

THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

Phil. 2:9-11

by Walton Weaver

INTRODUCTION:

1. We are told by the inspired Apostle that the great scope of the prophecies related to "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." To the same points our attention is continually turned in the New Testament.

a. Sometimes they are stated as an accomplishment of prophecy, and as proofs of Christ's Messiahship.

b. Sometimes as grounds of our hope before God.

c. Sometimes as motives to stimulate us to duty.

d. Sometimes as models, according to which God will work in us.

e. Sometimes as examples, which we are bound to follow.

f. Sometimes as encouragements to follow those examples.

2. It is this last view that we are to consider at this time. The Apostle has said, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (v. 4). To illustrate and enforce this exhortation, he shows how our Lord had given up all the glories of heaven and endured death, even the accursed death of the cross, for the salvation of men.

3. Following the description of his humiliation he now gives us a vivid description of his glorious exaltation. Consider, first

I. THE HEIGHT TO WHICH HE WAS RAISED.

A. He had been honored by the Father in many ways and at different times.

1. At his baptism, Matt. 3:16-17.

2. In the miracles which he worked during his ministry, John 11:41-42.

3. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Matt. 17:5.

4. On the cross when certain miracles took place: the veil of the temple being torn in two from top to the bottom (Matt. 27:51), the earth quaking and the rocks splitting (Matt. 27:51), certain saints being resurrected and entering Jerusalem again (Matt. 27:52-53), and great darkness coming over all the land in mid-day (Matt. 27:45).

B. But it was at his resurrection and ascension that he received the highest honor.

1. By his resurrection he was declared to be the Son of God with power, Rom. 1:4.

2. Upon his ascension into heaven he sat down at the right hand of God where he now sits and rules, Acts 2:29-36; Heb. 1:312:2; 1 Pet. 3:22, in the midst of the raging nations, Psalm 2. He is indeed King of kings and Lord of lords, Rev. 19:16. He shall rule until the last enemy, death, is destroyed by the resurrection of all from the dead, 1 Cor. 15:22-26.

3. He is above all angels, all the principalities and powers having been made subject to him, 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:5, 8, 9, 13. That "all things" have been made subject to Christ has but one notable exception, the Father himself, 1 Cor. 15:27-28.

II. THE REASON OF HIS EXALTATION (v. 9)

It was in consequence of his previous humiliation (note the "therefore" in Phil. 2:9).

A. He was exalted as a reward for his sufferings.

1. In fulfillment of the words spoken by the prophet, Isa. 52:13-15 and 53:10-12.

2. In harmony with his anticipation of the "joy set before him." By it he "endured the cross, despising the shame," and "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

3. In keeping with his request to be glorified with the Father once again, John 17:4, 5.

4. In actual accomplishment when he appeared before the Ancient of Days, Dan. 7:13, 14. See also Heb. 1:3, 4.

B. He was exalted to complete the work he had begun on earth.

1. His work on earth as the "suffering servant" was "finished" as he himself had testified on the cross, John 19:30. This was to redeem us by his own blood, Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5, 6. His blood was the *price* of our redemption, 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Acts 20:28.

2. His work in heaven is to continue his work on earth through his appointed agents and the gospel message made known through them, John 13:20. He did not leave them without the "help" that would be needed in revealing and making known the gospel message, John 14:16 15:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:6-13; Eph. 3:1-7. In his present exalted position he serves as our only mediator (1 Tim. 2:5; see also Heb. 9:15) and as our merciful and faithful high priest who lives forever after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 2:17-18; 3:1; 5:1ff.; 7:11-17; 9:11-12). Through his resurrection power he will finally put all enemies under his feet, death being the last enemy to conquer, 1 Cor. 15:25-26.

III. THE RESULTS OF HIS EXALTATION (vv. 10-11).

Christ was exalted that he might be put in a position of honor. He has and will receive honor that is proper only to God.

A. Indicated by the name "Lord" that was given to him, a name above every name (v. 9).

B. Indicated by every knee bowing to him (v. 10), and every tongue confessing

that Jesus Christ is Lord (v. 11). This is not a confession unto salvation like Romans 10:9-10, but is an acknowledgment of the fact that Jesus is indeed Lord. This final confession is one that is made by unbelievers as well as believers: "every knee" and "every tongue."

CONCLUSION:

The Son had glorified the Father while on earth by accomplishing the Father's work (Jn. 17:3 with Phil. 2:8b); the Father has glorified the Son by giving him a name that is above every name (Jn. 17:5 with Phil. 2:9-11a).