

Student Work

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He Made Himself Nothing

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He Made Himself Nothing

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Jill Schouten

Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 31:9-16](#)

[Isaiah 50:4-9a](#)

[Matthew 26:14-27:66](#)

[Philippians 2:5-11](#)

Try to imagine “nothing”. What do you see? If you are like me, you likely envision the vastness of outer space, an empty jar, or a tiny speck of dust. We often consider each of these things to be “nothing”. Yet, is it true? Is there such a thing as nothing?

As humans, the concept of “nothing” is difficult to grasp. Everything we see and imagine is still something. The empty space between the stars and galaxies is actually filled with an infinite amount of minuscule particles. Likewise, an empty jar is never really empty as oxygen fills and surrounds it. A speck of dust may seem like nothing to you; yet when examined under a microscope, there’s a whole other world unveiled.

To define “nothing”, one might say it is the lowest form of anything. Quite mind-boggling? Yes, but stick with me. To be “nothing” is to be nonexistent, absent, and of no value or worth. For humanity, being “nothing” has negative connotations, as each one of us craves to be something. Our deepest longings are to be acknowledged, appreciated, and, ultimately, to be known. We want people to notice us and recognize our accomplishments. We desire to matter and have purpose. Being viewed as “nothing” to society is one of our greatest fears.

In Philippians 2:7, the verse begins by saying “...he [Christ Jesus) made himself nothing”. Nothing! Can we even begin truly comprehend what Christ did when he left his heavenly throne to dwell on earth with us? No, of course not. Just as we cannot comprehend the concept of “nothing”, so is the immensity of what Christ did in becoming one of us. So often, we take what Jesus did for granted. We didn’t deserve anything, yet Christ became nothing because of his love for us.

We see His deep love for us in Matthew 26:14-27:66 as it gives us the account of Judas’ betrayal, Peter’s denial, the trial and crucifixion of Christ. The physical pain Jesus endured is unimaginable to our slight imaginations. Furthermore, nothing compares to Christ’s deep agony in Matthew 26:45-50 when God, his Father, forsook him. In separation from God, Christ became nothing, that we may have everything: eternal life!

As we draw near to Good Friday, let Christ’s death serve not only as a reminder of God’s love for us, but also as a call to service. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, calls us to this service in our relationships with others. He says to “have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). Well what does that mindset look like? Paul goes on to explain how Jesus “took on the very nature of a servant”, “humbled himself”, and became “obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:7-8). We are called to imitate! Imitate Christ’s example, by daily humbling ourselves, serving our neighbor, and giving up our earthly desires for the sake of the gospel. May we place ourselves in lowly positions in order to serve others well. In our service, may all the glory be given to the One who gave his all.

Today, let us become “nothing”, so that Jesus may be everything.