

**God Became One of Us**  
***Philippians 2:5-11 (part 2)***

Good morning.

This morning, I am going to start, by reading the Bible passage where Jesus was *transfigured* right before the eyes of three of His Disciples.

***Matthew 17:1 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves;***

***Matthew 17:2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.***

***Matthew 17:3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.***

***Matthew 17:4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."***

***Matthew 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" NKJV***

***Transfigured*** is the Greek word “*metamorphoo*” and it is where we get the English word metamorphosis.

***Transfigured*** means to be changed in structure or composition, in a manner that is visible to others. It is the same word used when we see the change of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly.

When Jesus left heaven and came to Earth, God placed Himself into a tent of humanity, but He never ceased to be God. Here, Jesus revealed His Divine Nature to Peter, James, and John.

Wiersbe said, “*It is only in Jesus Christ that the invisible God is revealed perfectly. Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God.*”

Please open your Bibles to ***Philippians 2***, as we continue in our verse-by-verse study of Paul’s Epistle to the Church at Philippi.

Last week was part one of a series, on ***Philippians 2:5-11***, the Apostle Paul wrote, as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Some commentators refer to these seven verses as a hymn or a poem, written by the Apostle Paul.

This hymn tells us to have the Mind of Christ, and there is also a specific breakdown of the character of Jesus.

Having the Mind of Christ means we agree with Christ’s perspective, His will, and we have the same goals, as well.

We all struggle at times, but according to ***Galatians 5:16***, ***if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.***

For someone to have the Mind of Christ, they must first have **Saving** Faith in Christ, and then receive the Holy Spirit.

Today, the portion of scripture we will look at leaves no room for doubt that Jesus is God in the flesh, who humbly became a man, to visit Earth, take the Cross, and save lost sinners.

Read *Philippians 2:5-11*

## I. God took on a new form.

Read *Philippians 2:5-6*

We spent all of last week on *vs. 5* and now today, *vs. 6* has a lot of theology, as well. When these verses are studied correctly, it disproves the cults teaching, against the Deity of Christ.

Let's break down the words, "*Who being*". The word *being* means, to **previously exist**.

Kenneth Wuest said, "*By using 'being,' Paul informs us that our Lord's possession of the divine essence did not **cease** to be a fact when He came to earth to assume human form.*

*"This word alone is enough to refute the claim of Modernism that our Lord emptied Himself of His Deity when He became Man."*

The word "*being*" in *Philippians 2:6* tells us that Jesus, "*being in the form of God*", happened before Bethlehem and Jesus remained God throughout His **incarnation**.

*Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. NKJV*

Let's discuss the words "*form of God*", from the NKJV. *In the NIV* this is translated as, "*Who, being in very nature God.*"

*Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn (preeminence or position) over all creation. NKJV*

The word "*form*" has nothing to do with a shape because God is not a shape, He is Spirit.

*John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." NKJV*

Warren Wiersbe said, "*The word form means "the outward expression of the inward nature."*

*This means that in eternity past, Jesus Christ was God. In fact, Paul stated, that Jesus was "equal with God."*

*Hebrews 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,*

*Hebrews 1:2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

*Hebrews 1:3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. NKJV*

Jesus is the brightness of the Father's glory, the radiance that shines as a source of light.

Moses received the Law from God on the mountain, we read.

***Exodus 34:29 when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.***

***Exodus 34:30 So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. NKJV***

The radiance of Moses' shining face was a reflected radiance, a received glory.

C. H. Spurgeon said, “*The face of Moses shone because he had long looked upon the face of God.*”

***Hebrews 1:3*** says, “*Jesus is the brightness of God's glory*”.

***John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.***

We have never seen God the Father, but we see Him through the “rays” of light through the Son of God.

***The express image of His person:*** Christ is the likeness of the Father, the true form, figure, character, or representation of Him.

This idea is the same idea of an impression, that a signet ring would leave when pressed into hot wax.

***Hebrews 1:3*** says the Son is in the likeness of God. This is an exact likeness made by a stamp. Jesus **exactly** represents God.

In His earthly ministry, Jesus constantly demonstrated the power of His Word.

He could heal, forgive, cast out demons, and calm nature, by His Word. His Word is so powerful, that He can *uphold all things*.

*He Himself purged our sins*, no one else could do it for us, and we could not do it for ourselves.

He *sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*. This is a position of majesty, honor, glory, and of His finished work.

This position of Jesus sets Him far above all creation.

This is why Jesus could say with all authority in *John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. NKJV*

R. Kent Hughes said, "*The Son is the radiance of God's glory*". *The translation "radiance" here is proper, as against some others that use "reflection."*

*"The moon reflects light, whereas the sun radiates light because it is its source. Jesus does not simply reflect God's glory; He is part of it!"*

Jesus possesses the unique and identical qualities that make God, God. Jesus Christ is the very substance of God because Jesus Christ is in His very **being**, God.

Jesus was in the very form of God, yet He did not consider it *robbery to be equal with God*.

Listen to how the NIV states the second part of *Philippians 2:6*, ***Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, NIV***

The word “*grasped*” means to clutch and retain some treasure.

Jesus did not cling to the prerogatives or privileges of His deity.

Jesus was not trying to be equal with God the Father by clinging to His divine rights, He was divine and **equal** to the Father, yet He willingly chose to submit to the will of the Father.

Wiersbe said, “*This is “the mind of Christ,” an attitude that says, “I cannot keep my privileges for myself,*

*I must use them for others, and to do this, I will gladly lay them aside and pay whatever **price** is necessary.”*

## II. Jesus emptied Himself.

Read *Philippians 2:7-8*

Instead of “*no reputation*” in the NKJV of *Philippians 2:7*, the NASU of *Philippians 2:7* says, “***But emptied Himself***.”

The term *kenosis* refers to the doctrine of Christ’s “self-emptying” at His incarnation.

The words *no reputation* or *emptied* come from the Greek word *kenoo* (ken ah whoo) and that is where we get the word *kenosis*.

There is some heretical teaching attached to *Philippians 2:7* using the wrong interpretation of the *kenosis theory*.

As a general rule, I stay away from teaching on false Theology, because I believe Christians should know the truth so well that when a lie comes along, we will recognize it immediately.

But the heretical teaching attached to *Philippians 2:7* says that Jesus emptied Himself of some of His divine attributes before coming to earth as a baby at His incarnation at Bethlehem.

These folks believe He regained divine attributes at His baptism.

The problem with the false teaching of the *kenosis theory* is that if Jesus ever stopped being God, even for a time, then He was never God.

Jesus never emptied Himself of His deity in any way.

Dominic Shiells said, “*This does not teach Jesus gave up any of His divine attributes since it says nothing of those attributes.*”

*The meaning of **emptying** speaks of Jesus’ humility to submit to the will of the Father, to leave His majesty in heaven, and to humbly take on humanity.”*

The correct theology about Jesus coming to Earth is the Hypostatic Union, which teaches Jesus is fully God and fully man and did not give up any divine attributes while on Earth.

***Colossians 2:8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.***



***Colossians 2:9 For in Him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. NKJV***

Some of the confusion comes from the wrong interpretation of certain scripture passages.

***Mark 13:32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. NKJV***

Some people who are confused with the teaching that Jesus knew all things, because of His divine nature would ask, “*Why did He not know the day or hour of His return?*”

Jesus cooperated with the limitations of humanity and voluntarily did not exercise certain attributes at times.

There are other times when Jesus controlled nature, foretold the future, and healed the blind, as found in ***Mark***, showing divinity.

***Mark 2:7 "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"***

***Mark 2:8 But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"***

***Mark 2:9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?***

***Mark 2:10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic,***

***Mark 2:11 "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." NKJV***

R. Kent Hughes said, "Christ did not exchange the form of God for the form of a slave. Rather He manifested the form of God in the form of a slave". (R. Kent Hughes)

This God-man, Jesus Christ, humbled Himself to take the Cross.

Billy Graham said, "Christ's coming in the flesh—His invading the world, His identifying Himself with sinful men and women, His being born in flesh—is the most significant fact of history."

By coming as a man, Jesus proves He understands you. He knows what you're going through. So, we can go to Him.

*Have you been betrayed? He was betrayed. Have you been lonely? He was lonely.*

*Are you facing death? He has faced death and died as a criminal.*

***Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.***

***Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.***

***Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV***

Look again at *Philippians 2:7 taking the form of a bondservant*

David Guzik says, “*Taking*” does not imply an exchange, but an addition.” Jesus remained as God the Son and made Himself as a *bondservant*.

We spoke on *bondservants* at length within our first sermon from the *Book of Philippians*.

[gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org) said, “In Rome, the term bondservant or slave could refer to someone who voluntarily served others.

*Exodus 21:5 But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,'*

*Exodus 21:6 then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. NKJV*

We know Jesus was a perfect *bondservant*, as He willingly emptied Himself of His rights and submitted to the will of God.

F.B. Meyer said, “In *Exodus 21:6* “That awl represents the nail that affixed Christ to the cross, and we must expect it in every true act of consecration.”

Jesus showed His Disciples the purest form of service when He washed their feet at dinner, the night He was arrested.

A bondservant was the lowest of household slaves, and they had to wash the feet of anyone who visited the home.

Jesus, at the Last Supper, volunteered to wash the filthy feet of His Disciples, on the very night of His trial and suffering.

This was also a picture of the humble act of taking the Cross for the sins of the world.

Adam Clarke said, *“Even the death of the cross shows that there is no limit to what God will do to demonstrate His love and saving power to man; this was and forever will be the ultimate.*

Crucifixion was so shameful in the Roman Empire that a Roman Citizen was not allowed to be crucified for any crime.

The Jews believed anyone who was crucified, was cursed by God. Jesus died a scandalous death!

The Cross is the ultimate insight into the Humility of God.

### **III. Practical application.**

Wiersbe said, *“It is only in Jesus Christ that the invisible God is revealed perfectly. Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God.”*

1. Since Jesus emptied Himself, He is now an example for Christians needing to be **emptied** of fleshly desires.

We empty ourselves of expectations, desires, and plans, as we submit to the Lord, allowing Him to live in and through us.

One definition for the word ***empty*** is to remove what is inside of something to make it ***empty***. So, to ***empty*** ourselves means saying goodbye to the Old Man, with its habits and passions.

*Colossians 3:8 you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.*

*Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,*

*Colossians 3:10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.*

The verbs “*put off*” and “*put on*” are a one-time and complete action, however, the Greek verb “*renewed*” is a present participle and is better translated as constantly *being renewed*.

If a person is truly in Christ, the Old Man has been crucified and all things become new.

*2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. NKJV*

True salvation naturally leads to a process of becoming more like Jesus Christ, which is a moment-by-moment **process**.

At salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live within the believer, but we still live in the flesh. So, we must choose to live according to the Spirit and not walk in the flesh.

After salvation, the believer willingly places their life under God’s **influence**.

2. Since Jesus willingly became a *bondservant*, He is now an example of choosing to become a *bondservant*.

The lifelong commitment of a *bondservant* to his master was not motivated by debt or obligation, only by **love** for the master, and the good things that the master had provided for the servant.

In *Exodus 21*, a willing slave had fulfilled his obligation yet still wanted to serve his master, out of **love**.

A Christian willingly becomes a slave, willingly lays down our rights, and we do it all motivated by love for our Master.

3. Since Jesus was willingly crucified, He is now an example for us to crucify our **flesh** and live for Christ.

When we give in to our selfish desires of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, the flesh is in control.

The only solution for Christians is to consider ourselves dead to these lusts. This is to deny ourselves and crucify our flesh.

This means to take up our cross and identify with Christ's death. We cannot find practical ways of dying to the flesh until we understand our position in Christ.

Once we understand who we are in Christ and realize that Christ Himself is our strength, then we can live in the power of God.

If we understand our position as co-heirs with Christ and the resources we have in Christ then we can live for Christ. We need to know who we are in Christ because Christ is in us.

As Christians, we are in a position of victory, and when we realize our position, and then victory can work through us.

***Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. NKJV***

Dying to self does not mean, we do not have emotions or lose our personalities and talents.

Neither does it mean we try to obey God in our strength. Dying to self is not a have-to, but it is a get-to.

Before faith in Christ, we were slaves to self-effort and sin. After faith in Christ, we are free to live for Jesus and use our gifts and talents, living in a way that furthers the Kingdom.

Dying to myself and living for Christ invites Him to use me as His hands and feet.

Dying to myself and living for Christ helps me to trust the Lord.

Dying to myself and living for Christ means I am living for His will and His way, of doing things.

Dying to myself and living for Christ gives me fulfillment and an Abundant life because I have a true purpose and calling.

A selfish life lived for the flesh leaves us empty and always wanting more, because we were created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

It is not until we willingly live for Christ that we find ourselves fulfilled, living how we were originally designed to live.