

- I. My Notes ... WWC message 5/23
- II. Series: Koinonia — The Joy of Living in Unity with Christ
 - Title: The Pattern of Participation – Part 3
 - Text: Philippians 2:5-11
 - Quote: “Bow now in love or bow later in recognition—but bow we will.” — Anonymous
- III. Memorial Day
 - Memorial Day gives us a sacred pause — a moment when a nation stops to remember those who laid down their lives so others could live in freedom. It’s a day built on sacrifice, and because of that, it speaks directly into the heart of Christian participation. The gospel teaches us that love always moves toward others, and the greatest love is shown in laying down one’s life for another. We honor that today.
 - But Memorial Day also invites us to consider the kind of people we are becoming. The freedoms we enjoy were not given cheaply. They were carried on the shoulders of men and women who believed that some things are worth giving everything for. Their sacrifice calls us to examine our own willingness to live sacrificially — not in dramatic, heroic moments, but in the daily choices that shape a life of Christlike participation.
 - Following Jesus means stepping into a story where freedom is never used for self-indulgence but for service. It means showing up for others, bearing burdens, protecting the vulnerable, and choosing the good of the community over the comfort of the individual. Memorial Day reminds us that participation is costly — and that the most meaningful contributions we make are the ones that require something from us.
 - So, as we remember the fallen, we also recommit ourselves to the kind of life their sacrifice makes possible: a life marked by gratitude, responsibility, and love in action. We honor them best not only by remembering their names, but by living in a way that reflects the values they died to preserve.
 - May this day stir us to deeper participation in God’s mission — a participation shaped by humility, courage, and the willingness to give ourselves for the sake of others.
- IV. Introduction
 - For the last few weeks, we’ve been talking about what it means to participate in ministry—not as a job title, not as a platform, not as a stage, but as a way of life. And for many believers, that word ministry still feels too big, too heavy, too official. We imagine people with microphones, people with degrees, people with a special call in their life. But Paul has been showing us something far simpler and far more beautiful:

ministry is what happens when ordinary people adopt the mindset of Jesus and live it out in ordinary moments.

- People who serve others are “in ministry.”

People who choose compassion over convenience are “in ministry.”

People who see a need and quietly meet it—no spotlight, no applause—are “in ministry.”

People who encourage their neighbors, who pay attention to the world around them, who carry the heart of Christ into the places they already live and work... that is ministry.

- This whole journey through Philippians 2 has been helping us understand who we are by looking at who Jesus is. We’ve traced His descent—His humility, His obedience, His willingness to go lower for the sake of love. And if we’re honest, that part of the journey confronts us. It stretches us. It calls us to participate in a way that costs something.
- But today, Paul shows us what is right around the corner.
Because the story of Jesus does not end in descent.
The path downward leads somewhere.
The obedience of Christ results in something breathtaking.
And this is where participation becomes joy.
- We often talk so much about the future benefits of the Christian life—heaven, eternity, glory—that we overlook the present moments where God is already at work. But it is in these present moments, right here, right now, that ministry happens... lives are changed... healing takes place... and joy is found.
- And Paul wants us to see that the same God who met Jesus in His descent is the God who meets us in ours. The same God who exalted Jesus is the God who lifts us as we follow Him. Philippians 2:9–11 is not just the conclusion of Christ’s story—it is the promise that participation in His life leads to participation in His victory.
- Today, we step into the exaltation.
Today, we see what God does with a life fully surrendered.
Today, we discover why the name of Jesus is the anchor for every act of ministry we offer.

V. Text

- Let’s read it once again ...

- **Philippians 2:5-11 NET**

You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross! As a result God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name

of Jesus every knee will 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.

- Paul is coaching us to adopt – to embrace and follow – the mindset that Christ had throughout His life. It is a healthy mindset for all believers.
- Paul is explaining what participation in life looks like through the example of Jesus. John reveals the results of this participation. We have been talking about this in Revelation 4 and 5.
- Both passages reveal one great truth ... Jesus is Lord of all! Paul gives us the theology of His Lordship; John gives us the worship of His Lordship.

VI. The Path

- Philippians 2 has been showing us the path that Jesus walked so that we, as Disciples, can walk in a similar fashion.
- Revelation 4 and 5 reveal the destination of our focus and the worship that is a result of this lifestyle.
- Philippians 2 points us to the mindset of Christ and the attitude that we should carry.
- In Revelation, we see the worship and praise that is due the Father and the Lamb of God. We see the throne and the One seated on the throne. We express our gratitude for Creation – for what He has done. And in the throne room we see the Lamb – the One who revealed grace through obedience. And we praise Him for redemption – for making a way for a right relationship with the Father.
- Philippians shows us the downward steps of Christ's humility; Revelation shows us the upward roar of Heaven's worship.
- And since this is who Jesus is, as we learn to walk this path, as we adopt His mindset, then this is the reflection that we become.

VII. The Name (It's Important)

- If the path of Christ shows us how to live, the Name of Christ shows us why it matters.
- In our culture, we scratch and claw to make a name for ourselves. In Christ's kingdom, we lower ourselves, and God takes care of the name. We don't have to defend our reputation when we are operating under the authority of the Name above all names.
- **Philippians 2:9 NLT**
Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names ...
- In Scripture, a name is never just a sound. It is identity. Character. Essence. Authority.
- When Paul says God "gave Him the name," he is saying: God publicly revealed who Jesus truly is.

- Jesus didn't become something new in the resurrection and exaltation. He was revealed as what He has always been.
- Heaven didn't upgrade Him. Heaven unveiled Him.
This is why the early church didn't whisper the name of Jesus—they proclaimed it. Because the name reveals the truth the world must reckon with: Jesus is Lord.
- Paul says, “As a result...” Meaning: the exaltation is tied to the obedience that Christ demonstrated (lived).
- Not as a reward. Not as a transaction. But as a divine declaration: “This is what My Son's humility reveals about My heart.”
- The Father has exalted the Son because the Son “descended” (lowered Himself). The Father honored the Son because of the obedience that the Son displayed. The Father brings glory to the Son because the Son walked in the love of God.
- Philippians 2 tells us that every knee will bow.
Revelation 4 and 5 shows us every knee bowing.
- Philippians 2 tells us every tongue will confess.
Revelation 4 and 5 shows us every creature singing.
- Philippians gives us the decree. Revelation shows us the doxology.
And both declare the same truth: Jesus Christ is Lord.
- Not “will be.” Not “might be.” Not “for some people.” Not “for those who choose Him.”
He is Lord—everywhere, always, and for everyone. And here's the discipleship connection: When we participate in the mindset of Christ, we participate in the joy of Christ.
- The Name above every name is the anthem of Heaven and the anchor of the Church.

VIII. Think About It

- The Name is the foundation of all the ministry that happens.
- Why do we serve? Why do we love? Why do we choose compassion over convenience? Why do we meet needs quietly, faithfully, joyfully?
- We minister in the name of Jesus. This means that we follow His example, we let His lifestyle be our example, we model the behavior of our Teacher (Lord).
- It's not our name, our reputation, our platform, or our strength that is the reason or the focus. Every act of ministry—seen or unseen—is an act done under the authority of the Name above every name.
- When you pray for someone, it's done in His Name.
When you forgive someone, you do it in His Name.
When you serve someone, you do it in His Name.
When you love someone, it's done in His Name.
- And Heaven sees it. Heaven celebrates it. Heaven joins it.
- Because participation in ministry is participation in the life of the One whose Name is exalted above all.

- The Name above every name is not just something we confess—it is the reality we participate in every time we live like Jesus.
- Every step of humility leads toward the throne. Every act of obedience echoes in eternity. Every moment of surrender aligns us with the worship of Heaven.
- The Name above every name is not just a theological truth—it is the future of the universe.
- And Paul is saying:
Live now in light of what will be true forever.
Participate now in the life that ends in worship.
Carry the mindset now that leads to joy then.

IX. Let's Bow

- **Philippians 2:10 MSG**

Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honored him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth—even those long ago dead and buried—will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that he is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father.

- This paraphrase makes clear the result of Christ's obedience. Paul's "theology" – every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, Jesus is Lord, and God (the Father) is glorified – points to John's "observation – the confession that leads to worship. And because of this the Father and the Son (Jesus) are honored and glorified. Paul is saying what he knows to be true ... John is telling us the truth that he sees.
- Pay attention to the parallels that we have been looking at here (Philippians) and on Tuesday nights (Revelation 4 and 5). Paul refers to Heaven, Earth, and under the Earth. John witnesses "...every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea ..." (Revelation 5:13) in praise and worship.
- This is not accidental. This is Scripture reinforcing Scripture for our edification and understanding. Paul is describing the universal worship of the exalted Christ. John is witnessing the universal worship of the exalted Christ.
- Same truth. Same Lord. Same worship. Two perspectives.
- In Philippians, the exaltation leads to universal confession.
In Revelation, the exaltation produces universal worship.
 - Paul: "God exalted Him and gave Him the Name..."
John: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain..."
 - Paul: "Every knee will bow."
John: Every being in creation bows.
 - Paul: "Every tongue will confess."
John: "Every creature sings."
- When we walk the path of Christ (Philippians 2), we join the worship of Christ (Revelation 5).

X. Making It Real

- You know, we don't always think of ourselves as people who bow. We imagine bowing as something ancient, something formal, something reserved for kings and queens. But the truth is... everyone bows to something.
- We bow to deadlines. We bow to expectations. We bow to fear. We bow to the opinions of others. We bow to the pressure to perform. We bow to the need to be noticed. We bow to the weight of our own past.
Every one of us, in one way or another, bends our knee to something that claims our attention, our energy, our identity.
- But Paul is reminding us that there is only One before whom bowing leads to freedom.
Only One before whom surrender becomes joy.
Only One whose Name lifts us instead of crushing us.
- And that's why this matters. Because when we bow to Jesus—when we participate in His mindset, His humility, His obedience—we're not losing ourselves. We're finding the life we were made for.
- That's the invitation of Philippians 2. That's the song of Revelation 5. That's the heartbeat of discipleship.

XI. Closing

- Allow me to encourage you with these words...
- If every knee will bow one day, choose to be the people who bow now.
Not out of fear, but out of love. Not out of pressure, but out of joy. Not because we are forced to, but because we want to.
- Let's be the people who choose the path of Christ—the path of humility, the path of obedience, the path of surrender—because we know where that path leads.
- It leads to the throne. It leads to worship. It leads to joy. It points us to the Name that is above every name.
- So today, let's participate in His life. Let's reflect His mindset. Let's reveal His heart. Let's live in His Name.
And as we do... may our lives echo the worship of Heaven, may our obedience reflect the Lamb who was slain, and may our surrender continue to bring glory to the Father.
- Let's pray.
- Grace First, Grace Always.