

# A STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11: BASIS FOR HUMBLE CHRISTIAN SERVICE

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## ABSTRACT

This work is an exegesis of Phil. 2:5-11 where Paul was urging the Philippians, and even all believers in Christ, to have the mind of Christ who, though he was God, emptied himself of the status, and was humble and obedient to the point of death, even the most ignominious death on the cross. The work is an attempt to show that being filled with humility and obedience is the basic requirement for successful Christian service.

The work comprises of five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction containing definition of terms like mind, humility and service. Chapter two gives the background to the text. Chapter three is an exegesis of the text containing grammatical analysis, word studies and meaning of the text. While chapter four is the application of the text where the mind of Christ, humility and Christian service, and exaltation and commitment will be discussed. Chapter five is the conclusion and recommendation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### CONCLUSION

Although, the text we have worked upon in this research was used by Paul as an illustration to encourage the Philippians church to maintain unity with humility of mind, this work has revealed that in the mind of Christ is humility. As revealed in the work, humility is not to have low opinion of oneself but means having a true opinion of oneself. "Humility is the bloom and beauty of holiness. The chief mark of counterfeit holiness is the lack of humility".<sup>1</sup> Edwin and Lillian Harvey said further that, "humility and lowliness of spirit are conditions which bring the mighty God very near and provide a platform upon which He can display His power. We have a God who works silently and in secrets. The big noise, self-advertising method that is popular with the world, is at variance with Him."<sup>2</sup>

This profound christological passage is not an exercise in theology for its own sake. Theology is meaningful only as it affects character and life. Paul's concern is not with theology itself but as a means to an end which is the proper existence of the Philippians. There is no way to cling to their little ambitions and persist in their petty quarrels if they confess Jesus Christ as their Lord. The mind which they have in him is that of humble, self-abnegation and obedient service, not of self-seeking ambition.<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Lightfoot restates the passage in this way:

But humble, as He also humble. Though existing before the world is in the Eternal God head, yet He did not cling with avidity to the prerogatives of His divine majesty, did not ambitiously display His equality with God; but divested

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin and Lillian Harvey (ed.), Royal Insignia (Indiana: Old Paths Tract Society Inc., 1992), p.9

<sup>2</sup> Harvey, p.6

<sup>3</sup> Clifton, J. Allen (ed.), The Broadman Bible Commentary: 2 Corinthians – Philemon, Vol. 11 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 197.

Himself of the glories of heaven, and took upon Him the nature of a servant, assuming the likeness of man. Nor was this all. Having thus appeared among men in the fashion of man, He humble Himself yet more and carried out his obedience even to dying. Nor did He die by a common death; He was crucified, as the lowest malefactor is crucified.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover the work revealed that humility is one of the basic requirements for every Christian who desire to get reward for all labour from the lord. The word of God which is the standard of God says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."<sup>5</sup> Jesus is our perfect example, He taught and lived the life of humility. He even said in the gospels that", all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.<sup>6</sup>

Exaltation is the reward of every Christian worker who served with humility and obedience. As Christ was highly exalted so Christian worker will be exalted. God bestowed on Jesus a name which is above every other name.

This research work has only been focussed on the mind of Christ, that is, the attitude and pattern of thought of Jesus Christ, which is humility with obedience as the basic requirement for every Christian worker. There is still room for further study on the passage, Philippians 2:5-11.

## RECOMMENDATION

I have the following recommendation for the contemporary ministers, children of God and the church:

1. The ministers and the church should discharge all their duty in the church with humility of mind.

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<sup>4</sup> Harvey, *Royal Insigning* p.62

<sup>5</sup> James 4:6, NKJV.

<sup>6</sup> Luke 14:11, NKJV.

2. Every child of God should realise that humility is not to have low opinion of oneself but recognition of one's worth and the use of one's potentials to the glory of God Almighty.