

2013 Basic Doctrines (06) **(Intro to Doctrine of Kenosis)**

While there are eleven verses in the passage of our lesson text, there are only three Greek sentences: (Phil.2:1-4; 5-8; and 9-11).

Today's bible lesson on kenosis is taken from the second Greek sentence (Phil.2:5-8). It is one of the most profound and controversial theological passages regarding **hypostatic union** (undiminished deity and true humanity) of the most unique person of the universe, Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of kenosis is part of this theological controversy:

(Phil.2:7) "But **emptied (keno / a.a.ind.3ps)** Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men."

- **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament:** "What is meant is that the heavenly Christ did not selfishly exploit His divine form and mode of being, but by His own decision emptied Himself of it, or laid it by, taking a form of a servant by becoming man." Pg.661)
- **American College Dictionary:** "Kenosis is the renunciation of the divine nature or dignity in the incarnation (used of Christ in Phil.2:6-7)."

I quoted from an earlier English dictionary to show that **kenosis** was once an established doctrine of Christianity in America even if you have never heard of it.

This lesson will study <u>four aspects</u> of the Introduction to Kenosis (Phil.2:9-11; Acts 4:12).
--

1. We will examine Paul's teaching on kenosis from our lesson text by the following five homiletic points (Phil.2:5-8).

- **Example** (Phil.2:5) Forming attitude (phroneo / p.a.impv.2pl) of **bondservant**
- **Essence** (Phil.2:6a) Form of God (huparcho / p.a.ptc / morphe theos)
- **Equality** (Phil.2:6b) Form of God
- **Emptied** (Phil.2:7a) Form of God
- **Exchange** (Phil.2:7b-8) Form of **bondservant** (lambano / a.a.ptc / morphe doulos)

Jesus' awareness of the importance of the doctrine of kenosis is seen in His prayer the night before His death on the cross:

(John 17:5) "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with **the glory which I had with You before the world was.**"

Note that Jesus prayed He would be glorified after His death for the sins of the world with the glory He had in pre-incarnation. His prayer was answered by His resurrection, ascension, and session (Eph.1:20-23).

2. **The doctrine of kenosis declares that Jesus Christ had both the form of God (undiminished deity) and the form of perfect man (true humanity).**

Kenosis teaches that He, Jesus voluntarily restricted its independent use in order to comply with the Father's plan. Jesus made this point again at His arrest in Gethsemane (Matt.26:52).

“The self-emptying permitted the addition of humanity and did not involve in anyway the subtraction of deity or canceling the use of attributes of deity. There was a change of form but not of content of Divine Being.” (Basic Theology by Ryrie, pg.301)

This meant that as true man, Jesus Christ, had to rely upon the ministry of indwelling Holy Spirit and upon the faith cycle of the word of God. (Luke 2:40, 52; John 4:6-8, 32-38; 8:40-48).

Kenosis was issue in the Devil's spiritual warfare against Jesus in (Matt.4:1-11). Devil challenged Jesus Christ to use His divine attributes for personal benefit rather than for the plan of God (Matt.4:1-11; 16:21-23).

3. **He voluntarily took on the form of a bondservant and the humiliation of death on cross for the sin of the world (Phil.2:7-8).**

(2 Cor.5:21) “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (John 1:29; 1 Pet.1:18-19)

Kenosis teaches that Jesus emptied deity in order to become the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

(1 John 2:2) “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

(Matt.27:46) “About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthni?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” (Matt.26:36-46).

“The doctrine of kenosis focuses more on the fact of His incarnation as necessary to His death.” (Basic Theology, Ryrie, pg.302)

4. **The ultimate fulfillment of kenosis of Jesus Christ is the exaltation of His name as redeemer of mankind.**

(Phil.2:8-11) “Being found in appearance **as a man**, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **For this reason also**, God highly exalted Him, and **bestowed on Him the name** which is **above every name**, so that at the name of Jesus **every knee** will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that **every tongue** will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

The affect of the doctrine of kenosis upon the spiritual advancing Church Age Believer (CAB) should be, **“Have this attitude in yourselves which is also in Christ Jesus.” (Phil.2:5)**

(2 Pet.1:4) “For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might **become partakers of the divine nature.**”

(Acts 4:12) “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is **no other name** under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

(1 Pet.4:6) “But if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, **but in that name let him glorify God.**”