

Living for the Glory of Christ

By Meagan Lacey

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read Philippians 2:1–5 at least four times. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How would you summarize these verses in one sentence?

Assignment Two

Read John 13:3–17 and Philippians 2:6–11. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How are these two passages similar in defining Christ's character?

Assignment Three

Equality is something people long for whether in school, sports, work, or relationships. Interview five friends with this scenario: *Imagine you were on the state championship soccer team last year and are about to enter your senior year of high school. The coach tells you that you will not be playing varsity this year, but on the JV team. How would you respond to this? (A) Quit immediately. (B) Be grateful for the opportunity to play. (C) Demand a reason.* Prepare to share the results of your survey with your group.

Scripture to Memorize

Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.
Philippians 2:6

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will better understand the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and learn how to live a life for the glory of Christ.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Leah was homecoming queen her senior year, but she was quickly surprised during her first year of college when nobody cared about her high school successes. She spent the next three years searching for identity in all the wrong things. Leah had one Christian friend, her neighbor Mary Ann. One night, Mary Ann asked Leah to come over and Mary Ann shared the gospel. Leah became a Christ follower, and because of this, she knew she had to break up with her boyfriend and stop hanging out with her friend group. In the world's eyes Leah lost it all, but to Leah, she had gained everything in Christ.

Read Philippians 2:1–11 out loud.

Introduction

Philippians 2:6–11 is the incredible story of Jesus' defeat over death by giving up His heavenly status. No passage in Scripture fully summarizes the Word of God, but Philippians 2:6–11 is a Christological passage that contains the overall purpose of the Bible in a few short sentences.

Philippians 2:6–11 is often considered a hymn. The text can be divided into past, present and future tenses. Verses 6–8 are in past tense, reflecting what Jesus did while on earth. Verse 9 is in present tense. Verses 10–11 reflect the future tense of what is to come.

Jesus clearly represents ultimate humility, yet He is exalted above all. Knowing the truth that the One whose name is above every name gave up everything for the sake of mankind puts into perspective the great love of God. This passage speaks of the ultimate suffering Jesus endured and the ultimate glory that is His.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week may now share an answer to the following question: How would you summarize Philippians 2:1–5 in one sentence?

Studying the Passage

Verse 6. who. Disciples must recognize Jesus as truly God, but also recognize that He did not see this as something **to be grasped**. The word *grasp* can mean “to seize hold of” or “to hold firmly.” Jesus did not do this. Jesus released His privileges, while still maintaining His deity. Our wickedness leads us to try to grasp the throne of Jesus, but Jesus gave this up.

All believers are called to imitate the attitude of Jesus, who gave up privileges in humble obedience to the Father. Death was unable to hold Him, thus demonstrating the fullness of His victory over the enemy. The death of Jesus on the cross was the ultimate example of humiliation. The resurrection of Jesus is the beautiful example of the exaltation of His name for all eternity.

Verse 7. emptied Himself. Jesus gave up His heavenly status, but He still was God. Jesus did not give up His deity, but came to serve and provide salvation from sin and separation from God. **servant.** A bond-servant is a slave who does not get anything in return for his or her work. Jesus came to save mankind from the sin and hell that each person deserves.

Verse 8. He humbled Himself. Jesus, both God and man, stood in humility and submission to the Father. Not only did Jesus leave heaven, but He died a gruesome death that was viewed as ultimate humiliation. In Jesus' time, people who died on a cross were slaves, criminals and assassins.

Not only was death on the cross seen as horrific and humiliating, but it also stood as a sign that this person was cursed by God (Galatians 3:13; Deuteronomy 21:22–23). This puts into perspective Jesus' words on the cross when He said, "*Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?*" that is, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" (Matthew 27:46). Jesus humbled Himself to the point of death for the sins of the world by becoming the perfect sacrifice we needed.

Verse 9. the name that is above every name. Jesus' obedience unto death gave Him the exaltation of all. Even now, Jesus' name is above every name. Though not all people presently acknowledge this truth, Jesus has already been highly exalted by God. To understand the exaltation of Christ requires an understanding of the humiliation Christ took on the cross.

Verse 10. every knee should bow. A day is coming when all will bow before Jesus. This includes people in heaven, people on earth, and people in hell. 2 Corinthians 6:2 says, *Now is "the day of salvation."* A day is coming when, regardless of a person's decision to follow Christ, every tongue will confess and every knee will bow. Disciples must share Jesus with all urgency.

Verse 11. to the glory of God the Father. In addition to every knee bowing, every tongue will proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. Nothing can take this glory away from Him. Revelation 5:13 is a beautiful picture of what is to come. Great joy comes to the disciple who sees this as the purpose of life: to glorify God.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: How are John 13:3–17 and Philippians 2:6–11 similar in defining Christ's character?

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now report on the interviews. What answers did you receive, and how did they differ from one another? What does this tell you about mankind?

Discussion Questions

Jesus prayed in Matthew 26:39 that God would "*let this cup pass from Me.*" What if the Father had *removed the cup*? As Isaiah 55:8–9 says, "*So are My ways higher than your ways.*" In life, things are going to happen that you do not understand. How does the example of Jesus help you live a life that glorifies God when things are going the way you want and when they are not?

On Your Own

Picture yourself standing before Jesus as He sits enthroned in heaven. In the space below, write what you would proclaim to Him, using only words of exaltation and praise for who He is. Use Psalm 103 and Revelation 5 for assistance.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

Being a disciple requires humility, and humility leads to obedience. As humans, we desire to understand and know “why,” but God first requires trust. Isaiah 26:3 shows that trust is built on a foundation of keeping one’s mind set on God. He must be the focus.

As Jesus walked this earth, His mind was set on the Father and His will. Jesus was obedient, and His obedience has highly exalted Him above all. Jesus is the perfect example of sacrificing privileges in obedience to the Father. Though truly God, Jesus gave up His heavenly status to save mankind. Jesus went through temptation, but He was without sin. He now sits at the right hand of the Father. Only the Father knows the day of Christ’s return to earth, but He is coming. This should impact the way a disciple lives.

Jesus came to earth to sacrifice Himself for the sake of man. He sacrificed everything and went through a gruesome death so that man may spend eternity with Him in heaven. Being His disciple requires costly living, including giving up self every day for the sake of Christ.

Disciples are called to make much of Christ by sharing Him with this lost and dying world. Exalting Christ must be the aim of every believer, not exalting self. Humility must exude from a heart that longs and desires to honor Him above all. Following Christ requires all, but He gives us all we need for the journey.

Follow up Question

When you see Jesus as the powerful and majestic King of the universe, how does that change how you speak to Him, worship Him and obey Him?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.