

Biblical Topics

Son – State of Humiliation

Christ's State of *Humiliation* consisted in this, that in His human nature, Christ did not always fully use the divine attributes communicated to His human nature. Humiliation is a state or condition in which a person of high degree and position humbles himself and become lowly, as when a king, who has great power, refrains from using this power and acts and lives like a poor peasant.

This humiliation was necessary; for had Christ not refrained from using His divine power, His enemies could not have captured and killed Him. Like a giant who does not use his strength, but allows little children to tie him down, so Christ did not use His almighty power but allowed men to put Him to death.

- Philippians 2:5-8: ⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

Words in the Second Article describe the State of Humiliation. *Conceived* by the Holy Spirit; *born* of the Virgin Mary; *suffered* under Pontius Pilate; was *crucified*, *dead*, and *buried*. These are sometimes called the stages of humiliation, not steps or degrees, as this would imply various depths of humiliation. There can be no degree in the non-use of a thing.

Jesus was in every respect like other human children, except that He was not *conceived* of an earthly father. Joseph was His foster-father. He was the Son of God, who by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit received a complete human nature from His virgin mother. This meant that He did not have original sin.

- Luke 1:35: The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
- Matthew 1:20: But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures teach that Christ was *born* of the Virgin Mary, a true man.

- Matthew 1:18: This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.
- Luke 2:7: and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Scriptures teach of the *suffering* and *death* of Christ.

A. In His earthly life Christ suffered poverty, contempt and persecution.

- 2 Corinthians 8:9: For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.
- Matthew 8:20: Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."
- Isaiah 53:3: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
- John 8:40: As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.
- Luke 2:7: At Jesus' birth He had only swaddling clothes and a manger.
- Matthew 2:13: Herod sought to destroy Him.
- Luke 4:29: In Nazareth the Jews tried to throw Him down from the top of the hill.
- John 8:59: In the temple they took up stones to throw at Him.

B. Under Pontius Pilate, Christ suffered extreme agony of body and soul. Jesus suffered in His body when scourged by the soldiers and nailed to the cross. An Even greater was the suffering of His soul, for He felt the heavy burden of our sins resting upon Him. Here He experienced the full measure of God's wrath.

- John 19:1-3: Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe ³ and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face.
- John 19:16-18: ¹⁶ Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷ Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). ¹⁸ Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.
- Matthew 27:46: About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

C. Christ died on the accursed tree of the cross. Jesus did not merely faint from physical exhaustion or pain, but He really died, His soul departed from His body. To die on the cross was a shameful and cruel death; men treated the Son of God like a criminal.

- John 19:30: When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
- Galatians 3:13: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Scriptures teach Christ's body was laid in the grave and remained there to the third day, but without seeing corruption or decay.

- Acts 13:37: But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

The above information is taken from: "Luther's Small Catechism" annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.