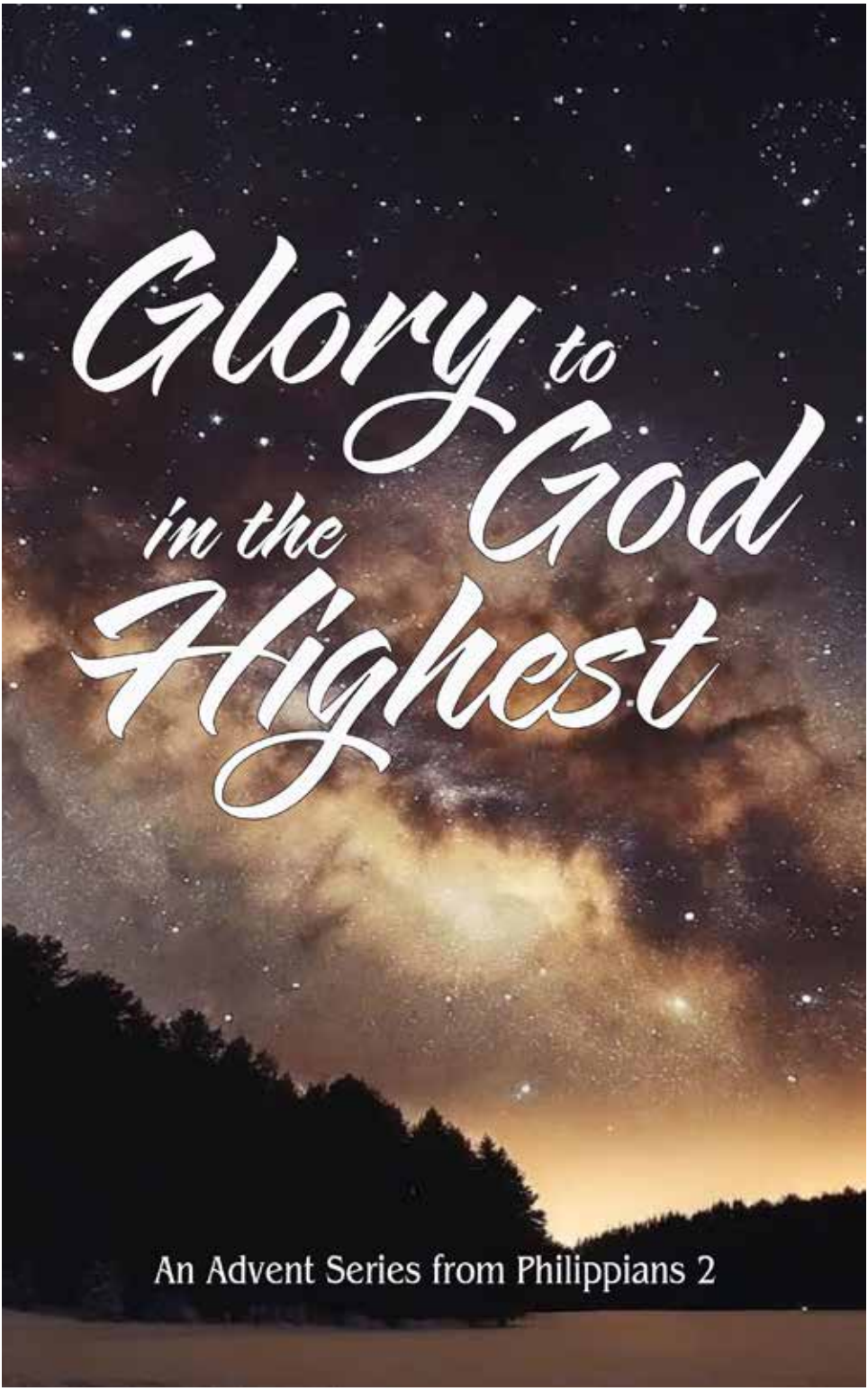

Glory to God
in the Highest
An Advent Series from Philippians 2

Philippians 2

December 6..... Philippians 2:6-7

December 13 ..... Philippians 2:8

December 20 ..... Philippians 2:9-11

December 27..... Philippians 2:1-5

INTRODUCTION

A big part of Christmas are the Christmas carols and songs that are full of sentimentality, nostalgia, warmth, and meaning. There's just something about Christmas music that sets the mood for the season.

One of the earliest hymns of the Christian faith is, if we can call it this, a Christmas song. It is a hymn about the person of Jesus, the birth of Jesus, the death of Jesus, and the reign of Jesus. It is a hymn all about why Jesus chose to come to this earth and live among us. It is a hymn about what the true meaning of Christmas is all about.

This hymn is found in Philippians chapter 2. Over the next month, we will spend time unpacking the wonderful truths expressed and celebrated in this short song.

The first step along the way will show us that Jesus stepped from the throne to the manger. The eternal King of the universe became man, to live with us. After all, this is what Immanuel means: "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

But why did he do this? That is the second step: to show us that Jesus stepped from the manger to the cross. God was with us – so that He could die for us. It is as the angel said to Joseph: "you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Yet the story of this Christ does not end with death and despair. On the third day, he was raised from the dead, and he has ascended on high. He has gone from the cross back to the throne, where he now reigns as the resurrected King, in glory. "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14)! The King deserves all of our worship, both now and forever.

This is the Christmas story, as told by this early Christmas carol. We will celebrate this "good news of great joy" (Luke 2:10) as a church this Christmas season.

But as is the case with all of Scripture, God intends for us not just to know it, but to rejoice in it, and in rejoicing, to live it out. So we will conclude our brief study of this hymn by returning to how Paul introduced it, seeing how Jesus is our ultimate example. If he could humbly love and serve like this, then we who have been saved by him should live like him.

So come along for the journey this Christmas. Amidst the business of the holiday season, we invite you to pause and reflect on what Christmas is all about.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Our prayer is that the Lord will use this study in the life of our church to stir our hearts to rejoice in Christ today, anchored in looking back and looking forward.

In the pages that follow, you will find a series of questions accompanying each week of our sermon series. There will be questions for you to answer based on your own personal study of the text, and further questions to reflect on and discuss in groups.

In order for you to get the most out of this series, we encourage you to read the text and write down your observations before listening to the sermon each Sunday. Devote time in the week leading up to Sunday morning to explore the text for yourself.

You will notice that each week asks the same basic questions:

- What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?
- What is one question you have about this passage?

These questions form a good introductory tactic to studying the Bible. We often rush to application (what it means for my life) without considering what the text really says, and we often read the Bible as if it is primarily about us when it is really about God. So we want you to begin each week by learning about God and the gospel, then by considering what the text says about us, before then moving to what the text calls us to. Remember: application is not simply what we do; application of the Bible is holistic: it is about what we do, say, think, believe, and love.

There will also be opportunities for you to write, and ask, questions that arise during your study. We encourage you to write down these questions, and then share them.

Finally, there are a handful of questions designed to be reflected on and discussed with others. Perhaps your Grace Group will consider discussing them, or maybe you can talk about them with your family, or pull together a small group of trusted friends to walk through this series together with. However it happens, we must remember that Bible study is meant to be done in community.

After each section, you will then find blank pages for additional notes, particularly for note-taking during the sermons. This would allow all of your notes throughout this series, both in personal study and in sermon content, to be together in the same place. If this would be useful, it is there for your benefit.

We pray that this study guide, going along with our weekly sermon series, helps you to grow deeper in understanding and applying the words we will read in Scripture, and that the words you read and the truths you learn will fuel a delight in Jesus Christ that gives you strength to live where the Lord has called you today.

Week 1: December 6, 2026
From the Throne to the Manger

READ: Philippians 2:6-7

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- Which parts of the Christmas story seem most incredible to you this year? Why?

- Which elements of the Christmas story helps you to see the humility of Jesus? How essential is this theme to understanding the heart of the holiday?

- Why is it significant that Jesus was born in the likeness of men – that is, in our likeness?

- Read Matthew 1:23. What does it mean that Jesus is "Immanuel"? How does this encourage you today?

- Read Hebrews 4:15-16. How is it helpful today to know that Jesus understands your weaknesses and can help you?

Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

Week 2: December 13, 2026
From the Manger to the Cross

READ: Philippians 2:8

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- If someone were to ask you about the meaning of Christmas, how would you respond?

- What does it mean that Jesus was "obedient" to the point of death?

- Read Matthew 1:21. What does this teach you about why Jesus came?

- Why is it important to remember the cross when celebrating the birth of Jesus? What do we lose if we do not keep this in view?

- Who can you share 'the true meaning of Christmas' with this week?

Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

Week 3: December 20, 2026
From the Cross to the Throne

READ: Philippians 2:9-11

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- Why do you think some people are comfortable with the idea of baby Jesus, but not King Jesus?
- Why is Jesus deserving of all praise and glory? What reasons do you see in this text? In your life?
- Read Luke 2:14. What does it mean to give God glory? How can you exalt Him in your life today?
- Jesus has the name above every names. Are there areas where other things matter more to you than Him? What can you do about this?
- How does knowing Jesus is the King help you better understand and appreciate the Christmas story?
- How does knowing that Jesus is on the throne help you navigate the fears, anxieties, stresses, and concerns of your life today?

Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

Week 4: December 27, 2026
From the Throne to Our Hearts

READ: Philippians 2:1-5

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- What blessings does this passage highlight which are ours in Christ?

- What do these verses teach you about humility? Why is living this way so hard for us?

- What does it mean to count others more significant than yourself? What are some ways you can do that this week?

- Read Luke 1:38. Where in the Christmas story do you see people respond in humility? How do these examples help you?

- Why does understanding the humility of Jesus free us up to live this way with others?

Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

Notes:



grace church

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