

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST AS MANIFESTED IN HIS WORK
FOR THE SALVATION OF MAN.

Jesus is the example in all true living. Jesus is the example in all true service to God. With the mind we are to serve the law of God. Therefore saith the Scripture, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:5. So certainly as we will let this mind be in us, so certainly it will be in us; and so certainly as it is in us, so certainly it will do in us what it did in Christ; and so certainly that which appeared in Him will appear in us. p. 1, Para. 1, [SPIRIT].

What, then, did this mind do in Him? -- "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2:6. The idea conveyed in the word "robbery" may be made plainer by noting the different translations. The Emphatic Diaglott remarks that the original, -- Harpagmon, -- "being a word of very rare occurrence, a great variety of translations have been given," and cites the following: - p. 1, Para. 2, [SPIRIT].

Clarke, "Did not think it a thing to be earnestly desired." Cyprian, "Did not earnestly affect." Wakefield, "Did not think of eagerly retaining." Stuart, "Did not regard as an object of solicitous desire." Sharpe, "Thought not a thing to be seized." Kneeland, "Did not eagerly grasp." Dickinson, "Did not violently strive after." Turnbull, "Did not meditate a usurpation." p. 1, Para. 3, [SPIRIT].

From this it is easy to see that the idea conveyed by the word "robbery" is not a mistaken one; because the point stated is that though He was in the form of God, though He was the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and though He was indeed equal with God, He did not think that to be equal with God was a thing to be seized upon, and eagerly held fast, as a robber would grasp and hold that upon which he has seized. p. 1, Para. 4, [SPIRIT].

The Emphatic Diaglott adopts Turnbull's translation, "He did not meditate a usurpation to be like God," which, where government is involved, is nearer the idea of the original, as a robber of government is a usurper. p. 1, Para. 5, [SPIRIT].

The thought, then, which is expressed in the verses is this: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be seized upon, to be violently striven for, and eagerly retained with solicitous desire, not a usurpation to be meditated, to be equal with God." But He was already equal with God. He was already the one whose "goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." He was already the one who created all things "that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." He was indeed already God, equal with God. What, then, caused His mind to run in this channel, and to think it not a thing to be seized upon, striven for, and eagerly retained, to be equal with God, -- in other words, to be that which, by eternal and inalienable right He truly was? Something caused it; and when we discover that, we have the key to the whole situation. p. 1, Para. 6, [SPIRIT].

From the nature of the case, it is evident that on the part of somebody there was a strife, a dispute, as to who ought to be equal with God. It is plain that on the part of someone there was manifested a mind, a disposition, earnestly to desire, to seize upon, and to meditate, a usurpation of such a position, -- a position of equality with God. Who was that one? In whom did such a mind manifest itself? Not in Christ Jesus, for the mind that was in Him thought no such thing. In whom was it, then? Ah! in that anointed cherub that covered, and who sinned; for the Scripture says: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God, and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Ezek. 28:14-17. p. 1, Para. 7, [SPIRIT].

Being "perfect in beauty," he began to look upon himself, to honor himself, and to glorify himself because of this perfect beauty, instead of glorifying Him that gave it. He

began to attribute to himself the honor and the merit, and to think that there was not shown to him the preference that was his due, and that the place which he held was not such as fitly became one so glorious. Then he said in his heart: "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north;...I will be like the Most High." Isa. 14:13, 14. p. 2, Para. 1, [SPIRIT].

Here is the one in whom was the mind that thought that to be equal with God was a thing to be seized upon, a thing to be eagerly grasped and retained, as a robber his prey. Here is the one in whom was the mind that meditated a usurpation to be equal with God. And love of self, exaltation of self, was the beginning of it all. His own self would exalt itself to the throne of the Most High, and would make all subject to himself, instead of to God. p. 2, Para. 2, [SPIRIT].

For this, he was cast as profane out of the mountain of God. Then he came to this world, and instilled into its inhabitants this venom of self. p. 2, Para. 3, [SPIRIT].

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? p. 2, Para. 4, [SPIRIT].

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. p. 2, Para. 5, [SPIRIT].

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as God [Hebrew and Revised Version], knowing good and evil. p. 2, Para. 6, [SPIRIT].

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Gen. 3:1-6. p. 2, Para. 7, [SPIRIT].

Thus Satan instilled the exaltation of self into man -- even his own ambition to be equal with God. Thus it was the selfish desire to be equal with God that induced sin in man

on the earth. And thus into mankind was instilled the mind of Satan, -- that same mind which thought that to be equal with God was a thing to be seized upon, and eagerly retained, -- that same mind which meditated a usurpation to be equal with God, -- that same mind which puts self in the place of God. p. 3, Para. 1, [SPIRIT].

Then it was the mind that was in Christ Jesus was manifested. He whose goings forth have been of old, from the days of eternity; He who had created all the worlds, and all things in all of them; He who was the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person; He who was of right equal with God, -- He, the high and lofty One, thought it not a thing to be seized upon, to be greedily grasped and zealously retained, to be equal with God; but emptied Himself (Phil. 2:5, 6, R.V.), and gave Himself for lost mankind. Therefore the word went forth immediately to Satan: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." And in this word to Satan there was a promise to man of deliverance from the bondage of Satan, which is the bondage of self, into the glorious liberty of sons of God indeed. p. 3, Para. 2, [SPIRIT].

The deception of man led him to put self in the place of God, and the mind and word of Satan in the place of the mind and word of God. This led to the perversion of man's ideas concerning God, and the receiving of Satan's ideas and suggestions as the true ideas concerning God. It led to the setting of God in a totally false light in the estimation of man. It led mankind to look upon God as a hard master, a despotic governor, and a stern, impassive, unmerciful judge. Over and over, the Lord set forth His Word to the contrary. To Moses He declared Himself to be "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." In His law He set forth His character as "LOVE." Yet, for all this, mankind still followed perverted ideas of God. p. 3, Para. 3, [SPIRIT].

Then, when the fullness of time was come, the Father would reveal Himself to mankind as He really is, and His bearing toward the world of sinners. And in order that this might be done in its fullness and perfection, Jesus emptied Himself, and "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was

made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. 2:6-8. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14. p. 3, Para. 4, [SPIRIT].

So entirely did He empty Himself of all self that He could say with perfect truth, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." John 6:38. "I can of Mine own self do nothing: As I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." John 5:30. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." Verse 19. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John 14:10. "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me." John 7:16. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself," "But the Father which sent Me, He gave a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." John 14:10; 12:49. p. 3, Para. 5, [SPIRIT].

He came not doing His own will, nor speaking His own words, nor doing His own works. It was the Father's will which was done in Him; it was the Father's words that were spoken by Him; and it was the Father's works that were done in Him. That is to say, He emptied Himself that the Father might appear in Him. And when He emptied Himself, the Father did appear in Him. And so, "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He was "God manifest in the flesh," "God with us." p. 3, Para. 6, [SPIRIT].

But He did all this that men might know the Father as He really is. Therefore, He says none know "the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." This is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. p. 4, Para. 1, [SPIRIT].

What the Father was to the Son and in the Son in this world, that is just what He wishes to be to every person in this world. And just as certainly as any man will empty himself of self, as Christ did, so certainly will the Father be to him, and in him, what He was to the Son, and in the Son. p. 4, Para. 2, [SPIRIT].

The word of Christ to every man is this, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself." Luke 9:23. p. 4, Para. 3, [SPIRIT].

All sin is of self, and self is of Satan. All righteousness is of Christ, and Christ is of God. p. 4, Para. 4, [SPIRIT].

Therefore let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, "who emptied Himself" that the Father might appear to men, and that men might be saved. Let it be in you. As surely as you will let this mind be in you, so surely will it be in you. And so surely as in Him it led Him to empty Himself, so surely it will lead you to empty yourself of all self. And so surely as you are emptied of self, so surely will you be "filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. 3:19. -- A. T. Jones. -- Taken from England's The Present Truth, vol. 8, no. 3, February 11, 1892. p. 4, Para. 5, [SPIRIT].