

Week 7, Day 1 (September 27)

Weekend Message from Philippians Philippians 2:5-11

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Reflect and Respond:

- What stood out most to you from this weekend's message?
- What might God be inviting you to believe and to do in response?

Additional exercise: Read through the entire book of Philippians in one sitting.

- It's a short book and it should only take you 15-20 minutes.
- Imagine being a member of this church and receiving this letter from a dear friend and pastor, that is encouraging you to continue growing in your relationship with Jesus.
- You'll be encouraged to do this exercise each week throughout this series. You might try reading a different Bible translation on some weeks to get a fresh read of the book.

Week 7, Day 2 (September 28)

Prepare: Before reading the text below, take a couple minutes to be silent before God. Invite him to speak to you and you read and pray.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11 with a focus on verses 5-6

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

Meditate:

- Verse 5 begins with the phrase, “in your relationships with one another...” Our day-to-day relationships are key contexts for us to work out what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Take a few moments to assess the different spheres of relationships in your life: your family, close friends, acquaintances, co-workers, neighbors and others. Where do you currently see God at work in these relationships? Where would you like to see more of God in those relationships?
- In verse 5b, Paul challenges us to “have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.” An important piece of growth as a Christian is to “be transformed through the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2). Where or how would you like God to further transform your thinking in this season of life?
- Verse 6 is jam-packed with meaning, both about Jesus’ incarnation and his example to us. What impact does it have on you that Jesus became human? What does that humble step communicate to you about his love and sacrifice? How could you embody a similar humility in your day-to-day relationships?

Pray: Take some time to talk with God. Thank him for what he’s shown you in today’s devotional. Invite him to transform you in the areas you need to change. Ask him to empower you in ways you need his help to do what he is calling you to do.

Respond: What is God inviting you to do in response to what you have read and prayed about today?

Week 7, Day 3 (September 29)

Prepare: Before reading the text below, take a couple minutes to be silent before God. Invite him to speak to you and you read and pray.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11 with a focus on verse 7
7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Meditate:

- God is bigger than the galaxies stretching across the skies and yet, in control of the smallest atom perfectly placed in the world around us. Reflect for a few moments on the grandiose nature of God.
- Verse 7 again hits on a key theme in Philippians, reiterating that Jesus took on “the very nature of a servant.” What aspects of servanthood are most reflected in Jesus’ willingness to become human?
- What ways is God challenging you towards having attitudes and responses of a servant in your life today?

Pray: Take some time to talk with God. Thank him for what he’s shown you in today’s devotional. Invite him to transform you in the areas you need to change. Ask him to empower you in ways you need his help to do what he is calling you to do.

Respond: What is God inviting you to do in response to what you have read and prayed about today?

Week 7, Day 4 (September 30)

Prepare: Before reading the text below, take a couple minutes to be silent before God. Invite him to speak to you and you read and pray.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11 with a focus on verse 8

8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!

Meditate:

- How does it make you feel knowing that the God of the universe willingly set aside his right to power and glory to come to your rescue - becoming human and dying on your behalf? What do you want to tell God in response to this?
- Verse 8 highlights Jesus' obedience, and brings to memory the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but yours be done." What areas of your life are you struggling to be obedient to God? What is it that God is asking you to do? What would it look like to give God your fresh surrender to his will today?

Pray: Take some time to talk with God. Thank him for what he's shown you in today's devotional. Invite him to transform you in the areas you need to change. Ask him to empower you in ways you need his help to do what he is calling you to do.

Respond: What is God inviting you to do in response to what you have read and prayed about today?

Week 7, Day 5 (October 1)

Prepare: Before reading the text below, take a couple minutes to be silent before God. Invite him to speak to you and you read and pray.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11 with a focus on verses 9-11

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Meditate:

- This “hymn” in Philippians 2 finishes in unique fashion: the one that humbled himself is now exalted to the highest place. How is that journey from “humble servant” to “exalted one” unique to Jesus? In what ways is that a progression that God does in our lives, as well?
- These verses paint an incredible picture of how the story of the world comes to a close and points to Christ's supreme reign. How might this picture bring you hope today?
- This passage is infused with responses of worship: lifting Jesus' name up, that every knee would bow, that every tongue would confess Jesus is Lord. Take some time today to express your gratitude to God for who he is and what he has done. Be specific in your responses of surrender to Jesus as Lord and King of your life.

Pray: Take some time to talk with God. Thank him for what he's shown you in today's devotional. Invite him to transform you in the areas you need to change. Ask him to empower you in ways you need his help to do what he is calling you to do.

Respond: What is God inviting you to do in response to what you have read and prayed about today?

Week 7, Day 6 (October 2)

Prepare: Before reading the text below, take a couple minutes to be silent before God. Invite him to speak to you and you read and pray.

Read: Revelation 5:6-14

Meditate:

- This passage in Revelation 5 gives us a further glimpse of Jesus as the exalted Lord and King. Sit with this passage for a bit, re-read it several times and allow yourself to enter into the scene as best as you can. What elements of this passage jump out most to you?
- Jesus is described as both “the Lion of Judah” and “the Lamb that was slain.” Is one of those easier for you to relate to, in your understanding of Jesus? Why do you think that is? What might make the other one more difficult for you to connect with?
- In this grand expression of worship in heaven, every tribe, tongue and nation is represented before the throne of God. Have you been in diverse settings of people worshipping Jesus before? What was that like? What ways do you long for more of this part of “heaven” coming to earth in our current day?
- What do you want to say and do in a response of worship to God today?

Pray: Take some time to talk with God. Thank him for what he’s shown you in today’s devotional. Invite him to transform you in the areas you need to change. Ask him to empower you in ways you need his help to do what he is calling you to do.

Respond: What is God inviting you to do in response to what you have read and prayed about today?

Week 7, Day 7 (October 3)

Review Day: Take the opportunity today to revisit this week's devotionals. What themes emerged for you? Are there any items you want to go deeper with God about today?

Reflection: Here are a few questions to discuss at Small Group or with a friend this coming week:

- 1) What are you celebrating this week?
- 2) What has God been speaking to you from this week's material and/or the recent weekend message? How are you trying to put those things into practice?
- 3) What questions do you still have from your reading and times of prayer this week?
- 4) Who are you praying for or reaching out to right now? What have you learned or experienced this week that you could share with them?
- 5) What challenges are you facing this week? How can others pray with/for you?