



Daily Devotionals

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PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8 GIVING IT ALL UP

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⁵ *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*

⁶ *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 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.*

There has been a long debate, indeed ever since these words were penned by St. Paul, as to just what the Son jettisoned when he became incarnate as a human being. Although the NIV uses the term “made himself nothing,” most translations speak about his having “emptied himself.” Since we can have no real understanding of the divine, we cannot totally comprehend what it is that the Son gave up – other than it was voluntary and tremendous. In practical terms, as we are called to follow Jesus and we are not divine, whatever he specifically gave up is not the point. Rather, whatever we imagine he gave up, he did it in order to become an obedient servant. And that is something that even the least of us is in a position to do.

The universal message is that whoever we are, we are to empty ourselves of our self. The Son of God is the Son of God and you are you. If you are to have the same attitude as Christ, then you must give up your self. We are not called to lose our identity, only to no longer allow who we are to dictate how we live and our attitude toward God and others. The excuse that I am the way I am because that is how God created me does not hold water. Jesus comes to us where we are, but his command is to follow him – we are not to remain the same but become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are to remove ourselves from the throne of our lives and allow Jesus to take his rightful place as the sovereign ruler of all we do and think.

Almighty God our heavenly Father, you declare your glory and show forth your handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various

occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one who serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, p.261)

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