

# Philippians 2:7 Commentary

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Philippians 2:7 but emptied ([3SAAI](#)) Himself, taking ([AAPMSN](#)) the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** talla [heauton](#) ekenosen ([3SAAI](#)) morphen doulou labon, ([AAPMSN](#)) en [homoiomati](#) [anthropon](#) genomenos; ([AMPMSN](#))

**Amplified:** But stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity], so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that He became like men and was born a human being. . ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

**Barclay:** but he emptied himself, and took the very form of a slave, and became like men. [Philippians 2 Commentary](#)

**Lightfoot:** but divested himself of the glories of heaven, and took upon him the nature of a servant, assuming the likeness of men.

**Phillips:** but stripped himself of all privilege by consenting to be a slave by nature and being born as mortal man. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** But emptied Himself, having taken the outward expression of a bonds slave, which expression came from and was truly representative of His nature, entering into a new state of existence, that of mankind.

**Young's Literal:** but did empty himself, the form of a servant having taken, in the likeness of men having been made,

#### **BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF: alla heauton ekenosen (3SAAI) :**

- Ps 22:6; Isa 49:7; 50:5,6; 52:14; 53:2,3; Da 9:26; Zec 9:9; Mk 9:12; Ro 15:3; 2Co 8:9; Heb 2:9-18; 12:2; 13:3)

**But (alla)** introduces a striking contrast. See importance of pausing to ponder this **term of contrast**.

The **King James Version** is still a beautiful and poignant rendering "**But made Himself of no reputation.**"

**Wuest** writes "Instead of asserting His rights to the expression of the essence of Deity, our Lord waived His rights to that expression, being willing to relinquish them if necessary. He did not consider the exercise of that expression such a treasure that it would keep Him from setting that expression aside, and making Himself of no reputation. The words "made himself of no reputation" are the translation of two Greek words which literally translated mean, "emptied Himself." Before we discuss the question as to what our Lord emptied Himself of, we must examine the words, "and took upon him the form of a servant." ([Philippians Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

Regarding the pronoun "**himself**" the **KJV Bible Commentary** notes that...

**Himself** is accusative in Greek. He did not empty something from Himself, but He emptied Himself from something, i.e., the form of God. The figure presented is similar to pouring water from a pitcher into a glass. The form is different, but the substance remains the same. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb 13:8). Christ emptied Himself of His divine glory (Jn 17:3), but not of His divine nature. He emptied Himself of the self-manifestation of His divine essence.

"He was not unable to assert equality with God. He was able not to assert it" (M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*. p. 433).

He stripped Himself of His expression of deity, but not His possession of deity. He restricted the outward manifestation of His deity. In His incarnation, He clothed Himself with humanity. He was like a king temporarily clothing himself in the garb of a peasant while still remaining king, even though it was not apparent.

When Christ became incarnate, He was one person with two natures, divine and human, "each in its completeness and integrity, and that these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. In brief, to use the antiquated dictum, orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures" (A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 673). Christ emptied Himself in order that He might fill us (2Co 5:21; 8:9). ([Dobson, E. G., Charles Feinberg, E. Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H. L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson](#))

**Spurgeon on emptied Himself** - Emptied Himself of all His honor, of all His glory, of all His majesty, and of all the reverence paid to Him by the holy spirits around the throne.

**Keith Krell** - Jesus came down from heaven to earth in the greatest stoop of all time. Instead of climbing the ladder, Jesus stepped down, one rung at a time. We can be sure of one thing: This phrase doesn't mean that Jesus emptied Himself of any of His divine attributes (emptying by subtraction). If Jesus did such a thing for even one moment, He would cease to be God. Fortunately, the next clause in 2:7 explains the meaning of "emptied Himself"—"taking the form of a bond-servant being made in the likeness of men." Jesus' act of "emptying" Himself was in His act of "taking" on a human nature. It was emptying by addition. In other words, Jesus, being God, "emptied Himself" by adding humanity...The point that he is trying to make is that Jesus Christ practiced self-denial and self-sacrifice for our sake and became "God-in-a-bod!" What an astounding, unfathomable thought. Jesus left the glory and splendor of heaven and came to dwell on earth to serve others. He understood *the way up is down*. ([Work Your Way Down the Ladder](#))

**Emptied (2758) (kenoo** from **kenos** = empty) means to completely eliminate elements of high status or rank by eliminating all privileges or prerogatives associated with such status or rank. Kenoo can mean to cause to be without result or effect = destroy, render void or of no effect.

Of Jesus divesting of His self-interests. Emptied does not mean that Jesus gave up divine attributes. In short, Jesus did not surrender His deity! But He did veil His glory.

**Friberg** - make empty; (1) literally remove the content of something; (2) figuratively; (a) as taking away the effectiveness of something deprive of power (1Co 1.17 ); (b) as taking away the significance of something destroy, make invalid, empty (1Co 9.15); (c) as taking away the prerogatives of status or position empty, divest; He emptied himself, i.e. he took an unimportant position (Phil 2.7)

**Mounce** - to empty, evacuate; to divest one's self of one's prerogatives, abase one's self, Phil. 2:7; to deprive a thing of its proper functions, Ro 4:14; 1 Cor. 1:17; to show to be without foundation, falsify, 1 Cor. 9:15; 2 Cor. 9:3

**Zodhiates on kenoo** -

(I) The antithesis of plērōō <[4137](#)>, to fill. Kenōō is used in Rom. 4:14; 1 Cor. 1:17; 9:15; 2 Cor. 9:3; Phil. 2:7 meaning to empty oneself, to divest oneself of rightful dignity by descending to an inferior condition, to abase oneself.

(II) The use in Phil. 2:7 is of great theological importance. It refers to Jesus Christ as emptying Himself at the time of His incarnation, denoting the beginning of His self-humiliation in verse eight. ....

(III) The word kenōō, to make empty, is used metaphorically as meaning to bring to nothing in the sense of not accomplishing what one set out to accomplish as in Ro 4:14, the faith not accomplishing its purpose. Used as an adj. in reference to the cross of Christ, meaning the cross not accomplishing its purpose, i.e., salvation for unbelieving man (1 Cor. 1:17, 18). In the same manner, life can be vain or empty, not accomplishing its God-intended purpose (1 Cor. 9:15; 2 Cor. 9:3). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament.)

**Kenoo** - 5x in 5v - Usage: emptied(1), made empty(1), made void(2), make...empty(1). In Septuagint in Jer 14:2, 15:9

Romans 4:14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is **made void** and the promise is nullified;

1 Corinthians 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be **made void**.

1 Corinthians 9:15 But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man **make** my boast an **empty** one.

2 Corinthians 9:3 But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be **made empty** in this case, so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared;

Philippians 2:7 but **emptied** Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

**Steven Cole** comments on **emptied Himself** (NIV = "made Himself nothing") - "Clearly, God cannot cease to be God, and so Jesus **did not**, as some have asserted, give up any of His divine attributes. He limited the independent use of certain attributes and prerogatives while on this earth. And, His preincarnate glory was veiled (John 17:5), except for the brief time on the Mount of Transfiguration, and perhaps when the soldiers in the garden fell backwards after a flash of His glory (John 18:6). Paul explains the main sense of how Christ emptied Himself in the rest of Phil 2:7 and in Phil 2:8: by taking the form of a servant and being obedient to death on the cross. ([Philippians 2:5-8 Supreme Humility](#))

**Marvin Vincent** explains that **emptied** is " Not used or intended here in a metaphysical sense to define the limitations of Christ's incarnate state, but as a strong and graphic expression of the completeness of his self-renunciation. It includes all the details of humiliation which follow, and is defined by these. Further definition belongs to speculative theology. not intended in a metaphysical sense (i.e., that he gave up divine attributes), but is a "graphic expression of the completeness of his self-renunciation" ([Philippians 2 Commentary page 59](#)).

**Kenoo** was used of removing things from a container, until the container is empty; of pouring something out, until there is nothing left. So of what did He empty Himself? To reemphasize, He did not empty Himself of His divine nature for that would be impossible. He continued to be the Son of God.

There is controversy concerning the precise meaning of the **'kenosis'**, some theologians of liberal persuasion suggest that Jesus became human in the sense that He was fallible, possibly even sinful. Conservative theologians interpret this passage to mean that Jesus took on the limitations of humanity. This involved a **veiling** of His preincarnate glory (Jn 17:5) and the **voluntary nonuse** of some of His divine prerogatives during the time He was on earth (Mt 24:36).

**One question that you may have pondered is if Christ did not grasp His deity and in fact emptied Himself, then how was He able to perform the miracles during His three year ministry?** The short answer is by totally relying on the power of the Holy

Spirit! Click here for more on Jesus' power to heal, etc

**John Walvoord** - The Greek expression *ekenosen*, meaning **to empty**, is a strong word speaking of the dramatic act of incarnation. It must be interpreted, however, by its context. Christ did not empty Himself of deity, but of its outward manifestation. He emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant (Greek *labon*, meaning taking, an aorist participle indicating simultaneous action). The incarnation did not change the person and attributes of Christ in His divine nature, but added to it a complete human nature. To achieve the divine purpose of becoming the Savior, the divine glory needed to be veiled. Christ voluntarily, moment by moment, submitted to human limitations apart from sin. The humiliation was temporary. The incarnation was everlasting. ([Philippians 2 At the Name of Jesus Every Knee Should Bow](#))

For an excellent discussion of Philippians 2:6-11 from a thoroughly conservative and Scripturally based perspective John MacArthur's [Philippians 2:6-11 Incarnation of Triune God](#) is highly recommended.

Clearly Jesus did not cease being God for He Himself made the clear declaration to Philip in the form of a question...

"Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (Jn 14:9)

*Aside He threw His most divine array,  
And hid His Godhead in a veil of clay,  
And in that garb did wondrous love display,  
Restoring what He never took away.*

#### **TAKING THE FORM OF A BONDSERVANT: morphe doulou labon (AAPMSN) :**

- Isa 42:1; 49:3,6; 52:13; 53:11; Ezek 34:23,24; Zec 3:8; Mt 12:18; Mt 20:28; Mk 10:44,45; Lk 22:27; Jn 13:3-14; Ro 15:8)

The passage denotes the special or characteristic form or feature of a person or thing. Morphe is the essential form which never alters; schema is the outward form which changes from time to time and from circumstance to circumstance.

**Keith Krell** - "**Taking the form of a bond-servant.**" In other words, Jesus became a particular kind of man, a slave, the lowest position a person could become in the Roman world. The King of the Universe, the Lord of glory, voluntarily became a pauper for our sake. He had to borrow a place to be born, a boat to preach from, a place to sleep, a donkey to ride upon, an upper room to use for the last supper, and a tomb in which to be buried. He created the world but the world did not know Him. He was insulted, humiliated, and rejected by the people He made.<sup>30</sup> The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this truth of the Incarnation. Jesus went as low as He could possibly go. This means no matter what you go through, no matter how low you may get, you can never sink so far that Jesus cannot get under you and lift you up. He can identify with you in any situation, no matter how hard: poverty, loneliness, homelessness, rejection, you name it. ([Work Your Way Down the Ladder](#))

**Steven Cole** comments on **taking the form of a bond-servant** "he means that He voluntarily adopted the very nature of a servant. He did not cease to be God in any sense, but added to His divine nature a true human nature. Jesus' human nature was exactly like ours, except that it was joined to a divine nature (not mixed or blended); and, it was without sin, although His body was subject to the results of the fall, such as weariness, aging, and death. When Paul says that Christ was "**found in appearance as a man**" (Phil 2:8), he means that if you had looked at Jesus, you would not have thought, "There is a superman or a god," but rather, "There is a normal-looking man." He was born into a family as a baby, grew to maturity as we all do, and in every other observable way was completely human. Thus the orthodox statement concerning the person of Christ is that He is **undiminished deity** and **perfect humanity** united without confusion in one person forever. **To deny either the full and perfect deity of our Lord or His complete humanity is to veer into serious heresy.** So what Paul is showing is that the Lord Jesus went from the highest place in the universe, as eternal God, to take on human existence, and that, not as a king or powerful warrior, but as a lowly servant." ([Philippians 2:5-8 Supreme Humility](#))

See in depth discussion of John 1:14 - [John 1:14 Commentary](#)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Incarnation - Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible](#)
- [Incarnation - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Hypostatical Union - Watson's Biblical & Theological Dictionary](#)
- [The Person of Christ - Outline from Dr Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology](#)

- [The Person of Christ - Pt 1-3 Dr Wayne Grudem-in Depth Mp3's - Recommended](#)

**Taking** (2983) (**lambano**) is an instrumental participle in the Greek, indicating the means by which the action in the main verb is accomplished. Our Lord set Himself aside by taking upon Himself the form of a servant. The word "**form**" (**morphe**) has the same content of meaning as the word "**form**" in Php2:6. "Taking" does not imply an exchange but adding something and so Paul teaches that the Lord did not lay aside the form of God and did not cease to be God, but He added the "form" of man.

**Form** (3444) (**morphe**) as discussed above (**note**) refers to the nature or character of something and emphasizes both the internal and external form. In other words **morphe** refers to the outward display of the inner reality or the essential form of something which never alters. Jesus, the same divine Person Who existed always in the form of God took on Himself the form of a bondservant. He Who was the Sovereign manifested Himself as a lowly bondservant. When Christ did this, His Person did not change, only the mode (= way in which something occurs) of His expression. Paul clearly refutes any assertion of liberalism that the Lord Jesus Christ emptied Himself of His deity!

**Bondservant** (1401) (**doulos [word study]**) is one who has surrendered their rights to the will of another. Jesus surrendered His rights to the will of His Father. He did this for you and for me beloved. Shall not the such love constrain us out of love to live a life of surrender.

Christ Jesus changed His mode of expression from that of the glory of Deity to that of the humiliation of **bondservant**, and in doing that, He set His legitimate desire of being glorified aside, thus setting self aside to express Himself as a **bondservant**, receiving instead of the worship of the angels, the curses and hatred of mankind. It was the Lord of Glory at the Passover feast (read John 13) who laid aside His outer garments to wrap a towel about Himself and perform the duties of a slave. That towel, symbol of His position as a **bondservant**, speaks of the humility with which He clothed Himself. One had to be laid aside if the other was to be taken up. While He was kneeling on the floor washing the disciples' feet, He was still the Lord of Glory although He looked like a **bondservant**.

**Kenneth Wuest** - The word "**form**" is from the same Greek word that we studied in verse six. The word "servant" is the translation of the Greek word which Paul used in 1:1 to describe himself, a bondservant. The word "and" is not in the Greek text, but was supplied by the translators. The word "took" is an aorist participle. A rule of Greek grammar says that the action of an aorist participle precedes the action of the leading verb. The leading verb here is "emptied." That means that the act of taking preceded the act of emptying. That in turn means that the act of taking upon Himself the form of a servant preceded and was the cause of the emptying. The translation so far could read, "emptied Himself, having taken the form of a bondservant."

What do the words mean, "**having taken the form of a bondservant?**" The word "form," you remember, referred to the outward expression one gives of his inward being. The words "form of a bondservant" therefore mean that our Lord gave outward expression to His inmost nature, the outward expression being that of a bondservant. The words "having taken" tell us that that expression was not true of Him before, although the desire to serve others was part of His nature as Deity. When expressing Himself as a bondservant come to serve, He necessarily exchanged one form of expression for another. In verse six He was in His pre-incarnate state expressing Himself as Deity. In verse seven He expresses Himself in incarnation as a bondservant. This is the direct opposite of what took place at the Transfiguration. There we have the same word "form" used, but with a prefixed preposition signifying a change. We could translate "And the mode of His outward expression was changed before them, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light" (Matt. 17:2). Our Lord's usual mode of expression while on earth previous to His resurrection was that of a servant. He said, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). But now, His outward expression as a servant ceased, and He gave outward expression of the glory of His deity. In our Philippian passage, the change of expression is reversed. Instead of giving outward expression of His deity to the angels in His pre-incarnate glory, He gives outward expression of His humility in becoming the servant of mankind. The one expression was set aside so that the other could become a fact. Vincent says in this connection: "This form, not being identical with the divine essence, but dependent upon it, and necessarily implying it, can be parted with or laid aside. Since Christ is one with God, and therefore pure being, absolute existence, He can exist without the form. This form of God, Christ laid aside in His incarnation." Both expressions came from our Lord's nature, His act of glorifying Himself and His act of humbling Himself. Both are constituent elements of the essence possessed by the Triune God.

But in exchanging one form of expression for the other, He emptied Himself. The question arises, "Of what did He empty Himself?" He did not empty Himself of His deity, since Paul says that the expression of His deity was a fact after His incarnation, that expression implying the possession of the essence of Deity. He set aside the outward expression of His deity when expressing Himself as a bondservant. It was the outward expression of the essence of His deity which our Lord emptied Himself of during the time when He was giving outward expression of Himself as a bondservant. But the emptying Himself of the expression of Deity is more implied by the context than stated specifically by the verb "emptied." When our Lord set aside the expression of Deity in order that He might express Himself as a bondservant, He was setting aside His legitimate and natural desires and prerogatives as Deity. The

basic, natural desire and prerogative of Deity is that of being glorified. But when Deity sets these aside, it sets its desires aside, and setting its desires aside, it sets Self aside. The pronoun "Himself" is in the accusative case. The action of the verb terminates in the thing expressed by that case. The act of emptying terminated in the self life of the Son of God. Our Lord emptied Himself of self. This agrees perfectly with the context which is an example of humility and self-abnegation for the benefit of others. This setting aside of self by the Son of God was the example that Paul held before the saints at Philippi. If each one would set self aside, then unity would prevail.

An illustration of this self-emptying of the Son of God is found in John 13:1–17. Our Lord seated at the table, the Master and Lord of the disciples, is illustrative of Him in His preincarnate glory, giving outward expression of the glory of His deity to the angels. Our Lord, girded with a towel, and washing the feet of the disciples, is illustrative of His taking the outward expression of a servant in His incarnation. His outer garments laid aside for the time being, point to His setting aside the outward expression of His pre-incarnate glory while He expressed Himself as a bondsman. The fact that He was still their Master and Lord while kneeling on the floor doing the work of an oriental slave, speaks of the fact that our Lord's assumption of humanity did not mean that He relinquished His deity. He was just as much God while on earth in His humiliation, as He was before He came and as He is now. His act of taking His outer garments again, tells of the resumption of the expression of His glory after the resurrection.

The words "**took upon him the form of a servant,**" do not refer to His assumption of human nature without its sin, but to His expression of Himself as a **bondsman**. His humanity was only the necessary medium through which He would express Himself as a servant of mankind. The fact of His becoming man is expressed in the words, "**and was made in the likeness of men.**" The words "**was made**" are the translation of a word meaning "to become." The tense of this verb is ingressive aorist, which signifies entrance into a new state. Our Lord entered into a new state of being when He became Man. But His becoming Man did not exclude His possession of Deity. He was and is today a Person with two natures, that of absolute Deity and that of Humanity. The text says, "**He became in the likeness of men.**" The word "**likeness**" in the Greek text refers to "that which is made like something else." Our Lord's humanity was a real likeness, not a phantom, nor an incomplete copy of humanity. But this likeness did not express the whole of Christ's being. His mode of manifestation resembled what men are. But His humanity was not all that there was of Him. He was also Deity. He was not a man, but the Son of God manifest in the flesh and nature of man. ([Philippians Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

**Arthur Pink** writes that Jesus...

voluntarily "took upon him the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7) and manifested His entire subjection to God by becoming "obedient" to Him—an obedience without any reserve or limit, for He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). Thus,

### **a "servant" is known chiefly by his obedience**

"Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). Of Christ the Father declared, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect, in whom my soul delights" (Isaiah 42:1). And why did the Father find such "delight" in Him? Because He loved righteousness, and hated wickedness (Psalm 45:7), because He could say "I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29).

And it is only as the Christian conducts himself as an obedient "servant" that he has fellowship with Christ, follows the example He has left him, and gives his Redeemer "delight." "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 25:55). Mark it well, my reader: it was not only Moses and Aaron, or even the priests and Levites who were His "servants," but all the Israelites who had been redeemed from the house of bondage; and they were "servants" because He was the Lord their God. "Lord" and "servant" are correlative terms, as are husband and wife, parent and child. This holds good in the New Testament era as truly and fully as it did in the Old: all who have been genuinely converted and brought to receive Christ as their Lord—are His servants. This was foretold of old: "And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him" (Isaiah 56:6).

"Not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6). "You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). "Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God" (1 Peter 2:16). Even in Heaven, the saints shall still sustain this relationship and character: "His servants shall serve him" (Rev 22:3). ([Servants of God](#))

## THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST

Declared by himself -Matthew 11:29

### EXHIBITED IN HIS

- Taking our nature -Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:16
- Birth -Luke 2:4-7
- Subjection to his parents -Luke 2:51
- Station in life -Matthew 13:55; John 9:29
- Poverty -Luke 9:58; 2 Corinthians 8:9
- Partaking of our infirmities -Hebrews 4:15; 5:7
- Submitting to ordinances Mt 3:13-15
- Becoming a servant -Matthew 20:28; Luke 22:27; Php 2:7
- Associating with the despised -Matthew 9:10,11; Luke 15:1,2
- Refusing honours -John 5:41; 6:15
- Entry into Jerusalem -Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:5,7
- Washing his disciples' feet -John 13:5
- Obedience -John 6:38; Hebrews 10:9
- Submitting to sufferings -Isaiah 50:6; 53:7; Acts 8:32; Mt 26:37-39
- Exposing himself to reproach -Ps 22:6; 69:9; Ro 15:3; Is 53:3
- Death -John 10:15,17,18; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2
- Saints should imitate -Philippians 2:5-8
- On account of, he was despised -Mark 6:3; John 9:29
- His exaltation, the result of - Philippians 2:9

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### Spurgeon - Five Lessons to Learn from Christ's Humiliation

(1) The first lesson to learn from Christ's humiliation is to have firmness of faith in the atoning sacrifice. If my Lord could stoop to become man, and if, when He had come as low as that, He went still lower, and lower, and lower, until He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, I feel that there must be a potency about that death which is all that I can require. Jesus by dying has vindicated law and justice. If God can punish sin upon His own dear Son, it means far more than the sending of us to hell. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin—but His blood was shed, so there is remission. His wounds let out His lifeblood; one great gash opened the way to His heart. Before that, His whole body had become a mass of dripping gore, when, in the garden, His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. My Lord, when I study your sacrifice, I see how God can be "just, and the one who justifies the person by faith in Jesus" (Rom 3:26). Faith is born at the cross of Christ. We not only bring faith to the cross, but we find it there. I cannot think of my God bearing all this grief in a human body, even to the death on the cross, and then doubt. Why, doubt becomes harder than faith when the cross is visible! When Christ is set forth evidently crucified among us, each one of us should cry, "Lord, I believe, for your death has killed my unbelief."

(2) The next lesson I would have you learn from Christ's humiliation is this: cultivate a great hatred of sin. Sin killed Christ; let Christ kill sin. Sin made Him go down, down, down; then pull sin down, let it have no throne in your heart. If it will live in your heart, make it live in holes and corners, and never rest till it is utterly driven out. Seek to put your foot upon its neck, and utterly kill it. Christ was crucified; let your lusts be crucified. Let every wrong desire be nailed up, with Christ, upon the felon's tree. If, with Paul, you can say, "May it never be that I boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal 6:14), with him you will also be able to exclaim, "Let no one cause me trouble, for I carry on my body the marks of Jesus" (Gal 6:17). Christ's branded slave is the Lord's freeman.

(3) Learn another lesson, and that is obedience. If Christ humbled Himself, and became obedient, how obedient ought you and I to be! We ought to stop at nothing when we once know that it is the Lord's will. I marvel that you and I should ever raise a question or ask a moment's delay in our obedience to Christ. If it be the Lord's will, let it be done, and done at once. Should it rend some fond connection, should it cause a flood of tears, let it be done. He humbled Himself, and became obedient. Would obedience humble me? Would it lower me in man's esteem? Would it make me the subject of ridicule? Would it bring contempt upon my honorable name? Should I be elbowed out of the society wherein I have been admired, if I were obedient to Christ? Lord, this is a question not worth asking! I take up your cross right joyfully, asking grace to be perfectly obedient, by the power of your Spirit.

(4) Learn next another lesson, and that is self-denial. Did Christ humble Himself? Let us practice the same holy art. Have I not heard of some saying, "I have been insulted; I am not treated with proper respect. I go in and out, and I am not noticed. I have done

eminent service, and there is not a paragraph in the newspaper about me.” Your Master humbled Himself, and it seems to me that you are trying to exalt yourself! Truly, you are on the wrong track. If Christ went down, down, down, it ill becomes us to be always seeking to go up, up, up. Wait till God exalts you, which He will do in His own good time. Meanwhile, it behooves you, while you are here, to humble yourself. If you are already in a humble position, should you not be contented with it; for He humbled Himself? If you are now in a place where you are not noticed, where there is little thought of you, be quite satisfied with it. Jesus came just where you are. You may well stop where you are, where God has put you. Jesus had to bring Himself down, and to make an effort to come down to where you are. Is not the Valley of Humiliation one of the sweetest spots in all the world? Does not the great geographer of the heavenly country, John Bunyan, tell us that the Valley of Humiliation is as fruitful a place as any the crow flies over, and that our Lord formerly had His country house there, and that He loved to walk those meadows, for He found the air was pleasant? “I should like to be known,” says one. “I should like to have my name before the public.” Well, if you ever had that lot, if you felt as I do, you would pray to be unknown, and to let your name drop out of notice; there is no pleasure in it. The only happy way, if God would only let us choose, is to be known to nobody, but just to glide through this world as pilgrims and strangers, to the land where our true kindred dwell, and to be known there as having been followers of the Lord.

(5) I think that we should also learn from our Lord’s humiliation to have contempt for human glory. Suppose they come to you and say, “We will crown you king!” You may well say, “Will you? All the crown you had for my Master was a crown of thorns; I will not accept a diadem from you.” “We will praise you.” “What, will you praise me, you who spat in His dear face? I want none of your praises.” It is a greater honor to a Christian man to be maligned than to be applauded. I do not care where it comes from, I will say this: if he be slandered and abused for Christ’s sake, no odes in his honor, no articles in his praise, can do him one-tenth the honor. This is to be a true knight of the cross, to have been wounded in the fray, to have come back adorned with scars for His dear sake. Look upon human glory as a thing that is tarnished, no longer golden, but corroded, because it came not to your Lord.

Lastly, let us be inflamed with a strong desire to honor Christ. If He humbled Himself, let us honor Him. Every time that He seems to put away the crown, let us put it on His head. Every time we hear Him slandered—and men continue to slander Him still—let us speak up for Him right manfully. Do you not grow indignant, sometimes, when you see how Christ’s professed Church is treating Him, and His truth? They are shutting Him out still, till His head is wet with dew, and His locks with the drops of the night. Proclaim Him King in the face of His false friends. Proclaim Him, and say that His Word is infallibly true, and that His precious blood alone can cleanse from sin. Stand out the braver because so many Judases seem to have leaped up from the bottomless pit to betray Christ again. Be firm and steadfast, like granite walls, in the day when others turn their backs and fly, like cowards.

The Lord help you to honor Him who humbled Himself, who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross! May He accept these humble words of mine, and bless them to His people, and make them to be the means of leading some poor sinner to come and trust in Him!

#### **AND BEING MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN: en homoiomati anthropon genomenos (AMPMSN)**

- Jn 1:14; Ro 1:3; 8:3; Gal 4:4; Heb 2:14, 15, 16, 17; 4:15)

After explaining that Christ always existed, Paul explains that He came into the world in the likeness of men, meaning “as a real Man.” The humanity of the Lord is as real as His deity. He is true God and true Man which is a mystery that no created mind can fully comprehend!

**Spurgeon** - A great marvel is that Incarnation, that the eternal God should take into union with Himself our human nature, and should be born at Bethlehem, and live at Nazareth, and die at Calvary on our behalf. He was the Creator, and we see Him here on earth as a creature; the Creator, who made heaven and earth, without whom was not anything made that was made, and yet He lies in the virgin’s womb. He is born, and He is cradled where the horned oxen feed. The Creator is also a creature. The Son of God is the Son of man. Strange combination! Could condescension go farther than for the Infinite to be joined to the infant, and the Omnipotent to the feebleness of a newborn babe? Yet this is not all.

**Tony Evans** on **made in the likeness of men** - That means He looked like an ordinary man. He didn’t go around with a halo around His head, floating above the ground. He looked like a servant, because that’s what He was. Jesus Himself said He came not to be served—which was His right and prerogative as God—but to serve, which is what a slave does (Mark 10:45). A slave doesn’t have any rights. So when Jesus took on a human body, He also volunteered to accept the limitations of being human. Jesus was still fully God while He was on earth. We need to keep this fact before us. But He lived as a man without using His deity for His personal comfort or benefit or to avoid having to face the hardships and temptations of normal everyday human life. In other words, Jesus did not use His divine power to solve a problem for His humanity. One example of this is in His temptation, when He was hungry and the devil tempted Him to turn stones into bread (Matthew 4:3). But the greatest example is in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus



rebuked Peter for drawing his sword, telling him that if He chose, He could call "more than twelve legions of angels" to deliver Him (Matthew 26:53). Now don't misunderstand. Jesus did use His divine power on a number of occasions. We call them miracles. But they were always done for the benefit of the kingdom and the blessing of others, not to make Jesus' life easier. The reason is that Jesus had to experience every pain and temptation we face (Hebrews 4:15), so He could reverse the first Adam's failure and win the spiritual battle Adam lost for mankind in Eden. Jesus lived out the will of God on earth, that He might be an acceptable substitute for man. Hebrews 10:5 really underscores the nature of Christ's self-emptying. Speaking of Christ, the author said, "When He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body Thou hast prepared for Me.'" When Jesus Christ emptied Himself, what He did was pour His deity into a container called a human body. This is what we call the Incarnation, Jesus taking on human flesh. The second person of the Trinity was encased in a body that God prepared for Him through the Virgin Birth, when the Holy Spirit conceived a baby in Mary's womb. Notice again that Jesus did the emptying Himself. It was voluntary. He didn't have to do it, but He did it to save people like you and me, just because He loved us! We need to meditate on that regularly, because it will give us an attitude of gratitude, love, and humility—the attitude of Jesus! (Who is this King of Glory)

**Being made** (1096) (**ginomai**) means to cause to be ("gen"-erate) become. It describes Jesus definite entrance in time into humanity. He "invaded" humanity

"when the fulness of the time came, (when) God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law"  
(Gal 4:4) (The divine Son was fully human)

Jesus was no mere phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics ([see Docetism](#)) held. Christ was born here below that we might be born from above.

The verbs **emptied**, **taking**, **being made** are all **aorist tense**. Specifically they are all what is known as punctiliar aorist, where punctiliar denotes action that occurs instantaneously or at a point in time, as opposed to action that is progressive or ongoing.

He came into existence as a man, **John** writing that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn 1:14) (This is the great verse of the incarnation, when the eternal Word took on human flesh. Since this verse and the following verses unequivocally refer to "Jesus Christ" John 1:17, there is no legitimate escape from the great truth that Jesus was the great God and Creator, as well as perfect Man and redeeming Savior. Furthermore, He has assumed human flesh forever, while still remaining fully God. He is not part man and part God, or sometimes man and sometimes God but is now and eternally the God-Man. He is always true God and perfect Man--man as God created and intended man to be)

In **Romans** Paul explains that "concerning His (God's) Son, (He) was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh" (Ro 1:3-note) (Paul describes the incarnation of God in human flesh, in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a true man, "made of the seed of David," as foretold by the prophets; His birth was completely natural from the point of conception, but His conception was altogether miraculous. He had no human father although Joseph was his legal, adoptive father, conveying the legal right to David's throne and His mother remained a virgin until after He was born. Since Mary herself was a descendant of David, and since He grew in her womb for nine months, He was indeed "made" of one who was of the seed of David. Nevertheless, He could have had no genetic connection to either Mary or Joseph. Otherwise, there could have been no natural way in which "that holy thing" Luke 1:35 could have been kept from inherited sin or inherited mutational defects. Thus, His conception necessarily involved the special creation of the cell placed by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb. "A body hast thou prepared me" (Heb 10:5). Just as the body of the first Adam was specially created by God, without genetic connection to human parents, so was that of "the last Adam" (1Co 15:45). Yet, He was no less fully human than the first Adam, the father of all other humans. Furthermore, His growing body was "made" through natural nourishment in Mary's womb as He grew, and Mary was "of the seed of David." Thus He was, indeed, "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," although the specifications for the "making" of His body were contained in the DNA code programmed by God in the created cell. [Philippians 2 Study Notes](#) )

Later in Romans **Paul** adds that "what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the **likeness** (homoionoma = "likeness" is crucial, for it indicates that Jesus was a true man but not a sinful man) of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh (Ro 8:3-note)

**How important is this doctrinal truth?** John explains that "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; (1John 4:2)

In this passage, John is stating that the supreme test of the demonic spirits, and the false teachers they influence is their teaching concerning the nature of Jesus Christ. If, in any way, they try to separate Jesus from "the Christ," denying either the full deity or perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are not from God. Some attempt to make Jesus a mere man upon whom "the Christ-spirit" came. Some argue that everyone can be "a Christ" in the same sense Jesus was. Many deny His miraculous conception, bodily resurrection or both. Unless Jesus Christ was perfect man, He could not die for our sins. Unless He was God, He could not

defeat death and thus could never save us. Any doctrine less than that of Jesus Christ as the God-Man, God and Man perfectly, united in the hypostatic union, is deadly heresy.

**Hebrews** also emphasizes the truth of Jesus the God-Man, writing that "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (Heb 2:14,15)

**Likeness** (3667) (**homoïoma** from **homoioo** = to make like) refers to shape, similitude (= a visible likeness, a thing or sometimes a person that is like or the counterpart of another) or a resemblance.

**Thomas Constable** is careful to point out that "**Likeness (homoïoma)** does not mean exactness (**eikon**). Even though Jesus had a fully human nature, that nature was not sinful. Every other human being has a sinful human nature. Moreover Jesus had a divine nature as well as a human nature." ([Philippians 2 Commentary](#))

Strong's Lexicon writes that **homoïoma** is "1 that which has been made after the likeness of something. 1a a figure, image, likeness, representation (as used in Ro 1:23, Rev 9:7). 1b likeness i.e. resemblance, such as amounts almost to equality or identity (as in Ro 5:14, 6:5, 8:3, Phil 2:7)."

**Homoïoma** according to **Thayer** is "that which has been made after the likeness of something, hence, a. a figure, image, likeness, representation."

**TDNT** states that **homoïoma** is "what is made similar," "copy." The word is rare in secular Gk.. It occurs in Plato, Aristotle, Epicur., and occasionally papyrus., and always has the concrete sense of "copy" rather than the abstract sense of likeness or correspondence. It is thus synonymous to **eikon**. **Eikon** and **homoïoma** are often used as equivalents (but see Constable's **note** above)...(and) are in Plato the earthly copies of the heavenly prototypes. But there is often a distinction between the two words. This may be formulated as follows: **eikon** represents the object, whereas **homoïoma** emphasizes the similarity, but with no need for an inner connection between the original and the copy. (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament](#). Eerdmans)

Our Lord's humanity was a real likeness, not a mere phantom. But this likeness did not express the whole of Christ's nature. His mode of manifestation resembled what men are. **Homoïoma** emphasizes identity. In reality He was a man, possessing all the essential aspects of a human being, although unlike all others He was sinless.

**Homoïoma** is found only 6 times in the NT ([Romans](#) 4x; [Philippians](#); [Revelation](#)) and is translated: appearance, 1; form, 1; likeness, 4.

Here are the other NT uses of **homoïoma**...

(men who had professed to be wise but were fools) exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the **form** (or likeness - **homoïoma**) of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Ro 1:23-note)

**Comment:** Here Paul uses **homoïoma** to describes the state of being similar in appearance - the same idea is seen in the use of **homoïoma** in the Septuagint (LXX) of **Psalm 106:20** "*Thus they exchanged their glory for the image [homoïoma] of an ox that eats grass*" referring to the Israel's making the idolatrous golden calf in Ex 32:1ff. Aaron sought to present this golden calf to Israel as the image, of the gods they left behind in Egypt.

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the **likeness** of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. (Ro 5:14-Note)

**Comment:** Here Paul is using **homoïoma** to describe a state of having a common experience. Before there was even a written law, men were disobedient to the "law" which God wrote on the heart of every man. Though they might not have broken a direct written command, death still reigned over them because of Adam's transgression. Because Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden after they sinned, they had no more opportunity to disobey God's single prohibition. They no longer had access to the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, nor have any of their descendants. Consequently, it has been impossible for any human being, either before or after Moses, to have sinned in the likeness of the initial offense of Adam.

For if we have become united with Him in the **likeness (homoïoma)** of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* (this phrase added by translators) of His resurrection, (see **note** Romans 6:5)

**Comment:** Here Paul is again using **homoïoma** to describe a state of having a common experience, specifically in the same death that Christ died, we died

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the **likeness** of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, (Ro 8:3-note)

The **appearance** of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. (Rev 9:7)

**Homoioima** is found 32 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (Ex 20:4; Deut. 4:12, 15ff, 23, 25; 5:8; Jos. 22:28; Jdg. 8:18; 1 Sam. 6:5; 2 Ki. 16:10; 2 Chr. 4:3; Ps. 106:20; 144:12; Cant. 1:11; Isa. 40:18f; Ezek. 1:5, 16, 22, 26, 28; 8:2f; 10:1, 8, 10, 21; 23:15; Dan. 3:25). For example Moses records...

"You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any **likeness** (LXX = **homoioima**) of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. (Ex 20:4)

"Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form (LXX = **homoioima**) -- only a voice." (Deut 4:12)

In Daniel we see a usage that almost certainly refers to an appearance of the pre-incarnate Messiah "He (Nebuchadnezzar) answered and said, "Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is **like** (LXX = **homoioima**) a son of the gods!" (Da 3:25-note)

**MacArthur** adds that **homoioima** "refers to that which is made to be like something else, not just in appearance (cf. Php 2:7) but in reality. Jesus was not a clone, a disguised alien, or merely some reasonable facsimile of a man. He became exactly like all other human beings, having all the attributes of humanity, a genuine man among men. ([MacArthur, J. Philipians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

It is important to realize that the resemblance signified by homoioima in no way implies that one of the objects in question has been derived from the other. In the same way two men may resemble one another even though they are in no way related to one another. This word is so important to the proper understanding of the incarnation of Christ that it is necessary to consider the context of the more important passages where it occurs.

**THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (AD451) is generally regarded as the most orthodox "definition" of how the Bible describes the Person of Jesus Christ**

"We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, **to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ,** as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us. ([Chalcedonian Creed](#))

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**ONE GIANT LEAP FOR GOD** - On July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts landed on the moon. It was an unprecedented human achievement. Millions remember the words of Neil Armstrong: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." President Nixon declared, "All humanity is one in their pride."

Two thousand years earlier, the Creator of the moon made a giant leap of a vastly different kind. He descended from heaven to earth (Philippians 2:5, 6, 7, 8). God the Son, the eternal Word (John 1:1,14), stepped down from heaven to become fully human, while remaining fully God. It was an amazing "leap," which showed us God's heart of love. He became one of us so that He could die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. By trusting Him as our Savior, we are forgiven. We also receive His Spirit, who enables us to overcome selfish ambition and conceit, and to care for others (Philippians 2:3, 4).

A leap into space may unite mankind in the pride of achievement, but it pales in comparison with what God accomplished when Jesus came from heaven to earth. He now unites all who trust Him, producing in them a growing humility and love that replaces selfishness and pride. Going to the moon is nothing compared to that. — Dennis J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus our Savior left heaven above,  
Came down to earth with a message of love;  
Took on Himself all our sin and our shame,  
Now life eternal is ours through His Name. —Hess

**Christ was born here below that we might be born from above.**

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In washing the disciples' feet, Jesus shocked His followers (John 13)

This was not the beginning of the first valet school; Jesus was not some water-basin wonder. With a towel around His waist, Jesus washed soiled feet, but He was more interested in dirty people than dusty toes.

The disciples had been vying for leadership positions, and Jesus played chief foot-washer to clean their hearts rather than their feet. Jesus acted as a servant to combat the hotshot attitudes of the disciples. He hoped they would recall and imitate His humility.

In coming to this earth, Jesus became part of a long-running play, but He was not acting. He took the servant part for some thirty-three years to show people how to live (Phil. 2:7). Those who follow Him lead by example. They never make a grand entrance; they come in through the service door. —D J De Haan ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Getting our own way serves only to get in the way of service.**

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**F B Meyer's devotional commentary on Philippians...**

## **HE EMPTIED HIMSELF**

Php 2:5-8

**Majesty and Humility Combined.** In the whole range of Scripture this paragraph stands in almost unapproachable and unexampled majesty. There is no passage where the extremes of our Saviour's majesty and humility are brought into such abrupt connection. Guided by the Spirit of God, the Apostle opens the golden compasses of his imagination and faith, and places the one point upon the supernal Throne of the eternal God, and the other upon the Cross of shame where Jesus died, and he shows us the great steps by which Jesus approached always nearer and nearer to human sin and need; that, having embraced us in our low estate, He might carry us back with Himself to the very bosom of God, and that by identifying Himself with our sin and sorrow He might ultimately identify us with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And this wonderful description of His descent to our shame and sorrow is here cited by the Apostle, that it might be a living impulse and inspiration to ourselves, not to look upon our own things, not to hold them with a tight grasp, but to be willing to stoop for others to shame, sorrow, and spitting; fulfilling God's purpose of mercy to the world, even as Jesus Christ, who became the instrument and organ through which God's redemptive purpose wrought. "Let this mind be in you." Think these thoughts. Never look exclusively upon your own interests, never count anything of your own worthy to stand in the way, but always be prepared to the last point to deny yourself, that the redemptive purpose of God may flow through the channel of your life to those that sorely need His blessed help. It is a wonderful thing that, day by day, in our poor measure, we may repeat the purpose and the work of Jesus Christ our Emmanuel.

No rhetoric or metaphor of ours can add to the splendour of these words, but in the simplest possible way we will stand on these seven successive slabs of chrysolite.

### **FIRST, HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD.**

Christ in the Form of God. The Greek word translated "form" means a great deal more than the external appearance; it stands for the essence of God's nature, so that we may say that Jesus Christ possessed the essence of the Divine quality and nature from all eternity. This exactly agrees with other words of Scripture, as when we are told, He is "the image of the invisible God." Again, "Being the effulgence of His glory," i.e. He was the outshining beam of the Father's glory; "and the very image of His substance," i.e. He corresponded to the Divine Nature, as a seal to the die. Again, "The Word was with God, and the Word was God. .... All things were made by Him." And then, as we overhear that marvellous communion between the Son and the Father, in John 17, we notice His reference to the glory He had with the Father before the worlds were made, and with which He asks the Father to glorify Him in His human nature again. All these deep words prove that whatever

God was in the uncreated eternity of the past, the infinite, the incomprehensible, the all-holy, and the all-blessed,--that was Jesus Christ, who was absolutely one with Him, as spirit and soul are one in the organisation of our nature.

### **SECONDLY, THERE WAS NO ROBBERY WHEN HE CLAIMED EQUALITY WITH GOD.**

**It was not Robbery.** Indeed, as R.V. puts it, it was not a thing to be grasped, because He was so sure of it. It was conceded to Him universally; He counted it no robbery; He thought it detracted nothing from the Father's infinite glory when He stood on an equality with Him; and it is remarkable to notice how in the four courts of earthly life He prosecuted His claim. There are four courts for us all.

**Four Courts.** In the court of His intimates. On the highway to Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples whom men took Him to be; and Peter cried, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This could not have meant that the Lord Jesus was the Son as we are sons. That would have been a meaningless response. There was something more than that. And Jesus took it to be more, because He said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." In those words He took to Himself the prerogative of equality with God. You remember how He said afterwards: "Ye believe in God,"--give Me the same faith, "believe also in Me." He thought it not robbery to receive the faith that man gives to God. He said significantly: "My Father and I,"--"We will come and make our abode with him." He thought it not robbery to enter the human soul and to share its occupancy with the Father. With His intimates He always spoke of Himself as One with the Father, in an incomprehensible, mysterious, but essential oneness.

**So also in the court of public opinion** He said, "I and my Father are One," with an emphasis that made the Jews catch up stones to cast at Him, because, being a man, He claimed to be God. And He also told them that all men were to honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He thought it not robbing God to accept the honour men gave to Him.

**So also in the court of justice.** We know how the priests challenged Him, and asked Him to declare His essential nature, and said, "Art Thou the Son of the living God?"--using the word son in the sense the Jews always did use it, as intimating essential Deity; and He said, "Thou sayest that I am: and hereafter ye shall see the Son of man coming in the glory of God," for He did not think it robbery to share God's prerogative and place.

**Finally, in the court of death.** When death came, and He hung upon that cross of agony, He did not for a moment retract all that He had said, but opened the gate to the dying thief, and assured him that he would be that day with Him in Paradise,--for He did not think it robbing God to assume the right of opening the gates of forgiveness and life.

All through His earthly life He insisted upon it that He was God's equal, God's fellow, and that He was One with the Father.

### **THIRDLY, HE EMPTIED HIMSELF.**

He Emptied Himself. This was evidently by His free will and choice. He emptied Himself of His glory. As Moses veiled the glory that shone upon his face, so Emmanuel veiled the glory that irradiated from His Person. We are told they need no sun in heaven, because His Presence is sun. What an effulgence of light must have streamed from Jesus, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, in those uncreated ages! But when He stepped down to earth He veiled it,--the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us, the Shekinah nature was shrouded, so that it was not able to penetrate, save on the Mount of Transfiguration, when, for a moment, the voluntary act by which Christ hid His intrinsic splendour was laid aside, and it welled out in cascades and torrents of blinding light.

But probably we are specially here taught that He emptied Himself of the use of His divine attributes. This is a profound truth which it is necessary to understand if you would read rightly the lesson of our Saviour's life. Men have been accustomed to think that the miracles of Jesus Christ were wrought by the putting forth of His intrinsic and original power as God: that when He hushed the storm, and the waves crouched like whelps to His feet, that when He raised the dead, and Lazarus sheeted with grave-clothes came forth, that when He touched the sight of the blind, and gave eyeballs to those that had been born without their optics, that all this was done by the forthputting of His own original, uncreated, and divine power; whereas a truer understanding of His nature, specially as disclosed in the Gospel by St. John, shows that He did nothing of Himself, but what He saw the Father doing; that the words He spoke were not His own words, but as He heard God speaking He spoke; that the works He did were not his own, but the Father's who sent Him, for when they said on one

occasion "Show us the Father," He replied, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; the words! speak to you I speak not from Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth His works." His human life was one of faith, even as ours should be: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, even so he that eateth Me shall live by Me." Frequently He paralleled our experience with His own; and no doubt the story of the Vine in which He depicts our dependence upon Himself, had long been in His thought as an emblem of His own dependence upon the Father. He chose to live like this. He voluntarily laid aside the exercise of His omnipotence, that He might receive power from God; absolutely and voluntarily forwent the use of attributes that lay all around Him, like tools within the reach of the skilled mechanic, that He might live a truly human life, weeping our tears, and receiving the plenitude of His Father's power.

#### **FOURTHLY, HE TOOK UPON HIM THE FORM OF A SERVANT.**

Christ in the Form of a Servant. The infinite God, with whom He was One, desired to achieve certain purposes in our world; and the blessed Christ, the Second Person in the Trinity, undertook to be the medium and vehicle through which the Father might express Himself: and just as the words that issue from our mouth are impressed with our intelligence--the liquid air around us yielding itself to the movements of the larynx, so that what is in our mind is communicated and conveyed to others as they listen--so Jesus Christ became the Word of God, impressed with the thought, mind, and intention of God, so that the Father was able, through the yielded nature of the Son, to do, say, and be everything He desired. Christ was the perfect expression of the Being of Him whom no man hath seen, or can see.

It is absurd, therefore, to divorce Jesus from the Father. Preachers have made an awful mistake when they have spoken of the Atonement as though Jesus intervened to appease the Father, to satisfy something in God that needed satisfaction before He could love. On the contrary, the whole Bible substantiates the belief that God was in Christ; and that what Christ did, God did through Him, and that the death on the cross was the act of the entire Deity. What wonder, then, that the Father said, "Behold My Servant whom I have chosen, Mine elect, in whom My soul is well pleased. I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles."

#### **FIFTHLY, HE WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN.**

In the Likeness of Men. He must know what the experiences of a human body are, what childhood and boyhood, and what it is to pass through the various stages of manhood. It was needful that He should be as perfectly united with man as He was perfectly united with God, so that He might be made a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make intercession for our sins--for all these reasons--He did not abhor the Virgin's womb, but was made man. Let us not fear too much the mystery and burden of human life. Our Lord and Master has gone this way before us, and has left a track behind, as they who traverse the Australian bush break twigs or branches along their route, to serve as a guide to those who follow. It is good to be born, that we may have a share in the nature He has worn.

#### **SIXTHLY, HE DIED.**

Christ Obedient to Death. He need not have died, because He was sinless; and death was only the result of sin. 'Adam sinned, and so died; Jesus did not sin, and therefore needed not to pass through death's portal. From the Mount of Transfiguration, He might, had He chosen, have stepped back into heaven, as Adam might have been caught back to God, if he had not eaten of the forbidden fruit. Had our first parents not yielded to temptation, our race would still have peopled the world, and would have passed away, as, at the Second Advent, those will, who are alive and remain,--suddenly changed, not seeing death, and their mortality swallowed up of life. From the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus Christ could have stepped into heaven, His body passing in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, through its supreme transfiguration. But, had this been the case, He would never have made the reparation due to the holy law which man had broken. And therefore, with calm deliberation, and with full knowledge of all that awaited Him, He came down the mountain-side, and yielded Himself to death. He laid down His life at the cross, and bowed His meek head beneath death's sceptre. He had power to lay down His life, as a voluntary gift and sacrifice for our race; and He used it. Though Lord of all, He became obedient to the last dread exaction of human penalty: and, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death.

#### **SEVENTHLY, HE CHOSE THE MOST DEGRADING AND PAINFUL FORM OF DEATH.**

Even the Death of the Cross. There were several methods of death--by decapitation, by the stoppage of the heart's action, or by drinking poison. The death of the cross was the death of the slave, the most shameful and ignominious. Cicero said that it was far, not only from the bodies but the imagination of Romans. Therefore,

since this death was the most shameful through the exposure of the person, the most degrading, the most painful known to man, the Saviour chose it. He could not have gone any lower.

One has sometimes imagined how He might have died--in the home of Bethany, with the window open towards Jerusalem, Mary wiping the death-dew from His brow, and Martha waiting on His every need, whilst Lazarus gave Him a brother's help. But this could not be the Lord's choice, in view of the fact that He must taste death for every man, and be made a curse, and be able to put His everlasting arms beneath those of His followers, who have died the most excruciating and shameful deaths.

That Mind must be in us. We must be willing to lay aside our ambition and glory, our thrones of comfort, respect, and power, if by doing so we may be the better able to succour others. We must be willing to take the form of servants, to wash one another's feet, to submit even to shame and spitting, to misunderstanding and opprobrium, if we shall thereby help to lift the world nearer God. There is no other way of sitting with Jesus on His throne, no other method by which we may assist Him, however feebly, in His work of saving others. There are plenty among us like the two brethren who would sit right and left in the Kingdom, who will never be able to attain thereto because they will not pay the price of drinking His cup and being baptised with His baptism. They will not take the low seat, or stoop to the obscure and unnoticed tasks: they love the honour that comes from human applause, and the notoriety which accrues from conspicuous notices in the daily press. God help and forgive us for yielding to these insidious temptations, and give us the Spirit of our Lord, that the same mind may be in us as in Him. Kepler, when he first turned his telescope to resolve the nebulae, said, "I am thinking over again the first thoughts of God"; but surely it is given to us to think still earlier thoughts than those of Creation, even those which were in the heart of the Lamb who was slain in the Divine Purpose before the worlds were framed. (F. B. Meyer. The Epistle to the Philippians)