

**“Jesus, God with Us”**  
**Philippians 2:5-11**  
**Mercy Hill Church | December 25, 2022**

<sup>5</sup>Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Big Idea: *On Christmas Day, we are humbled and in awe of the incarnation of Jesus – because in His incarnation we see the mystery and majesty of God’s love for us through Jesus’ humility, humanity and divinity.***

**1. The Divinity of Jesus (v.6a)**

- Jesus (the Word) there in the beginning of creation (cf. John 1:1)
- Jesus claimed He and the (Heavenly Father – God) are one (cf. John 10:30)
- Jesus wasn’t just partially God, or god-like, but was fully divine (cf. Colossians 3:29)
- In the Gospel accounts, it’s Jesus claim to be God – not just a religious leader -- which angered the Jewish religious leaders at the time and ultimately led to His crucifixion at hands of the Roman government.

**2. The Humility of Jesus (vv.6b-7a)**

- Jesus is fully God (cf. Colossians 1:16-17), yet despite Jesus’ divinity, Jesus was humble
  - NLT translation: “Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.”
  - Message paraphrase: “...He had equal status with God but didn’t think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what...”
- One thing to be humbled (by someone or something), another to be humble
  - Jesus’ humility revealed through His words (cf. Matthew 20:28), His heart (in prayer) (cf. John 17:1), and through His actions (cf. John 13:1-16).

**3. The Humanity of Jesus (vv.7b-8a)**

- One of the great mysteries of the Christian faith -- can easily lead to false dichotomies (either-or):
  - Docetism: Jesus only appeared to be human – didn’t have a real, human body. Denied the humanity of Jesus
  - Arianism: Jesus was created by God. Denied the divinity of Jesus
  - Historic church creeds (e.g., Nicene Creed, Chalcedonian Creed, and Athanasian Creed) re-affirmed the full divinity and full humanity of Jesus
  - Herman Bavnick Quote: “The incarnation of the Word is not a problem which we must solve, or can solve, but a wonderful fact, rather which we gratefully confess in such a way as God Himself presents to us in His Word.”
- Graham Cole Quote: “Could it be that Old Testament Language about God’s eyes, ears, arms, hands, fingers and so forth prepare the way somehow for the incarnation, God the Word become flesh?”
- Scripture constantly affirms the (full) humanity of Jesus:

- Jesus was weary (cf. John 4:6)
- Jesus was thirsty (cf. John 19:28)
- Jesus experienced grief (cf. John 11:35)
- Jesus experienced temptations (cf. Hebrews 4:15)
- Jesus experienced abandonment (cf. Matthew 27:46)
- Jesus was born as a Jewish baby, into a particular culture, in a particular place, at a particular time (cf. Matthew 1-2)
- ...and much more!
- Jesus in his full humanity experienced all that we as people experience. As Christians, we worship a God who is not just transcendent but also immanent, not only divine but also human, a God who is not only “up there,” but “with us” – Immanuel, God with us.

#### **4. The Cross of Jesus (v.8b)**

- (cf. Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 2:17)
- Christopher Watkin Quote: “...but the incarnation is not just one more god-become-creature story in the same mold. There is something qualitatively different about it. Christ comes not to ravish or to amuse himself but to serve, not to exercise his right to domination but to give the right to be His children.”
- Jesus’ humility and humanity reminds us that God is with us – but it’s not enough!
  - Bavnick Quote: “The incarnation of the Son of God, therefore without anything further, cannot be the reconciling and redeeming deed. It is the beginning of it, the preparation for it, and the introduction to it, but it is not that deed itself.”
- Ultimately, Jesus was born (incarnate) for the ultimate purpose of dying -- from the cradle to the cross, from the womb to the tomb, from Christmas to Good Friday & Easter
  - John Piper Quote: "The incarnation is the preparation of nerve endings for the nails. The incarnation is the preparation of head for a crown of thrones to press through. He needed to have a broad back, so there was a place for the whip. He needed to have feet, so that there was a place for spikes. He needed to have a side, so that there was a place for the sword to go in. He needed cheeks, fleshly cheeks, so that Judas would have a place to kiss and there would be a place for the spit to run down that the soldiers put on him. He needed a brain and a spinal column, with no vinegar and no gall, so the exquisiteness of the pain could be fully felt – for you.”
- R.G. Lee Quote:
  - "Christ who in eternity rested motherless upon the Father’s bosom and in time rested fatherless upon a woman’s bosom, clasping the Ancient of Days had become the Infant of Days. What deep descent from the heights of glory to the depths of shame; from the wonders of heaven to the wickedness of earth; from exaltation to humiliation; from the throne to the tree; from dignity to debasement; from worship to wrath; from the halls of heaven to the nails of earth; from the coronation to the curse; from the glory place to the gory place! In Bethlehem, humility and glory in their extremes were joined. Born in a stable! Cradled in a cattle trough! Wrapped in swaddling clothes of poverty! No room for Him who made all rooms! No place for Him who made and knows all places! Oh, deep humiliation of the Creator – born of the creature, woman! But in His descent was the dawn of mercy. Because we cannot ascend to Him, He descends to us.
- On Good Friday and Easter Sunday, we see Jesus’ full humanity, full divinity, and full humility displayed to redeem and rescue us from our sin and shame for our good and His glory!

## 5. The Majesty of Jesus (vv.9-11)

- (cf. Isaiah 45:22-23; Revelation 7:9-12)
- And ultimately, from beginning to end, from birth to death, resurrection to ascension, Jesus' life opens our eyes and our hearts to the beauty, majesty, and love of God – that we might respond in humility, love and worship of Him!

### Reflection Questions

- What are your favorite holidays? What is it about those particular holidays that you appreciate and enjoy?
- When you consider Christmas, what words, thoughts and feelings come to mind? Why?
- When you think about Jesus, do you think of Him more as "divine" (i.e. God) or "human" (i.e. a person)? Why? In what ways have you neglected the other aspect of who Jesus is? How does knowing how Christians have wrestled through this mystery in the past help you to better understand and know Jesus?
- How does knowing that Jesus was fully human encourage and comfort you? How does knowing Jesus is fully God encourage and comfort you?
- Why is it important to keep the cross (i.e. Good Friday/Easter) in mind as celebrate Christmas?
- Have you -- and do you -- confess Jesus as Lord? If not, what's preventing you? What are some next steps you can take?
- As you consider the humility (and selflessness) of Jesus, what are some ways you can grow in humility (and selflessness) in your relationships and interactions with others?