

### Spiritual Combat: The Dark Side v. the Light; Ignorance of Truth Gives False Teachers the Advantage; Doctrine Is the Antidote, Phil 2:5; the Deity of Christ: He Does Not Use Divine Attributes in the Prototype System, v. 6

We have the same power source to learn and apply the Word as He did. The Holy Spirit enables us to comprehend, retain, and apply the sophisticated divine thought that is incomprehensible to the mind of the unbeliever.

Christ used His human faculties and the power of the Spirit to assume the status of a bondservant, the Greek word **δοῦλος (doulos)** found in verse 7. For us to advance to the sophisticated spiritual life we must become bondslaves to God.

We were bought out of the slave market of sin because Jesus made Himself a bondslave to God in the fulfillment of the divine plan of salvation. We are made free so we can enlist in God's army as a bondslave for Him.

The same mental attitude possessed by Jesus Christ is outlined in Philippians 2:1-4 and we are to busy ourselves in acquiring that same mental attitude with the same power of the Spirit utilized by Him.

#### PRINCIPLES:

1. Everyone in human history is born into the spiritual combat associated with the appeal trial of Lucifer. The battles are engaged on two fronts: (1) by unbelievers who unwittingly or by choice remain under the influence of cosmic forces and (2) believers who are conscripted into the Lord's army at salvation.
2. Each category makes the advance toward its objective by means of thought. The Dark Side is involved in promoting the plan of Satan as ruler of this world while those who fight for the Light are involved in advancing the plan of God, the sovereign of the universe.
3. The Dark Side is effectively opposed by those who have acquired divine thought which enables them to withstand the challenges offered by it.
4. The Dark Side is effective in its efforts when believers are ignorant of its devices and thus are co-opted to betray the Lord who bought them.

**2 Corinthians 2:10a** - If you forgive anyone for anything, I also forgive him ...

**v. 11** - so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes [ νόημα, *noēma*: devices, plots, evil intentions ]). (NET)

**2 Peter 2:1** - But false prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the Master who bought them. (NET)

5. Ignorance of biblical truth plays directly into the hands of false teachers. The long march through the institutions has enabled the National Education Association, the largest union in the United States, to take students, whose souls are tabula rasa, and infuse them with Progressive ideology from kindergarten through university. By the time a student graduates from college he is indoctrinated in the collectivist-socialist group think that presently threatens our individuality, our freedom, our property, and our safety.

6. The only defense against this onslaught of propaganda is to teach our children well; teach them about freedom – personal freedom, establishment freedom, and spiritual freedom. In so doing they will gain the momentum to fulfill the mandate found in:

**Philippians 2:5** - Keep on thinking this within yourself which was also resident in Christ Jesus,

**Philippians 2:6** - Who, though He eternally existed in the essence of God, He did not think equalities with God a gain to be seized and held,

This verse is not easily understood in English translations. It is best to approach it from the standpoint of the hypostatic union. First of all we observe His undiminished deity which will give us an appreciation for our Lord's sacrifices during the Incarnation.

The verse begins with reference to the Lord's status quo prior to the Incarnation. It begins with the relative pronoun **ὅς (hos)** translated "Who," referring to "Christ Jesus" in verse 5.

Next is the present active participle of the verb **ὑπάρχω (huparchō)**: to exist. This is a causal participle and its definition contributes to the impact of the verse:

The causal participle indicates the *cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb* [ κενόω (kenoō), v. 7].

This participle answers the question, *Why?* The thought of this participle can be brought out by *since* or *because*.

The causal participle normally *precedes* the verb it modifies. Thus the *cause of the action precedes the action*.<sup>1</sup>

The verb *kenoō* refers to the doctrine that, during the Incarnation, Jesus Christ did not rely on His divine attributes to accomplish His mission but rather the assets imputed at the virgin birth, i.e., the divine dynasphere and eight problem-solving devices.

There is an inscrutable reality that is being developed here. We believe that Jesus Christ is both undiminished deity and true humanity in one Person. However, we are able to comprehend how His true humanity exists temporally and spatially; we have great difficulty grasping the simultaneous essence of omnipresent God. The key to understanding this is found in the doctrine of *kenōsis*, a subject we will address in verse 7.

So we start with His undiminished deity – *huparchō* – "eternally existed": the continuance of an antecedent state or condition which is the cause of the necessity to have that status quo voluntarily set aside.

Undiminished deity is immutable and cannot change. Therefore, it is impossible for the divine essence of Jesus Christ to be diminished, altered, or amended. But the Lord may voluntarily choose not to utilize these assets so that He might function in the devil's world as we must while utilizing the divine dynasphere as the environment for learning the plan of God.

Therefore, the preexisting condition is eternal existence which is described as being "in the essence of God." The word for essence is the locative of sphere of **μορφή (morphē)**. There is no definite article and thus emphasizes the qualitative aspect of this essence.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 631.

The verse reads: “Who, though He eternally existed in the sphere of the essence of God.” Where the definite article would not be translated in English it is understood in the Greek and thus is inserted for emphasis. The pre-Incarnation essence of Christ is the same essence as is possessed by God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

The prepositional phrase “in the sphere of the essence of God” is made up of only three words in the original: ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ (*en morphēi Theou*).

This refers to the inner essence of Christ as being the same as the essence of God which is indicated by the possessive genitive singular of Θεός (*Theos*): “of God.”

We see from this a correlation with the phrase that John uses to introduce his Gospel:

**John 1:1a -** In the beginning [ Ἐν ἀρχῇ, *en archēi* ] was the Word [ ἦν ὁ Λόγος *ēn ho Logos*: was Christ ] ...

John uses the word for beginning that means “a beginning that was not a beginning.” This is a way to dramatize the eternal existence of Jesus Christ.

We think chronologically and spatially. We are capable of going back to the beginning of the universe but have trouble comprehending that the eternal state preceded it. At the beginning of the universe, Jesus Christ preceded it from eternity past which had *no* beginning.

Paul’s phrase, *en morphēi*, emphasizes the divine essence of Christ while John’s *en archēi* emphasizes the eternal life of Christ.