, God has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name. I don't care whether it's Mohammed or Buddha or any other religious figure. Jesus Christ's name is above every name. God has super, highly, eminently exalted him above every other name. You know, that's why the name of Jesus is so divisive today. Because there is only one way to God the Father, and that's through Jesus Christ. And you know, we don't like that. You know, that reminds me, we hearken back to the early days of the automobile.

Remember Henry Ford? When he started the process and really pioneered the assembly line process? And he said, you can have a Ford in any color. Black.

But what happened? People said, we want what? Choices. We want choices. And so he capitulated, and now we can get a car in almost any color, the horriblest colors even, because we like choices.

But God says, you have a choice. You either accept me or reject me. How's that for a choice? Isn't it the most marvelous choice available? Because he has a name that is above every single name.

He has gone from the humiliation of man to the honor of God. And what we see, if you were a Jewish person reading this, what we see is, you hearken back to the Old Testament. And God was known as Yahweh. God was known as Lord. He was known as the I Am. But as we come to the New Testament, when you get to the Greek translation of the Old Testament, when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, every time God, Yahweh, his name was translated as Lord, it's the same Greek word that is given for the name of Jesus as Lord every time in the New Testament. So what we're seeing is Jesus is God. When he was talking to the religious leaders, he was saying, you want to see God?

[10 : 43] God, just look at me. Highly exalted. God, we see Jesus Christ highly exalted throughout the New Testament.

The same honor and glory that belongs to the God of the Old Testament belongs to the Jesus of the New Testament. This is the identity of the baby in the manger. He is Christ the Lord, worthy of all our praise, exalted to the utmost position, and from the humiliation of man to the honor of God. Now, I don't want us to miss the context of this here, because if you read through the book of Philippians, you're going to see, like I said earlier, that the Christians in Philippi, the church in Philippi, had become self-obsessed and self-absorbed. And they were living for themselves, sometimes even at the expense of their fellow believers, at the expense of their brothers and sisters in Christ. And they were asserting themselves, asserting what they considered to be their rights over one another.

And he starts off in Philippians chapter 2, if you want to go back to verse 3, I don't have this up on the screen, but in your Bibles, Paul tells them, let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others, what? Better than himself, better than herself. That's hard for us as human beings. Let each of you look out, not only for his own interest, but also for the interest of others. So don't miss it. Not only is Jesus Christ the object of our worship, but he's a pattern for our lives. Because what did Jesus do? Paul said, let this same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. What was that attitude? The attitude, even though I have all the glory that I share with God the Father throughout eternity past, I don't think too much of myself that I am willing to humble myself and to do whatever it takes to save our creation and ultimately go even the death of a cross.

And so he goes through the humiliation, through the honor of God, but he's also showing us, as we look at that context, that success before God or pleasing God, the path is paved with selflessness before man. Now this goes against everything in the Philippian culture, and you realize this goes against everything in the American culture as well. Selflessness is not the popular choice that we have today. But what we see is we sacrifice ourselves, we humble ourselves, and then we are exalted by God.

We see that throughout scripture. God's servants being humbled and ultimately being exalted. And Philippians 2:9, God has highly exalted him. Who exalted Jesus? Verse 9, God exalted Jesus because Jesus humiliated himself or humbled himself. And no one humbled Jesus. We saw last week that Jesus humbled himself. Then God glorified him. God lifted him up. And it's the same thing we see in the book of Genesis with Joseph. You remember? 13 years, Joseph was humbled. And ultimately, what did God do?

[14 : 29] God exalts Joseph. And so we see that from the humiliation of man to the honor of God, we see that if we want to please God, that path is paved with selflessness before man. The first thing we see is he reigns in the utmost position. The second thing we see in Philippians chapter 2 verses 9 through 11 is Jesus Christ holds unending power. Jesus Christ has all the power. Now if we look at the mindset of a Jew who might have been hearing this, you know, they might have been reminded back of God of the Old Testament. But you are Gentile, and you're hearing this, and you are hearing this read to you that the Apostle Paul is saying, and he uses the word Lord. What comes to your mind? Now remember, Greek mindset, Gentile mindset, they were used to having slaves. And slave owners were called lords. And so in a Greek mindset, in a Gentile mindset, we would equate, or this first century mindset would have equated Jesus with power. Because if you own something, you have power over it.

If you own something, you are the master of it, and you have power. Him who took on the nature of a slave has this unending power. And once he rose from the cross, arose from the grave, he reigns and has this unending power. Now his dominion we see, we see in verse 10. Look at verse 10 with me of Philippians 2.

God has highly, remember, God highly exalted Jesus, given him a name above every name, so that what? We see here his dominion, his unending power. We see that he has the power to save. First of all, he has the power to save. See, Philippians chapter 2 verse 9 starts with what word?

Hmm? What word does Philippians 2 verse 9 start with? Therefore. Therefore. So what we have to do is, we look, have to see why therefore is there. What did Jesus do? Jesus humbled himself, came to the earth, even to the death of a cross. And we heard that Sunday when we looked at that, was that was the purpose of his coming. Remember the gifts that the Magi gave? Gold, incense, myrrh, or embalming fluid.

I mean, imagine that. You go to a baby shower and bring a baby casket. That's unheard of. Well, why was the baby Jesus brought embalming fluid? Because it gives us a picture of that was his purpose. He was born to die. You know, we were born and we die, but that's not our purpose.

[17 : 40] Jesus was born for the purpose of dying on the cross in our place. So therefore, therefore, because he became obedient to death, because he died on the cross, he is given the name above every name. He alone has the power to save. He alone is Lord over death. Him who knew no sin became sin for us. He alone has the power to save. I think most, if not all of us, have lost a family member in Christ. They've gone on before us. They have died, and we had to say goodbye to their earthly body.

But we are able to know beyond the shadow of a doubt, based upon what God's word tells us, that fret not, don't grieve like others who have no hope. One day we will see them again, because Jesus Christ holds the power over death. Jesus Christ has the power to save. He has the power power also to rule over us as well. He is the owner. He's sovereign. He is basically means that he is in complete control. That at the name of Jesus Christ, every knee should bow. God has highly exalted him, given him a name which is above every name. Colossians chapter 2 verses 9 and 10 talk about that in Christ, dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. So that means when Jesus Christ was on planet earth, he was God. He wasn't part of God, and God wasn't part of Jesus. Paul says in Colossians chapter 2 that all the fullness of the fullness of the Godhead was in Jesus in bodily form. And he has the power to rule over us. And so that's the picture we get. And one day, notice verse number 10, that at the name of Jesus, every knee will do what? Every knee will bow. Every knee will bow. So that brings us to the decision that

I talked about when we first started. So you know I have a choice. And it's the most important choice that anyone could ever make. Because the Bible says that at the name of Jesus, not some, not maybe, not most, but the Bible says that at the name of Jesus, every single knee, and I take that to mean every knee that has ever existed from the creation of mankind, from Adam to the last person that will be alive when Jesus Christ either takes us home or when the last person that has ever been born stands before God at the great white throne judgment. Bible says every knee is going to bow. So our decision that we have to make, the first decision. Now here's the thing, since every knee is going to bow before him either now or later, you see, everyone here today, you have been given a wonderful gift.

You have been given the opportunity to bow before him today. You have the opportunity to bow before him now and say, Jesus, I trust you. You are God. You are the Lord of creation. And I bow my knee. I bow my life to you and accept the gift of life. And I accept you as my Savior and Lord. See, we have that opportunity because if we bow the knee today, that results in salvation. All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, the Bible says. So this morning, the day that we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ is the day that you could be born new. A brand new life. The Bible says, though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Anyone has ever thought about how neat it would be, how wonderful it would be, especially for some of us who feel that we have wasted, squandered, or lived horribly. And we look at our past and some people say, I need to turn over a new leaf. Have you ever thought about what it would be like if there would be a way possible for you to go and your past would be erased? God says, I'll do it.

The moment we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the Bible says, God says, I will remember your sins no more. He says, I will separate your sins from you as far as the east is from the west. I will remember them no more. That's awesome. So bowing the knee today results in salvation. And so I trust that today, if there's anyone here in this auditorium today, even if you're not sure, even if you say, well, you know what? I grew up in church. I walked down an aisle one day, I came forward, spoke to the pastor, and I was baptized, but you know, I was little. I might've been five. I might've been 10. And you know, I don't know if I'm really, I don't know if I'm really following Jesus. I don't know if I'm right with God. And I encourage you at the end of our time together, don't hesitate. Don't wait.

[23 : 42] You come. As a matter of fact, it's been, this has been a number of years ago. It's only happened to me once, but someone came up during the middle of the message and says, I need to be saved. Isn't that awesome? I encourage you, don't squander this opportunity. Bow the knee today, resulting in a new life in Christ. But there's another choice that we have to make. The Bible says every knee is going to bow. But what if we don't bow our knee to Christ today? What if we say, you know what? I don't, I don't get into all that religious stuff. That's not for me. Well, I've got news for that person. One day your knee will bow to Christ and you will say, Jesus, you are Lord.

Bow the knee then that results in condemnation. See, for all of us who have trusted Christ as our Savior and trust in his salvation for us, there is absolutely no condemnation. Romans 8, 1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. But those who stand before God at his great white throne judgment, we see in the book of the Revelation, Bible says, God will say to them, depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you.

And so bow the knee then results in eternal condemnation. He is reigning in the utmost position.

He holds unending power as Lord of our lives. He is in control. And it's good that he's in control. I'm glad you're not in control. And you're glad that I'm not in control. Amen? Because God alone knows what's best for us. Jesus is Lord. And the final two things that matter means he deserves universal praise. He deserves universal praise. The third thing that we see, and very quickly, he deserves praise from every angel. The Bible says, verse 10, that the name of Jesus, Philippians 2, 10, that in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow of those, now let me read this for you, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth. Now you might say, well, what in the world does that mean? I think that pretty much covers everything. And so every created angel, that means every angel that obeys God, that means every angel that defected and followed

[26 : 18] Lucifer. The Bible says, every knee shall bow. Everything created in heaven, on the earth, and even under the earth, will one day say, Jesus, you are Lord. So from every angel, also from every people.

Are you included in verse number 10? Yes, we are. Because I think we're part of everything on the earth. But not only that, not only every people, but every language. Every tongue will confess. And we see in the word, in God's word, when it talks about tongues, not only does it mean our word that we speak, but it also means language. And so every single language that has ever been spoken, even if it's a dead language, everyone that spoke that language, even if it was just a small group of people, they're going to bow the name, bow the knee before Jesus and say, you are Lord. And then lastly, he fulfills the ultimate purpose.

He fulfills the ultimate purpose. Now don't, don't, don't miss this. What did we see in verse 9? God exalted Jesus to the, what? To the utmost position. He is above every name. Every knee will bow to him.

And what was the ultimate purpose of Jesus Christ? You may say, well, the ultimate purpose of Jesus Christ was to come to the earth and be born. That was part of his purpose. Wasn't the ultimate purpose.

You may say, well, Jesus Christ came to the earth to live a good life and be an example for us. That was part of his purpose. But that was not the ultimate purpose. You say, well, Jesus Christ came to the earth to die on the cross, to save us from our sins.

[28 : 07] That was the ultimate purpose. That was part of the purpose. That was not the ultimate purpose. Let's look at verse 11. You say, well, pastor, where are you going with this? Got to get into heresy.

No, it's in, it's in scripture. Look at verse 11. That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to what? The glory of God, the father. Everything that Jesus did, the Bible says, was to glorify God.

So what did Jesus accomplish when he died on the cross to save us from our sins? What did he accomplish? The ultimate purpose, he glorified God. God says, well done, my good and faithful servant.

So Jesus, in everything that he did, ultimately was to glorify God. Now let's bring that a little closer to home. What are you going to do today?

What are you going to do tomorrow? When you get back to work, those of you who work a job outside the home, what are you going to do? Well, you know, I got emails to send, and I got this, and I got all kinds of stuff to catch up on.

[29 : 12] And well, what's the ultimate purpose? I hope you do it to glorify God. Even if it's an email. Even if it's mucking out a stall.

Whatever it is, right? Do everything to the glory of God. He fulfills the ultimate purpose. So, at Christmas, not only do we look back, as we've been talking about, to his revelation of the Father's glory.

When Jesus Christ was born, he revealed the glory of the Father. He told the religious leaders, Jesus said, if you want to see God, you've seen me. You've seen the Father, is what Jesus said.

So, really, literally, what that means? When Brock sang that song a little bit earlier, you've kissed the face of Jesus. Jesus, you've kissed the face of God.

So, at Christmas, we look back to the revelation of the Father's glory. Yes, we do celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. But another thing that we do is, at Christmas, I think we need to look forward to his return with the Father's glory.

[30 : 22] Because it didn't stop in Bethlehem. That was just a beginning. At Christmas, we look forward to his return in glory.

1 Corinthians 15 talks about all things being put under his feet so that God may be all in all. In 1 Corinthians 15, when you get to the end, it talks about the trumpet.

It's going to sound. The last will be first. The first is going to be last. And it says, death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? One day, it's going to end with Jesus Christ coming back for us.

And all those who are in Christ who have died before us, that's what it's going to all be about. And the bottom line, and I want to close with this, that our prayer this Christmas would be, God, open our eyes that we may see the magnitude of your glory.

Where we started in Philippians 2. Open our hearts that we may feel the weight of your grace. And God, open our mouths that we may declare the wonder of your gospel today and tomorrow and throughout 2017 and the rest of our lives.

[31 : 51] Let's pray. God, we praise you this morning. We praise you for your plan for redeeming us. We praise you that you sent your Son.

We praise you that you have exalted him to the highest place. So, Father, we bow our knee today before our Lord. We call him Lord.

And, Lord, we long for your return. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. God, we pray that until that day that our lives would show forth the glory, your glory, in our lives and everything that we do, so that everything that is said of us is that you worked among us to the glory of God.

Father, this morning we pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.
Amen.