

The Wednesday Word, June 24, 2025:
Paul's Wonderful Defense of the Deity of Christ
D. G. Miles McKee

Good old Paul, he can always be relied upon to come up with a robust defense of the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul had a simple key to unlock the identity of the Lord Jesus. In his inspired thinking, Jesus was both God and man. Listen to him in 2 Corinthians 5:19 where he says,

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Paul gives us further confirmation of Christ's identity in Philippians 2:6 where he writes,

"Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God;"

This is a very hard verse to translate, and many have given it varied and, sometimes, colorful renderings. Some translators say that, although He was in the nature of God, Christ did not think equality with God was something to be grasped. What the translators are saying is of course true, but it's not the entire truth. Let's look at this phrase, *"thought it not robbery"* to help us with our understanding. If we rob someone, we take something that is not ours. This is the exact opposite of that which Christ did. Christ's Deity was His by right, not by robbery. Christ's equality with God was never considered as theft.

Let me illustrate. The only person who cannot rob the famous Crown Jewels of England is the English Monarch. If you ever find yourself in possession of these gems you can be sure that someone somewhere has been guilty of theft. If the Monarch, however, was found to have these jewels in their possession, no one could object for they are Royal property. Likewise, for Christ to possess the divine nature was no unusual thing. He did not possess it through robbery, for the divine nature was His by right.

It should be further noted that in this passage Paul is not trying to prove that Christ is God. He takes it for granted that the Philippians already believe this mighty truth. Notice how, in verse 6, he uses the term, "equal with God." This is a giveaway! The Greek word used for 'equal' is 'isos' and means having equal measurement! From this word 'isos', we get our term "isometric" which means, 'equal in dimension and measurement'. Paul, therefore, by this one word, declares Christ to be equal in every way to God.

Although this passage confirms the deity of Christ, the point of the passage is to tell the Philippians to have the same mind as Christ who, although He was in the form of God, took on the form of a servant. Jesus, although He was the Almighty, had a servant's heart and the heart of a brother. He was highly exalted yet, in grace and love, He stooped and made Himself the lowliest of servants, a 'doulos' or quite literally a bond slave.

What a revelation of God Christ gives us! Consider Him, He is full of power and yet filled with such tenderness that He neither breaks the bruised reed, nor snuffs out the smoking flax (see Matthew 12:20). Consider Him, in Christ Jesus, the omnipotent Yahweh arrived here with the nature of a meek merciful, and mild man.

Consider Him, the divine creator walking amongst us.

Christ, we are told, emptied Himself of one form and took on another. It should be stressed, however, that, by the act of becoming a man, Christ could not possibly give up His Godhead. No act of condescension or humiliation could cause Him to cease to be God. For that to have happened, God would have ceased to exist. He did not, however, give up the possession of deity but rather gave up its outward expressions! Christ, for the sake of our redemption, gave up His rights, reputation, and riches. What immense grace!

And that 's the Gospel Truth!