

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

The Real Jesus—Part 2

Lesson Sixteen

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Lesson Goal: To encourage students to understand who Jesus really is.

Scriptures: Philippians 2:7

For Memory: “[He] made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Philippians 2:7

The Real Jesus-Part 2

In the last lesson, we said that we were going to have a series of studies from verses six through eleven. If the people in Philippi were to think like Jesus, as they were encouraged to do in verse five, they needed to understand who Jesus is.* In the last lesson, we said that Jesus is exactly like God. Actually, according to His words and other words in the Bible, Jesus is God. See John 10:38; 14:9; 14:11; 16:15.

We also said that Jesus volunteered to come to earth and live with human limitations. Now, in this second lesson, we want to be more specific about what that meant. If Jesus was no longer unlimited, just what did that mean to Him?

Paul tells the people at Philippi that Jesus made Himself nothing. I guess someone could think that Jesus became invisible...you know, now He’s here...now He’s not. But, it really doesn’t mean that. Some think that this means that He gave up being God. However, the rest of the New Testament says that He was God (divine), so that can’t be true. For instance, John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “*Word*” here means Jesus. Jesus was with God and He was God. Now that may be a little difficult for our minds to get around, but that’s the way it is.

So, if He didn’t become invisible, and if He didn’t give up being God, what in the world does Paul mean when he says that Jesus “made Himself nothing.” To answer that, we need to know that these words should be translated to say Jesus “emptied Himself.” With that, as we read the next few words we can understand that it is not about Jesus becoming nothing, it is about His willingness to make room in Himself for the way humans are and the way we function.

We could say that Jesus made room in Himself for being, thinking, acting, and feeling like a human. It was not putting on a costume like an actor. It was not like having some kind of plastic surgery to change your looks. He actually moved from being spirit...God is spirit, you know...to being a human, in the flesh; not only looking like a human, but being human.

He became a nothing compared to what He was and had been since before the world began. Although He was still God, He now had the limitations of a human being,

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and, that's certainly not much when you understand that He lived in eternity and was the creator of all that we know anything about before He became a human. The word nothing here compares how great the difference is between being God and being human.

And, when we read the next phrase, "taking the very nature of a servant," we see how different His new nature really was. We said that His DNA was God's DNA. Now, we must realize that when He came to earth, He added a new nature. That nature had the characteristics of a servant; someone who works for someone else with no thought of any other way of life in the future. If we study the Bible, we will see that Jesus lived like, and was, a servant all His life. He even gave up His life for us.

The final thing that today's Scripture says about Jesus is that He was "made in human likeness." He was born just like any human baby, he was as human...as human as any of us is. Jesus became a human because God wanted us humans to understand Him and for us to know that He could live like us and die like us.

Now, do any of us understand how God could become a human and yet remain God? No! No one fully understands that. And, if we could, we would probably be God.

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.



Teaching Tips:

1. This lesson has some difficult concepts that are not easily explained, but are most important to understanding Jesus. Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance today.
2. Songs that emphasize Jesus as God, humility, Jesus as one of us and Jesus as serving and dying for us would be appropriate.
3. Pray with your students, asking God to teach us about His love that brought Jesus to earth to show us how to live and serve one another.
4. Thank God for Jesus and His willingness to come to earth and be our example.
5. Notice in the four Gospels that Jesus serves others...not others serving Jesus. He served fishermen, tax collectors, the sick, those in sorrow, etc. See Matthew 20:28 He even washed His disciples' feet. See John 13:1ff
6. A study of the Greek word *morphe* will give additional insight into what it meant for Jesus to be "in very nature God," and in "the very nature of a servant."

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Student Worksheet

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For Memory: “[He] made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Philippians 2:7

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=If the people in Philippi were to think like _____, they needed to understand who _____ is.

=John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was with _____, and the _____ was God.” “*Word*” here means _____.

=We could say that Jesus made room in Himself for _____, _____, acting, and _____ like a human.

=He became a _____ compared to what He was and had been since before the world began. The word _____ here compares how great the _____ is between being God and being _____.

=If we study the _____, we will see that Jesus lived like, and was, a _____ all His life. He even gave up His _____ for us.

=He was born just like any human _____, he was as human as any _____.

=Jesus became a human for a time because _____ wanted us _____ to understand Him and for us to _____ that He could live like us and _____ like us.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.