

## **Knowing Christ: The Paradoxical Narrative**

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV).

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery (Hebrews 2:14-15).

“For this the Word of God became man, and the Son of God Son of man, that man mingled with the Word and thus receiving adoption, might become a son of God” (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses* 3.19).

“Thus he [Christ] took up humanity into himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being made human” (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses* 3.16.6).

“For he was made man that we might be made God; and he manifested himself by a body that we might receive the idea of the unseen Father; and he endured human insolence that we might inherit immortality” (Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* 54).

“He assumes the poverty of my flesh, so that I may assume the richness of his Divinity” (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* 38.13).

“As one of us, though he knew not death, he went down into death through his own flesh, in order that we might also go up with him to life.” (Cyril of Alexandria, *Letter to the Monks of Egypt* 26).

“We are children of God by grace, not by nature; for the only one who was by nature Son of God became, for our sakes, out of mercy, a son of man, so that we, who are by nature the

children of of men and women, might become through him children of God by grace” (Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* XXI, 15).

“Christ is God and man in one person. He...cannot sin, die, or be condemned; his righteousness, life, and salvation are unconquerable, eternal, omnipotent. By the wedding ring of faith he shares in the sins, death, and pains of hell which are his bride’s. As a matter of fact, he makes them his own and acts as if they were his own and as if he himself had sinned; he suffered, died and descended into hell that he might overcome them all...Thus the believing soul is free in Christ...free from all sins, secure against death and hell, and is endowed with the eternal righteousness, life and salvation of Christ its bridegroom” (Martin Luther, *On the Freedom of a Christian*).

### **Philippians 2:1-11**

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,  
7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,  
being born in the likeness of men.  
8 And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross.  
9 Therefore God has highly exalted him  
and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,  
10 so 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.