

**Text:** Philippians 2:5-8

**Title:** Christmas: Christ Came Down

**Truth:** Christ lowered Himself for your salvation.

**Date/Location:** Sunday December 20, 2020 at FBC

## **Text of Philippians 2:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.

## **Introduction**

Christmas is all about Jesus Christ. It is the holiday set aside to commemorate the birth of Jesus into the world. Although it has been commercialized, it ought not be so in our minds.

## **I. Who and Where Was This Christ of Christmas?**

### **A. Who Was He?**

1. "Being in the form of God." The "mystery" of the Trinity. Col. 1:19, 2:9; Heb. 1:2-3. His very nature was God. He existed before He came to humanity. The word *being* indicates a continuous state of existence in the past and through the present. The word *form* refers to something that characterizes the thing in that form. The meaning is debated but the next phrase clarifies the meaning.
2. "Equal with God." John 10:30. The Son of God is utterly equal to God the Father (John 1:1-3), so that we can rightly say He *is* God. God came in the flesh, in a manger, in Bethlehem, in Judea, in Israel. John 1:14.

The "did not consider it robbery" is a poor translation of this idea: He was not primarily concerned about his own wants or needs. He did not consider His status as God and the accompanying glory as something to be held onto.

## B. **Where** Was He?

1. Heaven. John 3:13. Heaven is where he came from: John 3:31, the bread from heaven 6:50, the man from above 8:23.
  2. Glorified. John 17:5. Ponder that glory, with God the Father and Spirit; angels, cherubim, and seraphim; the four special living creatures; the throne of God; sinless perfection; no lack, no hunger, no death, no pain, no sorrow, no tears.
- C. From **when** was He? Eternity past (Col. 1:17). He pre-existed John the Baptist, who was born before Him (John 1:15). He pre-existed Abraham (John 8:58). He is the great I AM.

## II. **What Did He Do?**

- A. “Made himself of no reputation.” Illustrate this in your own mind with yourself. How would you—in a righteous way—make yourself of comparatively no reputation? The following descriptions show how low Jesus went. In so doing, He did not become “un-deity.”
- B. “Taking the form of a bondservant.” Here again is the word *form*. Jesus was not only characterized by deity (form of God) but also now characterized by being a servant (*form* of a servant). Whom did He serve?
1. Servant of God. Isaiah 52:13. Acts 4:27, 30.
  2. Servant of all. Mark 9:35.
  3. Servant to the Jews, to confirm the promises of God. Rom. 15:8. Also to turn them away from their sins, Acts 3:26.
- C. “Coming in the likeness of men.” This too is a step down, for One who was in heaven and glorified and had no limitations whatsoever. He became incarnated/enfleshed. Do not make too much of the word “likeness” or “appearance.” Jesus really was a man, not just an apparition of one.
- D. “Humbled Himself.” He took the lowest place, and did so voluntarily. He has done what He asks us to do—humble ourselves.
- E. “Obedient to death.” The Author of Life laid down His life, 1 John 3:16.

F. “The death of the cross.” To come from eternal life and glory to a place of death is bad enough. But to the ignominy of the death on a cross? That is a terrible!

The summary of all of this: Christ lowered himself down, down, down. Form of God to the cross. Let the weight of this sink into your heart.

### **III. Why Did He Do It?**

His activity was not merely an example of humble service for us to follow. It was way more than that.

A. Matt 1:21 “To save His people from their sins.”

B. Mark 10:45 “To give his life a ransom for many.”

C. Luke 2:11 A savior “for you.” Think of it, dear ones. The exalted glorified Christ, leaving that behind and coming as a man to die for sinners. To die for you. To lower Himself lower than you that you might be lifted higher than the greatest of men in the heavenly kingdom and beyond into an eternity with God and Christ and the Spirit.

D. John 1:14 To dwell among His people.

E. Titus 2:14 To redeem people who would be His followers and would be energetic about doing good instead of evil.

### **IV. Who and Where is He Now?**

A. Who is He? The same as He always has been. In humbling Himself, he never gave up His deity. Go back to section I—He is all those things still and again. But also, He has made clear His place as:

1. Savior. Acts 13:23, Titus 2:13.

2. Redeemer, Titus 2:14.

3. Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36.

4. Judge. Acts 10:42, 17:31.

5. Son of David, Son of God and King. Rom. 1:3-4.

B. Where is He?

1. Heaven. Acts 7:56, Phil. 3:20.

2. Glorified. Acts 3:13, 5:31, Rev. 5:9-10.

C. Back to Philippians 2:9-11: “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,<sup>11</sup> and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

## Conclusion

Christ went from absolute greatness to abject lowliness, supreme glory to lowly servanthood, eternal blessing to painful death.

The passage exhorts us to have the same mindset. If Christ can go from so high to so low, we certainly can go from our already lowly spot to an even lower one!

For this Christmas, let us be filled with gratitude and praise to our God and Savior Jesus Christ, who lowered Himself in our interest, for our favor.

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