

Advent 5 2014

Throughout the Advent Season we have contemplated:

- Man's Greatest Need - A Savior to deliver him from the power and the penalty of sin. Then we considered the pledge of God to meet man's greatest need through:
- God's Promised Seed – From the Book of Genesis we discovered that Jesus is the *seed of the Woman* (born of a virgin) and the promised *seed of Abraham*. (Messiah and King, that descendant of Abraham who would bless all of the nations)

Last Week we moved from the Old Testament to the New Testament as we focused on “Christ's Glorious Deed”

- We discovered that the incarnation of Jesus involved a deep humiliation whereby he left his home in glory and took on human flesh. The text that we considered was Phil. Ch 2.

Philippians 2:5 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,*
6 *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,* 7 *but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* 8 *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

- Jesus Christ, God the Son, the Second person of the Trinity, the very same one who existed for all of eternity in the form of God, dwelling in loving union with the Father and Spirit, left his home in glory, emptying himself into the human vessel of a servant.

Allister Begg: “No one ever started so high and humbled himself so low.”

The Puritan writer Thomas Watson wrote, “*The steepest step down was the very first one, where the King of kings became a bondservant.*”

- First Step - (HUGE) incarnation, (covered that in great depth last week)

8 *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

- By taking on human flesh Jesus did for us, what we could never do for ourselves.
- From the manger to the Cross, HE lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father.
- His obedience and his sacrificial death provided a right standing with God for all who believe.

Romans 5:19, *For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

C.S. Lewis wrote a book he called Miracles. In the chapter titled "The Grand Miracle," Lewis, in his unique and picturesque way, described the incarnation of Jesus Christ with these words: "In the Christian story God descends to re-ascend. He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity ... down to the very roots and sea-bed of the Nature He has created."

In the same publication Lewis uses the image of a deep sea diver to help us understand both the descent and ascent of Jesus Christ,

"Think of a diver, reducing himself to nakedness, then glancing in mid-air, then gone with a splash, vanished, rushing down through green and warm water into black and cold water, down through increasing pressure into the death-like region of ooze and slime and old decay; then up again, back to color and light, his lungs almost bursting, till suddenly he breaks surface again, holding in his hand the dripping, precious thing that he went down to recover."

- Through the incarnation Jesus willingly jumped into the deepest of water and he continued to descend in the mire as the Suffering Servant of God bearing in his own body the sins of many.
- The prophets of old foretold this "**Suffering Servant**" who would descend to the depths. Were all familiar with the words of the prophet Isaiah describing Christ's deep descent:

Isaiah 53: 3 **He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.** 4 **Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.** 5 **But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.**

- BUT did you know that Isaiah who speaks so clearly of Christ's descent speaks with equal clarity of Christ's glorious ascent?

Isaiah 52:13 **Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.**

- This same servant, the one who was so greatly humiliated has been exalted to the highest place.
- Paul tells the Philippian believers that this exaltation has already taken place.

Philippians 2: 9 **Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,** 10 **so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,** 11 **and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

- Let's take a few minutes and finish up our Advent devotions by bringing the story FULL CIRCLE.
- Jesus who descended is the same one who also ascended.

Ephesians 4: 8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." 9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

- All of this descending and ascending is enough to make me dizzy, let's make it simple.

Because Jesus perfectly obeyed the will of the Father, because he humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross, GOD highly exalted him.

Here in Philippians 2 the Father's reward to his beloved Son is described for us. That reward was threefold:

- Position, (Vs 9)
- Purpose, (Vs 10)
- Praise, (Vs 11)

Position: Phil 2: 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

- Having conquered death through his glorious resurrection Jesus ascended into heaven like a triumphant King arriving home with the spoils of victory.
- To exalt it to "Lift up" When Paul Says: "highly exalted" he adds a prefix (HUPER - hyper) If exalt is to extend, (lift) then to highly exalt is to hyper-extend. (lift)
 - The Father elevated Jesus to a position that is far above everything else in all of creation.
 - We see this in Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 1: 20 (when Christ ascended the Father) seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

- Right hand = The position of power, prestige and honor.
- Not MERELY ABOVE but FAR above ALL *rule* and *authority*, *power* and *dominion* (titles describe angelic powers) Jesus has been ENTHRONED, seated far above them all.
- King David spoke prophetically of this glorious moment when the Father would enthrone the Son after his glorious victory.

Psalm 110: 1 **The LORD (Jehovah) says to my Lord: (Adonai) “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”**

Purpose:

Verse 10 is what we call a “Purpose Clause” What is the purpose for this exaltation?

Philippians 2: 10 **so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,**

- The exaltation of Jesus is SO THAT everything that has been created WILL BOW
- God the Father has decreed that glory, honor, respect and adoration should be given to his beloved Son.
- Where is this honor (the bending of the knee) taking place? In heaven, on earth and under the earth.
 - That covers every area of Gods creation.

That statement should raise a question in your mind: Why don't we see this happening?

- There was no traffic jam in Colebrookdale this morning as you were coming to worship the Lord Jesus.
 - People are not lining up like the Wise Men to bow the knee.
- The guys that you work with continue to use the Name of the Lord Jesus in an openly blasphemous manner. Didn't see any lightening strikes yet.

Even though the Father has decreed the fact that every knee shall bow before the Lord Jesus, at this point his decree is not being enforced.

As the writer of Hebrews says, (Heb 2:8) **“Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.”**

- **BUT we see Jesus!**
- IN the sovereignty of God, the time has not yet come. There are still people who need to hear the Gospel and to repent.

2 Peter 3:9, **The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

- **BUT, THAT DAY WILL COME,** and the Apostle John gives us a glimpse of it:

Revelation 1: 7 **Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”**

Praise: ALL of Christ's honor and exaltation yields glory to God the Heavenly Father.

- The Spirit shines a light on the Son, the Father exalts the Son and the Son and the Spirit glorify the Father.

Philippians 2: 11 **and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

- Everything that Jesus did he did for the glory of the Father.

The Protestant Reformers taught that all of life is to be lived to the glory of God.

Last of the 5 Solas of the Reformation is “Sola Deo Gloria”

As the Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, "What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever."

- As believers in Jesus Christ the works of our hands, the words of our mouths, all that we do and all that we are is to bring glory and honor to the one who created and redeemed us.

We are not to live for our own glory but for the glory of Christ with the glorious HOPE that we will be with him one great day.

As believers our ultimate hope is to see God’s glory. **“We rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2).** That great day when God will **“present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy”**

God has met mans greatest need by sending his one and only Son, Jesus Christ, The seed of the Woman, the promised seed of Abraham.

He left his home in glory, taking on himself the form of a servant for the express purpose of dying on the cross.

- Because we love him we gladly bend the knee to the King of all Kings.