

He Emptied Himself

(Pray that All would See Him for Who He Is)

Email: reasons2believe@icloud.com

Website: word4today.net



In the Beginning

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8 NASB, 1995 version)

Before coming to this earth as a man, Jesus existed in the form of God (See Thayer’s Lexicon notes below) and took part in the act of creation as well. We see this to be true where we read: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”* (John 1:3 ESV) We see this also to be true in the first chapter of the book of Genesis. For we first read: *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”* (Genesis 1:1) Next, we read: *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”* (Genesis 1:26) Yes, God said: *“Let us”* showing that there was more than one agent in the act of creation.

Below is Thayer’s Greek Lexicon definitions on the two Greek words: μορφή (the form) and ἐκένωσεν (emptied):

- μορφή (the form) = who, although (formerly when he was (λόγος ἄσαρκος) [**the Logos who was without flesh**] “he bore the form (in which he appeared to the inhabitants of heaven) of God (the sovereign, opposed to μορφή δούλου), yet did not think that this equality with God was to be eagerly clung to or retained (see ἀρπαγμός, 2), but emptied himself of it (see κενώω) so as to assume the form of a servant, in that he became like unto men (for angels also are δοῦλοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:8f) and was found in fashion as a man” (**Note:** The bold words in brackets are added by the editor of this article to provide a clear understanding that this is in reference to Jesus Christ before coming in the flesh)
- ἐκένωσεν (emptied) = κενόω, κενῶ: (future κενώσω, 1 Corinthians 9:15 L text T Tr WH); 1 aorist ἐκενωσα; passive, perfect κεκνωμαι; 1 aorist ἐκενωθην; 1. to empty, make empty: ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, namely, τοῦ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ or τῆς μορφῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ, i. e. he laid aside equality with or the form of God (said of Christ), Philippians 2:7 (see a fuller exposition of this passage in μορφή).

He Became Like Us

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

Now, the “Word” who became flesh and blood is none other than Jesus Christ himself. And while being the “Word,” he voluntarily emptied himself of who he was in heaven and became a human being just like us with all of life’s limitations. This we also know was God’s will and plan for him. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” (John 3:16-17)

So, it was necessary for Jesus Christ to come in the flesh. For he came to show us not only who God is, but to reveal that he (Jesus) is our promised Messiah and Redeemer. For we first read: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) We this also to be true in one of John the apostle’s letters to the church, for we read: “We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.” (1 John 5:20 NIV) So, Jesus came to reveal that God the Father is both “him who is true” and “the only true God.” And the only way we can come to him is through him whom he sent. For we read: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6) Yes, Jesus is our promised Messiah. Amen.

- **“In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.”** (Hebrews 5:7-10 ESV) **Note:** So, we see that Jesus himself was praying and crying out to God his Father to save him from the grips of hell itself. For this wasn’t concerning his physical death, because he did die. Therefore, Jesus was crying out that his soul would not be left in hell. (See Acts 2:23-32)

My God and Your God

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20:17)

In that passage above, Jesus was equating himself with us by saying that God the Father was both his God and ours. We see this also to be true concerning those who followed him, for we read: “Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” (Matthew 12:47-50)

We can see the same thing happening in Hebrews: “For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, In the midst of the congregation will I sing thy praise.” (Hebrews 2:11-12).

Also, let's take heed to what Paul the apostle said: *"yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."* (1 Corinthians 8:6 ESV) And let's remember what John the apostle said above: *"We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life."* (1 John 5:20 NIV) And finally, Jesus Christ himself said: *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."* (John 17:3)

Therefore, we should not believe the false teaching that Jesus was of the same nature as God the Father while being in the flesh. I say this because not only did both Paul and John the apostles clearly declared that God the Father was *"the only true God,"* but Jesus Christ himself claimed this as true as well. Yes, this is true brothers and sisters in Christ. For as we have already read earlier, Jesus let go of who he was in heaven in order to become flesh and blood like us. He did this in order to take upon himself the sins of the world. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."* (John 3:16-17)

God Cannot be Tempted with Sin

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13)

So, according to that passage above, God himself cannot be tempted with sin. However, we know that Jesus was tempted, for we read: *"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."* (Matthew 4:1) And again we see this to be true where we read: *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."* (Hebrews 4:15 ESV) This is also true in Hebrew 2:18 where we read: *"For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."* (Hebrews 2:18 ESV)

So, Jesus himself was tempted according to these passages. Therefore, when Jesus came in the flesh, he couldn't be equal nor of the same nature as God the Father. Also, that passage above shows us that Jesus had the capacity to commit sin while being flesh and blood like. I say this because it wouldn't make sense for him to be tested if he didn't have the capability to give into those temptations. However, we know he resisted temptation at every point. And let's be thankful for that my brothers and sister in Christ. I say this because our salvation was at stake in all this.

What others have to say:

- When He came to earth in that body which was of the seed of David, **did He come with all the fullness of God in His Spirit? The answer is "No"**, because it is written, *"... who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross."* (Philippians 2:6-8). **We often hear it said, "He was true God and true Man." But this is not true if you mean that He retained all God's fullness when He came to earth in the body that was of the seed of**

David. Nor is this statement appropriate in light of what is written in Hebrews 12:2, "... looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." (activechristianity.org)

- The New Testament teaches that Jesus was a man: The New Testament teaches that Jesus was a man. For one thing, Jesus himself said so. For example, in John 8:40, Jesus said he was **"a man who has told you the truth."** Jesus was not being disingenuous and hiding his "divine nature." He was making a factual statement that reinforced what the Jews were expecting of the Messiah—that he would be a fully human man. ...The apostles also taught that Jesus was a man. For example, in his sermon to the crowds gathered on the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter made a very clear declaration that Jesus was a man approved of God: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; **Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God** among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which **God did by him** in the midst of you..." (Acts 2:22). Here Peter clearly taught that Jesus was a man, and that God did miracles **"by him."** ... Like Peter, Paul also taught that Jesus was a man. For example, when he was in Athens, Paul taught a crowd of unsaved Gentiles about Jesus Christ and said that God would judge the world **"by the man whom He has appointed"** (Acts 17:31). Paul never said or implied that Jesus was anything but a "man. ... There are a number of other New Testament verses that state that Jesus was a man. For example, Romans says that a man, Adam, caused sin to enter into the world, and also that a man would have to redeem it from sin. Romans 5:15 (ESV) says, "For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of **that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.**" Some theologians teach that only God could pay for the sins of mankind, but the Bible specifically says that a man must do it. The book of Corinthians makes the same point Romans does. It says, **"For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead"** (1 Cor. 15:21 NASB). ... 1 Timothy 2:5 says that it is Jesus, the man, who was the mediator between God and men. 1 Timothy 2:5 (ESV) says, **"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."** This verse calls Jesus Christ a **"man"** even after his resurrection. ... Actually, the book of Hebrews seems to clear up the subject when it says that when Jesus was on earth, he was made like us in every way: **"Therefore he [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every respect,** so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God" (Heb. 2:17 ESV). This verse shows that Jesus was not both fully human and fully God at the same time. If he was, he would not be like us in every respect. If we believe that Jesus was a fully human man, this verse can be seen to be completely true, but if Jesus is fully God and fully human, it is confusing at best. None of us would have the doubts, worries, and fears, that we do if we were God. Saying that Jesus was made like us in every way is the Bible saying in a very straightforward way that Jesus was not "both God and human." **Commentary from the online "Revised English Version" at appendix 10 section.**

Closing Comments

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2)

Now that all being said, we shouldn't view Jesus as some ordinary prophet. For before coming to this earth, he was the *"Word"* who was with God and was God as well. And we know that all things were made through him and for him. For we read concerning Jesus: *"for in him were all things created, in the*

heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him” (Colossians 1:16 ASV)
 So, we must understand that this is God’s beloved Son whom he gave to be a sacrifice for our sins. For we read: *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)* And concerning Jesus we read: *“for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him” (Colossians 1:16 ASV)*

“Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9-11) Yes, brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus is our Lord whom we bow to. *“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.” (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)*

Below are some other scriptures pertaining to all what was mentioned above:

- *And a ruler asked him, “And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. (Luke 18:18-19) **Note:** Jesus made sure that this ruler would understand that only God gets all the glory for any act of good being performed by man.*
- *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. (John 14:28) **Note:** Jesus acknowledges while being in his human state, God the Father is greater than he.*
- *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; **Jesus of Nazareth, a man** approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, **which God did by him** in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know (Acts 2:22) **Note:** Peter acknowledges that Jesus was a man and that God was doing the miracles through him. Thus, being in his human state, Jesus fully depended upon the Father for everything he said and did.*
- *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace **from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.** (Romans 1:7) **Note:** Paul the apostle makes an distinction between who God is and who our Lord is.*
- *For **there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.** (1 Timothy 2:5-6) **Note:** Paul makes it clear to Timothy that there is only “one God” which we know is God our Father. And that there is “one mediator” who stands between us and God the Father, which we know is “the man Christ Jesus.” For there may have been those who were already wrongfully claiming that Jesus was equal to God himself when he came in the flesh.*
- *But **we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels** for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. (Hebrews 2:9) **Note:** So, we see that Jesus, just like us today, was made “a little lower than the angels.” This verse is a quote from Psalm where we read: What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little less than angels, thou*

hast crowned him with glory and honor; (Psalms 8:4-5) Therefore, we must consider how much Jesus gave up to redeem us from all our sins. This goes for God our Father as well who gave us his son whom he loved. This is true love indeed.

- ***Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*** (Hebrews 2:17 ESV) **Note:** Again, this should be proof that Jesus was not equal to God when he came in the flesh. For he gave up who he was in heaven to redeem us from our sins.

Note: Bible text other than the King James Bible have been abbreviated according to the version that was used. This is done so that you the read can read it for yourselves. *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* (2 Timothy 2:15)

- ESV = English Standard Version
- NASB, 1995 = New American Standard Bible, 1995 version
- ASV = American Standard Version
- NIV = New International Version