

# CHRIST'S POVERTY FOR US

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Second Corinthians 8:9 says, "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*" The scriptures describe the humility of the Son of God and how he made himself poor. He did this to provide the way for us to have eternal riches.

## **From rich to poor**

On the eve of his crucifixion, Christ made request of his Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). From this request, we know that Christ had great glory in Heaven with his Father from the beginning, and that he had left off that glory when he came to this earth. Philippians 2:6 states that Christ was "in the form of God" prior to coming into this world. Thus, he humbled himself greatly when he came to this earth. He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Php 2:6), he then "*made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*" (Php 2:7-8). Christ emptied himself and forsook all the riches and glory of heaven and was made like us in every way when he came here (Heb 2:9-18).

## **Christ's poverty**

When he was on this earth, Christ did not live in wealth and luxury. He did not even have a place to lay his head (Matt 8:20; Luke 9:58). When he was crucified and the soldiers cast lots for his possessions (Psa 22:18; Matt 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34), all that was there were his clothes and a coat that was woven without seam (John 19:23-24). And Jesus also did not have a retinue of servants waiting upon him. In fact, the very opposite was true. Jesus took upon him the form of a *servant*. He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt 20:25-28; Mark 9:35; 10:42-45), and said, "I am among you as he that serves" (Luke 22:24-27). Jesus humbled himself to serve to the point that he even washed his disciples' feet (John 13:1-17). In all of this, he left the perfect example of being poor in spirit (Isa 66:2; Ps 51:17; Matt 5:3). Throughout his life on this earth, Jesus obeyed His Father (Php 2:8; 5:8). He never sinned even one time (John 8:46; 16:33; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 2:22; 3:18; Rev 3:21). He only did God's will, not his own (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:28-29; 17:4). He even returned good for the evil that was done to him (Matt 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36; 22:51; 23:34; Jas 5:6; 1 Pet 2:21-25; 3:8-9,13-14). He learned obedience and grew to be spiritually

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complete (Luke 6:40; John 15:9; 17:20-26; Heb 2:10; 5:8). Jesus humbled himself and obeyed God to the point of dying on the cross (Php 2:5-8), proving that he would do *nothing* of himself but only and always what pleased the Father (John 8:28-29). This was the ultimate act of humility and obedience to God, and of love towards mankind (John 13:1; 13:34; 15:9-13; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Gal 2:20; Eph 5:2,25; Rev 1:5). Christ's pathway from the riches of heaven to his death on the cross was the greatest descent from wealth to poverty that there could ever be.

## **The way to be rich**

But through Christ's poverty, we have the opportunity to become truly rich. It is through Christ's sacrifice that we have redemption, reconciliation with God, the remission of sins, and freedom from sin (Isa 53:5-6; Matt 26:28; Luke 24:47; John 3:16-18; Acts 2:38; 5:30-31; 10:34-43; 20:28; Rom 3:24-25; 5:6-11; 1 Cor 5:7; 10:16; Eph 1:7; 2:13; 4:32; 5:2; Col 1:13-14,18-22; Heb 9:11-14,22-28; 10:4-23,26-29; 12:22-24; 13:12-13,20-21; 1 Pet 1:2,18-19; 1 John 1:7; 5:6,8; Rev 1:5-6; 5:9-10; 7:14; 12:11). All spiritual riches and blessings are found in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 8:9; Eph 1:3; Php 4:19; 1 Tim 6:17-18; 2 Pet 1:3; Jas 1:4; 2:5; 3 John 2; Rev 2:9). We have the opportunity to see this glory of the Lord, and have the same mind in us (Php 2:5-8). The glory of the New Testament is described in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*" When we have the mind of Christ, changed into his image, we have the ultimate and eternal riches. "*For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal*" (2 Cor 4:16-18). Finally, when we have followed Christ in this life, and are conformed to his image, we have the promise of partaking of the glory that he has again in Heaven. In anticipation of receiving his request to have his glory restored, Christ also prayed in John 17:24 that we would be able to partake of that glory with him: "*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*"