



A Hymn of Christ: Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation & in the Setting of Early Christian Worship

Ralph P. Martin

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Philippians 2:5-11, long cherished and mined for its riches, has shaped the very language and architecture of orthodox Christian confession of Christ. Whether in contemporary worship or devotional reading, all Christians have found this Pauline passage speaking with memorable and evocative power. Yet few scriptural texts have generated as much interpretive comment and controversy. Close inspection of its lines raises important questions of the meaning of terms, the principal affirmations regarding Christ's nature and work, the function of these verses within the argument of Philippians and the possibility that the poetry of verses 6-11 reveals the shape of an early Christian hymn. And if these verses constitute a hymn, what does it disclose of its original setting and the nature of early Christian worship? Ralph Martin's study of this passage was originally published in 1967 under the title *Carmen Christi* and then reissued in 1983 with a new preface. For thirty years it has been widely and uncontestedly recognized as the indispensable work for any serious interpretation of Philippians 2:5-11. Now reissued as *A Hymn of Christ*, this classic work includes a new preface that brings readers abreast of critical issues in the interpretation of this text since 1983. Once again a foundational volume on Pauline theology is made available to students of Scripture.

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