

*Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

**The Christmas Story from Paul's Perspective  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Part 7**

How are people saved? How are they born again? Hopefully everyone in this room this weekend knows the answer to that question. We are saved as we place our faith in Jesus Christ. What does **John 3:16** say? **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”**

It is all a matter of belief. But what does this mean? Does this mean that all we have to do is believe certain things about Jesus? Does this mean that all we have to do is to believe Jesus is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins? And what is the answer to that question? The answer is No! It is not enough. **James 2:19** tells us that the demons **“believe”** and even **“tremble”** but this does not save them. Intellectual assent is not enough.

We must actually entrust ourselves to what is revealed about Christ. If Christ actually died for our sins as the Scriptures tell us then we need to entrust ourselves to Him as our Savior. In other words we need to transfer our trust from ourselves and our good works to Jesus Christ alone for our salvation. If Christ actually is the Son of God, God the Son as the scriptures tells us then we need to entrust ourselves to Him as our Lord. In other words we need to sincerely seek to bring our will into submission to His will in all things.

Most all professing Christians are willing to acknowledge that those coming to Christ must embrace Him as Savior, but there are many professing believers who refuse to acknowledge that those coming to Christ must embrace Him as Lord.

This week's message hopefully will help us all to see why we must accept Christ not only as Savior but also as Lord if we are going to exercise true genuine saving faith.

The passage of scripture that we are presently examining is **Philippians 2:9-11**. Let us read those verses, **“Therefore also God highly (super)exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”** In response to the humiliation of Christ which was described for us in **Philippians 2:5-8** God the Father has now highly exalted Christ. The exaltation of Christ is described for us in **Philippians 2:9-11**.

We are breaking these verses into four different areas of truth. The first area of truth concerning Christ's exaltation was that His exaltation involved four different steps. What were these four steps?

The first step in Christ's exaltation was His resurrection (Acts 1:3).

The second step in Christ's exaltation was His ascension (Acts 1:9-11).

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The third step in Christ's exaltation was His unveiling when He once again was crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:9).

The fourth step involved in Christ's exaltation is Christ's high priestly ministry of intercession.

We are now ready to consider a second area of truth concerning the exaltation of Christ. I would hope that you will find this message not only helpful in clarifying what is involved when we exercise saving faith, but that it will also stimulate us to exercise even greater diligence in our Christian walk.

What is the second area of truth concerning Christ's exaltation that we will look at in this passage? The second area of truth concerning Christ's exaltation was that He received a very special name.

**Philippians 2:9** “**Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed upon Him the name which is above every name.....**” The phrase “**and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**” does not describe a further or separate stage in the exaltation of Christ. Rather it communicates that God the Father, in the exaltation of Christ, wanted to confirm some very important truth. When God bestowed names at various times in the Scripture upon certain individuals, it was intended to communicate to that individual and others a prophetic certainty (Genesis 17:1-8; 32:22-28; 35:9-12; Matthew 16:13-19). We see this with Abram as his name was changed to Abraham. We see this with Jacob as his name was changed to Israel. We see this with Simon as his name was changed to Peter.

And we should expect that the same thing would be true when God bestowed on Christ this particular name in **Philippians 2:9**. What is the prophetic certainty that is introduced when God bestows on Christ this name which is above every name? In order to answer this question it would seem that the first question we need to answer is, “What was the name that was bestowed on Christ by God at His exaltation that was in fact above every name?”

If we were reading very quickly through this portion of Scripture it might seem that the name that was given to Christ was “Jesus.” Why do I say this? Let us read **Philippians 2:9** and the first part of **Philippians 2:10**, “**Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow .....**” The casual reader would quickly say that obviously the name that was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was “Jesus.” But this is not so. Let us read this verse again but this time more carefully. “**Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (10) that at the name Jesus every knee should bow.....**” Did I read the verse correctly? And the answer is no. Paul did not say “**at the name Jesus.**” Rather he says at the “**name of Jesus.**” And what is that name of Jesus? We still do not know the answer to that question. Jesus had many names. He was called “Christ.” He was called the “Son of Man.” He was called the “Son of God.” The name “Jesus” just happened to be the name God gave to His Son at His birth. It means “Savior.” It was a very appropriate name considering the fact that He came as God's sacrificial lamb to be offered up on the cross of Calvary for our sin. But after His exaltation God bestows on Christ a different name. A name that was more appropriate to His exalted position and would communicate a certain prophetic certainty.

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So again we need to ask ourselves the question, “What was the name of Jesus that was bestowed on Him at His exaltation? I believe that the passage gives us the name but it is not in **verse 10** but rather it is **verse 11**. Let us read the entire passage again, **“Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus (whatever that name of Jesus might be) every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is (who) Lord.”** What is the name that was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation? The name that was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was “Lord” (Philippians 2:11).

What does the word “lord” mean? The word “lord” (KURIOS) signifies having power or authority. It is used of an owner as in Luke 19:33. It is used of a master as in Matthew 6:24. It is used of an emperor or king as in Acts 25:26. It is used of idols as in 1 Cor. 8:5. It is used as a title of respect for a father, husband, master, ruler, or an angel. It is used as a title of courtesy addressed to a stranger as in John 12:21. And finally and most importantly it is was used primarily as the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew word Jehovah which can be demonstrated in passages such as Matthew 4:7 and James 5:1.

How should we understand the name “Lord” that God bestowed on Christ at His exaltation? There can be only one way to understand this name. The name bestowed at His exaltation was “Lord.” The name “Lord” that was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was a title for God. This is why Paul could say that it was a name that was above all other names. This New Testament name for God as it is applied to Christ is an essential element of who Christ is. Why is this the only way to understand this name?

First of all because of the link between Philippians 2:10 and Isaiah 40:20-25. The reference to “every knee shall bow” is taken from **Isaiah 40:20-25**. Let us read this passage: **“Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, who carry about their wooden idol, and pray to a god who cannot save. (21) Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me. (22) Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. (23) I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.”** This passage tells us very clearly before whom every knee would bow. And who is it? It is Jehovah God. It is to the Lord of glory.

The first reason why we need to understand that the name “Lord” which was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was a title for God was because of the link between Philippians 2:10 and Isaiah 40:20-25.

Secondly because of how the term “Lord” is used when referring to Christ in the Epistles.

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When we look at the Gospel accounts and we are reading the many times the word “Lord” is used we need to understand, as I have explained, that it has many different meanings. In the Gospel period invariably when people used the word “Lord” to refer to Christ prior to His resurrection they were not in any way acknowledging Him as God and this includes even His disciples. The only time anyone in the Gospels actually consistently used the word “Lord” to identify Jesus as God was when Jesus used the word “Lord” to refer to Himself (Matthew 7:21-22; 22:41-45; Mark 5:19; John 13:13).

Christ knew that He was divine and when He used the word “Lord” to refer to Himself in the Gospels He was in fact acknowledging His deity. But the disciples did not have any grasp of this fact prior to Christ’s resurrection. If they truly understood that He was God they would not have had any problem with believing that Jesus could in fact rise from the dead.

The deity of Christ did not become clear to His disciples until after the resurrection. When the Apostle Thomas, who we have come to know as doubting Thomas, saw Christ alive and was invited to touch the nail prints in His hands and put His hand into His side, how did Thomas respond? **“My Lord and My God.”** The resurrection of Christ marked a turning point in how Christ’s disciples viewed Him. He was no longer simply Jesus who happened to be the Christ but He was now seen as the “Lord Jesus Christ” or in other words He was seen as God. We see this throughout the Epistles.

This close connection between Christ being called Lord and His deity can be seen in the very first message preached after the birth of the church on the day of Pentecost. Listen to these words from Acts 2 beginning in V. 22, **“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know - (23) this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (24) And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in it’s power.”** Then He goes on shares with them **Psalm 16:8-11**, which prophecies the resurrection of an individual referred to as “The Holy One” and then argues from the Scripture that the person spoken of by David was Jesus Christ. And then he says, beginning in Acts 2:32, these words, **“This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. (33) Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. (34) For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says (quoting from Ps. 110.1).... “ The Lord (Jehovah) said to My Lord (ADONAI which is another name for God) sit at My right hand, (35) until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet.”**

What is Peter saying in referencing this passage? He is saying that Jesus is God. Having established this point then he goes on to say, **“(36) therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ - this Jesus whom you crucified.”** Not only had they crucified their Messiah they had crucified their Lord which was just another way to say that they had crucified God.

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This close connection between the name Lord when it is applied to Christ and deity is clearly seen beginning with **Acts 2** and continues even to the very last chapter of the Bible in **Revelation 22**.

The first reason why we need to understand that the name “Lord” which was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was a title for God was because of the link between Philippians 2:10 and Isaiah 40:20-25. The second reason why we need to understand that the name “Lord” which was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was a title for God was because of how the term “Lord” is used when referring to Christ in the Epistles.

And finally because the proper response to the name which was bestowed is worship and worship is only permitted toward God. Why did God bestow the name Lord to Christ at His exaltation according to **Verse 10** **“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.”** This clearly is worship. Remember the words of Christ to Satan in **Matthew 4:9,10** **“And he said to Him, “All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me.” (10) Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”** It was wrong for Jesus to give worship, but it is very right and necessary that He receive it.

The name “Lord” that was bestowed on Christ at His exaltation was a title for God. Does this mean that Christ was not “Lord” in the sense of being divine prior to the bestowal of this name? And the answer would have to be, No! Philippians 2 already has made it very clear that Christ prior to His incarnation was in the form of God. Philippians 2 has already made it very clear to us that He was exactly equal with God. The only way for us to understand the significance of the bestowal of the name “Lord” at the time of Christ’s exaltation was that it initiated a process by which equality with God, that Jesus always possessed, would be acknowledged by all creation. God bestowing the name on Christ did not alter or change who He was, but it communicated a prophetic certainty.

This brings us back to what I said early in the message. When God bestowed names at various times in the scriptures upon certain individuals it was intended to communicate to that individual and others a prophetic certainty. And what prophetic certainty is communicated to us by God bestowing on Christ the name “Lord” at His exaltation when He took His seat at the right hand of the throne of God. The prophetic certainty was that at the name of Jesus which we now know to be the name “Lord” that every knee will bow.

There is a prophetic certainty that everyone will acknowledge that Jesus is God and give Him the honor that is due Him name. **THE ONLY QUESTION IS WHETHER WE WILL BOW BEFORE BEFORE CHRIST OF OUR OWN FREE WILL OR BE FORCED TO BOW BEFORE CHRIST IN THE LIFE TO COME AT THE FINAL JUDGMENT.** Be assured of this that every knee will bow before Christ the Lord. It is a prophetic certainty.

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### CONCLUSION

I asked you at the beginning of this message; can anyone be saved without submitting themselves to the Lordship of Christ? What is the answer to that question? The answer is No! God did not give Christ the name Lord, a name that is above every other name for no reason. He wants people to recognize who He is and what he has done and bow before Him as Lord. We cannot simply embrace Christ as savior we must also embrace Him as Lord because this is exactly who He is and is and embracing Him by faith both as Savior and Lord is the true biblical expression of saving faith.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS? IS HE LORD OF YOUR LIFE? OR ARE YOU DOING WHAT YOU WANT WHEN YOU WANT? ..... THERE CAN BE NO PICKING AND CHOOSING IF WE YIELD TO CHRIST AS LORD OF OUR LIVES. WE MUST BE SEEKING TO HONOR HIM AS LORD IN OUR MARRIAGES, IN OUR FAMILIES, IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, IN OUR WORKPLACES..... WE MUST BE SEEKING TO HONOR HIM WITH OUR THOUGHTS, WITH OUR ATTITUDES, WITH OUR FEELINGS, AND IN ALL OF OUR ACTIONS..... WE MUST BE SEEKING TO HONOR HIM WITH ALL OUR RESOURCES, WITH OUR TIME, ENERGY, TALENTS, AND MONEY..... IF WE DO THIS WE WILL BE LAYING DOWN A GOOD FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE. IF WE FAIL TO DO THIS WE ARE NOT..... LISTEN TO LUKE 6:46-49 **“AND WHY DO YOU CALL ME, ‘LORD, LORD’ AND DO NOT DO WHAT I SAY? (47) EVERYONE WHO COMES TO ME, AND HEARS MY WORDS, AND ACTS UPON THEM, I WILL SHOW YOU WHOM HE IS LIKE: (48) HE IS LIKE A MAN BUILDING A HOUSE, WHO DUG DEEP AND LAID A FOUNDATION UPON A ROCK; AND WHEN A FLOOD ROSE, THE TORRENT BURST AGAINST THAT HOUSE AND COULD NOT SHAKE IT, BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN WELL BUILT. (49) BUT THE ONE WHO HAS HEARD, AND HAS NOT ACTED ACCORDINGLY, IS LIKE A MAN WHO BUILT A HOUSE UPON THE GROUND WITHOUT ANY FOUNDATION AND THE TORRENT BURST AGAINST IT AND IMMEDIATELY IT COLLAPSED, AND THE RUIN IF THAT HOUSE WAS GREAT.”**