

Christology Week 10 - The Humiliation of Jesus Christ

Christ's "humiliation" is the process by which he (though divine) came to earth as a baby, eventually to die on the cross.

Phil 2:5-8 -- Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The Death of Jesus

His death marks the fulfillment of his perfect obedience. This obedience to death is the result of his power and willingness, not the result of Satan's victory or a great cosmic injustice.

John 10:18 - "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

It is important that we recognize that His death was a willing sacrifice, in willing obedience to the command of the Father.

Mark 14:32-43 -- They came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell to the ground and *began* to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again He

went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. And He came the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. "Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!" Immediately while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, *who were* from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Luke 22:39-47 -- And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him. When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray, saying, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done." Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground. When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow, and said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation." While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd *came*, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him.

Although various theories and philosophies (such as Gnosticism) have argued about the extent of His death – some (like the Muslims) argue that He did not actually die, but had a substitute. Some say that as God it was impossible for Him to actually die. But, the evidence from the Bible leads to the following conclusions:

Jesus suffered the full extent of physical death, which is separation of body and soul. The earliest Christian creeds confirm this, as well. As His body lay in the tomb, He descended into the lower parts of the earth.

Matthew 12:38-42 -- Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and *yet* no sign

will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. *The Queen of the South* will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus also knew the suffering of separation from God. (Some have called this a form of spiritual death — likening the agony of those who will be permanently separated from God. This appears to be what was happening when he hung on the cross, crying out, "Father, why have you forsaken me?!")

This could be the cause of the turmoil he was in the night before in the garden (even more than the physical suffering.)

Not only did He suffer physically, but He took the curse of the Law in our place, fulfilling the years of sin sacrifices that had temporarily abated the wrath of God on Israel.

Gal. 3:13-14 -- Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree [Deut. 21:23]: that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

He also subjected Himself to human authorities, allowing Himself to be arrested (re:Luke 4:28-30) and standing before the highest Roman judge in the region – Pontius Pilate.

Read John 19:1-15

He died like a criminal, hung between two guilty men. So, He died under the judgment of men and under the curse of the Law of God.

This is why the message of the cross is a scandal to the Jews because this was not the way that they perceived their Messiah's reign on Earth.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 - For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom ; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block (scandalon) and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

But God, in the resurrection, reverses all of this.

The Exaltation of Christ

Exaltation refers to when Christ laid aside the infirmities of the flesh and again assumed his majesty.