

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*I came upon this article after I sent out “Sold Out” with its admonition to fight with Jesus. This article from Fr. Schall<sup>†</sup> tells us how to do it. This article has been appended to the original article on the website to be read first before reading how the globalists are trying to steal faith and freedom from us common folk.*

## The “Mind” of Christ

*We do not find ourselves by finding ourselves. We find ourselves by finding Him who first loved us and gave us to ourselves.*

[July 9, 2022 James V. Schall, S.J. Columns, Features, Sojourns with Schall o](#)  
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**Genealogy of Jesus Christ and the Christ Pantocrator (WikiArt.org)**

**Editor’s note:** *This “Sojourns With Schall” column was originally posted a decade ago, on July 11, 2012.*

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*“The hymn to Christ, or, more commonly, the ‘Christological hymn’ (Philippians 2:4-9) is a hymn in which all attention is focused on the ‘mind’ of Christ, that is, on his way of thinking and on his practical approach to life.”*

— **Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, June 27, 2012.**

*“Human logic often seeks self-fulfillment in power, in domination, in forceful means. Man still wants to build the Tower of Babel with his own efforts, to reach God’s height by himself, to be like God.”*

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## I.

The fact that a quarter of the *General Catechism* is devoted to prayer has always impressed me. Likewise, this year’s papal audiences are devoted to prayer. Surely, some will insist, this is too much. Like the money spent on oils to anoint Christ’s feet, could they not have found better use, say, in helping the poor? The basic Christian response to this oft-heard remark is this: It is highly unlikely that anyone will help someone else, or even his best self, if he does not pray. Why is this so?

The basic answer at the heart of all human issues is how we stand to God. **If we put God first, and not ourselves, we will love others, make their lives ours. If we put ourselves first, we will repeat the history of humanity, which fashions our relations to others in terms of power and struggle, intent on protecting oneself, not in giving oneself.**

According to St. Paul, joy is the basic effect of our faith. Our faith is in the example of Christ, including His cross. When Paul thought of these things, he was in prison, probably in Rome. There, he expected no alternative but death. It is in this context that the “Christological hymn” of Philippians revealed “the ‘mind’ of Christ.” This mind teaches us how to think and a “practical approach to life.”

If we look at this mind of Christ in Philippians, Benedict tells us, it reveals “love, generosity, humility, obedience to God, the gift of self.” It involves a whole way of life and thinking about reality. **In this sense, “prayers must lead Christians to knowledge and union in ever deeper love with the Lord, if they are to be able to think, act and love like him.... Putting this into practice, learning the sentiments of Jesus, is the way of Christian life.”**

The “way” of the Christian life is summarized in this Pauline hymn. It shows “the entire divine and human itinerary of the Son of God and englobes the whole of human history from being in the form of God to the

Incarnation, to death on the Cross and to exaltation in the Father's glory; the behavior of Adam, of man, is also implicit from the start." This is a remarkable passage.

The understanding of the Son of God—his being and presence within creation—is what explains human history. Over against this history of God's presence in the world is man's effort to reject it. This negative relation to God follows from the use of our free will to find reasons why God's order is not accepted as human order.

Christ was in the "form" of God. He was true God and man. This "being God" did not, however, prevent Him from going out of Himself. God's "being God" is not seen as a "triumph" or a "supremacy." Right away, we distinguish God's being and nature from our own. Christ "stripped" Himself and took on the form of a "slave." Why did He do this? "To behave as a servant totally dedicated to serving others." Thus the purpose of God's coming out of Himself in the Incarnation was to teach us how God acts and expects us to act.

Jesus "humbled" Himself. He was obedient to His Father's will." Benedicts cites Cicero as saying that crucifixion is the "most degrading kind of death." Here Christ attained the "greatest degree of humiliation." This is not simply humiliation for humiliation's sake. Rather it is to show the way that God teaches us about His own love, both of Christ and of us. "Through the Cross of Christ, man is redeemed and Adam's experience is reversed."

## II.

What was Adam's experience? And why was this reversal needed? **"Adam, created in the image and likeness of God, claimed to be like God through his own effort, to put himself in God's place and in this way lost the original dignity that had been given to him." Adam's sin became the paradigm of all sin, great and small.** All human sin still follows the same model. It implicitly rejects the love that God gives us and invites us to imitate, a sacrificial love for others. It replaces this love by our own definition of what we want to do and love, now disguised as what "ought" to be done by everyone. Man thus lost "the original dignity" that had been given to him.

Christ, though in the "form" of God, humbled Himself. He did this to show that Adam's example was not correct for us. We still have some of this "Adam in us." His "disobedience" needs to be replaced by Christ's obedience. We are to copy His humbling of Himself. **Prayer means precisely "to open our mind, our heart and our will to the action of the Holy Spirit to enter into this dynamic of life."**

“Human logic often seeks self-fulfillment in power, in domination, in forceful means. Man still wants to build the Tower of Babel with his own efforts, to reach God’s heights by himself, to be like God.” This passage is not a critique of “logic” as such. Logic is itself a good thing. But we are aware of the rational steps that press on from our first operative principle, that we want to rule ourselves for our own ends. We conclude that we build our own ethic and politics. They depend on nothing but our chosen end. There is “logic” of disorder and rejection of the good.

In the plan of God, however, that is implicit in this Pauline hymn, “the Incarnation and the Cross remind us that complete fulfillment is found by conforming our human will to the will of the Father. We are to empty ourselves of our selfishness, to fill ourselves with God’s love, with his charity, and thereby become capable of truly loving others.” Thus, the whole point of the human drama is that we be able to receive and live the love that is manifest in the Godhead, in the Trinitarian life, as it is manifest in the life of Christ.

“Man does not find himself by remaining closed in on himself, by affirming himself. Man finds himself only by coming out of himself...” Logically, to “come out of ourselves” means that we see and love what is not ourselves. This is the great divine gift. The inner love of the Godhead by being itself also is creative and, if necessary, redemptive. It is good for man to be, but it is not good for him to be alone.

“And if Adam wanted to imitate God, this was not a bad thing in itself but he had the wrong idea of God.” This is why **having the right idea of God is so significant, why idolatry in any form—of statues, laws, politics, or other beings—is so contrary of what we are given to be.** “God is not someone who only wants greatness. God is love which was already given in the Trinity and was then given to the Creation. And imitating God means coming out of oneself, giving oneself in love.” When I read passages like these in Benedict, I sometimes think that his great legacy will be to teach us nothing less than that *Deus Caritas Est*, as he entitled his first encyclical.

### III.

The second part of Paul’s hymn reminds us of two things. The first is that Christ is the “Lord,” the word used for God in the Old Testament. We speak now of the Father who bestows this title on Christ, true man, because of His obedience. The Jesus who is exalted and the Jesus of the Last Supper are the same. There, Christ washed the feet of the Apostles. When He finished, He quizzed them. “Do you know what I have done?” He also

identified Himself as their “Teacher.” They are to follow His teaching and example. “Loving is God’s essence.” This is the power that purifies man.

**We need a “scale of values” that is the Lord’s, not ours. Prayer is designed to make us aware of this priority.** We also show our understanding of God by kneeling and genuflecting. “Every knee shall bow.” The pope is not impressed by churches in which no one kneels or those in which we never see genuflections, or in which we have to look all over to find the Blessed Sacrament. “Genuflection or kneeling in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament exactly expresses the attitude of adoration in God’s presence and also with the body. Hence the importance of not doing this action out of habit or hastily but rather with profound awareness. When we kneel before the Lord, we profess our faith in him; we recognize that he is the one Lord of our life.”

**In the end, the “mind” of Christ does not follow “human logic” to find power and rule to be its end. Rather it follows Christ who though in the form of God, took on that of a slave in order that He might teach and restore the original love in which we were created.** It is a love that goes out of itself in the way the love of God within the Trinity went out of itself. We do not find ourselves by finding ourselves. We find ourselves by finding Him who first loved us and gave us to ourselves. We pray *for* ourselves, not *to* ourselves. We are born and saved because of others have first loved us. This is both a plan of life and the subject of our constant prayer.

**About James V. Schall, S.J. [180 Articles](#)**

**James V. Schall, S.J.** (1928-2019) taught political philosophy at Georgetown University for many years until retiring in 2012. He was the [author of over thirty books](#) and countless essays on philosophy, theology, education, morality, and other topics. His of his last books included *On Islam: A Chronological Record, 2002-2018* (Ignatius Press, 2018) and *The Politics of Heaven and Hell: Christian Themes from Classical, Medieval, and Modern Political Philosophy* (Ignatius, 2020).

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