

Bible Basics
Lesson Four, Part One
The Person of Christ

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

John 1:1 (ESV)

The Second Person of the Trinity is eternal

5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form¹ of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped², 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. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

Philippians 2:5-9 (NASB)

Key Questions:

What is meant by “form of God”?

What is meant by “emptied Himself”?

He is God from the essence of the Father, begotten before time; and he is human from the essence of his mother, born in time; completely God, completely human, with a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father as regards divinity, less than the Father as regards humanity.

¹ The Greek word has no reference to the shape of any physical object. It was a Greek philosophical term. The word is used in its philosophical sense to denote that expression of being which carries in itself the distinctive nature and character of the being to whom it pertains, and is thus permanently identified with that nature and character. Therefore the NIV rendering, "Who, being in very nature God".

² *Harpagmos*: Held on to, asserted, forcefully retained

Although he is God and human, yet Christ is not two, but one. He is one, however, not by his divinity being turned into flesh, but by God's taking humanity to himself. He is one, certainly not by the blending of his essence, but by the unity of his person.

For just as one human is both rational soul and flesh,
so too the one Christ is both God and human.

Athanasian Creed, 5th-7th Century

At the Incarnation, the Second Person of the Trinity took on human flesh

The Person of Jesus Christ is truly God and truly human

As the “God-man”, He has one, undivided nature

In essence, Jesus Christ is God and man together, foreshadowing the work He came to accomplish: to bring God and man together

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh

Hebrews 10:19-20 (NASB)

The writer of Hebrews expressed Christ's embodiment as a veil

This imagery helps us understand Christ Jesus, God Himself, retaining His glory, particularly in light of the transfiguration.