

The Savior – The Person of Jesus Christ

The Humility and Exaltation of Christ

The Humility of Christ – Condescension

In order to grasp the idea of Christ's humility, it is important to understand the exalted position of Glory that He possessed prior to His Humiliation. This is expressed in the term “**Condescension.**” Christ “*condescended*” from Heavenly Glory to the realm of earth in order to become a man and redeem mankind from His sins. This is an extremely profound idea, one that indeed creates a sense of awe and wonder. As we have stated, the incarnation of Christ, is a divine mystery that we can only comprehend in part. Before His incarnation, Jesus existed eternally as God the Son in Heavenly Glory.

John 17:5 - 5 "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, **with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.** NASB

In this state of glory Jesus existed as God in all His heavenly majesty. He is the agent of the Godhead in Creation and Providence, being the One “*by whom all things were created*” and also the One who now “*holds all things together.*”

Colossians 1:16 - 16 For **by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible,** whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — **all things have been created by Him and for Him.** 17 And He is before all things, and **in Him all things hold together.** NASB

In the eternal state of Deity, Jesus possessed the Sovereignty as God over everything. Myriads of angels attended Him, myriads of angels sang to the glory of His name. He always was exalted as head over all.

John 3:31 - 31 "**He who comes from above** is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. **He who comes from heaven** is above all NASB

So the idea then that Jesus would “stoop” down to earth and become a man is profound indeed. But this is exactly in what His Humility and Condescension consists. He left His highly exalted state to take of the flesh of man. Thomas Watson the beloved Puritan comments on this....

“What king would be willing to wear sackcloth over his cloth of gold? but Christ did not disdain to take our flesh. Oh the love of Christ!..... He stripped Himself of the robes of His glory and clothed Himself in the rags of our humanity!.... He came not in the majesty of a king, attended with his life-guard, but he came poor; not like the heir of heaven, but like one of an inferior descent. The place he was born in was poor; not the royal city Jerusalem, but Bethlehem, a poor obscure place. He was born in an inn, and a manger was his cradle, the cobwebs his curtains, the beasts his companions; he descended of poor parents....'God manifest in the flesh.' That man should be made in God's image was a wonder, but that God should be made in man's image is a greater wonder. That the Ancient of Days should be born, that he who thunders in the heavens should cry in the cradle; that he who rules the stars should suck the breast; that a virgin should conceive; that Christ should be made of a woman, and of that woman which himself made;Christ taking flesh is a mystery we shall never fully understand till we come to heaven...”

Jesus left the glory of Heaven to redeem those who had shamed His image, spurned His Holy Law, and rejected His fellowship....now in all of this we learn the virtues of Humility and Love! Jesus left the riches of heaven so that we could become rich with heavenly riches!

2 Corinthians 8:9-10 - 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor,** that you through His poverty might become rich. NASB

Here Humility shines upon us like a sunbeam! Watson goes on to comment on the reason why He came... “*That he might take our flesh, and redeem us; that he might instate us into a kingdom. He was poor, that he might make us rich. 2 Cor 8: 9. He was born of a virgin, that we might be born of God. He took our flesh, that he might give us his Spirit. He lay in the manger*

that we might lie in paradise. He came down from heaven, that he might bring us to heaven. And what was all this but love? If our hearts be not rocks, this love of Christ should affect us. Behold love that passeth knowledge! It was love in God the Father to send Christ, and love in Christ that he came to be incarnate. Love was the intrinsic motive. Christ is God-man, because he is a lover of man. Christ's taking flesh was a plot of free grace, and a pure design of love. God himself, though Almighty, was overcome with love. Christ incarnate is nothing but love covered with flesh. As Christ's assuming our human nature was a master-piece of wisdom, so it was a monument of free grace.... Christ took our flesh that he might make the human nature appear lovely to God, and the divine nature appear lovely to man." Consider how the Scripture describes this Condescension of Christ.....

Philippians 2:6-11 - 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 **but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** NASB

Jesus was **"in the form of God"** and took the form of a man. He exchanged a body of perfection, for a frail body of pain and suffering. The Scripture describes this in verse 7 as **"emptying Himself."** He **"emptied Himself"** to come for us. And further, He **"took the form of a bond servant."** King Jesus left His Sovereign throne in Heaven to become a servant of rebel men! What wondrous love is O my soul! And what is more than this, read and fear, **"He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."** Now here is the lowest degree of Christ's humility....the Prince of Life was slain in death! Barnes comments on this.... *"when he became a man, he "emptied himself," or laid aside the symbols of his glory; now, when a man, he humbled himself. That is, though he was God appearing in the form of man--a Divine Person on earth--yet he did not assume and assert the dignity and prerogatives appropriate to a Divine Being, but put himself in a condition of obedience. For such a Being to obey law implied voluntary humiliation; and the greatness of his humiliation was shown by his becoming entirely obedient, even till he died on the cross."* Jesus' humility and obedience was of such steadfast character that He endured the scornful and degrading ordeal of crucifixion, all the way to the point of death. But obedience to death is not the end of the depth of Christ's Condescension. Yet even deeper shall we search, this **"death"** He died, having **"become sin"** for us! Jesus bore the wrath of God in our place, taking sin upon Himself.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - 21 He made **Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** NASB

Consider that the pure and righteous Holy God of Heaven, the infinitely clean and undefiled spotless Son of God **"became sin on our behalf!"** This is a wonder of amazement! And this He did dying at the hands of godless men.... imagine this, a bleeding God.....O wonder!....Almighty God, the Creator of Life, slain by those He gifted with life, and this by willing submission.....

Luke 23:34 - 34 But Jesus was saying, **"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."** And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves. NASB

Dear reader, hold your hand over your mouth.....and here learn the nature of true love and divine Humility! So here we see the great depth which Jesus plunged to redeem us from our sins. Let us not forget the great price which He paid for our benefit! Let us adore Him so much that we become like Him! Do you see Christ humbling Himself and will you be proud? Let us have this mind in us that was also in Him!

Philippians 2:3-5 - 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but **with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;** 4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, NASB

Let us aspire to this heavenly virtue and learn to consider others as better than ourselves! Let us make a sacrifice of our time, money and convenience to serve others and be like Jesus!