

**THE DOCTRINE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**  
**Part VI: The Perfection Of The Incarnate Son Of God**

**I. Introduction**

- A. The idea that God became mere man in Jesus is such an amazing concept that some believe that "Christ in some sense gave up part of His deity in order to become Man," Walvoord, Jesus Christ Our Lord, p. 138. Some also teach that **though** the Son of God did **not** sin, since He was also **man** and could be **tempted** according to Hebrews 2:18 and 4:15, that He **could have** sinned! Charles Hodge teaches that "If He was a **true** man He must have been capable of sinning," (Syst. Theol., II, p. 457 as quoted in Walvoord, p. 146).
- B. These questions have profound ramifications on the doctrine of salvation! If Christ gave up any part of His deity on the earth, then He failed to represent the Father as our Mediator on the cross, and we are yet unsaved! If Christ could have sinned, then He was not fully GOD on the earth as GOD cannot sin, and then He fails again as our perfect Mediator and Savior from sin!
- C. Well, how **perfect** is the Incarnate Son of God, both in His earthly life and in His glorified body now? We answer these questions by dealing with the following sub-head doctrines on the Incarnation:

**II. The Perfection Of The Incarnate Son Of God**

- A. We must examine the doctrine of the "Kenosis" in Philippians 2:1-5-11 to see if Jesus gave up any part of His deity while on the earth (as follows):
  - 1. The term "kenosis" is from the Greek word, *ekenosen* from the root form, *kenoo* translated "emptied (himself)" in Philippians 2:7. It describes Christ as "emptying himself" in his earthly humiliation. Some believe that this means He emptied Himself of some of His deity so that He was less than fully God when He died on the cross!
  - 2. However, the **context itself** shows Christ not thinking it something to be grasped after to be **equal** with the Father, Phil. 2:6. To have emptied Himself of deity would have contradicted His being equal with the Father and neutralized the whole truth of verse 6. Whatever He emptied, it was **not His deity!**
  - 3. The term translated "form" (*morphei*) in verse 6a deals with "the outer appearance or manifestation" of some entity, Walvoord, *Ibid.*, p. 139. Throughout eternity, Jesus outwardly expressed the attributes of deity. However, in the ministry of the cross, he chose not to **express OUTWARDLY** that deity, but rather **express OUTWARDLY** his servanthood as a man and die on the cross for our sin, Phil. 2:7-8.
  - 4. Summary: Christ did not give up any of His deity while on the earth; rather, He "**gave up the independent exercise of divine attributes**" to perform the work of dying for our redemption in our place as the perfect Mediator between God and man, *Ibid.*, p. 145 in quoting Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 704. Only humanity can die, so Jesus **used only His humanity in dying** on the cross! A good illustration is for basketball superstar, Michael Jordan, to play one-on-one basketball against a kindergarten student only to allow himself to be defeated for a public relations endeavor!
- B. We examine the doctrine of the "Impeccability of Christ" to see if Christ **could have** sinned on the earth!
  - 1. It is a fact that Christ was surely tempted; His being tempted with its associated sufferings makes Him an adequate divine Empathizer with us as our Intercessor, He. 2:18 with 4:15.
  - 2. But though His human nature is temptable, His divine nature is not temptable according to James 1:13.
  - 3. On the earth, Christ was **both fully God and fully man**:
    - a. As God on the earth, He forgave sin to prove He was God on the earth, cf. Luke 5:20-26.
    - b. As Man on the earth, He actually physically died, Mtt. 27:50.
  - 4. Well, since Christ on the earth had **both God and human natures**, and that as a **single person**, the inability of His divine nature to sin makes Him as a **single person** unable to sin, or impeccable.
  - 5. We illustrate as follows: (a) it is fully conceivable that a rowboat can attack a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier; (b) however, the rowboat cannot defeat the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier! In like manner, it is possible for Christ to be genuinely tempted, but it is impossible for Him to sin as the God-man!

***Lesson:*** *Jesus Christ was and is perfectly God and perfectly man. As such, (a) He was capable of being tempted and was fully tempted as a man, but He was unable to sin as God; (b) He gave up no divine attributes in dying on the cross, but only gave up the independent USE of them as God; (c) He thus perfectly qualifies as the sole Mediator between God and man relating to all issues of salvation!*