

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 12, The Christ Hymn, Philippians 2:5-15

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This is Dr. Dan Darko and his lecture series on the Prison Epistles. This is session 12, The Christ hymn, Philippians 2:5-11.

Welcome back to the Biblical Studies lecture series on prison epistles.

I'm glad you chose to study with us, and I hope you are enjoying it so far. Now, we go on to continue from where we left off in the previous lecture on Philippians. As you may recall, when we reached Philippians chapter 2, I explained to you that verses 1 to 4 is one long sentence in Greek.

In that sentence, we see how Paul actually highlights some key qualities that he observes in the church when he uses the conditional clauses if I explain that can translate since because these are supposed to be active in a church and goes on to highlight key things they need to do or keep alive, keep in the basket as I illustrated to you to keep his joy complete or to make his joy complete. At the end of the last lecture, I began by looking at verse 5 generally and mentioning that you should hold your thoughts on verse 5 of Philippians 2 because that is where we'll start. We'll look at some key things in verse 5 before we look at verses 6 to 11, which we have come to know as the Christ hymn.

So, going back to verse 5, let's begin to look at the function of verse 5. In terms of trying to understand or interpret what we have come to know as the Christ hymn, verse 5 actually serves as a transition linking chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, and chapter 2, verses 6 to 11. To interpret verses 6 to 11, it is important to realize how verse 5 sets the stage for the framework with which we interpret verses 6 to 11. One of the things you find in terms of continuity between or with verse 5 and verses 6 to 11 is the fact that the call for one mindset, the mental attitude worthy of the gospel, moves on and links to the mindset that exemplifies or exhibits character that is found in Christ.

Let me illustrate this to you. Verse 5 in the ESV reads like this. Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.

Some translations, as I will show you in a few minutes, translate it differently. But hold your thoughts on that. You can read verse 5 in two ways.

Modern commentators are quick to point out that you can read verse 5 in two ways. One is what we call the ethical reading. The ethical reading says verse 5 is actually

calling for emulation, is calling the church to emulate the life of Jesus or to think as Jesus did.

The ethical reading actually says that verse 5 sets the framework to think about verses 6 to 11 as an example of Christ that needs to be followed. The second reading of verse 5 is what we call the charismatic or soteriological reading. In that reading, the scholars who argue for that position actually think that when you read verse 5, you should read verse 5 as the ESV is trying to convey here as a kind of a preacher saying, you know what, I want you to have this in your mind among yourselves.

Not necessarily to be an example of Christ. Have this in your way of thinking because this is what is in Christ also. In other words, verse 5 serves as calling the individuals or the community to think as those in Christ ought to think.

We are calling for an attitude or defeating mindset among themselves. So, when we get to translations, you would see different translators carrying one of the two views. Ethical or soteriological or charismatic.

Charismatic actually just means a preaching component or soteriological carrying the sense of salvation or the saved community's way of conduct. So, let me just illustrate it to you with four translations here. Look at the ESV and the NIV.

The ESV and the NIV seem to lean towards the soteriological or the charismatic reading. Have this in mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus. ESV.

NIV says that in your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. Now, I don't want to bother you with how the Greek works with this. But it is very, very interesting how they managed to couch out some words that they supply in English to make sense of the kind of reading they want to convey.

In a more straightforward way, you find the New King James Version translating. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. In other words, let Jesus Christ be an example in the way you think. The NRSV, which is a translation I prefer in this particular situation, says, let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Let the mindset of Christ be in you. Let Christ be your model. If you remember in one of the earlier lectures, I mentioned to you what we call mimesis, which is the kind of using a key figure as an example for others to emulate.

Verse 5 may be read both as theological or charismatic or as ethical. I tend to lean towards looking at verse 5, which calls for Christ as an example for the church. Because not only Christ does Paul bring in Philippians as a model, Paul will bring out even in chapter 2; he will bring out his friend Timothy as a good example for the church to follow.

He will bring out another important companion, Epaphroditus, and he is going to say, he is a good example, too; you need to follow that. In chapter 3, when we reach there, we will see Paul actually also stating that he himself is a good example for the church to follow. For that very reason, I tend to lean towards verse 5 being translated in a more literal in the way the Greek stands.

Mimesis, let the mindset of Christ be in you also. Or, carefully explained or translated to convey this meaning, let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. Mindset, think about that.

The Greek word for mindset features a lot in Philippians. This word is a very interesting word. In classical Greek, it appears in Aristotle and other places.

But as Wayne Meeks rightly put it, this word dominating Philippians actually tells us something about the importance of cognitive process or mental work in the formation of Christian living. Meeks put it this way: the letter's most comprehensive purpose is shaping Christian's fullnesses. A practical moral reasoning that is conformed to his death in the hope of his resurrection.

A Christian mindset, if I will translate that word. But it's not just a mindset; you keep things in your mind as though the mind is a trunk that you pack some ideas in and lock up. No furnaces have the connotation of you absorbing or receiving this, processing it intellectually, and making it reflect in your conduct.

Let that mind or mindset that is in Christ be in you also. Let the thought pattern that shapes behavior that was in Christ be in you also. This thought pattern will be couched in this discussion more in a sense of obedience to Christ and what God expects of his people.

Let that kind of mindset that actually does not look at pride and conceit as something to vie for but humility as a virtue to emulate. Let the mindset of Christ be in you also. Let me go on to draw your attention to three aspects of the literary debates of verses 6 to 11.

Perhaps, in order to put this in context, I should read those verses—Philippians chapter 2 from verses 5 to 11. You may even know this from memory.

Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus. Who thought he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God as a thing to be grasped. But emptied himself by taking the form of a servant.

Being born in the likeness of man and being found in human form. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even death on the cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Let me just draw your attention to a few debates. A few points that I made or a debate that is held on the literary function or structure of this particular passage. One, it has been argued among scholars that first Paul authored this paragraph.

So, some scholars will go on to say you know what this paragraph reads like a poem. And even in your translation, you may see that translators indent it to make it look like a standing poem. Some scholars will argue that Paul actually wrote this particular paragraph even if he wrote it before the Philippians.

He wrote it somewhere, and he brought it in to add to a later letter. So those three views that we have as far as this text is concerned is worth noting carefully. If you read a commentary, you may sometimes have two views articulated or one view being assumed as the standard view for everybody.

But you want to note that the first view says Paul authored verses 6 to 11 that read like him. Even if Paul had authored it earlier, he found it important to bring to this text. The second view says Paul did not write it.

The second view actually said it was a Christian hymn that was circulating, and Paul just picked it up. He edited it slightly, and he incorporated it into Philippians to make sense. This is the problem, though.

When you talk about those passages or those passages as being a Christian hymn that was circulating, The challenge is what we observe in the content of hymns. Hymns normally praise God.

Hymns normally exalt the name of the Lord. And so, if this was a hymn that was not written by Paul. How was this going to be a hymn given the content of this passage that church members in Christian communities were going to be using? What will make it the content of hymn that we would like it to be? Or are we perhaps suggesting that there was a poem that was circulating rather?

We had access to it, but it was not necessarily a hymn because once you use the hymn language, you say it is a hymn. We are looking for the content of praise, some degree of worship. We are looking for the components and features that we want to see in a hymn.

The poetic component, yes, the structure, seems to suggest some of it. But do we call it a hymn? Think about that. Some scholars argue strongly that this was a circulating hymn that Paul incorporated.

You may not be surprised to find out that a lot of commentators lean towards this. Because you are following this lecture with me, I have to give you a disclaimer. There is a book that is written by DePaulo.

DePaulo's book is called Hymn Fragments in the New Testament. Was his doctorate thesis revised and published? Yes, I am the one who reviewed DePaulo's book for the Society of Biblical Literature.

So, if you had come across that review, which I know is circulating around there, sometimes some people would ask what Dacron has to say about that. I question some of DePaulo's arguments and his sources to say that this is actually a hymn. When he cannot show us any evidence of the manuscript anywhere that says this was a hymn circulating.

I am just content, or if you came across that, all that I am saying is this. If it is a hymn, do we have any evidence of a papyrus fragment somewhere that contains only this piece? Somewhere, we could make such a strong claim, and if not, was there anything like that? And if it is a hymn or if it would later become a hymn why couldn't Paul write it? This brings me to the third view.

The third view actually says Paul did not write it, and Paul did not incorporate it into his letter. But actually, Paul wrote Philippians, and a very skillful redactor found a way and said Oh, this verse of Paul reminds me about something interesting I know about. About some hymn somewhere I know about, and actually, it will strengthen the whole conversation if I bring it in.

So, the third argument goes as far as to say that Paul didn't even know that this particular hymn or this material existed. Wow! Before we go, let me try to explain something that is part of my discipline, and I am just going to try to be a nice boy. Not to be too technical lest you turn out of the zone of your reasoning with me.

I want you to stay with me. I promise I am going to try to make it simple. In our discipline, we cannot just make claims and make claims for claim's sake.

So, if a letter is written by Paul and as I drew your attention to that in the introduction, we have no evidence to suggest that the letter came in two pieces or there are two letters put together, or there are parts of the letters that did not belong there. Then, we have to treat the letter as a complete letter from Paul. The other thing you want to note is this.

All the arguments on whether the letter was one letter or two letters edited together don't even go as far as to suggest that Philippians chapter 2, verses 6 to 11, must be somewhere else, and somebody brought it in to question the letter as one letter. No, that isn't featured in that argument. So, up until this point, we were working with a letter that was written by Paul.

If you have that at the back of your mind, let me try to get to the second thing that is important to consider in our discipline—namely the two. Paul did not write it.

There is a Christian hymn circulating, and he modified it and brought it into the text. There is nothing wrong about Paul knowing of Christian tradition, something that edifies the Christian community for Paul to bring into the conversation. I do that.

I do that in my sermons. Sometimes, I do that in writing. I was giving an important speech quite recently and one of the things I noticed that was not part of my script I just went off script and said if you remember that hymn, A Church to Keep I Have, A God to Glorify, I was invoking a common hymn that we know and the substance of the language of the hymn tend to reinforce the message I was trying to convey.

There's nothing wrong with that. In a literary piece, though, when we say or make such a claim, we need to establish that evidence existed that this was circulating and was brought in. Other than that, it is what we call conjecture or mere speculation.

So, if there was a hymn circulating, why don't we have a single evidence anywhere outside Pauline writings to show us that this is a copy of that hymn on an animal skin from a church somewhere else. We don't have that. So, I am just trying to ask us to be careful about that claim.

I'm not saying that is entirely impossible, but I'm saying we don't have evidence to support it. The last thing is the third view—the third view, which tries to marry the two except to kick Paul out of the conversation.

I am a Pauline scholar. I am not happy when somebody's talking about Paul's letter and kicking Paul out. Yes, you may say, but Paul is the guy who brings all the controversy.

Jesus loves people. He feeds the poor and the hungry. Paul brings up all these controversial topics that we don't want to talk about.

I love Paul. I want him in. The whole view of a redactor thinks about how this sounds.

This is perhaps to suggest that in the early church, there was an existing document called Paul's Letter to the Philippians. And they were using this letter or the letter to the Christians in Philippi was such that they received and enjoyed the letter minus

verses 6 to 11. For some miraculous reason, we don't have any evidence of such a letter.

Wow! Nobody in Philippi thought it was important even to pay somebody to copy such a letter. I submit that there were rich people in the church in Philippi. Lydia the woman from Titera who dealt in purples was fairly rich.

Just in case you think the Philippians didn't like giving, I want to suggest to you that Paul said they were the most generous church. So, they could have funded the printing of another copy of a letter without this hymn. There's another thing here for you to consider.

To suggest that a redactor brought this hymn material into the text after Paul wrote it sometime later. It's actually to suggest that the early church was so dumb. When they had a letter, and they got somebody to insert it in, they couldn't even make a note that this one was not from Paul.

I like to submit here with more confidence that that could never be right. And I hope I'm persuading you that. To say that an editor added it even when we use the word skillful is one of the most ridiculous claims we can make in our academy.

I mean my group. We like to speculate, but this one is taken too far. So, let's think more seriously about the literary pattern of this.

Keeping in mind that though we don't have evidence that there was a hymn somewhere that Paul brought in. The poetic nature of this particular passage cannot be disputed. The reality of certain vocabulary in this passage that is not found anywhere in the New Testament cannot be disputed.

Some of the language is rare. The writing, the rhythm of it, it rhymes, it sounds like a poem. Did Paul write it? Yes, Paul wrote it in his letter.

Did he get it from somewhere? Maybe, but we don't have evidence for that. Could Paul have been having some? Maybe his artistic path came up and said, oh, let me just phrase things. Oh yeah, by the way, when you have those verses indented in your Bible, that is not how Paul wrote them.

Paul wrote Philippians on animal skin with no verses and no chapters and no punctuations. So, think about the Philippians in those terms. And then let's now go and look at some of the literary patterns that we want to observe in this text.

Relative to the discussion we've been having so far, I want to suggest to you that the notion that this passage is poetry or hymn was unknown perhaps in the first 1700

years of Christianity. We don't find anywhere else people discussing this passage is a hymn or what is that. We don't find it until somewhere in the 1800s.

In fact, the first time we find it mentioned according to Ralph Martin in his book that is devoted, a big book that is devoted to this passage alone. Martin said the earliest mention of this passage as a hymn was in 1899. You know, I don't know if I've said it yet in this lecture, but I have often said that I have my own sense of skepticism when scholars come out of nowhere at a certain time and say, hey, guess what, guys, I have discovered something that for thousands of years or for hundreds of years no one ever knew existed.

I have brand new stuff to show you. It becomes interesting, and often, we learn our hard lessons later when we over-stretch things, and the evidence comes to contradict that. Martin reminds us that the concept of hymn, that which I grew up with, that which I studied as a student, and in my study of Philippians, that taught occasionally I entertain, was not part of the conversation in early Christianity on the letter until 1899.

Fairly recent. It was not even popular. That was the earliest mention.

It became popular in the 1920s. Less than 100 years ago. It sounds like some of the things we say in New Testament scholarship when you find a New Testament scholar being so confident in saying, oh, Paul's Greek here is not good.

He didn't know what he was trying to say. Or when we find New Testament scholars saying, you know, these early Christians, they didn't know what they were trying to do, and I'm trying to tell them what it's supposed to be. It's just interesting.

That is an understatement. It became popular in the 1920s. And we have no such notice of this passage as a hymn in Greek or Syriac commentaries on Philippians 2, 6 to 11.

So maybe you're asking me, what are you trying to tell me? All that I'm trying to do is this. We are studying Philippians. We are studying an important letter that was written by Paul.

You may pick up a comment and try to study more about what the commentators say. I wouldn't like you to be so distracted about these particular arguments whether it's a poem or whether Paul wrote it.

What is clear is that Paul wrote it because we don't have any evidence to the contrary. Whether it was an existing hymn or something.

It may be, though we don't have evidence. But if it became a hymn later on. Oh yeah, I know a hymn that actually picks up some words.

Do you know one of those hymns? His Lord. His Lord. He's risen from the dead, and he's Lord.

Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord. Even one of the contemporary hymns picks from that. There's nothing wrong with that.

And if there was a hymn and Paul picked it up, there's nothing wrong about that. It doesn't discredit the text in any way. So, let's study this text as the word of God that was written by Paul to the church in Philippi.

For the church to be edified, to grow in their work with God, and to live worthy of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me draw your attention to some of the things that we need to look at as we approach this text in terms of content. This text is very theologically loaded.

And I will show you that major doctrines have developed from this text. But don't be confused about that. Here, as I tried to establish earlier on, the point is that the Philippians should develop the mindset, the phronesis.

The mindset that translates into conduct that was in Christ Jesus. The point is the example of Christ. But it is not meant to be theological or something that we will come and argue about later on in the third century, in the fourth century.

As I will show you, the main here is illustrative. It is meant to show that Christ lived this lifestyle. It is ready for you to emulate that as well.

Some scholars have argued, as you may later pick up a commentary on Philippians, that in this hymn, Paul is trying to be poetic so that he can show a contrast between Christ and Caesar. Or Christ and the status quo mindset. The mindset that says if you want to rise to the top, you step on everybody's neck; you actually bully and push people down so that you can rise.

And Paul is trying to show, in Christ, the way to the top is the humble way. And Christ himself demonstrated that in his life and ministry. If you look at it more as a contrast between Caesar, then you think about this powerful figure who wants to be called Lord and trying to show this power and exert power and use command and authority all over the place to get things done.

And Christ, who would empty himself, who would take the place of a servant, as the way to the top, the other Lord. And what happens in the end? That God would exalt him and give him, in Greek, the onoma, the name, the reputation, the license, that

which gives him that status above every other name. That at the mention of that name, every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

Wow, what a pathway to Lordship, contrary to what Caesar wants to exert from the top down. As we go into the passage, I would like you to pay attention to some key things here that I will emphasize. I will try not to be too technical about this.

But you want to know that the main issues to look at in this passage are some keywords. The very nature or form. The word something to be grasped.

King James, something to be robbed. The word empty or emptying himself. The word, he took the form of a human in his human likeness.

Those will later become major theological issues for us to discuss. So, in our study of this passage, I will try as much as possible to unpack some of this. But let's begin to get our minds going here.

So, assuming you were thinking about a question like this. Does Jesus being in the form of God, or in his very nature God, suggest that Jesus was God? Before he was conceived by Mary. In the pre-existent Christ, when the passage says he was in his very nature God, or he was in the form of God.

What does it mean? Have you thought about that? What does the nature of God mean? Or the form of God? Does it mean he is God? Does it mean he is like God? Does it mean he is like a model of God? Well, the simplest answer is this. Let's read this passage assuming that what Paul is conveying here is Christ participates in the essence and essential attributes of who God is. He is not suggesting that Christ is not God.

Or, for some reason, Christ is the cloning of God. But in his very essence, he is God. Fee would like to explain it this way.

He was characterized by what was essential to being God. It is this understanding which currently lies behind the NIVs in every natural God. So, let's go into that passage when you come across those words, assume that this is what is being conveyed.

Unless some people of some particular sect confuse you with some of this language. A second question. How did Christ empty himself? Well, when we read the text from verse 7, he emptied himself.

But how? What was the content? How did he empty himself? That became a major controversial issue in early Christianity. And we will look at and unpack some of those in this discussion. What did he empty? Did he empty himself of his power? Did

he empty himself of his divinity? In other words, did he cease to be God? And if he ceased to be God when Christ was walking and doing ministry, was he God or was he not? Very important question to ask.

More of this will be unpacked later. But I would like to clear your mind on this issue by still trying to share with you how scholars and recent scholars have tried to explain this. And I think three of those scholars explained this quite well.

So, let's look at how they explained this. For instance, Bruce Wright. The point is rather that he did not treat his equality with God as an excuse for self-assertion or self-aggrandizement.

On the contrary, he treated it as an occasion for renouncing every advantage or privilege that might have accrued to him, thereby as an opportunity for self-improvement and unreserved self-sacrifice. Fee, who was my professor on Philippians, puts it this way. Equality with God, Paul begins, is something that was inherent to Christ in his pre-existence.

Nonetheless, God's likenesses, contrary to common understanding, did not mean for Christ to be grasping, seizing being, as it would for the gods and lords whom the Philippians had previously known. It was not something to be seized upon his own advantage, which would be the normal expectation of lordly power, an idea of selfishness. Rather, his equality with God found its truest expression when he emptied himself.

A few years ago, Witherington writes, he emptied himself of whatever would have prevented him from being truly and fully human. His divine prerogatives and status can be dramatically contrasted with the status and lack of choices and prerogatives of a servant. Note that none of these three scholars who have published commentaries in recent years argue that he emptied himself of his power or of his divinity.

The closest we have come to is he emptied himself of his privileges. But then God exalted him. What does it mean? What connotation do we have? Because from verse 9, this is how Paul said, Paul said, on the basis of this, therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every other name.

Does exaltation mean that Christ was rewarded for his humiliation? Or does the exaltation indicate a victory that he had overall, including principalities and powers? As he talks about every other name that could allude to magic or whatever powers, even those in heaven, on earth, and underneath, does that mean victory over all this? Or is it a divine vindication of Christ emptying of himself and humbling himself in obedience by dying on the cross? Is it that God is saying, look, this is the pattern

for those who are in Christ? They humble themselves in obedience. They do my wishes or my will.

And that is the pathway to being exalted. To rise above all principalities and powers. Contrary to the status quo mindset that if you want to be great, you step on everybody's shoulders.

You crash people down. You show all kinds of conceit and power. Witherington further explains this, perhaps in a very interesting and yet precise way.

In status-conscious Philippi, Paul is trying to stress that Christ stripped himself of his divine privileges and status. And took on the responsibilities, limitations, and status of a human being. Indeed, of a servant among human beings.

The Philippians are also to take on the mindset of Christ. And so not view their social status and privileges as they are in the past. Which should lead to different and more self-sacrificial behavior.

Hansen, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, explains, The great rulers, heroes, and the gods of the citizens of Philippi were famous for exploiting positions for power. When did the emperors Caligula and Nero, the great conqueror Alexander the Great, or the gods of Apollo and Zeus, ever not regard their positions as advantages to exploit? But the one existing in the form of God said no to self-exploitation of his position in the form of God. And said yes to the form of a servant, Christ.

He took on the form of a servant, the well-translated slave. He took the path of service. And that brings me to my next question.

What did Christ empty? Again. This becomes a major issue in doctrine and in doctrinal studies of the early church. Because if you say Christ emptied himself of his divinity, then Christ was not completely God on earth.

If you go further to build on that argument, on the promises that he was in the form of God, but not really God, and then he comes in, he emptied himself of his power, of his omniscience, omnipotence, and all that, then Christ was a mere human being. And if so, how does it affect our faith? Did his divine power, privileges, and all that entails disappear? Is that what is going on here? Maybe in the 21st century, you are thinking to yourself, why do we have to get into all this discussion when we have this beautiful, beautiful passage to think about what Paul is asking of the church? Well, I'm glad you asked that question. But let me try to explain.

Because this was not an easy thing in the early church. When I introduce you to the keywords that are difficult for us to work with, I introduce you to the word emptying,

which is how he emptied himself. That word would later be at the center of a major doctrine in the early church.

And that doctrine would be a major cause of dispute. Scholars have called it the kenosis doctrine or the kenosis theory after the Greek word for emptying is kenosis.

This theory or doctrine is rooted in the usage of the word in Philippians 2, verse 7, which translates in English to empty, lay aside. As this will become a doctrine that will be argued and debated in early Christianity, the doctrine or the theory will state that Christ emptied himself of his divine attributes, such as his omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence on earth, and took the form of humanity. When did this doctrine begin? I've been reminding you to be cautious about how these doctrines begin and where.

Well, this doctrine, as far as we know in the literature, was first brought into the picture for discussion in 1860, up until 1880, in Germany. Then, it resurfaced later, from 1890 to 1910, in England.

And scholars would drag and debate on, oh Christ, and he emptied himself. And they would explain Philippians chapter 2, verse 7, oh he emptied himself of all his power so that he can become like one of us. The implications of this is huge.

They are saying that Christ limited himself in order to accomplish his earthly mission, but that undermines the doctrine of the Trinity. It actually suggests that, at one point, Christ was not fully God.

It also suggests that, at some point, the divinity of Christ that we talk about in terms of doctrine did not exist. Because he let that go in the 30, 33 years that he was here on earth.

The implications of how we perceive Christ and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity are huge. So let me provide some answers related to this. And then, I'll take back to the text and highlight a few things.

You want to know that there was no such doctrine or such reading of this text until 19th-century European theology. If I want to be blunt with you, I'm suggesting that be suspicious about how late this thing emerged and how they tried to drag it. The next thing you like to note is that Jesus did not empty himself of power in Philippians.

In fact, this is what the text says. Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped. But emptied himself, this is of power, by taking the form of a servant or the word can translate slave.

Being born in the likeness of man and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Nothing in the text says he emptied himself of his power. The text actually, as I read, describes how Christ emptied himself.

The how question is answered. He emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, not by relinquishing his divinity. He gave up his status and privilege.

All that he had in heaven that he could boast about, that he could brag about, he let go so that he could be one of us. Christ was fully divine and fully human when he was with us in this world.

So now that we have answered some of the key questions here, it helps to understand that Christ emptied himself for our sake. So as to live as human. He emptied himself, not of his power, but taking the form of a servant.

Now, putting it in the context of Philippians 5, let the mindset of Christ be in you also. In the mindset of Christ, he had all rights and privileges, yet he chose the way of a servant, a slave, to serve. He came to identify himself with us in his incarnation.

He took the form of a slave, working in obedience to a master. And Paul says it is as a result of that humility and obedience that God saw and exalted him and gave him the reputation, the name, the authority that is above every other name. That at the mention of that name, Jesus, now all that seems great and perceived things to be great can now be bowed before him because he's Lord.

What a wonderful thing. Do you want to look at this text again? And look at what is going on here. Paul says that unity should be in the church; the church should work in one spirit with the same mind and soul and live the conduct that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

The believers should let the same mind that is in Christ be theirs. Christ, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited. But he emptied himself and took the form of a slave.

Being born in human likeness and being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him. He gave him the name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.

And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Now, notice the mention of the name. It is every name.

His name is above every name. Authorities, magical powers, whatever name, every name comes beneath him. That is what happens when people walk in obedience and humility.

And for those who are subject to him, the sphere, those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, all have been made subject. With all the special dimensions you can think about, all have been made subject to him, Christ. Oh, and if you think that is not enough.

And every tongue, every, every tongue, every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. Every tongue. Even those who do not agree with the message of the gospel at the moment, at one point, will recognize that Jesus is Lord.

All to the glory of God the Father. I don't know what you think is going on with Paul here. I'm excited about Paul and what he's doing.

I'm excited about what he has to share with this church. Great things have been happening. And as I showed you earlier on, the conduct worthy of the gospel.

Paul has pointed out to us that there is a need for unity and steadfastness as they face opposition. And in chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, he appealed to them to have a strong sense of unity. Mentally, emotionally, socially.

That as an important feature of a community of faith. He then challenges them in the passage we have just looked at. To have the mindset of Christ.

The mindset that is in Christ Jesus has to be their mindset as well. As we go on, we will see Paul would then appeal. Now that he has shown them Christ as a suitable example, he can then go on to challenge them to shine as lights.

I like how Paul handles some of this. Paul will go on with that appeal. And let's cover that in the next few minutes.

Appeal to shine in the world. In this appeal to shine in the world, the pericope unpacks, or the passage unpacks, what it means to live worthy of the gospel again. We will find out that Paul will underline the obedience of Christ.

And call for radical obedience to the point that it will scare most Christians to read that passage because it will suggest that Paul is calling for work mentality. And you notice a pattern that Ben Willington likes to argue about in terms of Greek rhetoric that I mentioned.

I'm not a big, big, big fan to push it too far. But we will begin to see some of these dimensions. Now, appeal to shine in the world.

I will cover more of this when we begin the next session. But I just want you to pay attention just for a moment with me as I draw your attention to what we have done in this lecture. Paul has reminded the church that it's important to have the mindset of Christ among them.

In so doing, he laid out an example of Christ. Christ. He had privileges.

He had all it takes, but he let go. He assumed the posture of a humble servant. Slave.

He took the form of frail, weak humanity like us. Yes, he walked. Yes, he got tired.

Occasionally, he was so tired that he even slept on the boat. God has seen all these things with Christ. And the obedience he exhibited in his ministry exalted him high above all.

The mindset of Christ is a mindset that thinks of self-sacrifice for the sake of the other. It's a mindset of humility, being ready to let power or privileges be put aside not because you become weak but because you choose to reach down to those beneath. It's a mindset of obedience.

Obedience even to the cross. And when that is going on, God is pleased to honor those who choose the path, walking and living, worthy of the gospel of Christ in the community of faith. You may say it is hard to follow the footsteps of Christ.

Yes, I agree. Paul was trying. So should the church in Philippi.

And so should we. It is not hard to choose to be humble. And I close by reminding you that I'm an African who grew up in an African village.

As a New Testament scholar, when I'm back in my village, I am perhaps one of only three people among the 6,000 or so in the small town and their children who are out of town who ever had a PhD. But when I go back home, my uncle wants to sit down and remind me that he's my uncle and I have to listen to him. I serve like every other person.

And in fact, the truth be told, they have no idea what even the degrees I have represent. I have learned that following the path of Christ makes me accessible to my own people when I'm back home. Following the path of Christ will make us accessible to so many people around the world, even in the United States, in the European context, in Asia, in Latin America, and in Africa.

The incarnational walk with Christ, the mindset of Christ, reaps or yields significant results. May God help us as we seek to emulate Christ and develop this mindset so

that, in the end, his name will be glorified in our lives. Thank you again for joining our conversation and studies.

I hope you are learning something. The more I think about this and what Paul writes about, the more I feel challenged about my walk with Christ. And I hope that is your story as well.

Thank you.

This is Dr. Dan Darko and his lecture series on the Prison Epistles. This is session 12, The Christ hymn, Philippians 2:5-11.