



Philippians 2:5-8 In Very Nature God

⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Like-minded.

1. In vs. 1-4, we have been encouraged to look out for one-another's needs.
 - a. In doing so, to draw strength from Christ's love,
 - b. Availing ourselves of the strength of the Holy Spirit,
 - c. And so demonstrate compassion and tenderness to others.
2. We are to join together to be jointly of one mind and spirit.
3. In our mutual relationships, we should have the same approach as did Yeshua.

II. YESHUA IS GOD

A. Fully God.

1. NIV: being in very nature God
2. NASB: existed in the form of God
3. 'nature' and 'form' do not refer to physical characteristics, but to 'identity'.
 - a. Christ is of the very essence of God.
 - b. Yet embraced perfect humanity.
4. Christ possessed inwardly and displayed outwardly the very nature of God himself (Motyer, p108).
5. In full possession of the divine nature.
6. 'Appearance' (v8): in Greek means an outer appearance which may be temporary.

B. Equality with God.

1. The mind of Christ is on full display.
2. By nature and by right he possesses the eternal glories.
3. But not a platform for self-display.
4. Not a launching pad for self-advancement.
 - a. NIV: not 'something to be used to his own advantage'.
 - b. NLT: not 'something to cling to'.
 - c. ESV: not 'thing to be grasped'.

III. GOD BECOMES INCARNATE

A. Emptied himself.

1. In English, empty means to completely remove the contents of something.
2. In Greek, it means to deprive something of its proper place and use.
3. On balance empty means Christ just did not let his divinity show.
 - a. Emptied himself of his self-interests but not his deity.
 - b. Retained his divinity but accepted the limitations of humanity.
 - c. Surrendered his right to manifest himself visibly as the God of glory.

B. Self is something to be emptied or poured out.

1. Equality with God led him to view his status not as a matter of privilege but as a matter of unselfish giving (Thielman, p116).

IV. GOD COMES AS A SERVANT

A. Begins his journey.

1. The plan has been, at a time determined by the Father, to initiate the redemption of his children.
2. First step: Become the Servant of the Lord.
 - a. Isaiah 53 ¹*Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. ⁴Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. ⁹He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.*
 - b. A deliberate choice.
 - 1) This was a deliberate, conscious consigning of (himself) to a foreseen situation (Motyer, p114).
 - 2) Heb. 12b *For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
 - 3) The tense in Isaiah 53:7 suggests 'He allowed himself to be afflicted and he on his part humbled himself and did not open his mouth'.
 - 4) No other lamb brought to slaughter ever came by conscious consent and voluntary decision.

B. Servant/slave metaphor.

1. Slavery was ubiquitous in the Roman empire.
2. Christ refused to exploit the privilege of his deity and, giving up that right, became a slave.
3. The lowest one could stoop socially.
4. Christ went from the highest position imaginable to the lowest precisely because such selfless love was an expression of his deity (Thielman, p119).

V. YESHUA ACCEPTS BEING CURSED

A. Continues his journey.

1. Eternal God.
2. Willingly and obediently accepts the limitations of humanity.
3. Accepts even the Cross.
4. In horror accepts the curse of death.
 - a. Matt. 27:46b *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*
5. Is exalted – Raymond's message next time will talk more about this.

B. Obedient unto death.

1. English translation implies 'obeying death'.
2. Greek meaning is 'obedient right up to the point of death'.

C. However, death was not 'in charge'.

1. Death was the mode, not the master, of the journey.
2. John 18:11b Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?

VI. APPLICATION

A. Mount Everest (29,029') or the Marianas Trench (36021' below the ocean's surface)?

1. We like Everest.
 - a. Everest is where we feel good about ourselves.
 - b. Where we feel accomplished and approved of.
2. We don't like Marianas,
 - a. It's where our flesh resides.
 - b. Where we feel weak and powerless.
3. Yeshua had glory and eternity; even better than Everest.
 - a. Willingly gave it up.
 - b. Went from Everest to Marianas without complaint.

B. Christ went the whole distance.

1. Christ gave us salvation.
2. His journey from glory to cross to glory is part of the gift.
3. Side story: There was a little boy in Africa who loved his teacher very much. He wanted to get her an awesome gift but had no money. He ended up giving her a beautiful seashell that was from the beach 5 miles away. The teacher told him it was beautiful and that she would treasure it but added that he shouldn't have walked so far to get her this gift. The boy smiled and said, "The long walk was part of the gift." The teacher could only sit in wonder at this child as she realized this little boy cared enough for her to walk all the way to the shore on his own. A feat of love worthy of praise and remembrance.
4. Christ's journey is the greatest example of humility ever made.
5. No other human is capable of it.

C. Our humble place is a microcosm.

1. Our life can reflect Jesus'.
2. We have one life to live; how we live it is what counts.
 - a. Do we accept Jesus as Lord? *Really* accept him.
 - b. Do we love one-another, forgive one-another, accept one-another?
 - c. Do we humble ourselves before our Father as Jesus did?
 - d. Are we willing to give up everything for the sake of another?
3. Choose humility?
 - a. Humble persons have what it takes to deal with burdens.
 - b. To do so requires integrity.
 - c. Humble people epitomize integrity - unity, wholeness, oneness.
 - 1) at one (at peace) with God
 - 2) at one with Christ
 - 3) at one with fellow believers
 - 4) at one with self
 - 5) unified in community
4. Or choose pride?
 - a. Wherever pride prevails:
 - 1) selfish ambition
 - 2) personal desire for prestige and power
 - 3) an attitude of superiority toward those whose differences some don't like
 - 4) there will be disunity
 - b. Chief characteristic: being "at odds with" rather than "at one with"

D. We are all in Christ.

1. In a love relationship with Christ

- a. Who first loved us.
- b. Gave himself for us.
- c. Told us to love one-another.
2. Imbued with power by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.
3. People of compassion and prayer.
4. Committed to Christ.
5. Part of a believing community.

E. Summary: What did Christ do?

1. V6: *⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage*
 - a. Came in humility
2. V7: *⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness*
 - a. Ready to serve
3. V8: *⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!*
 - a. In full obedience

F. We should strive to go the full distance too.

1. Let's make humility, service, and obedience our life pattern, sort of our credo.
 - a. Can't under our own power.
 - b. Can only choose to submit our will to His.
 - c. Strive to draw near to God.
2. Repent and seek forgiveness every day.
3. Pray for one-another every day.
4. Help others with their burdens.
5. Join in community prayer times.

VII. REFERENCES

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