



WORLD
GOSPEL
MISSION

THE CORONATION

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⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

Something about the royal pomp and circumstance of Westminster Abbey really grabs my imagination. It's one of the few spaces in today's world that has such pageantry. Most recently, we saw this during Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in the fall of 2022. The ornate service was attended by heads of state, royalty, and dignitaries from around the world.

But nearly seventy years earlier, the intricate ceremony was for a much happier occasion.

In 1953, when Queen Elizabeth II was crowned, it was the first time television cameras were ever allowed to record the event in the great abbey church of Westminster. It was a controversial move at the time—some feared it would cheapen and soil the sacred moment. Winston Churchill was set against it. But the young queen insisted, and the world was fascinated by the first world event to be broadcast internationally.

An estimated 277 million people watched as Elizabeth took the ancient symbols like the Sword of State and the Sovereign's Orb, the Archbishop of Canterbury placed St. Edward's Crown on her head, and the great assembly cried out three times, "God save the Queen!" What a powerful and moving spectacle!

But this ceremony is nothing to the privileged glimpse Paul gives us in Philippians 2:9 of the coronation of the King of the Universe. Verse nine is where this hymn about Christ Jesus takes a radical turn. So far Paul has been describing the Incarnation to the Philippians—God Himself coming down, entering as a servant, embracing suffering and death.

Suddenly the tone changes and we see not the suffering Christ but the exalted Christ. The victorious Christ. The ruling Christ.

Now that's a coronation worth watching.

Philippians 2:9 indicates that Jesus' final exaltation is a direct result of the sacrifice of His incarnation as described in verses six through eight. It also indicates that the name that the Father gave Him—the one that "is above every name"—was given to Him at the time of His exaltation.



That tells me that we're not talking about the name "Jesus," which His parents gave Him at birth, the name that in Hebrew indicated His destiny on earth: "He will save." We're not talking about the name prophesied for Him hundreds of years before His birth by Isaiah, "Immanuel," the name that described His very identity as the incarnate God who would be *with us*. In fact, Paul here doesn't tell us exactly what that *name* is. Is it a new name? A different name?

I suspect that the *actual* name is not really the point. The name represents the person. That's why when we pray in the *name* of Jesus, what we're doing is identifying our prayer with Jesus Himself. We're telling God that what we're asking, we're asking in agreement with Jesus and His will and His purposes. By the same token, the name represents the person's *authority*. So, when we pray in Jesus' name, we are affirming Jesus' authority over the situation we're praying about. The New Testament is full of assertions of Jesus' authority—think about Mark 2, where Jesus tells the religious leaders that He has authority to forgive sins, or Matthew 28, where Jesus tells His disciples that *all* authority has been given to Him.

As a missionary in Paraguay, I've seen many prayers prayed identifying with Jesus' will and asserting His authority, many of which were answered on the spot in dramatic ways. Several years ago, my fellow missionary Peter and I prayed in the name of Jesus for a young Mbyá Guaraní man suffering from a knee injury. Over the course of about three minutes, we saw him go from painful stiffness to kicking his foot up to chest height.

The point is, it's not by the goodness or eloquence or status of the one praying, but by demonstrating absolute confidence in the power and goodness of the one we're identifying with—Jesus!

But in invoking the *name* of Jesus here, Paul goes further still. Not only, he says, did Jesus possess full identity with God (v. 6); not only did He give His own life (v. 8); now Paul says Jesus is nothing less than the absolute king! He occupies the highest place! His name is above every other! This Jesus he's introducing as the God who willingly descends and serves and suffers has, as a result, been exalted by none other than God Himself.

Now, it's our privilege to be the royal heralds, proclaiming the coronation to a watching and waiting world. Jesus is King! There is none like Him! His name is above every name! This, after all, is the Gospel.

When Mark describes the beginning of Jesus' ministry in chapter one verses fourteen through fifteen, he says that He proclaimed the Gospel, the Good News, with the statement, "The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the Gospel!"

To proclaim the Gospel is to proclaim the arrival of the Kingdom with Jesus as its King, and to welcome all who hear to enter gladly into that kingdom in joyful submission to the King. So let's proclaim it: It's what we're made for.

PUT JESUS’ NAME AT THE TOP

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal things that you’ve made “lord” in your life.

These might be tangible things like your phone, money, friends and family, or a hobby. Or they might be ethereal: comfort, safety, excitement, or acceptance. Write these things on a piece of paper.

Then, as a demonstration of your desire to submit to Jesus’ lordship, cross them all out and write the name “Jesus” above them. Pay attention to your heart, and the next time you worship one of those things, remind yourself that the name of Jesus is above every other.

CHRISTMAS IN PARAGUAY

Paraguayans’ celebration of Christmas culminates at midnight on Christmas Eve. Families gather to eat *asado* (grilled meat) late into the night and to set off fireworks. These are sold on just about every corner during the weeks leading up to Christmas, along with large outdoor nativity scenes featuring two–three foot-tall stables thatched with grass. The crescendo of explosions peaks at midnight, and being in Asunción to hear the cacophony of this night is quite an experience! Christmas day itself is very quiet. People tend to sleep in and stay at home.

ACTIVITY: MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM _____

Below are six different languages spoken in locations where WGM missionaries live. Can you match the way to write “Merry Christmas” with its correct language?

- Luganda (Uganda)

Japanese

Albanian

Spanish

Arabic

Khmer (Cambodia)
- វីភោយថ្មងប៊ុណ្ណាយណូងលែ

Gëzuar Krishtlindjet

Feliz Navidad

دي عيس داليم دي ع

Sekukulu Enungi

メリークリスマス

Correct Answers:
Luganda = Sekukulu Enungi
Japanese = メリークリスマス
Albanian = Gëzuar Krishtlindjet!
Spanish = ¡Feliz Navidad!
Arabic = دي عيس داليم دي ع
Khmer (Cambodia) = វីភោយថ្មងប៊ុណ្ណាយណូងលែ