

Conformed to the Image of Christ: Christ's self emptying (kenosis)

- Related to Christ's selflessness, Christ's humility, and Christ's self denying, falling to the ground and dying.

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ **but emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8)

I) What is “kenosis”?

- **“kenosis”** is “the act of emptying” and **“kenoo”** - “to empty out”
- It refers to the emptying of Jesus’ own will to become entirely abandoned and submitted to the Father’s divine will. To remove anything the self may hold on to (in the mind, emotion, will, heart) that may hinder being in total yielded to God’s will.
- Not to abandon the intrinsic functions of our soul, but to empty out anything in the mind, emotion, will and desires that might stand against the divine will of God

II) How did Christ empty Himself?

- A) **Christmas is about Jesus emptying Himself!** “And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn... Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:7,14)

- B) **Stepped out of being about Himself to show compassion to others!** “When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns.¹⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.” (Matthew 14:13-14)

- D) He went “two miles” when forced unjustly!** “But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.” (Matthew 5:39-41)
- E) He remained quiet like a lamb led to slaughter!** “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:7) Ref: (Acts 8:32-33)
- F) He forgave those who persecuted and crucified Him!** “Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) “Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.” (Acts 7:60)

III) How did Christ's disciples empty themselves?

A) Deacon Stephen!

- “While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.” (Acts 7:59-60)

B) Apostle Paul wanted to be conformed to His death!

- “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, **becoming like him in his death**, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:10-11)

□ “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ **We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.** ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So then, **death is at work in us, but life is at work in you**” (2 Corinthians 4:7-12)

□ **“Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.** ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶ I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers.” (2 Corinthians 11:24-26)

IV) How are we, as His true disciples, called to empty ourselves?

- “And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ²⁴ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.” (Luke 9:23-24)
- “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (John 12:24)
- “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.” (Philippians 2:5-7)