

# The Exaltation and Humiliation of the Gospel

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] grace peace and mercy to you from God our Father and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ amen it's a real joy to be with you this morning it's an absolute privilege as I think about just how the Lord has grown you folks over the last period of time we've followed Stephen's ministry for a number of years and you can imagine how exciting it's been for those of us that had contact with him when he was this hot-headed young surfer from Durban and to see how it developed I remember having quite a tussle with faculty when we were trying to determine who would lead that team with a maroon kumbi on a mission trip and and nobody wanted to support the idea that you do and I said listen that young man needs to be given responsibility so that we can test him and everybody said now we're going to end up picking up the pieces well Neil you set it up and if there's pieces you fix it up and you guys did well actually you made me proud so Stephen it's no surprise that you've gone to where you have I think you showed the capacity to to lead back then and the Lord has honored that and so Robin he's a he's an absolute find and I and I'm sure that that he supported you tremendously is that the first task that you would be doing for me over the next couple of months thank you so much

I'm planning a series through the book of James at our church and over the last 12 years my primary function has been to develop the other elders so that they could preach as well and so this month is one of those months where the elders continue with a series that we set up but I want to do this series through James with them and so what I would do is I would probably preach two of the four Sundays or three of the four Sundays and they would pick up another two so I get to keep an eye on things all the way now I have a reasonable library and I always enjoy much background reading before I commence the prepping and there's a number of things that I've enjoyed Dane Ortlund of Gentle and Lowly Fame has written a great study guide on on the book of James others that have helped me greatly Kent Hughes Dan Doriani one of my favorite authors Tim Keller has a very helpful book it's it's profitable but it's difficult to read walking with God through pain and suffering and what Tim Keller's that does in that book is he offers great insights on the issues of evil and suffering and the sovereignty of God and how he works in our lives what I want to do is just give you a little bit of background I'm sure you've done this before but here's the brother of Jesus who wasn't converted until after the resurrection he writes this first book of the New Testament 15 years after Jesus's ascension James is probably the most quoted book in the New Testament packed full of gospel wisdom who's this fellow James he's the rock star pastor in Jerusalem he's got this mega church it's a great church growing unbelievably wonderful things happening there people are being converted 4,000 and 5,000 etc but there's a major theme that runs throughout the book of James and what he's doing is he's helping us to live a gospel-centered life of persistent ministry and joyful maturity in a sin-cursed world he wants us to have a ministry that is that is ongoing and he wants us to have joy as we are maturing in that ministry while we're living in a broken world and of course our Christian lives are characterized by those two things constantly you find that our Christian lives have this persistent and obedient but struggling ministry and then of course you have continuing joy in this sin-cursed world and the only way we're able to do that is you must have a gospel foundation you know you've got to have a gospel motivation you've got to have gospel wisdom in order to leave that kind that kind of gospel life and so you'll find that as you read the book of James he's he's pastoral he's not any this is not an evangelistic book in fact he uses the phrase my beloved brothers 21 times throughout the book so evidently he's talking to professing believers he's talking to those who already have a relationship with the lord and he's really saying to us that um what you need to do in order to to to manage a gospel-centered life in the sin-cursed world you must have gospel wisdom and he doesn't go easy on telling us how to get that gospel wisdom either he starts off by pointing out to us that the reality for believers is that we will suffer trials and

suffering and adversity and understand that as believers we face everything that unbelievers face except one thing there's one thing that unbelievers face and that is the condemning righteous judgment of god that comes to those who don't know christ of course as believers we don't face that because jesus took that for us but we will face death and sickness and disappointment and suffering and adversity and unmet expectations because we are in a sin-cursed world so turn with me to james chapter 1 i'm going to start reading at verse 2 to give us something of the context and then i'm going to pick up on our passage in verse 9 so let's pick it up at verse 2 james chapter 1 and verse 2 consider it pure joy my brothers whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete not lacking anything if any of you lacks wisdom you should ask god who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be given to him but when he asks he must believe and not doubt because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea blown and tossed by the wind that man should not think he will receive anything from the lord he is a double-minded man unstable in all that he does now our passage today the brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position but the one who is rich should take pride in his low position because he will pass away like a wild flower for the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed in the same way the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business this is the word of the lord there you go good presbyterians i'm told that that's the response we don't do that in our church but i think i'm going to introduce that i think it'll get our folks to focus their attention on the reading of the scripture the esv translates that verse slightly differently it says let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation and the rich in his humiliation that's where i drew my title from exaltation and humiliation the exaltation and the humiliation of the gospel let me commence by asking you two questions this morning without thinking about the way that james one answers this question i want you to try and fill in the rest of the statement consider it all joy when think about that for a second don't shout out your answers intuitively what would you have put into that sentence consider it all joy when what happens in your life the second question is what do you think given the trials of life multifaceted inevitable multi-leveled according to james what is the most challenging and dangerous trial that a child of god a follower of christ might face in his life it's very likely that you'll probably answer that question related to the way that you answered the first question the way you fill in the blank i want to show you from our text today how james teaches us to respond to that how do we respond to dealing with with trials how do we respond to facing difficulty here's james who's writing this book of gospel wisdom martin luther had a great deal of difficulty with james he had problems with this book because he thought james was supposed to write the way that paul does in romans and galatians where paul paul is laying out how the gospel is established what the gospel is how you saved paul writes this theological treatise about about our our salvation but james is not doing that james says 21 times my beloved brothers he's assuming that you've already made a profession of faith that you already have gospel foundation you already have a relationship with christ because he's the one who died on the cross to save you from your sins and then coupled with that because you have gospel foundation you therefore have gospel motivation you love him because he first loved you now he wants to give us in very simple very honest language what the gospel life is and what you need to live it he's assuming that you now you already have a gospel foundation and now he wants to show you how to live that gospel life this is a treatise this book of james is a treatise on gospel wisdom now in the old testament you have all the wisdom books anticipating the gospel this wisdom book james is based on the gospel and that's what he now lays out in front of us now i borrowed this thematic statement from some of the other writers i tried to rewrite it in my own words but but i tell you they some of these guys can't use just as a way with words and and i can't i can't change it very much without messing it up but basically here's the theme of james james is telling us inspired by the by the spirit of god that the gospel life is a life of persistent ministry these are his words persistent ministry and joyful maturation in other words you are always growing in the grace and the knowledge of our lord jesus christ and you're living in a sin cursed world with all of his brokenness and informed by the god gifts the god sent gift of wisdom from above in other words the way that you manage this is the spirit of god enables you to have a persistent ministry and mature in the christian faith because god gives wisdom and this wisdom from a god from above is what god has purchased and promised and he gives it willingly gives it freely to his people so as a believer when when you put your faith and your trust in the lord jesus christ then you have a gospel

foundation and together with that you have a gospel motivation now since we live in this broken world we need gospel wisdom to deal with the inevitable multiple multifaceted trials that come against us in this fallen world what james does is he shows us what god is doing with our trials and how we are meant to respond to them he doesn't say you're going to be immune from trials in this world jesus himself said you will have trouble and james is saying well that's what happens when you're a believer you will have trouble you will face difficulty but we can persist in ministry and we can joyfully mature in the lord those are two things that must be evident in those who claim to be children of god's kingdom so what james does is he now begins to unfold this book with 48 commands this is what i love about it it is so james is so instructional 108 verses verses 48 commands one of the things that i started doing when i teach students in how to understand and interpret the bible is to use the you know the michael orton model where he talks about identifying doxology duty doctrine and discipline so so michael alton has a very simple model he says when you come to a passage of scripture what you do is you first examine the scripture to see what is doxological what is there in the passage that causes me to respond with worship and praise to god the second thing he does is he says let me look for for for for doctrine what doctrinal teaching is there in the passage is this christological is it about the trinity is it about this is it about that how is there a doctrinal teaching that's rooted so that pure doctrine can be drawn from the passage of scripture the third thing he does is he says what's duty what are those things where are the imperatives where are the verbs that tell us what we ought to do and you go through the entire passage and you mark all the verbs throughout the passage and in james it's overwhelming there's 108 verses of those verses there are 48 commands that are very direct commands and so why does james do that it's because he's he's got this to he wants us to understand that all of what god does in our lives as he pours out this this gospel grace this is the grace of god to prove and improve our gospel lives that's what he wants to do

he wants to ensure that you are glowing he wants to ensure that you are steadfast he wants to see that that you are persistent and so he lays out these things so that you will improve and improve and prove in other words prove where you are so that you are steadfast that you are persistent and to improve where you need to be notice what james says he says consider it all joy when not if it's inevitable it's multifaceted it's multiple when you encounter various trials why because you know something when you face those trials there's something that you know you have gospel wisdom you know that a sovereign god has taken all the brokenness of this world even the temptations of satan and he's superintended those things and he uses those things to provide a test for you god takes those things he takes those trials he takes those difficulties he takes those disappointments and he superintends them so that he can provide a test for you we had one of the kids from our church staying with us during the matric exams and that year was that her parents wanted her to be out of lavender hill away from that environment and and we stay in a quiet place we're in capri village there's a room she can quietly sit in the room no distraction no traffic no people no gunshots no dogs no kids playing in the street and she could study and she came to us right after the mock exams and it was it was during those mock exams that she said to me one day she says you know pastor you know these these exams these tests they do two things firstly they they to test to see what you know but then they also test to see what you need to know they have these conversations they i don't know if kids still do that they come out of the exam room and then they talk about the exam and then they discover all the things that they didn't know we never had those conversations going into an exam it throws you you suddenly you realize these other kids are talking about things that you didn't even study been in an exam room where that happens you get your exam paper and and you look around you and everybody's looking at the pen they're going and they start writing you going i think i've got the wrong paper listen that's happened i've seen myself have a complete blank out when it comes to an exam but that's what exams do exams reveal what you know and they show you what you need to know and so the goal of a test the goal of an exam is to help you improve when the trials come when the tests come when the disappointments come when those things hit you it's to see what you know and to help highlight what you don't know so that you can grow in those things so the first thing that happens in the life of a believer when when they get what god is doing they they hold on they become steadfast when you begin to understand that there's a sovereign god who's at work here's what you do you stand firm that's the word that james uses in fact the translation of that word is is you more than stand he uses a greek word it's a it's a it's a compound word with whoopo and meno meaning whoopo meaning hyper like like like a lot of standing or great standing and meno meaning standing so it's it's great standing you have this

super standing and so that's why james says you'll be steadfast not only are you going to hold ground but you'll also be taking ground as you go it's not just hanging on you're not just treading water the commentators use the word it's called heroic hanging on they say and the heroic hanging on is you're not a victim that's going oh this will soon pass you know you're not being stoic where you simply have to grin and bear your way through it it's not sadism where you where you're taking joy in the trial you get some people that say bring on the trials i'll deal with it with a smile on my face [ 17 : 49 ] it's not that kind of sadistic matthew attitude he knows that trials and are hard and difficult but if you're informed about what god is doing and what he's sovereignly sovereignly sovereignly accomplishing then they don't become that hard so what he's doing he's building in you and heroic endurance so that you experiencing the full effect you the full effect of knowing that you have gospel wisdom and a gospel foundation and a gospel motivation and so you are being completed you are being perfected you're lacking in nothing so the first blessing of a test is that you find out hey there's some things missing here i'm lacking something you're lacking a bit of wisdom of course if you're lacking wisdom there's great news in the text god gives you generously what do you do you're asking by praying if you don't have wisdom ask god that's what single-minded people do single-minded people will pray double-minded people well they unstable in their ways they're looking around in every other direction but looking to god they trust in themselves and and and and then it's all about it's all about them and then by the way they suddenly have a second thought oh by the way lord i need a little help here it doesn't work that way a single-minded man places no confidence in the flesh a single-minded man knows that his focus is on god it's impossible for me to do that i can do nothing and so therefore i come to him single-mindedly how do i hold on not passively not stoically not statistically how do i remain steadfast well i must persist in ministry and i must grow in grace that's why you have a christ-centered a a a cross-shaped mind to have a cross-bearing life if you're going to bear that cross if you're going to bear that that trial if you're going to bear that challenge then this has to be present and by the way my friends every one of us has a cross to bear some of us multiple crosses and when that happens what's going to be the platform for you to grow what's going to be the foundation where you're able to grow where you can tell g tell tell others about jesus and see the hand of god or when those things come do you succumb to a worldly view where there's chaos and discouragement and depression here's what you're saying i need to look to the cross of my savior the one person who suffered the one who should not have suffered but he suffered for me so that i can have life in him you see it's only with a christ-centered and cross-shaped mind that i can have a cross-bearing life and begin to interpret the trials and make sense of what life throws at me now think about this what's the most difficult trial in life i was very deliberate when i asked you to fill in the blank of the statement consider it all joy when i guess you figured that what i'm doing is i'm busy setting you up i do this in our church all the time i ask people a question and it's it's a rhetorical question but you know our folks are gullible and so they shout out answers and they've learned not to shout out answers because they know i'm busy setting them up for a bang that's going to come a little bit later so they rather keep quiet one day i actually said to them why do you keep quiet they said because you're going to correct us later anyway and so i did ask that question very deliberately when there's a smile or a frown in life what what brings that on what brings on that moment of joy or that moment of sadness promotion at work increase in salary acquisition of another luxury item maybe the victory of your favorite sports team and i'm not being deliberate here about arsenal or chelsea or anybody else i mean i watch i watch pastors and church leaders gathering together to watch

soccer matches and i tell you they lose it they post their videos on whatsapp statuses and all over and you're going seriously guys is that what gives you so much joy i tell you i i don't care i i don't tell you know i don't have a soccer team um i don't i know who your team is but i don't and again this is not a judgment against anybody who does support any any any teams but but i just don't on a saturday i can't spend my time watching these guys and then being ready to do what you did for us this morning as you let us in worship i don't see how that stuff prepares me for this and so i i've chosen not to engage in in that kind of euphoria that is nothing more than fleeting and then i sit here confused and and exhausted on a sunday morning because liverpool went down narrowly early hours of the morning you know what i find james doesn't sidestep these issues because what brings us pure joy for the most people for the most part most people operate on the world's system which includes success and money and power and prestige and you you watch how the smiles turn to frowns when we don't have the money or the applause or the prestige i've watched far too many

times how people crawl into a pile in the corner and then they wallow in their pity parties james doesn't sidestep these issues he says let me tell you why you're in a broken world let me tell you about a sovereign god who doesn't judge who doesn't dodge this stuff consider it all joy when not if you encounter various trials it is it's interesting that james picks the most dangerous of all the case studies that he could have chosen money and success he places that one right to the top there it's dangerous when you have it and it's dangerous when you don't have it of course there are other trials as well there's success and prosperity and applause of the world but what happens is they all eventually wrap themselves around the idolatry of money anyway jesus came up with this and peter paul and james they all affirm what jesus warned about didn't jesus say you can't serve god and mammon that it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of god and you see the disciples revealing what they were thinking you mean you mean a rich man can't get into heaven then then who who can be saved um surely a rich man must be closer to the kingdom because he has access no my friends you cannot buy your salvation or your child's salvation you know all the stuff that you have now can't go with you when you die naked you came from the womb and naked you will return you know i often hear pastors say at funerals that you know there's no trailer with a man's goods hitched to the toe bar of the hearse heading off into the cemetery you know you came in with nothing and you go out with nothing of course the question that we must ask ourselves is not how much how little you have while you hear that's not the question the question is how much of you did that stuff have and jesus tells us that so what james does is he gives us a riddle and he gives us a parable to illustrate what jesus has taught now here's the riddle in verse 9 he says let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation that's where i got the part of my title from let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation the niv translates it believers in humble circumstances or to take pride in their high position in their exaltation so who are we talking about here well we're talking about a brother we're talking about someone who's professed their love and faith in christ jesus they know him as lord and savior the one who died on the cross for them they love and they serve him now they have a trial in their lives and they are lowly now who said they are lowly well the world says they are lowly and you lowly because you don't measure up to the world's standards the world marches to a different different drum beat you don't have prestige and success you don't have our applause and our wealth and so therefore you are lowly that's what the world says to this brother now what does gospel wisdom tell that brother to say in that trial of life it's interesting gospel wisdom says what gospel wisdom says boast boast the bible says let him who boasts boast in the lord there's no contradiction in what he's saying here let him who doesn't have what the world boasts of when they declare him lowly he has another system his system is the gospel it's in the gospel that you now boast in the lord whom you are in and whom is in you you know you've been exalted to the throne of god that's why he uses that word when he ascended you ascended you at the right hand of the father you are a joint heir with christ and so when you boast your boast is in the lord you are lowly but you're boasting do you see how the riddle gives us gospel wisdom are you with me the riddle gives us gospel wisdom well what about the brother who's esteemed or rich in the world what should that brother do well it says he should boast also but what he boasts in is not what the world boasts in he boasts in the lord which means he boasts first to the world saying i am nothing he boasts in his humiliation the world tells the poor man you are nothing the poor man says in your eyes that's true but in the eyes of jesus i've been redeemed i'm saved i'm a trophy of his grace the world tells the rich man listen you somebody can i take a selfie with you can you like my facebook page can i post an interview with you on linkedin to show how successful you've gotten we just think you're wonderful but here's what you boast in the lord is your life and so therefore you boast by saying my friends you've got it all wrong for i am what i am by the grace of god there is nothing that i have that i did not receive from him you see your boast is in the lord so he does that he gives us this riddle and then he explains it to us but now he takes it a step further and he gives us a parable to illustrate what he's just told us now that's verses 10 and 11 but the rich should take pride in their humiliation since they will pass away like a wild flower for the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant its blossom falls and its beauty destroyed in the same way the rich will fade away even while they go about their business what is he doing he's quoting isaiah 40 here the rich man is like a man in the scorching heat of summer everything that was beautiful and flowering just a couple of weeks ago is now melting and wilting in front of your eyes it's just it's just drifting away the wind that he's referring to here is probably the sirocco of the middle east you know in the midst of summer when the sun is beating down in the middle east this breeze comes but it's a but it's a hot

one it's not a cool breeze we live down in the deep south and the southeaster is a pleasant wind sometimes it gusts but most times it's a cooling breeze when the sirocco comes you don't stand like you do at the top of alcee speak and you embrace the cool breeze when the when the sirocco comes you try to cover up because that wind is coming from the desert and it's not a refreshing breeze it's an oven blast and what isn't dead is soon going to be dead in the dust of death that comes with it it's soon going to be consumed when when that wind blows it leaves nothing behind the flowers fade and the grass withers and so is the rich man right in the midst of pursuing everything that he wants it's now gone this is a warning to the believer not to get trapped into the idolatry of of man's applause and and riches and prosperity because if you do it will ruin your family and it will bring death into your household how many believing men do you know have lost their family because they've fallen into the snare of the idolatry of success they they just didn't have time for them how many pastors have lost their ministries how many people haven't come to christ because they think of the idolatry of wealth of this world and what that will actually make of their lives you see that fading away is a is a two-edged sword it's looking at believers who get snared in this this trumpet call they're hearing this trumpet call of wealth and success and prosperity you know the prosperity preachers get you to march in time to their drumbeat and the rhythms of the pace of the world there are men out there who call themselves shepherds of the flock yet they manufacture the gospel as instruments of wealth and prosperity and applause of the world it will ruin you and when that becomes the path and purpose of your life it very definitely will destroy you when you prostitute the message of the cross by telling others that jesus died on the cross so that you can be healthy and wealthy you know when people ask me do you neil do you have to be poor to be a christian my answer is yes and no you have to be poor in yourself and rich in christ you don't have to be poor in the world the lord may or may not have given that to you but you have to be poor in spirit and have humility you have to humble yourself and in the same breath you don't have to be rich to be a christian you actually own nothing in this world and whatever god has given to you he's entrusted it to you to use for him and it doesn't matter how much you have you just have to make sure that he doesn't have you and that the lord has you you know the idolatry of riches is like that wind that blows and everything waltz with the oven blast of its emptiness yet people will sell their souls for it what's the takeaway here for you and i you know gospel wisdom given freely by god through believing prayer gives gospel clarity for every trial of life and of course you're lowly you know because the world tells you that you're lowly and the world tells you that you're not worth anything some folks have struggled with various things whether it's skin color how much money they have whether they have degrees and qualifications the world looks at you from the outside and they make all kinds of declarations that you're lowly mocks you marginalizes you because you're lowly that's the trial of life i'm under adversity i'm in poverty i don't have a resume with success records all around it i'm working at my minimum wage i'm living where people say you are a nobody i've come to christ as my lord and savior yet the world has marginalized me what do you do my encouragement is that what the world when the world marginalizes you as a father of christ in the midst of your adversity don't believe it don't believe what they say you're a child of the living king tell the world you don't believe what they say i'm a trophy of god's grace i may not be able to dress like you but the dress i have is the perfect righteousness of christ i may not be part of your affluent family but jesus is my savior and god is my father and i belong to the redeemed of the lord i've been purchased with the blood of christ i'm a joint heir with jesus i'm filled with the spirit of god i'm his workmanship i'm his masterpiece he writes the story of my life from him from from the inkwell that has been filled with the blood of jesus from the cross what they say what you say will not control my life by the lack of applause by the by the mocking or your marginalization but that same jesus that saved me can save you i've been sealed by him i'm a trophy of his grace i've been sought by him i've been saved by him i will be kept by him you know but i'll be kept by him for his glory i'm the apple of his eye and that's enough all of us know theologically that if i say jesus is enough or jesus is all i need we will nod our heads in agreement but very seldom do we know that jesus is all that i need until jesus is all that i have you know many of us can be socially economically positioned that we insulated from that statement that i've just made but you can see it through the by the power of the holy spirit when any trial in life comes your way jesus is all that i need but most often we don't know it until jesus is all that we have what about our brother who's esteemed in the world with riches and adulation and applause what about it if you're successful what if you what if you have resources what do i do when the world comes to me and says applause and adulation i i want to write a book on you interview you what do you do well you say the same thing i don't believe that

you do not boast in the things that they boast in you boast in your humiliation i am what i am by the grace of god i have what i have because i've received it from him your applause doesn't make me somebody he must increase and i must decrease because without him i can do nothing in fact i am nothing without him and the applause that the world gives is only a platform for me to tell them about jesus when they do that that gives me a platform that's all that it is i'm grateful for it but i'm not going to get on that platform i'm going to put him on that platform if i have academic success or athletic success or vocational success he goes on the platform me i'm nothing he must increase and i must decrease you know we live in a world and in the church where there's a dozen challenges that affect us you know there's all kinds of modern agendas and and social constructs that affect the way that we think one of the most lethal is what we call celebrity culture you know those who love the applause of men and the wealth of this world i don't know if you notice that there's a certain group and i'm not going to mention that where they are but you know who the people i'm speaking about that would have their celebrity preachers where their faces are bigger than the billboard itself yeah when they put things on in the social media their faces are are the most colorful thing in fact you don't even know that it's christian because there's not even space anywhere in there for for the word christian or bible you don't even know that it's a christian thing and that's the kind of stuff that we're dealing with it's celebrity culture and you know if there's anything that that that really gets my goat it's how we have a whole class of people that have money and power and prestige and applause and then we say they somebody yeah by the way we do that also we have our celebrity preachers that we like to read or follow have you noticed how sometimes we quote the celebrity preachers in the reformed environment more than we quote the bible we sometimes guilty of that too i don't know if you watched hollywood going up in flames last week i mean it was horrendous i see the you magazine had a headline that it says hell comes to hollywood it's amazing how they dramatize all this stuff but you know who the biggest purchaser of counseling and therapy is it's the celebrity class it's all that power and prestige and adulation that made you somebody well then if you have all of that then why do you need why do you need counsel what you need is the lord we need the lord and we need to say the lord is my life no matter what station i find myself in and no matter what the world is telling me you know there's nothing more rare than to find a humble man or woman who's successful but there's nothing more glorious than to find someone without the applause of men that points to christ turning the attention away from themselves

[ 38 : 19 ] why it's because you have a cross-centered christ-centered and cross-shaped mind let me wrap up with just a couple of verses of scripture i'm not going to expand on them 2 corinthians 8 and verse 9 for you know the grace of our lord jesus christ that though he was rich yet for your sake he became poor so that through his poverty you might become rich philippians 2 verses 5 through to 9 in your relationship with one another have the mindset of jesus christ who being in very nature god did not consider himself equal with god something to be used to his own advantage rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross and therefore god exalted him to the highest place 1 peter 5 and verse 6 humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of god so that at the proper time god may exalt you because he is your exaltation let's pray together father in heaven thank you for the moments and the privilege to be able to open your word would you speak to our hearts and minds many of us would have had the world's offering of the idolatry of success and money and we found nothing but the emptiness of that breath of hot wind oh lord would you help us to hear of christ who became poor so that they might become rich in those things that matter for eternity a living saving vital growing relationship with him help us to heroically stand firm for christ in a broken world and a gloriously and gloriously grow in grace in the midst of it all while avoiding that platform of applause or prosperity and say christ is enough for my life oh god i pray that you'd give us the mind of christ that people might see the life of christ and the trials of this life that we face we don't flee for our joy is in the lord i pray this in jesus name amen