

*Nuggets and Gems from the Bible*

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OF  
CHRIST

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***Living Stream Ministry***  
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# THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

In this booklet we shall consider the exaltation of Christ as revealed in [Philippians 2:9-12](#). The exaltation of Christ in [Philippians 2:9](#) is actually the manifestation of resurrection power. Resurrection power always follows the living of a crucified life. According to [Philippians 3:10](#), Paul aspired to know the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. [Philippians 2:5-8](#) shows Christ as our pattern. This pattern is the crucified life within us. Following the crucified life, there is the power of resurrection by which Christ is exalted to the uttermost. In the Bible the power to exalt Christ is called the power of resurrection. When we live a crucified life, we know the power of resurrection and the fellowship of Christ's sufferings.

## EXPERIENCING CHRIST AS OUR PATTERN

There is a correspondence between [chapters two and three](#) of Philippians. In [chapter two](#) we see that we should live a crucified life so

that we may enjoy the power of resurrection. In chapter three we see Paul's aspiration to know the power of Christ's resurrection. We should take the crucified life in Philippians 2:5-8 as our pattern so that we can experience the power of resurrection which exalted Christ to the highest peak in the universe. The experience of Christ as the pattern of a crucified life and the experience of the resurrection power which exalts Him is endless. Day by day, we need to live a crucified life. This is to live Christ as our pattern. Instead of having a life of rivalry and vainglory, we should live a life of self-emptying and self-humbling. This is to live a crucified life. By means of this life we are ushered into the power of resurrection by which Christ is exalted. According to his word in chapter three of Philippians, Paul did not regard himself as having experienced this in full. He still aspired to know, to experience, the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.

There is an urgent need today to experience Christ as our pattern. We desperately need to experience Him as our crucified life. Such a life stands altogether in contrast to a life of rivalry and vainglory. There is no third way. If we do not take the crucified life as our pattern, we shall

automatically live in the way of rivalry for vainglory. The issue here is extremely serious.

Nothing was more troubling to the Apostle Paul than to learn that the saints in Philippi were living in the way of vainglory. He was very concerned that they live a crucified life. This crucified life is Christ Himself as the One who emptied Himself and humbled Himself. Taking this crucified life as our pattern opens the gate of resurrection and brings us into the power of resurrection. The exaltation which is of God will never come by way of rivalry or vainglory. The more we seek vainglory, the more shameful our situation will be. To pursue vainglory is not a glory at all; it is a shame. Likewise, when we are in rivalry with others, the result is never exaltation. Inevitably the result is that we are brought low. The highest life on earth is the crucified life. Whenever we live a crucified life, God will bring us into the power of resurrection, and in this power we shall be exalted.

Whenever you are in rivalry with others, you are without question living in the self. We must condemn this rivalry and repudiate it. Furthermore, none of us should hold to any personal standing. Of course, we must stand firm for the Lord's testimony. However, we should not claim

any standing, title, or position for ourselves. Making such claims will never bring us into the power of resurrection. Instead of seeking glory for ourselves, we should seek Christ and Him alone. Then we shall experience the crucified life.

I believe that in the church in Philippi, two sisters, Euodias and Syntyche, were in rivalry for position or vainglory. Otherwise, there would have been no need for Paul to beg them to “think the same thing in the Lord” ([Phil. 4:2](#)). If there had not been the problem of rivalry in the church there, there would have been no need for Paul to say in [Philippians 2:3](#), “Doing nothing by way of rivalry nor by way of vainglory.” Because among the saints in Philippi there was rivalry for vain-glory, it was necessary for Paul to present Christ as the pattern of a crucified life. Paul presents this pattern in Philippians, not in other books, because in Philippi rivalry for vainglory was a definite problem. As long as certain of the saints there were seeking glory for themselves, there was rivalry. Therefore, Paul showed them that Christ, the Son of God, had a very high position. He possessed the very form of God and had the right to be equal with God. Nevertheless, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form

of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men. Then, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient even unto the death of the cross. Those Philippian saints who were seeking position and title for themselves surely needed to live according to Christ as the pattern of a crucified life.

We should be warned, however, not to take this word about the crucified life, the power of resurrection, and God's exaltation as a ground for seeking glory. We should not even seek true glory as something apart from Christ. Do not seek any glory that is other than Christ Himself. We need to say, "Lord, I want only You. I am not seeking any exaltation or glory." If we take the crucified life as our pattern, we shall experience the power of resurrection. This resurrection power is Christ Himself.

Often the saints complain of weaknesses. We are weak whenever we do not take the crucified life as our pattern. If you are weak in your family life, daily life, or church life, it is an indication that you are not taking the crucified life and therefore are not in the power of resurrection. I repeat, the gate through which we enter into the power of resurrection is the crucified life. Paul's expectation concerning the saints in Philippi was

that they would live this crucified life and then experience the power of resurrection.

## EXALTING CHRIST IN OUR EXPERIENCE

My burden in this booklet is to relate the exaltation of Christ to our spiritual experience. God has already exalted Christ, but have you exalted Him? Christ has been exalted in the universe, but has He been exalted in you? The problem is that Christ has been exalted everywhere except in you. This is the reason that I do not care to talk about the exaltation of Christ in an objective way, but to apply this to our subjective experience. Christ cannot be exalted in us unless we take Him as the crucified life to be the pattern of our daily life.

We should not forget that Philippians is a book on the experience of Christ. Hence, even the exaltation of Christ in this book is related to our experience. When I was young, I was taught about Christ's exaltation. However, I did not see much of Christ's exaltation in the lives of believers. This was primarily just a teaching from the Bible. We need to experience Christ to such a high degree that in our life He is exalted. Do not consider Christ's exaltation merely in an objective way. Just as we need to experience the Christ

who emptied Himself and humbled Himself, so we need to experience the Christ who has been exalted. God has already exalted Christ in the universe, but now it remains for us to exalt Him in our personal universe—in our daily life, in our family life, and in our church life.

Paul's desire was that the saints in Philippi would exalt Christ in their daily living. If the believers had done this, they would have made Paul's joy full. His expectation was that the believers would experience Christ as the crucified life and then experience Christ in His exaltation. Christ's exaltation needs to be carried out in our daily living.

## THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF SALVATION

Proof that Paul's concept was that Christ would be exalted not only objectively in the universe but also subjectively and experientially in our daily life is found in [Philippians 2:12](#). After speaking of the crucified life in [verses 5 through 8](#) and the exalted life in [verses 9 through 11](#), Paul says in [verse 12](#), “So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only as in my presence, but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

The words “so then” indicate that what Paul speaks of in [verse 12](#) is a consequence of taking Christ as the pattern of a crucified life in the preceding verses. These words indicate that Christ’s crucified life should be our experience. It is also true that Christ’s exalting life should be our experience. On the one hand, we may speak of Christ’s exalted life; on the other hand, of His exalting life. No matter which expression we use, in [Philippians 2:9-11](#) we have a life of exaltation. Such a life should also be part of the salvation worked out by us. The main elements of the salvation in [verse 12](#) are Christ as the crucified life and Christ in His exaltation. This should be the salvation we work out by God operating in us.

Surely the exaltation of Christ is the highest standard of our salvation. We should not simply be those who are saved, but we should be those who are exalted through Christ’s resurrection power. It was not Paul’s aim in speaking of the exaltation of Christ to teach doctrine objectively. Like all the other matters covered in this book, this point is related to Christian experience. We need to experience Christ in His humiliation. This means we need to experience Him as the One who emptied Himself and humbled Himself. Now that Christ has been exalted by God

to the highest peak in the universe, we need to experience Him also in His exaltation. Oh, may the Lord open our eyes to the fact that we are far below His standard of salvation! The standard of the salvation worked out by us must be so high that it includes the exaltation of Christ. Christ's exaltation should be our consummate experience in salvation. This requires that Christ be not only our crucified life, but also our exalted life in the power of resurrection. The very power that has exalted Him in the universe is the power that causes Him to be exalted in us. This power is nothing less than the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ ([Phil. 1:19](#)).

In the book of Philippians Paul uses different terms to refer to the same reality. The bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ is the very power that exalts Christ. It is also the power of resurrection in [3:10](#) and the power referred to in [4:13](#), where Paul says, “I can do all things in Him who empowers me.” That with which we are empowered is the power of resurrection, the exalting power, and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This power is adequate to enable us to work out our salvation to the highest standard. When we reach this standard, we shall be more than conquerors.

Verses 12 through 16 of Philippians 2 are the interpretation of verses 5 through 11 of the same chapter. This means that the words “so then” include all that Paul covers in verses 12 through 16. Therefore, Philippians 2:5-11 needs 2:12-16 for its interpretation and exposition.

## THE HIGHEST NAME

Philippians 2:9 says, “Wherefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.” The Lord humbled Himself to the uttermost, but God exalted Him to the highest peak. The name referred to in this verse is the name of Jesus, as indicated in the following verse. From the time of the Lord’s ascension, there has never been a name on this earth above the name of Jesus. God has exalted Jesus, a real man, to be the Lord of all. Therefore, it is altogether right for us to call, “O Lord Jesus.” We need to confess the Lord’s name openly. What a glory it is to worship the Lord by calling on His name! Actually, in the New Testament we are not told to worship Christ, but there is the clear indication that we are to call on the Lord’s name.

By His exaltation, the Lord has been given a name which is above every name. There has

never been a name in history higher than the name of the Lord Jesus. The highest name in the universe, the greatest name, is the name of Jesus.

In [Philippians 2:10](#) and [11](#) Paul goes on to say, “That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” The name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord Jesus is in His Person and work. The words “in the name” mean in the sphere and element of all the Lord is. It is in this way we worship the Lord and pray to Him.

We should not only call on the name of the Lord Jesus, but also bow our knees in His name. This is to worship Him.

In [Philippians 2:10](#) we see three levels of the universe: heaven, earth, and under the earth. Those who are in heaven are angels, those who are on earth are men, and those who are under the earth are the dead. The day is coming when those on every level will bow their knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. To openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord is to call on the Lord ([Rom. 10:9-10, 12-13](#)). The Lord Jesus as a man was made the Lord in His ascension by God

(Acts 2:36). Thus, every tongue should confess that He is Lord. This confession is to the glory of God the Father. The Greek word rendered “to” means resulting in. Our confessing that Jesus is Lord results in the glory of God the Father. This is the great end of all that Christ is and has done in His Person and work (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

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