

[7] "Christ emptied himself of the exercise of His divine prerogatives"

Here the ground shifts from attributes to prerogatives. Christ retains His divine attributes (He remains God), the independent exercise of them (He continues being God), and the manifestation of them (He discloses himself as being God). But He empties himself of His rights, His prerogatives, His authority to perform divine actions and claims only the rights of a man who walks in perfect fellowship with and obedience to God, one who walks in the full authority of scripture and the full power of the Holy Spirit.

Once again this answer can serve as a partial explanation of the significance of the self-emptying; it fails as a comprehensive answer simply because it runs aground on the hard evidence of scriptural instances to the contrary. There are simply a number of occasions when Jesus Christ exercises such uniquely divine prerogatives as forgiving sins (not simply promising forgiveness on the basis of God's redemptive provision, or on condition of repentance and confession), locating the authority to raise the dead in himself (not simply resuscitating the dead by the authority of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit), and the right to receive worship (not simply honor or obeisance or acts of subjection or gratitude). Christ retained His divine rights and prerogatives. It is true that at times He chose not to exercise certain of these prerogatives; and these choices may be considered merely as wise acts of restraint or as part of His humiliation.

[8] "Christ emptied himself of the glory which He had with the Father before the world began"

Of course, if "glory" be considered either as a place, or as the character of a place, as in such expressions as "down from His glory", or "He left the glories of heaven", then obviously Christ left that behind when He came from heaven to earth. Of course, if the Son of God was omnipresent (as God) before the incarnation, then He was already here on earth as well as there in heaven before He became man, in which case He could not have left heaven behind (in a spatial sense), nor could He have come to earth (in a spatial sense), at least so far as His divine nature is concerned. Of course, it could be said that Christ did not leave heaven behind when He became incarnate, but simply changed His abode from heaven to earth (while remaining omnipresent). This proposal would allow us to change our focus of attention to His "glory."

What is "glory"? The term "glory" appears to refer (in connection with God) to the honor, the brightness, the splendor, the magnificence, the majesty of God; and it may be used with reference to the nature of God expressed in His attributes, or to the high, lofty, exalted position of God as Creator and Ruler of the universe.

We may therefore ask two questions. First, did Christ give up the splendor and magnificence of His divine attributes to become incarnate? From the considerations made in previous answers, it does not appear so. Second, did Christ give up the splendor and magnificence of His lofty, exalted position as Creator and Ruler of the universe in order to assume human nature? This question must be explored.

Since Creation in the primary sense of bringing of the universe into being is no longer going on, we cannot ask if Christ is still Creator in the active sense. However, we can ask if He is the Sustainer and