

Doctrine of the Humiliation of Christ: The Concept of Humiliation: an Anthropopathism; Kenosis: Restriction of Independent Use of Divine Attributes; the Imperfection of Man Demands a Divine Solution: Christ Our Mediator; the Glorification of Jesus at Session, John 7:38-39; Acts 3:13

XX. The Doctrine of the Humiliation of Christ

The Concept of Humiliation.

1. To humiliate: to reduce to a lower position in one's own eyes or others' eyes.
2. Deity does not react to circumstances. However, for us to grasp the impact of certain situations that involve deity we must view them from our own frame of reference.
3. In this case "humiliation" is an anthropopathism which ascribes to Christ a human characteristic which He does not actually possess, but is used to reveal and explain divine modus operandi in terms of human frame of reference by the use of language of accommodation.
4. Humiliation is a perfect word to communicate to our finite minds the result of the Lord's sovereign decision to take on the essence of lowly humanity.
5. It vividly illustrates from a human frame of reference the result of His free-will decision to voluntarily restrict the independent use of His divine attributes in compliance with the Father's plan for the Incarnation.
6. The Father invented a system through which the Lord would be able to access divine power and divine thought through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and the presence of Bible doctrine in His soul.
7. The restriction of the independent use of His divine attributes was necessitated by the demands of the plan for the salvation of man. Each person born into this world is condemned at physical birth by virtue of the imputation of Adam's sin to the sin nature.

John 3:18 - "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

8. One of the ramifications of this circumstance is imperfection. God is perfect and cannot have association and fellowship with any creature that is imperfect.

2 Corinthians 6:14b - What partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

9. An imperfect creature is incapable of restoring himself to status quo perfection. Therefore, he is in need of a Savior, One who is capable of restoring him to the perfection first introduced in Eden but lost through sin.
10. For there to be a resolution to the dispute, an individual who possesses perfection must agree to intervene on behalf of the imperfect.
11. This intervention must accomplish what Adam could not: remain perfect in the face of thought, system, people, disaster, and prosperity testings.
12. To do this in a way that is compatible with the human condition faced by Adam and his progeny, the Redeemer must possess perfection and maintain that perfection until the controversy is resolved.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - God has made Jesus, Who knew no sin to be sin as a substitute for us for the purpose that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

13. The controversy is between the integrity of God as party of the first part and the imperfection of man as party of the second part.
14. To resolve the contretemps the integrity of God must be pleased with the performance of the humanity of Christ in executing the plan for salvation and the imperfection of man must be corrected by his faith in Christ for salvation.
15. This in effect makes Jesus the Mediator between the two parties: equal with God in that He is undiminished deity and equal with man in that He is true humanity.
16. The concept of Mediation and Mediator is defined as follows:

MEDIATION. Intervention; interposition; the act of a third person who interferes between two contending parties with a view to reconcile them.

MEDIATOR. One who interposes between parties at variance for purpose of reconciling them.¹
17. In order to maintain the integrity of His human personality, Jesus Christ did not call upon His divine attributes to benefit Himself or to act independently of and outside the boundaries of the prototype spiritual life.
18. To do so would have given Him an unfair advantage in dealing with the temptations and trials faced by members of the human race.
19. Consequently, the experiment to prove the prototype system worthy of the test would have failed; the failure of the prototype would have canceled the imputation of the operational system for the Church Age believer.
20. Therefore, Jesus Christ willingly chose not to independently utilize His divine attributes in executing the prototype system, however, this does not mean that he willingly surrendered any of His divine attributes.
21. One of the obvious yet often unstressed results of this decision was the veiling of His glory during the Incarnation. In Old Testament theophanies His glory was manifest, for example, the Shekinah Glory in (1) the burning bush before Moses in Exodus 3:2, (2) the pillar of fire by night and cloud by day in Exodus 13:21, and (3) in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle in Exodus 29:43.
22. In the New Testament the Lord displayed His glory (1) to Peter, James, and John on the mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-2) and (2) to Paul in a theophany in Acts 9:3.
23. This too was part of the humiliation; in order to carry out the plan for salvation, His identity must be ascertained by His performance inside the prototype, not broadcast by evidence of his deity through the visible revelation of His glory.
24. The plan called for His humanity to become glorified by the fulfillment of the plan of salvation:

John 7:38 - "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"

v. 39 - But He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

¹ Henry Campbell Black, *Black's Law Dictionary*, 4th ed. (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1968), 1133.

25. That He accomplished this objective is verified by Peter in:
Acts 3:13 - "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him."
26. In His true humanity, Jesus Christ was required to confront and conquer temptations, distresses, weaknesses, pains, sorrows, limitations, and trials far beyond what any mortal man would ever face and to do so without sin.