

November 25, 2018 **EMPTIED TO BE FILLED**

Philippians 2

Paul's overarching theme in his letter to the church at Philippi is...*Joy in the Journey with Jesus!* Despite persecution, hardships, & suffering, Jesus makes life worth living – especially since our natural lives have been “**re-Sourced:**” thru salvation, Jesus becomes our Source of identity. Now we live the “Christ-life” every day – the theme of chapter 1 – ***To live IS Christ...!***

In the second chapter of his letter, Paul writes about the joy and comfort we have together in Christ...***but at what & whose cost?*** I know you know the answer: ***It cost God everything to provide us salvation!*** Not just Jesus; but the entire Trinity! *Do you suppose it was harder for Jesus to humble Himself as a man in order to restore the covenant with God for us OR for the Father to let Him come, knowing the torture & agony His Beloved Son would experience at the hands of sinful men while en-fleshed?*

Today, Paul's letter informs us of this remarkable “self-emptying” that Jesus did to leave His heavenly throne in order to become a man. The theological word/concept for this emptying of self is “**Kenosis.**” Jesus had to empty Himself of aspects of His divinity in order to be filled with humanity – and it was His love for you & me that made Him willing to do just that!

I) Kenosis of Christ READ: Philippians 2:5-11 (NLT)

Though Jesus was God – *and still is* – He did not regard being equal as God with the Father & Spirit as something that would prevent Him from fulfilling His role in securing our salvation – as ***God's Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.***

- Jesus Emptied Himself of His privileges as God
 - Privileges: prerogatives, innate rights, authority
- Jesus willingly released everything that would prevent Him from taking on humanity!
- Then Filled w/ humanity: *frailty, insecurity, incapability*
 - God became man, Eternal b/c mortal, Spiritual b/c flesh, divine b/c natural, heavenly b/c earthly
 - the **Creator became created! (Heb10:5,9,10)**

*Jesus chose to “descend” from heaven to earth in His kenosis!

II) Kenosis of Christians READ Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT)

But there is another Kenosis that correlates to Christ's descension: Our Kenosis – *being emptied to be filled* – moves in the opposite direction: we “ascend” from earthly to heavenly as we empty ourselves of humanity to be filled with His divinity!

- We're raised from earthly to Heavenly (**1Cor 15:47-49**)
 - Our kenosis happens thru salvation/recreation in Christ
 - Begins with our Spirit-rebirth = Justification
 - Continues in soul renewal – transformation continues in mind, will, emotions = Sanctification
 - Finishes in body resurrection (Glorification) His Return
- Jesus' kenosis took Him from Life to death to Resurrection
Our kenosis takes us from death to Life to Resurrection

III) Kenosis of Christians practiced

But how do we demonstrate our kenosis from death to Life, the emptying of our humanity and filling of divinity? *How do we unleash our new “heavenly man” on earth? How do we practice our Kingdom inheritance & citizenship here & now? How do we continue being emptied of self to be filled (permeated) with God's Spirit?*

-Eph 5:18 – “***...be being filled with the Holy Spirit (every time it's now), singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.***” Besides living in community in lyrical ways, with Holy Spirit-awareness and keen sensitivity, we demonstrate that we are His children/disciples in the following ways:

READ: Philippians 2:1-4 (NLT)

INVITATION:

- 1) What “thanks” can you give a Savior who proved His love for us by kenosis?
- 2) What part of your humanity will you voluntarily empty to be filled more completely by God's Spirit?

MEDITATION: Luke 18:9-14 (NLT)

9) Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: 10) “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. 11) The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don’t cheat, I don’t sin, and I don’t commit adultery. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! 12) I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’

13) “But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ 14) I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

This scene is evidence that **“God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble”** – a truth that scripture repeats over and over in a myriad of ways. It’s also a truth born out in the human salvation experience: for no one is capable of being good enough for God; but only those who know they need saving actually trust Him for salvation & new life in Jesus.

Humility is the process of being emptied of self-reliance until the true state of human need is fully exposed in us...to us! Often, this painful process requires humiliation – the revealing of our own insufficiency to the world & us! And while this humiliating process feels like it’s fatal, it’s actually the safest place we can be with God – **“for in our weakness, His strength is made perfect/complete!”**

Only when we’re empty of self can we be filled with God.

SERMON IN A SENTENCE: **Emptied to be Filled**

Philippians 2:1-13 (NLT)

1) Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? 2) Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. 3) Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4) Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

5) You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6) Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7) Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8) he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross. 9) Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, 10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12) Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. 13) For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him

Hebrews 10:5,9,10 (NLT)

5) That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God, “You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. But you have given me a body to offer. 9) Then he said, “Look, I have come to do your will.” He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect. 10) For God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.

1Cor 15:47-49 (NLT)

47) Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. 48) Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. 49) Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man.