

# Philippians Series

Lesson #039

April 27, 2023

Dean Bible Ministries

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# Christ: Example of Humility

## Philippians 2:4–9



# **MAJOR QUESTIONS THE POST-APOSTOLIC CHURCH STRUGGLED TO ANSWER:**

**What was Jesus before He came? If He was eternal God, then are there not two gods, or three?**

**If He was created, then how can He be God, if He is not eternal?**

**How do we understand these apparently contradictory passages?**

**John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**

**John 10:30, “I and My Father are one.”**

**John 14:9, “Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”?’ ”**

**Are Jesus and the Father simply two different ways the One God reveals Himself?**

**Prov. 8:22, “The LORD possessed me [wisdom] at the beginning of His way, before His works of old.**

**Prov. 8:23, “I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth.**

**Prov. 8:24, “When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water.**

**Prov. 8:25, “Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth;”**

**Mark 10:18, “So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.’ ”**

**1 Tim. 2:5, “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,”**

**Php. 2:1, “Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,**

**Php. 2:2, “fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**

**Php. 2:3, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.**

**Php. 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” [NKJV]**

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**The emphasis in all of these descriptions relate to the care, concern, comfort which we have been given in Christ.**

**God's grace in action has provided this comfort and care to all of us, and none of us deserve it.**

**Therefore, there is no basis at all for superiority, for arrogant ambition, or inordinate competition in the body of Christ.**

**We are all to serve one another from humility and concern for others more than self.**

**Our example for serving through humility is Christ!**

## **What do we learn:**

- 1. Our new identity, the identity of the “new man,” being “in Christ” we have received grace, unmerited favor, none is better or worse. There is no basis for pride or arrogance or selfish ambition or self-serving.**
- 2. As a result, we should think in terms of unity—one minded—and if that is not possible there must be division at times.**

Php. 2:2, “fulfill my joy by **being like-minded**, having the same love, being of one accord, of **one mind**.”

Php. 2:3, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in **lowliness of mind** let each **esteem** others better than himself.”

Php. 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” [NKJV]

φρονέω *phroneō*  
to be wise, to think

ἡγέομαι *hēgeomai*  
to think, consider, count, regard

ταπεινοφροσύνη *tapeinophrosunē*  
humility

**Php. 2:3, “Not thinking according to selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” [RD]**

**ταπεινοφροσύνη *tapeinophrosunē*  
humility**

**ταπεινόω *tapeinoō*  
3 sing aor act indic  
to humble,  
humiliate**

**Zeph. 2:3, “Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD’S anger.”**

**Isa. 2:11, “The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.”**

**Job 5:11, “He sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety.”**

**Matt. 11:29, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”**

**Luke 14:11, “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”**

**Acts 20:18, “And when they had come to him, he said to them: ‘You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,**

**Acts 20:19, “ ‘serving [*douleuo*] the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;**

**Acts 20:20, “ ‘how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,**

**Acts 20:21, “ ‘testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Acts 20:22, “ ‘And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,’ ”**

**Prov. 3:34, “Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.”**

**Quoted in 1 Pet. 5:5, 6; James 4:6**

**Each is associated with commands to be humble.**



**Luke 18:9**, “Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

**Luke 18:10**, “ ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

**Luke 18:11**, “ ‘The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, “God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

**Luke 18:12**, “ ‘ “I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.”

**Luke 18:13**, “ ‘And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!”

**Luke 18:14**, “ ‘I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’ ”

**Eph. 4:2, “with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,”**

**Col. 3:12, “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;”**

**1 Pet. 5:5, “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*’ ”**

**ταπεινοφροσύνη *tapeinophrosunē*  
humility**

**Php. 2:3, “Nothing through selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility of mind let each think others better than himself.”**

**[RD]**

**ταπεινοφροσύνη *tapeinophrosunē*  
fem sing dat  
humility**

**ἡγέομαι *hēgeomai*  
pres mid part masc plur  
nom  
to think, consider,  
count, regard**

**ὑπερέχω *huperechō*  
pres act part masc plur  
acc  
to excel, exceed, be  
better than**

**Php. 2:8, “And by (or when?) being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” [RD]**

**ταπεινῶ *tapeinoō***

**aor act indic 3 sing**

**“to humble, to see oneself in proper relation to reality, to place under authority”**

**Php. 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” [NKJV]**

**“love your neighbor as yourself.”**

**What did we learn from these verses:**

- 1. We should not have a way of thinking characterized by arrogance: self-absorption and self-love. These are incompatible with the new nature in Christ.**
- 2. The contrast is focusing on self and focusing on what is best for others. Always take the high road.**
- 3. An application of Lev. 19:18—“love your neighbor as yourself.”**

# **MAJOR QUESTIONS THE POST-APOSTOLIC CHURCH STRUGGLED TO ANSWER:**

**What was Jesus before He came? If He was eternal God, then are there not two gods, or three?**

**What was Jesus when He came?**



**1. The illustration, the picture, the example for us of humility.**

**Php. 2:5, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:5, “Let this mind be in you (plural) which was also in Christ Jesus,” [NKJV]**

**φρονέω *phroneō***

**present active**

**imperative 2P**

**“to think, reason,  
mental attitude”**

**Php. 2:5, “Let this mental attitude be among yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,” [NKJV]**

**φρονέω *phroneō***

**present active**

**imperative 2P**

**MajT has a present**

**passive 2P**

**“to think, reason,  
mental attitude”**

**Php. 2:3, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.**

**Php. 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” [NKJV]**

# Who Was Jesus Before He Came?

**Php. 2:6, “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,” [NKJV]**

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**1. What does it mean “being in the form of God?”**

**What does “being” indicate? past, present?**

**What does form mean? shape? or something else?**

**What does robbery have to do with equality with God?**

**Php. 2:6, “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,” [NKJV]**

**ὑπάρχω *huparchō*  
present active participle  
anarthrous adverbial  
concessive participle,  
“although existing  
eternally”**

**Php. 2:6, “who, though existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,”**

**ὑπάρχω *huparchō*  
present active participle  
anarthrous adverbial  
concessive participle,  
“although He existed  
eternally”**

**μορφή *morphē*  
“form, outward  
appearance, shape  
or expression;  
used of the nature  
or essence of  
something”**



**Php. 2:6, “who, though existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,”**

**ἡγέομαι *hēgeomai***

**aorist middle**

**indicative deponent 3S**

**“to engage in an intellectual process, think, consider, regard”**

**WHO (Lord Jesus Christ), although eternally existing with identical essence to God did NOT think ...**

*Is this thinking, this mental attitude,  
part of His Deity . . . or His humanity?*

**Php. 2:6, “WHO (Lord Jesus Christ), although eternally existing with identical essence to God did NOT think it robbery to be equal with God,”**

**ἄρπαγμός *harpagmos***

**accusative masculine singular**

**“grasp, seize, snatched”**

**1. a violent seizure of property,  
robbery**

**2. equivalent to *harpagma*,  
something to which one can  
claim or assert title by gripping  
or grasping**