

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for December 15-16, 2001

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The Christmas Story from Paul's Perspective

Philippians 2:5-11

The first step Christ took in going from riches to rags was He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.

The second step Christ took in going from riches to rags was that Christ emptied Himself.

Paul always uses the verb "to empty" (KENOO) in a metaphorical sense. Christ did not empty Himself of Deity but rather He emptied Himself of Himself giving up His right to be seen as God.

Emptying Himself involved more than giving something up. It also involved taking something on.

When Christ emptied Himself of His right to be displayed as God He took on the form of a bond-servant.

The word "form" (MORPHE) refers to the essential character of something.

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When Paul says that Jesus took on the form of a servant he is saying that Jesus so completely stripped Himself of His rights that He took on the essential character of a slave (Mark 10:45).

The third step that Christ took in going from riches to rags was He was made in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:7).

In order for Christ to serve us He had to become one of us. Christ emptying Himself taking the form of a bond-servant resulted in Him becoming human.

The word "likeness" (HOMOIOMA) denotes that which is like something, a resemblance.

When Paul said that Jesus was made in the "likeness of men" he was not saying that Jesus was not a man. He was saying to us He was not just a man. He was saying to us that Jesus was 100% God and 100% man (Romans 5:12-15).

When people looked at Christ's appearance (SCHEMA), all they could perceive through their five senses was His humanity (Philippians 2:8).

Those who choose to walk in the footsteps of Christ will become servants and that service at times will be costly.