

The Christmas Special. The paradoxes of Christmas. Part 2

Grace Bible Church

Pastor Teacher

Robert R. McLaughlin

Sunday, December 27, 2015

Christmas Special: The paradoxes of Christmas. Part 2.

We have been noting a Christmas special on the paradox of Christmas. And I would like to wrap up this special by introducing to you what I have developed from what I believe is the greatest passage in the true meaning of Christmas which I believe is found in [PHI 2:5-11](#), and that which I have entitled I'm going to call the Five A's.

I would like to call this the 5 A's, especially 5 being the number of grace:

1. Abandonment; [PHI 2:6](#).
2. Acceptance; [PHI 2:7](#).
3. Association; [PHI 2:8](#).
4. Adoption; [PHI 2:8](#).
5. Ascension; [PHI 2:9-11](#).

#1. Abandonment in [PHI 2:6](#), when although He existed in the exact form of God, He did not regard His equality with God a thing to be grasped or to claim.

He was willing to abandon His rights as God so that He could become a man.

#2. Acceptance in [PHI 2:7](#), when He accepted the fact that He would deny Himself of the proper functions of His deity or His being equal to God. By taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

#3. Association in [PHI 2:8](#), when He associated with humanity by willing to be discovered in outward appearance as a man and was willing to humble Himself by becoming obedient to the point of spiritual death, that is the death of the cross.

#4. Adoption - when He received His new place among God and all o God's creature, both angelic and human, when God exalted Him to the maximum, and bestowed on Him a title, or the name or rank which is above every title, name or rank.

#5. Ascension when in [PHI 2:10-11](#) when He ascended to His new office, rank and dignity where every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And all of these principles have a paradox within them in some way. My main working definition of a paradox in this message is that a paradox can say two things that seem to be

opposite or contradictory but there is an important truth or unity in both of them. Now, I am going to give you my corrected translation again that we studied when I taught on every single word in every verse in the book of Philippians. We begin with [PHI 2:1](#) Since therefore there is encouragement in Christ, since there is comfort from virtue-love, [that is love for God; love for self; love for others] since there is fellowship of the Spirit, since there is tenderesses and compassions.

[PHI 2:2-6](#), Bring to completion my inner happiness [in your life] by thinking the same doctrines, maintaining the same virtue-love, with unity in your soul, concentrating on the same objective [which is the glorification of TLJC]. Doing nothing motivated by contentiousness or ambitious pride, but with humility of mind [by means of grace orientation] let each of you keep on considering one another as more important than himself; do not merely be regarding your own personal interests, but also regard or consider the personal interests of others. “Keep on thinking this [doctrine] within yourselves which was also resident in Christ Jesus,” who, although He existed in the form of God, [He was the exact nature of God Himself] did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

But instead in [PHI 2:7](#), He did not empty Himself of His deity but it says **He denied Himself of the proper functions of His deity or His being equal to God.**

How?

[PHI 2:7-11](#), By taking the form of a bond-servant, [becoming a slave] and being made in the likeness of men. - in the exact nature of man minus man’s OSN. In fact, although having being discovered in outward appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of spiritual death, that is the death of the cross. Therefore also the God has highly exalted Him to the maximum, and bestowed on Him the name or rank which is above every name, By means of His [onoma- name]the office, rank and dignity belonging to Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven, on earth and under the earth. That every tongue should confess or acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And remember we closed last time by noting the four important principles concerning confession which are confession of

1. Salvation
 2. Rebound
 3. His exaltation
 4. Our rewards
2. We homologo [confess or acknowledge] Christ as our Savior for salvation - [ROM 10:9](#)
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;
 3. We homologo [confess or acknowledge] our sins for experiential forgiveness and fellowship with God in time; [1JO 1:9](#).
 4. We homologo [confess or acknowledge] His office, rank and dignity in heaven and on that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; [PHI 2:11](#).

5. He will homologeo us [confess or acknowledge us as winner believers and announces our rewards that we receive before His Father and before His angels; [REV 3:5](#) To the winner -- I will confess [homologeo] his name [onoma-office, rank and dignity] before My Father and before His angels.]

And so a few principles emerge as we begin our passage in [Phi 2](#).

First of all, He was and still is the exact representation of God - equal to God the Father and equal to God the Holy Spirit which is why [HEB 1:3](#) says He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.

Secondly, He is totally the same exact essence of God which is why our Lord said in [JOH 5:23](#) that All judgment has been given to the Son in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Therefore; if you do not honor, respect and worship Jesus Christ then you do not honor and respect God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. And this was such a serious doctrinal error from the father of all lies, Satan, that in the early church the apostle John warned us about a certain group called the Gnostics who said that Jesus Christ was just a mirage and he is no longer in human form that the apostle John made the following statement.

[2JO 1:9-11](#), Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

A very serious statement.

So again [PHI 2:6](#) says who, **although He existed in the form of God**, [The original language says although He was the exact nature of God Himself] **He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped**, This means that our Lord did not cling to the fact that He was God and He did not claim His privileges of being God...a thing to be grasped or something to hold onto.

This my friends is really what is known as The Theology behind Christmas. If we just squeeze all these verses together, it's pretty clear that we're talking about one who is God, that's how it starts, and He is also Lord, and that's how it ends. That's the real message of Christmas, that Jesus Christ is God and He is Lord. This passage stands in unapproachable majesty. It is one of the pure jewels in the New Testament.

What this section explains to us is the condescension of the Son of God to come to earth to die and then to return in exaltation to glory. Again, I say it's the theology of Christmas. It tells us what happened from the divine side of this story. Our Lord abandoned His sovereign position,

accepted a slave's place, associated with sinful people, adopted a self-less posture, and He ascended to a supreme prince.

So, we have The five A's!!

1. He ABANDONED a sovereign position; ([PHI 2:6](#).)

When it says in [PHI 2:6](#) who, although He existed in the form of God, [He] did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, Though He was God and preexisted with the exact essence of God, He did not think claiming His equality with God something that He wanted or needed or desired to claim or to profess. He was willing to abandon His sovereign position.

[2CO 8:9](#), “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”

[2CO 5:21](#), He [God the Father] made Him who knew no sin to be a sin offering on our behalf, so that we might become the very perfect righteousness of God by being in Him.

[1PE 3:18](#) For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh [His humanity suffering a spiritual death], but made alive spiritually.

1. So, the first A is that He ABANDONED a sovereign position; ([PHI 2:6](#).)
 2. He ACCEPTED a slave's place in [PHI 2:7-8](#).

Again in [PHI 2:7-8](#); it does not say He emptied Himself of His deity but it says He denied Himself of the proper functions of His deity or of His being equal to God by taking the form of a bond-servant, [becoming a slave] and being made in the likeness of men. -- in the exact nature of man minus man's OSN. So, He accepted a slave's place. He was willing to accept the place of a slave. Remember a verse which is extremely humbling to all of us who recognize the tremendous humility behind it.

[LUK 19:10](#), “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The paradox is in [MAT 20:26](#), “Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant.”

[MAT 23:11](#), “But the greatest among you shall be your servant.”

1. He ASSOCIATED with sinful people which means that we begin to see the depth of His slavery in [PHI 2:7](#) when it says, “He was made in the likeness of men.”

[HEB 2:14](#), Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same nature as theirs [minus, of course, the OSN],

And why did He do that? That through His spiritual death [His spiritual death or His being separated from God] He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; Do not forget, that when the Bible talks about Jesus Christ dying for our sins, it is talking about spiritual death which is separation from God, not physical death. If the Lord died a physical death “FOR US” or in “IN PLACE OF US” then why would we die physically if He died “FOR US” or “IN PLACE OF US.” Or as the apostle Paul would put it in [COL 2:14-16](#), something like the song states.

Our Lord paid the debt so that we would never have to pay. That simply makes no sense at all, and that is not a paradox, it is a fact! He was willing to associate with sinful people. Which is why He was called a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners! ([LUK 7:34](#)).

1. He APOPTED or assumed a self-less posture. How self-less was He?

In [PHI 2:8](#), **And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** How selfless, willing to adopt a self-less posture.

1. Not only did He abandon the sovereign position, accepted a slave’s place, approached a sinful people, adopted a selfless posture, and finally He ASCENDED to a supreme prince. Verses 9 [to 11](#) says, “He ascended, a supreme prince,” and then it says, “for this reason also.”

What reason?

The reason of His submission, the reason of his humiliation, the reason of his obedience to death, even to death on the cross.” For this reason, because He perfectly obeyed the Father and accomplished redemption, God highly exalted him.” God raised him from the dead, as it tells us in the New Testament, “God raised him from the dead as a sign of God’s satisfaction over His death and then God exalted him to his own right hand and bestowed on him the name or the title which is above every name or title.”