

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

STUDY FIVE

The Servant Who Came

Philippians 2:5–8

Existing in unchanging deity of His essence, Jesus did not regard that position in heaven something He would hold on to and not release. Why? Because He is humble of heart. Because to come to our rescue, He couldn't remain in heaven. He let go of His privileged position where He received angelic praise, knew no pain, experienced no rejection. Unclutching His divine nature, Jesus, the second member of the Trinity, became a servant.

—Charles R. Swindoll

THROUGH eyes of love, Jesus saw the plight of self-destructive sinners, scarred by the burns of transgressions, and stretched out His hand to help us in our hopeless state. Because of grace, He overlooked our cosmic crimes against heaven and said to us, “I accept you.” In humility, Jesus donned the garb of a servant, carried a criminal’s cross, and paid the cost to heal us and reconcile us to God.

In the two prior *Searching the Scriptures* studies, we examined God’s love and grace. Now, we explore divine humility. At first, it seems odd to attach humility with God. How can the all-glorious One, the only One worthy of praise and honor, express perfect humility? Because God is triune—three persons, each truly divine, united as one God.

As Chuck Swindoll will teach us in detail through Philippians 2:5–8, the Son submitted His will entirely to the Father and endured a shameful death by the hands of His creation. In doing so, Jesus accomplished God’s redemption plan established in eternity past. Through it all, He displayed the greatest picture of humility human eyes would ever witness.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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Philippians 2:5–8



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Although the Bible contains human language written by human hands intended for human minds, the truth within its sixty-six books originated in the heart of God. The Spirit not only inspired every page of the Bible but ignites our understanding of it and belief in it. That's why it is always important to pray that the Spirit would help you as you read God's Word. Do that now before learning about the Divine Servant. Write your prayer below.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Chuck Swindoll teaches his Bible study method in his book *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*. We recommend you grab a *copy* if you don't own it already. In it, Chuck emphasizes the importance of examining what is written before and after the Bible passage in question. This process is called *checking the context*. He writes:

We understand a verse of Scripture better when we grasp its context—when we acquaint ourselves with the surrounding verses.¹

That proves vital for this study's passage, *Philippians 2:5–8*, which logically follows *2:1–4*.

So begin by reading *Philippians 2:1–4*, and in a single phrase, write the topic of this passage.



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In a single sentence, summarize Paul's intention for writing this passage.

With Philippians 2:1–4 in mind, we will now move to Paul's great hymn about the person of Christ.



Observation: Grace Illustrated

Read *Philippians 2:5–8*. Do so slowly and repetitively. Use multiple translations. Chuck's favorites are the New Living Translation and the New American Standard Bible.

How does this passage logically follow Philippians 2:1–4?

How did Jesus regard His divine status with the Father according to Philippians 2:6?



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What did Jesus do that indicated He gave up divine privileges according to 2:7?

What four specific ways did Jesus humble Himself according to 2:7–8?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

As God, He became human. As human, servant. As servant, He obeyed unto death—reaching the fullest expression of humility.

For the first time ever—and never to be changed—deity became humanity, true humanity. No playacting. He wasn't part angel, sprouting wings, glowing with a halo. No. Jesus was a human being. Amazing. —Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Death on a Cross

After carefully focusing on what the text says, we dive deeper to better understand what the words mean and the author's intention for writing them. Above, we observed that Paul wanted the Philippians to live humbly with each other, looking out for each other's interests. Christ displayed that kind of attitude perfectly.



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First, using your resources, rewrite an expanded translation of Philippians 2:6. InterVarsity Press offers a helpful [commentary](#) on Philippians via Bible Gateway should you need it. We recommend adding Chuck's commentary *Swindoll's Living Insights: Insights on Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* if you do not already have it.

Jesus, equal with the Father, did not have to come to earth. He could have remained in heaven. But He didn't. He came to us. In the NASB translation, Philippians 2:7 begins with, "but emptied Himself." What does this mean?

What was Jesus' greatest expression of humility?



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Look up *cross* and/or *crucifixion* in your Bible dictionary. Take notes below—especially on the humiliation of crucifixion and the intensity of pain inflicted on those crucified. Afterward, record a short prayer of gratitude to Jesus for enduring God’s wrath on your behalf.

Jesus obeyed and died, but that wasn’t the end. The Father raised Him and:

*. . . elevated him to the place of highest honor
and gave him the name above all other names,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9–11)*



Correlation: Come to Me

With humility, Jesus came to us. Because of His humility, He also bids us come to Him. He said so in Matthew 11:28–30—our focus for correlation, the third step in the *Searching the Scriptures* process. Take a moment to read [this passage](#). Do so deliberately, concentrating on each word to let the spiritual lightbulbs illumine your mind.

Whom did Jesus want to come to Him?



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Ancient farmers would attach a harness of bent wood around the necks of animals to connect them together so they could pull the plow in unison. The device was called a yoke. Sometimes kings used yokes to link slaves. Eventually, the word developed as a metaphor for connections in general. In this case, Jesus compared His yoke—His teaching about God and how to follow Him—with those of the religious teachers of His day.²

How did Jesus describe Himself and His yoke, and how are the two logically connected? Why is this significant for us today?

He did not come as a robed king, a rich merchant, or a political sage. He came as a servant, offering Himself to us with the very humility that brought Him to us.

Without releasing any of His deity, He took on all the limitations of humanity. More specifically, He voluntarily set aside the independent use of His divine attributes when He became man. Undiminished deity in true humanity: one person. The Incarnation. —Chuck Swindoll



Application: Adopt the Mind of Christ

Our application for this study will follow Paul's exhortation in Philippians 2:1–4. It's about having the attitude of Christ, so begin by reflecting on your own attitude toward others. How would you describe the way you typically esteem other people compared with how you esteem yourself?



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In what ways, or in what particular contexts, can you grow in your habit of looking out for the interests of others? For example, some find it easier to serve people in their homes rather than at work or vice versa.

The Divine Servant—such an astounding image of the Son of God painted by Paul. What remarkable humility. As we follow in the same path of obedience and humility, the world will see a living picture of God’s nature in us.



A FINAL PRAYER

End this study by recording a prayer below.

ENDNOTES

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 85.
2. Jeremiah K. Garrett, “Yoke,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry and others (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), n.p.



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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY

The Servant Who Came

Philippians 2:5–8



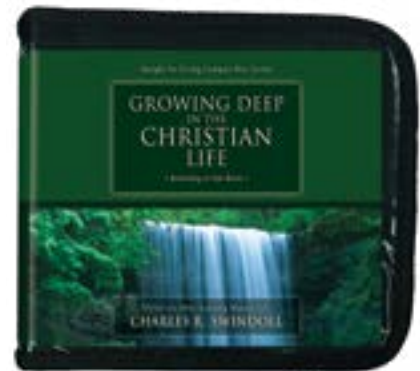
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For the 2019 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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