**The Great Exchange**

**Philippians 2:5-11**

Palmarum – 04.02.2023

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jesus humbled Himself, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant. Jesus, true God, took on human flesh. He humbled Himself, allowing Gabriel to speak Him into human flesh, by the working of the Holy Spirit, to be tabernacled in the womb of the Virgin. True God, the very Word of God, the second person of the Trinity, took on the trappings of one of those He created, in order to serve His creatures. He humbled Himself, even becoming obedient to the point of death. In our text, God tells us through the pen of Paul, that your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

What kind of attitude is in Jesus which God says you should adapt? The attitude of obedient submission to the will of the Father! Do you have that attitude? Think carefully about that.

Do you exhibit simple obedience to any authority, much less the Ultimate Authority – God? Do you always do exactly as the boss, your teacher, or your parents tell you to do? You are given the task or assignment, and you do it immediately and with a smile?

You always follow all the traffic laws? Always 55 in the 55 zone – not 58 or 62? 65 in the 65 zone – not 68 or 72? And that 8-sided red sign never gets the old tap-n-go or the slow-and-roll treatment? You obey all traffic laws – all the time?

Of course, the greater question is the question of obedience to God and all His laws. After all, that is the obedience being spoken of here, Jesus’ obedience to His Father’s will – and furthermore, that you are to have the same attitude. What is the Father’s will for you? As we learned in our study of the Lord’s Prayer on Wednesday evenings, God’s will is that we keep His name holy and that His kingdom come. You could say it this way, you are to – love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, strength, and soul; and love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus’ love of the Father is His obedience unto death – keeping His name holy in all His life, and speech, and work. Jesus love for His neighbor is His willingness to be obedient unto death to win for you and me, and to deliver to us forgiveness of sins – in which God’s kingdoms of Grace and Glory come to us.

What is your attitude? What is your attitude toward God? Maybe it is a bit flippant, “Yeah, I know God’s rules. I also know God’s love for me and His forgiveness in Christ. That’s why I will live however I want to live. As long as I don’t hurt anybody and am basically loving, for all the other stuff I’m forgiven.” If that is your attitude, then yours is an attitude of self-gratification, not selflessness.

Great attitude! And I say that with as much sarcasm as I can muster.

Here it is, Palm Sunday. We are celebrating Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem. They herald Him as the son of David. Hosannas are sung to Him. ”Please save us now” is the cry of the people, sung to Him. He is to be crowned king of the Jews.

That is exactly what happens. His crown is a thorny bower that encircles and pierces His brow.

His scepter is a rod of wood to which His hands and feet are nailed. Instead of His lifting His scepter on high, He is lifted up upon it.

And why?

Why did He who created all flesh endure the beatings, the scourging, and abuse of His flesh at the hands of evil men? Why did He who set the course of all the starry host allow Himself to be led out to the hill called Golgotha to be crucified between to thieves? Why did He who gave breath to all life, allow His life’s breath to be brutally snuffed out? Why did He who ruled in heaven take upon Himself the nature of the servant and be made in human likeness to suffer all this? Why did He humble Himself and become obedient, even to death upon the cross?

Did He do all this so that you might be forgiven? Yes!

Did He do all this so that you might go out and live your life with flagrant disregard to the Laws He gave to rule and reign in your life? No! Absolutely not!

Paul explain in Galatians: *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.* (Gal. 5:19-24)

Dear friends in Christ, you are either living according to the flesh or you live according to the Spirit. If you belong to Christ, you have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If you want to live according to the flesh, you may. But do not claim you are a Christian! Nor should you expect to inherit the kingdom of God.

Dearly beloved of God, the sins of the flesh are no longer to reign in your body. What attitude do you have? Are these the things that fill your daily life, *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control?* Do you exhibit those traits in your every waking moment and with every interaction you have with every individual you encounter each day?

If not, why not? Why do you and I not live in obedience to God?

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus!

But now comes the great exchange. Jesus is in His very nature God. Yet, He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. The second person of the Trinity made Himself nothing. He took on the very nature of a servant, He took on human flesh. It was the very Word of God, present for all eternity, who was incarnate – this enfleshed God was obedient in all things.

The Word of God became flesh, He made His dwelling among mankind, He exchanged His divine power and glory for a body like yours and mine. As a man, Jesus did not succumb to temptation. He kept Himself pure, free from; *immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.*

During His sojourn earth, He exhibited the traits we all desire to emulate in our daily walk as a Christian. He never failed to be complete in all; *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*.

God exchanged His place as king and ruler to place Himself as subject to the same laws and rules you and I must endure. As God, Christ demands the obedience of His subjects. Christ exchanges His dominion and rule and places Himself in subjugation to His Father, willfully obedient.

You know what makes this truly incredibly amazing? As He was found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death; even death on a cross!

Why? They heralded Him as King. They shouted loud hosannas. We did the same thing at the beginning of our service this morning. He could have demanded they bow down to Him. Even before Pilate He could have called the heavenly host to protect Him – and who could have stood before that army? Indeed, as Almighty God, had He chosen to flex His divine powers, who could have withstood Him? Instead, He submitted to the authority of the day, even unto death – a death on the cross.

This was the great exchange – His life for yours – His life of obedience for your life of self-gratification and selfish indulgence.

For this reason that the Father exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the Name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should 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.

The great exchange means that the glory of Christ’s name is yours.

Christ’s obedience is yours.

The reason Jesus took on the likeness of mankind is to be obedient in exchange for your disobedience.

When you confess Jesus as Lord, faith takes a posture of humility, confessing that you need a Savior from sin and death. In that obedience – your confession of your sinfulness, you receive the life of your King as your very own.

Your King came in humility – born in the poverty of a Bethlehem stable. That day we call Palm Sunday, He rides into Jerusalem for a very specific purpose, He rides to His death on a lowly beast of burden.

On the last day, when He returns in glory, He will be acknowledged as Lord. And on that day, every knee will bow to Him. Some will bow to Him in their unending shame and to their eternal remorse.

Your knees will bow on that day at the glad recognition that your King exchanged His glory for you shame, that He might be the source of your unending joy. As they waved palms and sang as He entered the holy city of Jerusalem, so you will also sing, “All glory, laud, and honor to You, Redeemer, King, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.”

You are the children who sing, you make hosannas ring. “Hosanna, save now,” is your cry, and your God has heard it. Your Christ has answered it with the Word of peace from His cross by the mouths of His ministers. In the Great Exchange, He drinks the dregs of your sinfulness and gives you to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, receiving His life and holiness. It is indeed a Great Exchange! In the name of Jesus. Amen.