

# Philippians 2:7

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 24 October 1993

Preacher: Donald Macleod

[ 0 : 00 ] Let's turn tonight to Philippians chapter 2, and where she'll find in verse 7, Philippians 2 and verse 7.

But made himself nothing. Her being in very nature God made himself nothing.

Now I want tonight to try to impress on your minds one word, and that is the word kenosis.

It's a Greek word which encapsulates a very important idea, the idea of the self-emptying of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It lies behind the text of a version, as I read it this evening, we're told that he made himself nothing.

The words be literally that Christ was in very nature God, emptied himself.

[ 1 : 28 ] That is Paul's way of defining for us the meaning of the enfleshment or incarnation of the Son of God.

And I want to explore it not only because it gives us a great vision of what Christ has done for us, but also because it gives us, in my view, a fundamental principle for our own Christian lives.

We're told that God practiced kenosis. But we are told that only because the apostle wants each of us, in turn, to practice kenosis in our own sphere and our own place.

And I want them to do two things. I want, first of all, to ask what this concept of kenosis actually involves.

And I want them to ask what are its implications in practice for ourselves. First of all, then, what does the apostle mean by kenosis?

[ 2 : 57 ] When Christ made himself nothing, when Christ emptied himself, what are the elements of this great action?

It implies, first of all, a starting point of great power and great eminence and great authority.

Because he was in the form of God. And that's where the whole idea of kenosis or self-emptying begins.

It begins with grandeur. In the context here in Philippians, Paul is looking at a problem in the church at Philippi caused by the aspirations, the jockeyings for position of the various members of the congregation.

And the problem was that so many in the church at Philippi had a great sense of their own importance. They all thought they were somebody.

[ 4 : 10 ] And therefore, they ought to be acknowledged and promoted and respected in various ways. And Paul's response is to ask us to focus on this one person who really was somebody.

Who really was great. Who really was immeasurably and supremely important. This one who was in the form of God. The same idea occurs many times in the New Testament.

The idea of Christ us. The likeness of God or the image of God or the glory of God. In some ways, they're all the sure ideas that express the impact made by Christ on observers.

It is as if the apostle supposes the angels in glory looking at the Lord Jesus. And what they see is the form and the glory of God himself.

Here there was all the fullness of God. There was every single perfection of the divine nature. He was infinite. He was eternal.

[ 5 : 29 ] He was unchangeable. Here were all the functions of God as creator. As provider and judge. All those great divine prerogatives of worship and adoration and so on.

The whole glory. The whole form. The whole majesty of God was here. Jesus Christ was Godless compacted.

In the most infinite and in the most absolute sense. Whatever was essential to God was found in Jesus. He was in the form of God.

That lies at the very basis of our faith and of our worship. He is the same in substance with God the Father.

And equal in power and glory. He has the very nature of God. He has the very being of God. He has all the rights and all the entitlements of God.

[6:31] And that's where this great movement began. It began with one who was really somebody. Because he was in the form of God. But then we see that this one who was in the form of God.

And acted under the compulsion of an overwhelming altruism. A concern for others. And here again Paul is stating a theological crisis.

This is right out of the context of the church in Philippi. The problem there was that everybody was thinking of themselves. Thinking just of themselves.

And their own selfish ambition. And their own vain glory. And they were thinking of their own interest. He says there in verse 4. Which of you he said should look.

Not only to your own interests. But also to the interests of others. And then he goes on to say. You should think the way Jesus thought.

[7:39] And what he's saying is this great thing. That then he was in the form of God. And yet he was thinking. Not of his own needs.

Or his own interests. But he thought of the interests of others. He was there himself with God. He had no needs. He had no lacks.

But as he looked at the human race. He saw it entangled in sin. He saw it enmeshed in misery. And he loved it. His whole heart went out to it. Because it wasn't his nature to look at his own things. But he looked at the things of others. And that altruism. That concern for the others. That awareness of the needs.

[8:37] The plight. The predicament of others. Is basic to the whole nature of God. God so loved the world. God saw the world in its need.

And God put the needs of the world before himself. And God gave his own son. And that's the language the Bible chooses.

To help us understand. How the heart and mind of God works. A heart which is love. Love. And the very essence of that love.

Is the awareness of others. And so he says. This was the mind of Jesus. This was his attitude. This was his mindset. This was the way that he thought.

He thought not of his own things. But he thought of the things of others. And I'm not sure for the moment. As we reflect. On the nature of the Trinity.

[9:42] The Father. The Son. The Holy Spirit. Three persons. Where does the unity of the Godhead come from? Does it not come precisely from this fact.

That in this fellowship. There are three. Each aware of the other. Each loving the other. Each seeking the glory.

And the good of the other. And in that. Shall I say. Centripetal. Center seeking force.

Of the love. There. Is what holds. The threeness. Together. In oneness. Each in love.

Thinking. Of the other. God. And then. Paul. Exposed into us. This other. Great vision. That. This. One God.

[10:41] This. God. Who is revealed. For us. In Jesus Christ. Is revealed. As the God. Of. Overwhelming. Other. Awareness.

Who is. Thinking. Of where. Others. Are. What others. Need. What peril. Others. Are in. And that was. What prompted.

To the kenosis. He was. In the form. Of God. But he had this. Overwhelming. Awareness. Of the needs. Of others.

And that. Brings us. To the third element. In the kenosis. Which is this. This fact. That Christ. Did not insist. On his own rights.

He was. Equal. With God. And as one. Who was equal. With God. He had. Certain rights. And you see.

[11:39] How it's put for us. Here. In verse six. He did not. Consider. Equality. With God. Something. To be grasped.

He. Was. Equal. With God. But. He didn't. Consider. That. Something. To be grasped. Now. I might. Prefer. To. Amend. The version. Just a little. And. To put it. This way. That. He did not. Regard.

That. That. That. Being equal. With God. As something. To be cloned to. As something. To be hung on to. At all costs.

In other words. What the apostle is saying. Is not. That. Jesus. Was. Unequal.

[12:35] To God. To God. But. Had the opportunity. To grasp. At equality. And yet. Refrain. From doing so. The position is. As I see it.

That. He. Was. Equal. That. Was. His. Right. To be equal. With God. But he did not. Cling. He did not.

Insist. On that. Equality. And I see it. In these terms. That as the one. Who was in the form. Of God. Jesus. Had the right. To insist. That when he came. Into the world. It was as one. Who was patently. And manifestly.

Equal. With God. And if you go back. Again. Into the whole problem. At Philippi. It was this. That. Everybody. Was insisting. On his.

[13:27] And her rights. Everybody. Who was. At her. Place. Everybody. Who was. At her. Own. Importance. And the church.

Was being. Torn apart. Because here. And there. And everywhere. Everybody. Was insisting. On his rights. And Paul. Is saying. To us. Suppose.

Jesus Christ. Had insisted. On his rights. Where would the church. Have been. Suppose. He had said. I am. Equal. With God. And I shall.

Remain. Equal. With God. And I shall. Be seen. As being. Equal. With God. And I will not. Have my honor. Or dignity. Or glory. In any way.

Compromised. Suppose. Christ. Had said that. No. Said the apostle. He did not. Cling to it. He did not. Insist. On his rights. He didn't.

[14:20] Say to God. Yes. I will go. To the world. But I'll go. The way the Lord. Appeared. In Sinai. In the glory. Of thunder.

And lightning. And earthquake. And all the. Peripherals. Of majesty. He didn't say that. And he didn't say. I'll go. The way. I.

Isaiah. Saw the glory. Of God. In Isaiah 6. The way. Saw him. High. And lifted up. He didn't say. Yes. Father. I'll go.

So long. As I can go. My glory. High. And lifted up. And he didn't say. I'll go. As I shall go. In the glory. Of my second coming.

In the parousia. When I go. In the father's glory. With the voice. Of the trump. With the mighty angels. These are my terms. I insist. On my rights.

[15:13] He said. None of that. He did not insist. On the trappings. Of majesty. On the paraphernalia. Of deity. On the insignia.

Of godhead. He did not insist. On his rights. On being equal. With God. And on being seen. To be equal. With God. And so.

There he was. He was in the form. Of God. But he was prompted. By this great concern. For others. And so. He did not. Insist.

On his rights. And then it moves. Into this. The willingness. To be unrecognized. Again. You come into.

The Philippian situation. The insistence. On recognition. That people must know. Who we are.

[16:08] And what we are. And how important. We are. But Jesus. Came into the world. As the one who was hidden. As the one whose glory was veiled.

As the one who was incognito. And whose identity was impenetrable. Behind the veil of poverty. And of humiliation. And of humiliation. And ignominy. And shame. And shame. And pain. And suffering. And death. And sheer ordinariness.

Their willingness. Not to be known. Not to be acknowledged. The one who was God's son. Unknown. In this world.

Lord. But it went beyond that still. This kenosis involved. The willingness. On the Lord's part.

[17:06] To go ever. Further. And further. And further. And further. Down. Into the abyss. Of humiliation. And of self-contradiction.

And in one of the most. Marvelous instances. Of Fraseology.

Which we find. Anywhere in the New Testament. The apostle pushed together. This sentence. Which he says to us. That. Christ.

Had deed. Himself. Taking. Himself. He emptied. Taking.

And I want you to ponder. For a moment. The sheer wonder of it. How can you empty. Something by taking. How can you diminish yourself.

[18:06] Lessen yourself. Subtract from yourself. By taking something. You see what Paul is saying. To us. Is not that Christ. Practiced.

Kenosis. And made himself. Nothing. By laying. Something aside. But he makes himself. Nothing. By taking.

And the whole. Contest goes on. To explain to us. In fact. What it was. That Jesus took. And the taking of it. Constituted.

The self-empty. There is. There is. A subtraction. By addition. Himself. He emptied. Take. He took. The form. Of a servant. And you notice. The perfect correspondence there. The form of God.

[19:05] The form. Of a servant. Christ. The form. The form. The form. The form. Christ. Christ. Christ was really God. And Christ. Was really a servant. And his servitude.

Was as real. As his deity. And I want you. Further down. For a moment. With that. Because the word. For a servant. Of course. Is the word.

For a slave. And we're told. He took. The form. Of a slave. And if you go back. Into the world. Of that day.

A slave. Was. Rightless. Utterly. Absolutely. Rightless. A slave.

Had no rights. In Roman law. A slave. Couldn't own property. A slave. Couldn't.

[20:01] Marry. A slave. Could not. Be the legal. Father. Of a family. A slave. Had. No sovereignty. Over his own life.

Not even the right. Of self-defense. The law. Gave him. Absolutely. No protection. He was. A no person. A slave.

Had. The same status. As. A cat. Or vermin. Might have. In our society. As far as the law. Is concerned. The law.

Did not protect him. In any way. Whatever. And that's what Jesus. Became. He took. The form. Of the slave.

The one. Who had. Absolutely. No rights. There was. No. No. To which the slave. Could appeal. Because.

[20:58] In law. He had no standing. And he took. The likeness. Of men. Or the appearance. Of men. I don't mean.

That it was only. An appearance. But I mean this. That when. Men and women. Looked at him. That was all. That they saw. They saw. Nothing. But human.

Nothing. But. An ordinary. Human body. Not I suppose. In any way. Especially. Pre-possessing. Or handsome. Or whatever. But.

An ordinary. Human body. They witnessed. As they thought. An ordinary. Human life. The. Appearance. Of a man. The likeness.

A man. How did you find him? We found him. Just human. Just ordinary. Human. So. There he is. He's going down. He has.

[21:53] The form. Of a slave. He has. The appearance. Of a man. You measured. The distance. From the form.

Of God. To the likeness. Of man. And then. You see this. Being found. In fashion. As a man. He goes. Further still.

Further down. Being. Found. In fashion. As a man. He humbled himself. And became. Obedient. To death. And there again.

This progression. From service. Through humanity. Right down. To death. Itself. He became. Obedient. And to death. And then. You intensify that. Even death. Even death. Even death. On a cross. And I spoke.

[22:49] At the outset. Of. The phenomenal. Logical. Perspective. We have here. The idea. Of a spectator. An observer.

Seeing. Seeing. The form. Of God. Seeing. The form. Of a servant. Seeing. The likeness. Of man. And now. Seeing. This death. Those angels. See. As they look. And they see. This. Whole. Great. Drama. Unfold. This. Story. To which. There is. No. Analogy. The story. Of the only God.

That is. Part. Of the story. Of God. In the form. Of God. Who makes himself. Nothing. By taking.

[23:42] By taking. The form. Of a servant. The likeness. Of man. By. Proceeding. From that. Human. Position. Right. Down. Still.

Into the depths. Of the valley. Into death. Into death. On a cross. Into a death. Involving. Dereliction. Abandonment. Forsakenness.

By God. Himself. Involving. The curse. Due to our sin. To your sin. The curse. Due. To my sin. Right down. You see. There is no limit.

And when the poor angels. See. Contemplate. What's going on. They see. With horror. Their maker. Taking the form. Of a servant. And then.

They see. The human appearance. And then. They see. This great. Inexorable. Descent. Through. Gethsemane. To the cross.

[ 24 : 38 ] Of Calvary. And the long. Long. Long. Long. Long. Progress. On Calvary. Itself. Because Calvary. Is no point. Calvary.

Is a line. Calvary. Is no single moment. Calvary. Is an era. In which. The son of God. Moves. Further. And further.

Into the darkness. Into the depths. Of the forsakenness. That our sin. Deserved. And this too. Is part. Of the kenosis.

The one. Who on the cross. Is an old person. Who made himself. Nothing. Who sat on the cross.

Oh. It's nobody. Who sat on the cross.

Oh. It's nothing. Because. You never have anything. On the cross. Only. Nobody. Go on the cross. Only. Great. Nothings. Go. Go on the cross.

[ 25 : 31 ] And that's. What he was. There were. Three crosses. There were. Three nothings. Three great nothings. And in the center. Of those. Nothings. Son of God.

The greatest. Nothing of all. The no. Person. Who was bearing our sin. What was. He was cursed. There was no place for him. God.

Had forsaken him. He had consummated. This great. Tenosis. He had made himself. Nothing. Because. He was sin. He was curse.

He was anathema. That's where he was. It began with him. In the form of God. And it ends with him.

As nothing. It began. In the midst of the throne. And it ends with him. As a nobody. As a no person. As a legal entity. He was nothing at all.

[ 26 : 27 ] Absolutely nothing at all. He made himself nothing. Well there it is something of what. The kenosis means. This one who begins.

In the form of God. God. And who prompted by the awareness of the needs of others. Does not insist on his own rights. Is willing to be unrecognized.

And is willing to move inexorably. Right into the abyss of non-entity. To become a non-entity.

To become nothing at all. To become in a way worse than nothing. To become the sin and the dross. Under the legs of the world.

Bearing sin. Shame and scoffing rude. In my place condemned. And he stood. The one at whom God could not look. And just cry.

[ 27 : 25 ] God could not hear. All day my God. To thee I cried. Yet I'm not heard by thee. There's a marvelous paradox. Of the one who is simultaneously.

God's own son. And an entity. And he cries to God. And God cannot hear. Well as I said. Paul doesn't give us this.

For the sake of pure theology. But Paul gives it to us. As a great guiding principle. For our own lives. And I want as I close.

To reflect for a moment. On what it means for us. This idea. We are called. To think the way Jesus thought. We are called upon.

To have the same mindset. And the same attitude. In other words. There is a great divine. Summon to us tonight. To practice kenosis.

[ 28 : 24 ] Because that's why. The New Testament. Gave us this description. Not simply to fill our hearts. With wonder. Before the love.

Of our incarnate Savior. But to give us. In one great word. The rule. Of life and conduct. So long as we are here on earth.

We are called. To lives of kenosis. That applies. First of all. On the individual. Personal level. We are called. We are called.

On that level. To think the way Jesus thought. We are called on that level. To practice kenosis. That means. That all of us are called.

To be more aware. Of the needs of others. Than of our own. All of us are called. To live. To live.  
[ 29 : 22 ] Regardless. Of our own rights. All of us are called upon. To live prepared. To be unacknowledged. And unrecognized.

And all of us are called. Whatever point we have reached in life. Called upon. To be willing. To go lower still.

Because there was no limit. To this downward curve. Down. Down. Down it went. Until. At last. He was empty. And he was. Nothing. At all. It may be that. At this very moment. You lie. Your minds are. Whirling away. Working at the limits. And the conditions. Of the kenosis. There may be a place for that. Some years.

[ 30 : 21 ] Down the road. But for the moment. I want us to stand before it. As a great. Absolute principle. We are called upon.

To be willing. To be nothing. Nothing. Called upon. To be willing. To be nothing at all. This is. What the Lord is insisting on.

Think. The way Jesus. Thought. And you'll. Wrestle with it. Ah. But we have rights. We have rights. Ah.

But we have rights. We have rights. I want you to think of him. Yes. He had rights.

It's not that he didn't have rights. But he didn't ascertain. Didn't insist on him. He was prepared. He was prepared.

[ 31 : 21 ] To go right down. Into a valley of humiliation. That he had no limits. There was nothing.

Off limits. For the son of God. All the angels thought. You can't have him. Born in a manger. You can't have him.

Crying in a garden. You can't have him. Dying. You can't. In God's name. Have him on a cross. And you can't have him.

Forsaken by God the father. And yet. That's the way it was. And God said to you. Long. Long ago. Take up your cross.

And follow me. On this great journey. Into. Being inconsequential. And being nothing.

[ 32 : 24 ] God. Himself was his vindicator. His trust in God was absolute. But he took no steps.

To secure his own future. Or to safeguard his own interests. He just. Kept. Going. Down. That was all.

Down. Down. Down. To the cross. To that. Incredible. Place. The last. Place. In the whole universe. Where an angel.

Would look for God. Was on a cross. Outside Jerusalem. And yet. That is where he was. Between. Two thieves. Forsaken.

By the very God. Do it. Sent him. And surely. If you and I. Could grasp. That great reality. Tonight. Nothing.

[ 33 : 23 ] That would ever. Ever. Happen to us. Would shock us. Suppose. In the world. Of loaded. All its contempt. And all.

Its malice. That all. Happens. Within the framework. That God. Has led us. To expect. When he calls us.

To this great life. Of kenosis. To be. Nobody's. And it's true also. Of the church itself.

I won't say much. On this. But. Sometimes. The church too. Is triumphalist. And sometimes.

It wants to be. Prestigious. And acclaimed. And powerful. And sometimes.

[ 34 : 19 ] As we long. And pray. For revival. Don't we have cause. To ask ourselves. Of what you really mean. Is. Our return. To those.

Great days. When preachers. Were paid the same. As high court judges. And when they were really. Somebody's. And government.

Consulted churchmen. And churchmen. Formed. And drafted legislation. As Thomas Chalmoff. Did on one occasion. Is that. That we long for.

A few weeks ago. North America. I saw a church. Not. By its standards.

By their standards. All that spectacular. It cost. I was told. 32 million dollars. To build. They had hoped.

[ 35 : 16 ] To have it clad. In marble. They had had to abandon. On that idea. 32 million dollars. It was magnificent.

The whole area. The grounds. And what. For what is it saying. What. Kind of statement. Was it. About the church.

Of Jesus Christ. The same day. I read the statistics. That told me. That in North America. There were. 37 million people. Officially. Classed as poor. And 39 million. Men and women. And boys and girls. In the richest country. In the world. Who had no medical insurance. No right. To medical care.

[ 36 : 15 ] There. There. There. There. Was a church. 32. Million dollars. Of the most magnificent. Real estate. What does it mean. For the church. Of God. To practice. Kenosis. What is our response.

In the violent. Inner cities. Of our time. When the frustrated. Youths. Of that area. Break your windows.

Vandalize. Our buildings. Is it simply. Righteous. In the ignation. And lamentation. Over the times. All the times.

All the manners. All the decadence. Or do we ever think. Of going back. To that day. On a green hill. Far away.

[ 37 : 16 ] When they sat. On the son of God. And then you say to me. Oh we're so surprised. People are spitting at us. We didn't expect this.

To happen to Christians. That we should be spat upon. And our windows broken. And our buildings vandalized. Happening to the good. And the righteous. The good and decent.

People of this great land. How have we got to the point. Where the world's contempt. Comes to us. Are such a surprise. When we are followers. Of a crucified savior. The son of God. Who made himself. Nothing. The very style.

Of our churches. Our posture. Our assumptions. Have to acknowledge. That we are called. To kenosis. To being. Nothing.

[ 38 : 10 ] Just nothing. At all. And it's a truth. Of our public ethics. For the conduct.

Of the great corporations. And the great nations. And the great power blocks. In the relationships. The one with the other. If it is part of our calling. To make disciples. Not simply of individuals. But of nations.

Go. And make disciples. Of all the nations. Does that not mean. That we are calling upon. The very nations.

Themselves. To live. The Christian ethic. And do we not realize. That that is more. Than to have legislators. Which are concerned.

[ 39 : 06 ] To enact. Criminal. And penal codes. Which are in some sense. Biblical. Without. Are also insisting. That these nations.

If they are. Indeed. To implement. The ethic. Of Jesus Christ. Are called. To the practice. Of kenosis. And I know.

More than. Anyone needs to tell me. What a hopeless mission. That is. In this great world. But I am so weary. Of. Men and women. In the name.

Of Jesus Christ. In the name. Of theonomy. And many other movements. Telling me. That we must. Persuade government. To introduce. Capital punishment.

And such things. As that kind. When nobody is telling me. That it is time. To persuade government. To practice. Kenosis. On the great power blocks. Of the world.

[ 40 : 03 ] Those. Groups of. Wealthy nations. Which govern. And dictate. The course. Of macroeconomics. That they too. Are not subject. Collectively. To the ethic.

Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. Because if I want. To Christianize. The nations. I am not simply. Calling for capital. Punishment. I am calling.

For kenosis. I am calling. Upon them. To think. The way. Jesus Christ. Thought. The one. Who is willing. To be nothing. Are we willing.

To encourage. Government policies. Which threaten. Our own level. Of affluence. But might benefit. The poorer nations.

Of the world. I am not saying. That there is any guarantee. That we can find. Such mechanisms. I am simply asking. Are we willing. To forfeit.

[ 40 : 59 ] Even. A little. Of our own. Wealth. And security. In the interests. Of those. On whose poverty. Our own wealth.

Is built. Of poverty. Our wealth. And our policies. Were simply a function. Of the differential. Between rich and poor. So. What does it mean. A Christian ethic. Does it mean. Longer prison sentences. Does it mean. The flogging of the criminal. Or does it mean. Nations. And collectives. And aggregates. Of nations. Willing to practice. The mindset. Of the son of God. That's. What we call people to. But above all. Is this principle. Of kenosis. Not tonight. Saying something to me. [ 41 : 56 ] About the very nature. Of God. Because. What is reflected. Here. Is. Something which belongs.

To the. Innermost realities. Of the deity. And the innermost essence. Of God. The point. Is not. That the man. Christ Jesus. Practiced. Kenosis. The point. Is. That he. Became. A man. Because. Before. He became. Man. He practiced. Kenosis. As the son of God. It was. God. Who didn't look. On his own things. But on the things. Of others. It was. God. Who did not insist. On his rights. It was. [ 42 : 51 ] God. Who made. Himself. In nothing. The early church. The church. Of the fourth. And fifth century.

Had such. A magnificent grasp. Of this. Who it was. Who was incarnate. Who it was. Who was crucified. Who. Who. Who. Who. Who. It was. Who was. Who was the great. Non-entity. It wasn't. The human nature. It was. The son. Of God. Himself. Who made. Himself. Nothing. Who looked. At the needs. Of others. Who refrained. From insisting. On his own rights. Refrained. From protecting. His own interests. And made himself. Vulnerable. In a limitless. And absolute degree.

[ 43 : 46 ] And what I see. In the distance. I'm sure. But what I see. Is a God. At whose heart. Is the impulse. To service. A God. At whose heart. Is the instinct. Of self-denial. And the God. Who. The omnipotent. And sovereign. Lord of all. Yet. In the wonder. Of his love. Goes towards. A pain. He need never. Have known. Choses. A humiliation. He need never. Have known. Goes towards. A death. He need never. Have known. Goes towards. [ 44 : 42 ] A cross. He need never. Have known. And goes towards. A desolation. A deliction. An abandonment.

He need never. Have known. And one of which. The magnitude. Caused. Even him. In the prospect. To tremble. Of course. He might remain. He might remain. The inviolable God. And the. Invulnerable God. And the impassable God. But he made. A different choice. And he came. And he washed feet. To. And maybe. From the whole. Of biblical history. I would want. [ 45 : 38 ] A shrine. If I would want. one place forever protected if I would want one frame immobilized and say stop there I would say stop it here almost the greatest moment in the history of the world where the son of God who is God takes a towel and girds himself and washes disciples feet such a reversal of the order yes we should serve him but he serves us and as he comes towards you tonight he comes in the form of a servant it's not his native form it's not even his natural form its form is assumed under the impulses of love he comes comes to you to serve you and he says let me serve you and I'm just wondering what your response to me is is it like Peter thou shalt never wash my feet he is to me the one a greater than who and none other can be conceived

I can think of no greater vision of God than the vision of kenosis and no more magnificent an understanding of deity than the one I find washing feet and the one I see crucified between two thieves but I want you to know and see you as he comes in his unnecessary love towards you this very moment and says to you now let me serve you this great God of wonders who says let me be your servant a new response is it yes Lord or is it never Lord may he bless his word who has let us pray oh Lord we ask that thou wouldst in grace look down upon us and enable us to take thy word to heart to become ourselves practitioners of kenosis to be willing to be nothing and help us too Lord respond in faith and acceptance to the God who comes to us in emptiness in nothingness as the God who made himself nothing

