**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

 ***What’s in a Name?***

**Philippians 2: 8 - 13**

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(Unless otherwise noted, NAS is quoted – New American Standard Bible)

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Chapter 2 of Philippians creates some theological discussions as to how God manifested Himself to be a regular everyday person and yet live a sinless life. The answer is found in Scripture.

We read in Philippians 2:6-7 . . .

**6** who, although He existed in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

**7** but emptied Himself,

taking the form of a bond-servant,

 and being made in the likeness of men.

 From this Scripture, we can see that God, as Jesus, did not want us to pursue being our own god. This is a selfish aim that victimizes others. So, in human form as Jesus, God taught that people were not to pursue being a god. Hence, Jesus modeled for us that equality with God was a thing not to be grasped. Jesus called for us to take on the servant role under God. . . in order to be in correct relationship with Him and our neighbor. If we are all trying to be a god, someone will run over another in their pursuit. Notice that throughout history when a person or ruler claimed to be a god, they required others to bow down and give their property and human rights to them. Then the man-made god requires their followers to go and conquer another and take their stuff and give it to them.

**Did God become one of us to confiscate our property or demand that we confiscate other people’s property for Him. . . or sacrifice our lives or someone else’s to gain right-standing with Him?** **No.**

As we stated previously, the core of the Gospel Message is that God came to die on the Cross for our sins (1 Corinthians 15) . . . and to model the life He intended for us to live. With this, Jesus was the High Priest who took the sins of the world upon himself instead of sacrificing someone else. Remember, it was God’s instruction (Exodus 30:1-6) directing the Jewish High Priest (Aaron) to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed animal on the horns of the Mercy Seat of the Ark of Testimony. . . representing atonement to God for the Jewish people. But this was only a representation that never took away the penalty of sin or reconciled sinful people to God (Hebrews 9 and 10).

**Why was this process chosen?**

**To prove to us that God does not demand our lives. . . like fallen humanity does.**

**God does not operate like fallen humanity’s self-proclaimed gods.**

From the first generation of people, fallen humanity left to their own pursuits and desires goes the way of Cain. Cain murdered his brother Abel, due to rebellion against God and self-absorbed jealousy leading to bitterness that turned into hateful murder (Genesis 4). Then Cain, filled with guilt, was fearful others would take his life. . . seeing that he was a hateful-murderous person. God’s plan for humanity is the exact opposite. God created us for life not death, for forgiveness and restoration. Before Adam and Eve ate from the Forbidden Tree, they were designed to live forever with God. Now, we still will live forever. However, God gives us a choice to live with Him or we can choose to be separated from Him for an eternity. God desires for us to choose Him . . .Free-Will-Choice.

To assist us in making the choice for God, He came to personally guide us. God, as Jesus, took the form of a person with all the weaknesses we have but demonstrated to us it is possible to overcome sin and death, but only with His Spirit indwelling us.

**Hebrews 4:14-15**

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

**This is a Miracle:**

**The Incarnation and Victory Over Sin and Death**

We need to remember to witness to others who have not experienced the One and only God who created us. . . that He has the same miraculous power to manifest Himself as one of us. Then, possessing all the weaknesses of fallen humanity, He modeled for us “by choice” the life He intends for us to live. Jesus’ life of victory over *sin and death* was only possible because of His divine *spiritual superiority*. Yes, and, in His *spiritual superiority,* we, too, are invited to participate (John 3:1-7).

God, as Jesus, calls us to be reborn of spirit. This is the transaction point of becoming in right-standing before God and receiving the ability to overcome . . . and elevate ourselves, above the power of sin and death. Paul affirms the superiority in *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* in **Romans 8:1-2.**

**1**Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

. . .  **Romans 8:9-11**

 **9** However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

 **10** If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

**Miracle: Eternal Life can start in our mortal bodies.**

 As we can see by reading Romans 8:9, the defining point of being a Christian is whether God’s Holy Spirit indwells you. Where did Paul get this understanding and teaching? From Jesus. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3-6 that a person cannot see or enter the kingdom of God unless they are reborn of Spirit.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

The creation is a miracle. Life is a miracle. The Incarnation is a miracle, love is miracle and becoming a person indwelled with God’s Spirit is a miracle. All of these are spiritual events. Miracles are spiritual. . . meaning that we cannot explain them using mathematics and the laws of physics as we know them. However, all these events have happened and can exist in the life of a Believer. These are all “experiential”.

**Some Miracle Points to Consider – Origin of Life to the Incarnation**

We now have confirmation . . . through honest scientists. . . that what we knew and believed, regarding the undeniable fine-tuning we see in the arrangement of the elements in their proper sequence in time. . . that life was created with purpose, meaning and direction just like the Incarnation. In fact, Jesus states that all things were created through Him (John 1:1-5).

So, God . . .with purpose, meaning and direction. . .

**Philippians 2**

**8** Being found in appearance as a man [Jesus],

He [Jesus] humbled Himself

by becoming obedient to the point of death,

even death on a cross.

**9** For this reason also,

God highly exalted Him,

and bestowed on Him the **name** which is above every **name**,

**10** so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW,

 of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

**11** and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

 to the glory of God the Father.

**Where does Paul get this information about Jesus?**

**Isaiah 45:23** "I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

**Paul also quotes Isaiah in Romans.**

**Romans 14:11** For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."

Remember, Isaiah was the prophet who prophesied the coming of Jesus in Isaiah 53.

Philippians 2:8-9 points to the reason God manifested Himself as Jesus, the One person to which all humanity is called. This name. . . “Jesus”. . . is the Light coming into the darkness.

**John 1:4** In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. **5** The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

**The name “Jesus” means “Jehovah is salvation”.**

This is a fitting name that most appropriately points to God’s loving intent for all humanity. . . “**salvation**”. There is not any other name ever given in history designed to accomplish the salvation of all. Islam does not provide any name to fulfill this salvation function. None of the eastern faiths do either, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, or Confucianism.

Greek

Jesus: Strong’s 2424 Ἰησοῦς Jesous {ee-ay-sooce'}

Origin: of Heb. or. 3091

 Meaning: Jesus = "Jehovah is salvation"

1) Joshua was the famous captain of the Israelites, Moses' successor

2) Jesus, son of Eliezer, one of the ancestors of Christ

3) Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of mankind, God incarnate

Hebrew

Yehoshua: Strong’s 3091 of Hebrew origin; noun proper masculine

Meaning: "the LORD is salvation," Moses' successor, also the name of a number of Israelites.

Original Word: יְהוֹשׁוּעַ Transliteration: Yehoshua

Phonetic Spelling: (yeh-ho-shoo'-ah)

**What is the difference in the Christian Life?**

**What do we tell our neighbors?**

 Now with spiritual clarity of this understanding. . . we see that it is God, as the One and only Creator, who has presented His victorious plan to us through His Word and the Incarnation as Jesus Christ. . . that our lives are purposed to live in peace with Him and our neighbor for an eternity. We can call this “*salvation”,* that we surrender to Jesus. Jesus modeled the humble servant role to us that brings peace to our lives. Jesus is the *Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9:6). This peace, the miracle of salvation, starts now and matures in us in a spiritual process we can call *sanctification*. In this, we avail ourselves to the supernatural power of God’s Spirit to be at work in us. The visible sign this is taking place is the outward witness of God’s Spiritual fruits (Galatians 5:22-26) we use to apply our gifts and talents to work with and assists others. So, it is God supernaturally at work in us. We are awed by and have reverence for Him. We should tremble at times to see the outcome of His work in us.

 One of the awesome powers Believers are given is the ability to forgive. Others may not expect forgiveness, but when we do forgive, they are released, and we are set free from a burdened heart. This is salvation experienced. This is salvation at work in you. Remember, Jesus’ name means “the Lord is salvation”.

**Philippians 2**

 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed,

not as in my presence only,

 but now much more in my absence,

work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

 13 for it is God who is at work in you,

both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**AMEN**