

Series: God Sent His Son #1075

Title: Galatians 4.4-5

God the Father and God the Son, Part 4

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. As our calendar continues to propel us – quickly – to Christmas we are walking along together through a very deep and rich passage in the New Testament Epistle or Letter to the Galatians. And right now we are in the heart of it. Galatians 4, verse 4 says, **“God sent forth His Son...”** God is God the Father and His Son is God the Son – Jesus Christ.

And when we read this it is easy to pass through these words quickly and without giving them much thought. And yet there is much here to think about and apply to our lives. What does it mean that God sent forth His Son? We have been wrestling with this for the last few days and thus far we have established that Jesus is equal with God. Indeed, Jesus Christ *is* God. He is God in human flesh. The Bible affirms this repeatedly and we have had opportunity to look at just some of those passages. I hope that you have been with us for that.

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You can also reach me by regular mail. God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890.

Through careful Bible study we find that, “God sent forth His Son,” means that Jesus is equal with God, yet Jesus humbled Himself to be subordinate to God while Christ lived as a man here on earth. When God sent forth His Son Jesus left heaven bound for the world, and He was born a baby to His mother Mary in the town of Bethlehem. God the Son took on human flesh. He became a man. And as a man, while He continued to be God, Jesus humbled Himself and became subordinate to God the Father who is in heaven.

One of my favorite Christmas carols is *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!*

I’ll save all of it for another day, but in the second stanza we have these true and fitting words, “Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate Deity! Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel.” That’s exactly right. God – veiled in flesh – is Jesus. Hail – worship – the incarnate Deity. Deity meaning Jesus is God and incarnate meaning embodied in human form. Jesus is man. The carol says it, “Pleased as man with man to dwell.” Jesus is man. Jesus is God and Jesus is man and He is both God and man at the same time!

No wonder the angels sing, glory to the newborn King!

And you might say, “This sounds hard to explain. This is mysterious. Jesus is God and man at the same time? You say Jesus became subordinate to God? So what, is like Jesus being subordinate to Himself? Was Jesus humbling Himself for Himself?” And to you I reply, “First, I agree. This is hard to explain. This is mysterious. Oh yes, my friend, we are dealing with that which ultimately cannot be adequately explained because One God existing in three Persons – as Father, Son, and Spirit – is not something our finite human minds can grasp. I admit that.”

And yet I must also respond and say, “No. Jesus was not being subordinate to Himself. Jesus was not humbling Himself for Himself. And the reason I say that is because God the Son is a different Person than God the Father. We have to uphold and maintain the distinction that is made in the Bible between God the Father (in heaven) and Jesus the Son (on earth).

And when you and I read Jesus in the New Testament Gospels we certainly see that He makes the distinction quite clear. So, we have before us something we do not totally understand. But we *do* understand enough to know that Jesus is the God-Man. He is God and He is man *at the same exact time*.

This is crucial to emphasize at Christmas for many reasons, not the least of which is this helps us see the high value and importance we must place on the birth of Jesus Christ. When we understand the miracle that is Christ's incarnation, then we will be so taken by this glorious truth that it will revolutionize how we live! It will take the attention *off* of us and put the focus *on* God. The truths that we are discussing this week will draw us in worship of Holy God. This will also deepen our love for Christ.

This is how *great* God is. He sent forth His Son! He gave us Jesus Christ. God came to earth! God came down! Wow. Think about this with me, let us rejoice and be glad! I think of John 3.16, "**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**" God loves us, so He gave us Jesus. And if you, like me, believe in Him then we will not perish but we have eternal life! Now if that does not make you a more worshipful believer, then nothing ever will.

So, although our time together this week may have seemed somewhat technical or a bit too "theological" for some, my prayer is that it's been worth it for us to repeat and rehearse what is *true*. And what is deeper than a festive homily, which many Christians are left with in their churches at Christmastime. Well, I hope you have benefited from this. You can always let me know if it has and/or send me your questions. mark@godisministry.org and God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890.

As we remain centered in Galatians 4, verse 4 I want to pick up now on this truth: Jesus humbled Himself to be subordinate to God the Father while Christ lived as a man here on earth. How is it that Christ willfully placed Himself under the authority of His Father in heaven? How is it that Jesus maintained His deity, yet lived the full expression of His human life? How is it that Jesus was a person as we are people, while at the same time being God?

As you continue to pray for me to have wisdom and discernment, let's answer these questions from the Bible and start today by talking about a word. And this word is *kenosis*. Kenosis. *What?* What in the world is kenosis? It sort of sounds like an exercise, or one of these health food drinks people spend a lot of money for, doesn't it? Kenosis. Let me spell it: K-E-N-O-S-I-S, K-E-N-O-S-I-S. Kenosis.

We just have time today for the etymology of this word. In the language of biblical Greek there is a word *kenoo* and from that word we get the word kenosis. It means to empty. *kenoo* means to empty or emptying. But this is not emptying as we most likely think of the word. We think of emptying as taking or pouring something out. So we talk about emptying the trash. I am sure many of us will do that this weekend. At our home, that is one of my jobs. Reminds me of the old lyrics from the song, "Take out the papers and the trash or you won't get no spending cash!" Come to think of it, I still do not get spending cash for taking out the trash! But, yakety-yak, I better not talk back!

Or we talk of emptying say a can or bottle of soda. Oh wait, these days we're being told soda is a no-no, so let's say a bottle of water. There now, that's better. (Yea, but soda is much more fun, right?) Anyway, we crack open that can or bottle, guzzle it down, and now the container is empty. We have poured out its contents into our stomachs. I say "emptying," and this is how you think of the word, right?

But the Greek language pushes *kenoo* to mean to make void, to nullify, or to make of no effect. OK. Let's see this in the Scripture.

Listen as I read from the Book of Philippians chapter 2, verses 5-7. I have moved over in my Bible from Galatians to Philippians and chapter 2, beginning in verse 5.

"⁵ 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."

You heard me, at verse 7, read that Jesus emptied Himself. The Greek word translated as emptied is *kenoo*.

On Monday we will see what this has to do with Jesus humbling Himself before God the Father. Join me then for God Is!

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