

Christ's Humiliation

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99 Essentials

From The 99 Essential Doctrines

Although God the Son was equal with God and worthy of all the glory God receives, He chose to humble Himself by taking on human flesh. He left His glorious state and came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3), and He experienced a humiliating death on a cross (Phil. 2:6-8) by becoming sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

From The Bible

Romans 8:3 NKJV

³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

Philippians 2:6-8 NKJV

⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ 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.

2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

John 1:1–14 NKJV

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. ⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the

flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became 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.

Galatians 3:13 NKJV

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*”),

Deuteronomy 21:23 NKJV

²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance; for he who is hanged *is* accursed of God.

Genesis 3:15 NKJV

¹⁵ And I will put enmity

Between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her Seed;

He shall bruise your head,

And you shall bruise His heel.”

Key Thoughts

- Regarding “likeness” used by Paul, It does not imply that Jesus was not really a man, for He was. It implies that He was not merely a man, for He was also divine.

- Regarding “robbery” used by Paul, Jesus did not rob God by claiming to be God for He is God.
- Regarding “made Himself of no reputation” He emptied Himself of the glory of His divine form in order to adopt a human form. He did not lay aside His divinity, rather he laid aside His glory and voluntarily restricted His usage of His divine attributes. This required humility but is also humiliating...as was the cross (It was humiliating in its own right but even more so for a Jew.)
- From the very first prophecy of a Messiah, it was clear that He would be human. This may seem obvious to us today, but it was not always so. And it probably isn’t universally so. Even if it were, that does not diminish in any way what Jesus did when He was born into our world as one of us.

Additional Thought

In the early part of the fourth century, Christians in Rome began to celebrate the birth of Christ. The practice spread widely and rapidly, so that most parts of the Christian world observed the new festival by the end of the century. In the fourth century the controversy over the nature of Christ, whether He was truly God or a created being, led to an increased emphasis on the doctrine of the incarnation, the affirmation that “the Word became flesh” (John 1:14 HCSB). It is likely that the urgency to proclaim the incarnation was an important factor in the spread of the celebration of Christmas.

Grissom, F. A. (2003). Christmas. In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 288). Holman Bible Publishers.