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**1863**  
**Tomus Primus**  
**Locus Quartus**  
**Caput XIV**  
**De statu exinanitionis et exaltationis**

**John Gerhard**  
**Loci Theologici**  
**Ed. Preuss**  
**Berlin**  
**1863**  
**Book I**  
**Section 4**  
**Chapter 14**  
**The State of Exinanition and Exaltation**

[Translated by Aaron Moldenhauer, Middler Dogmatics, Ascension Day 2002]

## Translator's Preface

The Lutheran dogmaticians have a well-deserved reputation as excellent theologians. Their dogmatics are thoroughly scriptural with an emphasis on exegesis. They bear in mind that *theologia est habitus practicus*. Their works are quite clear, not only in stating their position but also in refuting the position of their opponents. They are well-versed in the Church Fathers and are quite skilled in the biblical languages. Gerhard's chapter on the exinanition and exaltation of Christ lives up to all these expectations. In this chapter his arguments are frequently supported by the testimony of Church Fathers. His writing style is clear, both in his theses and antitheses. He bears in mind both sides of the *habitus practicus*: he instructs to increase the knowledge and edify the faith of the Christian and also draws practical applications from the exinanition and exaltation of Christ. Gerhard takes a thoroughly Scriptural approach to this chapter. The better part of the chapter is an exegesis of Philippians 2. Gerhard shows his ability to work with the biblical languages as he unfolds this exegesis. The result is an excellent treatment of the exinanition and exaltation of Christ.

A few notes need to be made regarding the translation. Gerhard makes frequent use of Greek terms in this chapter. When Greek terms are used as part of a Latin sentence (for example, as an adverb), they have been translated with no additional notations. However, when Gerhard uses a Greek term to comment on the Greek vocable, it has not been translated. Also, when Gerhard uses a Greek term alongside his own translation of that term, or when an original Greek quotation is included with Gerhard's translation of the quotation, the Greek has not been translated.

In this chapter Gerhard uses a few words which have no English equivalent. The most prevalent is *forma*. *Forma* is the Latin translation of the Greek μορφή. It means the state or condition, as determined either by the outward appearance alone, by the outward appearance and the essence, or by the essence alone. In order to make Gerhard's extensive discussion of the term clear, *forma* has not been translated. Gerhard also makes use of the technical terms *actus primus* and *actus secundus*. *Actus primus* refers to the raw power or ability; *actus secundus* refers to a display of that power in external operation. These terms have also been left in Latin.

Gerhard's paragraph divisions have been maintained with their respective numbers. This allows easy reference to the original text. At the same time, in order to help the modern reader follow the flow of thought, some editing has been done. Namely, additional paragraph divisions and English headings have been added to assist the modern reader.

To him who made himself poor that we may be rich; to him who ascended in glory to rule all things for his Church be praise and honor and glory and thanks now and forever. Amen.

## Concerning the State of Exinanition and the State of Exaltation.

### Definition of Exinanition

**293. Thesis 1: The exinanition as defined by the apostle in Philippians 2:7-8 is the obedience or subjection of Jesus Christ the God-man [θεανθρώπος] in the *forma* of a humble servant up to death, even death on a cross.**

We said above that we must distinguish between the communication [of attributes] and the use of the communicated attributes. The communication of divine idioms was brought about in the first moment of the incarnation, but Christ deferred the full use of them until he ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of God; from this the distinction between the state of exinanition and exaltation is derived. The exinanition of Christ is interpreted in two senses: ecclesiastical and biblical.

### The Ecclesiastical Sense

Ecclesiastically, that is, in the writings of the doctors of the church the exinanition is defined as a merciful inclination by which ὁ Λόγος inclined himself in order to have mercy on us and stooped to descend from heaven and assume a human nature in order to aid us. This exinanition, used loosely in this ecclesiastical sense, is called the humiliation of the incarnation; also as a disposition, by which the Son of God is said to have humbled himself by a merciful inclination (John 1:14; 3:13; 1 Tim. 3:16; Hebr. 2:16). This inclination from incorporeal majesty to the baseness of a body needs to be explained in a manner worthy of God. Justin in *ἐχθ. πίστ.* p. 299: “The descent was not of the body, but the will of the divine power.” Athanasius *contra gregal. Sabell.* tom. 1. p. 516: “Since the majesty and magnificence in the supercelestial God is named one thing, that which is contrary to it, namely, terrestrial humility, is called γήινως. to dwell on the earth. You will indisputably find that the descent of the Word is the inclination from incorporeal majesty to the baseness of a body. ἢ κατάβασις, εὐρίσκετε, τοῦ Λόγου ἢ ἐκ τῆς ἀσωμάτου μεγαλοπρεπειᾶς εἰς τὸ τοῦ σώματος εὐτελεῖς ἐπίδοσις etc.” Leo *serm. 7 de nativ.*: “The Word of God, God, the Son of God inclined himself to take up our humility without a reduction of his majesty, so that, remaining what he was and assuming what he was not, namely the true *forma* of a servant, assuming this *forma* to himself who was equal to God the Father in *forma*, he united and joined both natures in a complete union, so that the glorification did not perfect the inferior nature and the assumption did not diminish the superior nature.” John of Damascus lib. 3. *ort. fid.* c. 1. circ. fin.: “εὐδοκίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ὁ μονογενῆς υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θεός, etc. ὁ ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων κλίνας οὐρανοὺς κατέρχεται, τοῦτ’ ἔστι τὸ ἀταπεινῶτον αὐτοῦ ὕψος ἀταπεινώτως ταπεινώσας, συγκατάβασιν ἄφραστον τε καὶ ἀκατάληπτον (τοῦτο γὰρ δηλοῖ ἢ καταβάσις). καὶ θεὸς ὢν τέλειος ἄνθρωπος τέλειος γίνεται. By the good will of the Father the only-begotten Son of God and the Word of God and God, etc. who was existing in the *forma* of God, turned aside [*inclinavit*] the heavens and descended, that is, he humbled his loftiness, which cannot be humbled, in a non-humbling way and descended by an inexpressible and incomprehensible descent (for the descent shows that) and existing as perfect God he was made a complete man.” But in this locus the exinanition spoken of loosely, in this ecclesiastical sense, is not discussed.

### The Biblical Sense

**294.** In the biblical sense or as used by the apostle in Philippians 2 the exinanition properly speaking is defined as the κενώσις [emptying] of Jesus Christ or the incarnate Λόγος, which sense of exinanition is described in Philippians 2 in its proper *sedes*. Therefore let us analyze this passage. The objective of the apostle is to encourage the Philippians and all believers to be humble (v. 3), following the example of Christ (v. 5) who, although he was in the *forma* of God (v. 7), humbled himself (v. 8) on account of which God exalted him (v. 9). The apostle requires this same heart and mind in all the faithful: that it is right for them to follow in

the footsteps of Christ their master, in order that, after they will have humbled themselves under the powerful hand of God, they also will be exalted in their own time (1 Pet. 5:6).

### A False View

The subject of the apostolic proposition is Christ Jesus (v.5), by which name many of the Calvinists and Papists understand the Λόγος ἄσαρκος, and for this reason they understand and teach that the assumption of the *forma* of a servant described in this passage is the incarnation of the Son. This is clear from Beza p. 1 *resp. ad acta colloq.* p. 138. and Bellarmine libr. 1 *de Christi anim.* c. 6. We object to their judgment on the grounds of the following:

1) The objective of the apostle. The objective of the apostle is that he wishes to encourage the Philippians to be humble by taking into consideration the example of Christ. Therefore he gives them an example from the present time, not from the future. He proposes to them that the example of Christ is to be imitated as a way of life. Therefore he considers the deeds of Christ which occurred before their eyes. The incarnation is not one of these visible acts. The apostle bids the Philippians to imitate Christ in the ways in which they were not yet like Christ, but in which ways they were able and ought to be like Christ. Indeed, they were all already true men, but puffed up and arrogant. Therefore he bids them to imitate Christ and to strive to be humble. However, no one is able to be like the Son of God in respect to the incarnation.

2) The title given to the subject. The apostle calls the one who emptied himself “Jesus Christ.” This double title is fit for him after the incarnation. For Jesus is our Savior according to both natures (Matt. 1:21). And the anointing, by reason of which he is called Christ, happened to him according to the human nature (Dan. 9:24). The Son of God or ὁ Λόγος is properly said to have been made flesh, but Jesus Christ the God-man (θεάνθρωπος) is not properly said to have been made flesh, since he already exists as a man.

3) What is asserted in the predicate. It is said concerning Jesus Christ that he was in the *forma* of God (v.6). However, the Λόγος ἄσαρκος exists not so much in the *forma* of God as he himself is the *forma* of God (Hebr. 1:3). A certain emptying (κένωσις) is ascribed to Christ in verse 7. But, properly speaking, emptying cannot be ascribed to the Λόγος ἄσαρκος, the absolute deity, since he is immutable and invariable. Humiliation is attributed to this Christ in verse 8. But humiliation properly speaking is not able to be ascribed to the absolute deity, for humiliation brings in a certain changeableness to the humiliated nature. It is ascribed to Christ, that he was found σχῆματι [in form] as a man and acted obediently to the Father, even up to death (in the verses just cited). But neither σχῆμα nor death is fitting for the Λόγος ἄσαρκος. Exinanition and humiliation are ascribed to Christ, which were later removed through the exaltation. But the incarnation, that is, the human nature, has not been removed through the exaltation. The exaltation is fitting for Christ according to the same nature as the exinanition is fitting for Christ, as the apostle shows by the opposition of the two in verses 8 and 9. Now, surely the exaltation does not occur in the absolute deity of the Λόγος. Therefore neither does the exinanition, and consequently the apostle does not discuss this with respect to the Λόγος ἄσαρκος and his incarnation.

4) The interpretation of the Fathers. This is discussed below.

5) The judgment of opponents. Piscator in *schol.* correctly states that speaking properly and precisely, this passage ought not to be expounded in reference to the incarnation of Christ, but rather the humiliation of the incarnation. So much about the subject.

### Three Assertions

**295.** In the predicate three things about Christ are made clear. 1) What sort he was able to be. 2) What sort he wished to be. 3) What sort the heavenly Father made him. The part of the predicate which says that Christ is in the *forma* of God, ἐν μορφῇ, belongs to the first category. The Jesuits and Calvinists commonly explain this phrase to mean “to be God by nature.” But it must be noted, that the *forma* of God, even if the

subject and the matter itself is only one, nevertheless it receives a two-fold reckoning and consideration. For it is able to be considered either in and of itself, in its possession and by reason of its essence, that is, to what extent it is possessed; or, in respect to the things it creates, in its use, by reason of its authority, to what extent it publicly goes forth by its works and exhibits itself externally so that it may be perceived by human senses. In this passage, we deny that the divine nature and essence in itself is primarily and chiefly denoted by this phrase and that this nature is to be considered according to its essence. Rather, we maintain that through this phrase we are to understand the divine state or the divine condition; namely, divine glory and majesty. We confirm this assertion with the following arguments:

1) The *forma* and that which is in the *forma* are distinct, since it is not possible to say that something is in itself. Now surely the Son of God according to his deity is the *forma* of God, the image and the character of the deity (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). Therefore it is not possible to say that he is in the *forma* of God according to his deity. Therefore to be absolutely and simply in the *forma* of God is not to be God by nature. Rather, it is to conduct oneself as God, to declare oneself God, to exercise divine majesty by performing divine works. Calvin in his commentary on this passage favors our exposition. (Danaeus *contra Chemnic.* q. 1355.) Zanchius also asserts that μορφή is to be distinguished from οὐσία.

2) If the phrase “to be in the *forma* of God” means precisely the same thing as “to be God by nature,” it will follow that one may also say of the Father and the Holy Spirit that they are in the *forma* of God. That has not been customary in the church up to this time.

3) In the apostolic text, the *forma* of God ought to be interpreted in the same way as the *forma* of a servant, as the parallel yet opposite placement of the terms demonstrates. Now certainly the *forma* of a servant is not able to be understood concerning the human nature and essence, since Christ is not a servant by nature, and since Christ laid aside the *forma* of a servant in the exaltation. Luther in *Post. eccles.* accurately presents this argument.

4) The *forma* of God is understood in such a way that it was able to be seen by men. Concerning this John 1:14 says: “We have seen his glory.” That is clear from the objective, since Paul encourages us to be humble by following the example of Christ. We are not able to seek an example to imitate from things that are unknown and unseen. Now certainly the divine nature and essence in itself is not able to be seen by human eyes (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 6:16); but is seen only in the works in which it reveals itself through its power and majesty.

5) The apostle speaks about the *forma* of God to the extent that is fitting for Christ inherently, not essentially, for he says ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ. But this can only be related to the human nature of Christ, which has been assumed in the person of the Λόγος.

6) The cohesion of the text makes clear that the apostle means one and the same thing with these three vocables: μορφή, ὁμοίωμα, and σχῆμα. Now surely σχῆμα and ὁμοίωμα pertain not to the essence, but to the eternal state of the human nature. Therefore the vocable μορφή also denotes not the divine nature and essence, but the divine state and condition.

7) The later meaning of μορφή, which is understood as the essential *forma* or the nature and essence of a thing, is noted and used solely by philosophers. Piscator in *Anal.*: “I do not think that the apostle understands ‘the *forma* of God’ as the divine nature itself, in the same way that Aristotle in philosophy understands the vocable μορφή to mean the nature and essence of a thing. For it is not probable that the apostle would use that word in a sense which was observed solely by philosophers, but was unknown to the people. Then it is clear from the cohesion of the sentence that the apostle uses the three vocables μορφή, ὁμοίωμα, and σχῆμα to denote one and the same thing.”

8) The Fathers and more recent theologians explain it in the same way. Ambrose in his commentary on Philippians, p. 367, explains “*forma* as divine virtue, power and work, which demonstrates that Christ is God.” He says: “He was in the *forma* of God because, when he appeared as a man, he did the works of God, in order that it would be clear from the things he did that he, who was thought to be only a man, was God. For the works indicated the *forma*, in order that that one might be known as God, that one who was in the outward work or *forma* of God, because his works were certainly not the works of a man. For what is the *forma* of God except

an example in which God appeared, then raised the dead, restored hearing to the deaf, and cleansed the lepers?" Luther tom. 1 *Witeb. Lat.* p. 69 in *conc. de dupl. just.*: "The *forma* of God is not said to be the essence of God, because Christ never emptied himself of the essence of God. In the same way the *forma* of a servant cannot be understood as the essence of humanity, but the *forma* of God is wisdom, virtue, justice, goodness, and finally freedom." Similar passages occur in tom. 1 *Jen. Lat.* fol. 179. in *Post. major.* tom. 1. *Epistol.* ep. 94 etc. Erasmus in his annotations for Philippians 2 in like manner understands the phrase "to be in the *forma* of God" in regard to the human nature of Christ which was enriched by divine endowments and works from the Λόγος itself. Selnecker in *lib. de noviss. verb. David* states that consideration should be given to 1 Chronicles 17:17: "You have looked at me in the *forma* of man, you who are God in the celestial realms." Chemnitz *de duabus nat.* p. 352: "μορφή is used when some nature or essence is to be considered as it is endowed with the idioms, attributes and works of another nature, either divine or human, and when the nature has been clothed or adorned." Therefore the sense is that Christ, already from the first moment of the incarnation, was able to exercise the divine glory, majesty and virtue, which were communicated to him according to the human nature by making full use of them. He was able to conduct himself as God, etc. Luther's admonition can also be related to this: "There are three ways of being in a *forma* or laying hold of an external *forma* and condition. The first is the essence or nature considered without the *forma* (the act or the external work). The second is the essence and the *forma* (the act or the external work) considered at the same time. The third is the external *forma* or work of something considered without the reality of the nature and essence, which produces such a *forma*." The third way is foreign to Christ, moreover, it applies to the devil and his ministers. The first way is fitting for Christ in the state of exinanition; the second in the state of exaltation.

### Assertion 2: What He Wished to Be

**296.** To the second category belongs first of all what is said negatively or rather in a way that does not set boundaries [ἄοιστως] concerning Christ: "οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ." Some maintain that τὸ ἠγεῖσθαι ἄρπαγμὸν is simply used for ἀρπάζειν, "to seize, to take possession of as plunder, to abuse rashly and for pleasure." In this way in Hebrews 10:29 κοινὸν ἠγησάμενος is used for κοινώσας or κοινωσάμενος, so that the sense would be that by choice he did not use or abuse it, not that he took it for himself, but rather he abstained from its use by emptying himself of its use. Isidore *Pelusiota* lib. 1. epist. 139. explains the vocable "plunder [*rapinae*]" poorly enough and unsuitably: "When they (the Philippians) were Gentiles, they learned that the supreme God cut himself off from his own Father with respect to those characteristics which were designated to be increased. It is apparent that they were apprehensive about this lest other sons might exist and other fellow citizens of the kingdom and fellow heirs as well as some who might have seized divine attributes, and they were apprehensive that dissension and wars might arise from this. They were doubtful whether the Son of God, having left the thrones of heaven, would not fear any sharing of rule and power when he came to us and took on flesh. Therefore to answer their ignorance, or rather, their insanity, the divine man, as a doctor of hidden things offering medicine, uses these words: 'I will not seize [*rapinam*], etc.' That is, he will by no means seize deity nor the kingdom through force, he has it innately before the ages. In the same way he is not at all afraid lest it be seized from him, truly, since he is Lord of heavenly things, earthly things, and infernal things; neither is he afraid to leave things above and come near to us. Indeed, he also advanced even into the inferno, in order that, by walking through all things everywhere he might set all free in salvation." Some explain it this way: "He did not parade his plunder to show that he was equal to God; that is, he did not display his divine glory as victors usually display the spoils taken from their enemies in triumphs, but he hid that glory." The simplest explanation is deduced from an accurate examination of the individual words. ἠγεῖσθαι is used by the apostle to mean "to resolve certainly and without doubt" (Phil. 2:3, 25; 3:7,8). ἀρπαγμός is the same as ἄρπαγμα, pillage or plunder, whose antonym is τὸ ἴδιον, one's own. The sense of ἀρπαγμός is this: what someone seizes and lays claim to unjustly, since the thing which is said to be seized is not truly and properly fitting for him. Vice versa, in the same way no one may be said to steal or seize what properly belongs to him. The ἀρπαγμός is taken away by the negating particle οὐκ, but the opposite, ἴδιον, replaces it, which is not

ἀρπαγμός. This negating word refers not to the word ἡγήσατο, but it should be joined to ἀρπαγμός, in order that this may be an affirming proposition, not merely a negating proposition. For if we would desire to state that this is a purely negating statement, the apostle's speech would not be full, because he affirms nothing of certainty. Namely, in this passage, at the time of the exinanition, would Christ have had that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ, even in a doubtful sense? Or would Christ have seized divine honors for himself or not? Therefore it is necessary that we maintain that this is an affirming statement, but an indefinite affirmation from metathesis of a negating statement. As a result the meaning is that, even though in the state of exinanition he was the lowest of men, nevertheless Christ did not doubt, but firmly held the conviction that this was not in any way a foreign object to him or something he seized, but that it was his own by his very nature. He was equal to and of one substance (ἴσος, ἰσότης καὶ ὁμοούσιος) with God, and therefore by equal reason of his person and with the same right as the Father and the Holy Spirit, one and the same divine nature was fitting for him. Therefore in this way, as Selnecker *lib. de noviss. verb. David.* notes from Luther, three things are expressed by this phrase: 1) Nature: Christ seizes nothing according to his divine nature, but has everything by his essence and by his nature. 2) Contrast with his enemy or adversary: The devil wishes to take on equality with God by seizing it. Our first parents acted in like manner, but Christ behaved differently. 3) Power: Christ would have been able to display the majesty communicated to himself according to the flesh from the first moment of the incarnation etc. It is thought that the plural adjective ἴσα is generally placed in the neuter as a rhetorical device, as an alternate either for the adverb ἴσως or for the noun of the masculine gender ἴσον or ἐν ἴσῳ. But it is more emphatic if it is interpreted that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα is simply used for the noun ἰσότητος, because the neuter article transforms the whole infinitive phrase into a noun. ἴσον εἶναι is ἰσότητος, ὁμότιμον, to be equal and equivalent; εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ is to be equal and equivalent to God in every way and in all things. Therefore the meaning is that Christ had not only been endowed personally with divine gifts and augmentations according to his human nature from the first moment of the incarnation even in the state of exinanition, so that he would have been able to display divine glory and majesty (to which pertains the statement: ὑπάρχειν ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ), but also, according to the divine nature, he was by nature and essence true God (to which pertains the statement οὐχ ἡγήσατο ἀρπαγμὸν τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ). Augustine *Epist. 66*: “For Christ, who was in the *forma* of God, to be equal to God was not by plunder, but by nature, since he assumed it when he was born—he did not presume to take it by being insolent.” It should not trouble anyone that the first predicate is ascribed to Christ in respect to the human nature while the latter is ascribed to him in respect to the divine nature. Nor should it trouble anyone that we maintain that he who emptied himself according to the human nature is also said to be equal to God according to the divine nature. This is not troubling because on account of the hypostatic union both things are said of one and the same person, and those things which happen to the flesh or the human nature do not befall the flesh in and of itself, but they befall that one, who is equal to God by nature and who personally made that flesh his own. Namely, these things befall the Λόγος, who naturally and essentially is true God and equal to the Father in every way. From this the apostolic proposition arises that the one who is equal to God, that is, the Son of God, emptied himself according to the assumed nature.

**297.** Also belonging to the second category is what is said positively, ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, in the Vulgate *semet ipsum exinanivit* or rather *inanivit*. For in Greek it is not ἐξεκένωσε from ἐκκενόω, but ἐκένωσε from κενόω, although both the simple and the compound verb mean the same thing in Greek as well as Latin. κενός means “empty, void”; therefore ἐκένωσε means “he emptied, he made void.” The interpretation of this vocable is to be sought from those examples which do not speak about some physical pouring out and the loss of the thing in every way, in the way that a goblet is usually emptied when the wine is poured out of it, but rather examples which speak about the drawing back of power and working, which, insofar as it does not show itself, is said to be κενή (Is. 55:11; 1 Cor. 1:17; 2 Cor 6:1; Thess. 2:1). Therefore the exinanition of Christ is not some kind of loss or pouring out and evacuation of the gifts communicated to him through the personal union, but rather a voluntary and willing humbling (as the apostle himself explains later); that is, not always displaying and using the divine majesty in and through the assumed flesh, which majesty otherwise dwelt in him bodily or personally. Therefore it is said in reference to the divine glory that he had emptied himself of it and had put it aside from being seen, to the extent that he did not perpetually and in full light make the divine glory known nor

display it. Nevertheless, the apostle is not speaking about a feigned emptying, but a true and actual emptying. Therefore, by way of explanation, he adds to the passage that Christ emptied himself in this way: “He took on the *forma* of a servant, having been made in the appearance of men and having been found as a man he humbled himself, having acted obediently to the Father even up to death, moreover death on a cross.” These things were not feigned nor counterfeit, but were all done in truth. This is clearly testified to by the prophetic particle  $\text{לְכַף}$  (Is. 53:4), the gospel histories, the truth of our redemption, and the public condemnation of Marcionism.

**298.** A third point pertaining to the second category is what “μορφήν δούλου,” “to take on the *forma* of a servant” means. Some simply take this to be the incarnation, which is described in Hebrews 2:16 by a very similar phrase: “τὸ ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ.” But in this passage to take on the *forma* of a servant does not principally and primarily mean to take on the human nature. Rather, it means to take on the condition and weaknesses of that nature. With the following arguments we show that the *forma* of a servant is to be considered not as that which is predicated of the essence, but rather as that which is predicated of the qualities:

1) By force of contrast: The *forma* of God and the *forma* of a servant are contrasted with each other here. But to be in the *forma* of God here principally means to display the glory and majesty appropriate for God. Therefore to assume a servile *forma* means to freely assume the weaknesses appropriate for a servant.

2) From the relinquishment: The human nature which he once assumed, ὁ Λόγος never relinquished, but he did lay down the *forma* of a servant in the state of exaltation. This happened when “the name which is above every name was given to him” (Phil 2:10) and when “he was made Lord” (Acts 2:38). For how can someone say that he still has the *forma* of a servant in the state of exaltation and that he is still our fellow servant, when in fact “he was raised up to the right hand of God, above every principality, power, strength and dominion and everything that may be named not only in this age, but also in the future age” (Eph. 1:21). If the exinanition is precisely and exactly the assumption of the human nature, by way of contrast the exaltation will be the laying down of the human nature.

3) From a distinction: The *forma* of a servant must be defined in such a way that a distinction between the state of exinanition and the state of exaltation may be drawn from the definition. Now truly that distinction cannot be made primarily and most appropriately if the *forma* is defined as either the human or the divine nature, for as Christ was not only man, but also God in the state of exinanition, so also in the state of exaltation he is not only God, but also man.

4) From consideration of the subject: The subject of the apostolic proposition is Jesus Christ θεάνθρωπος. But it cannot be said about Christ θεάνθρωπος that he became incarnate. Rather, ὁ Λόγος is said to have become flesh; the Son of God is said to assume the seed of Abraham.

5) From the relations in the text: The exinanition is ascribed to Christ in the same way that taking on the *forma* of a servant is also ascribed to him. Now truly the exinanition is not ascribed to Christ in respect to his deity. Therefore also the taking on the *forma* of a servant cannot be explained in this sense, that the deity of ὁ Λόγος took on the human nature. Christ is said to have emptied himself before he took on the *forma* of a servant. Therefore, if the human nature itself came through the taking on the *forma* of a servant, then ὁ Λόγος emptied himself of his very own self or of his deity, which is out of place.

6) From the attached explanation: The apostle himself explains what “taking on the *forma* of a servant” should properly mean by adding “that Christ was found in the appearance of men, that he humbled himself, acting obediently to the Father even up to death.” But these things simply and taken by themselves cannot refer to the incarnation.

7) From the testimony of interpreters: Ambrose in his commentary on this passage: “It does not seem to me that to take on the *forma* of a servant means that he became man, as some interpret it.” And shortly before: “To take on the *forma* of a servant means that he was humbled as though he were a sinner. Moreover, there are servants of sin, such as Ham the son of Noah, who first received the name of a servant by their own fault.” Cyprian or Rufinus *serm. de resurrect.*: “The angelic spirits celebrate these Easter joys in the heavens and they wonder at the glory of the resurrected Lord. They rejoice and take delight in him, who was turned back from the *forma* of a servant to the *forma* of God and exchanged the exinanition of humility for the majesty of the



sublimity he had relinquished.” The Genevan gloss on Isaiah 2 explains the *forma* of a servant in the same way. Piscator in *Anal.* p. 173: “It should be noted that the apostle uses these three words: μορφή, ὁμοίωμα, σχῆμα in the same sense;” p. 171: “The *forma* of a servant is to be understood as the servile, humble and lowly state.” Also take into consideration Beza in *annot. major.* fol. 391. Martin in *Spic.* p. 164: “I do not understand what is said about the *forma* of a servant to be merely the human nature, but rather its lowly state, which he was in for a time.” See also Zanchius in reference to this passage and lib. 2 *de natura Dei* c. 6 p. 175. Moreover, when the Fathers at times seem to understand the *forma* of a servant as humanity itself, that should be understood in a secondary sense and by consequence, because the *forma* of a servant cannot exist without humanity. In fact, humanity is a prerequisite for it. Therefore they properly prove Christ’s humanity from this passage, because it is impossible that he who took on the *forma* of a servant was not true man. Also we are able to confidently progress from the position of πάθος, or the proper disposition, relative to the position of the subject, for whom the disposition is appropriate. Certainly, just as Christ’s true deity may correctly be concluded from this: that Christ is said to have been in the *forma* of God, since Christ would not have been able to display divine majesty in and through his flesh unless he had that majesty personally communicated to himself, and he would not have been able to have that communicated personally unless he were true God; so also Christ’s true humanity may correctly be concluded from this: that Christ is said to have taken on the *forma* of a servant, because human weaknesses presuppose the true essence of humanity.

**299.** Also belonging to this statement is that he was made “ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων,” “in the appearance of men.” It is especially clear from this explanation that the assumption of the *forma* of a servant is not to be understood principally and directly as the assumption of the human nature. This is clear because through the incarnation the Son of God was not only made ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων or only similar to [ὅμοιος] men, which would be to assert Marcionism, but of the same essence [ὁμοούσιος] as man. For ὁμοίωμα refers not to the essence of our nature, but to our weaknesses and the lowliness of our manner of living. In respect to these characteristics Christ was like other men, as is clearly shown by the following:

1) From the proper interpretation of this vocable [ὁμοίωμα]: This word is always used for correspondence of qualities, but not directly for the nature and essence. In Romans 1:25 the Gentiles are said “to have changed the glory of the incorruptible God ἐν ὁμοιώματι of the image of corruptible man,” which cannot be said about the essence of humanity. In Romans 6:5 we are said to have been made “σύμφυτοι τῷ ὁμοιώματι [ones growing together into the likeness] of the death of Christ;” Romans 8:3: “He sent the Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” In this passage the vocable ὁμοιώματος pertains not simply to the flesh, but rather to the boundary added by the apostle “subject to sin.” This emphasis is beautifully examined by Ambrose, lib. 1 *de poenit.* c. 3 tom. 1 p. 153, whose words we have quoted in chapter. 6.

2) From a comparison of equivalent vocables: The apostle joins together μορφή, ὁμοίωμα, and σχῆμα as though they had the same force. But μορφή never means the essence itself or the essential *forma*, but it only means the external figure or the accidental *forma*, as is clear by induction from all the passages where it is used. Therefore μορφή is understood as conformity to the natural operations and weaknesses of the life common to all men. Here ὁμοίωμα ἀνθρώπων is said in almost the same sense by which we are said “to bear the earthly image” in 1 Corinthians 15:50. For the apostle does not set up ὁμοίωμα in opposition to the true human nature in Christ, nor has it been used to address what sort of human nature Christ had by way of its essence, but rather it addresses in what way Christ conducted himself among men and in his manner of living at the time of the exinanition. Namely, that he was ὁμοιοπαθής, that he endured in both body and mind the same affects which other men endure. As it says in Hebrews 2:17, he was pledged to be like [ὁμοιωθῆναι] his brothers in every way. And again in Hebrews 4:15, he was tempted in every way just as we are [καθ’ ὁμοιότητα] yet was without sin; thus also in this passage [Philippians 2] “ἐν ὁμοιότητα ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος” means ὅμοιος ἀνθρώποις [to be like men]. Camerarius in his notations on this passage: “The phrase is a pregnant construction in the Hebrew dialect meaning to be similar [ὅμοιος] to other men.”

**300.** The fifth point in the second category is that he was found as a man in σχῆμα. σχῆμα means actions in the manner of life and living together with other men, the σχέσιν, the appearance and condition, with which he as a man arranged and conformed himself to those, with whom he dealt, for he was conformed to other men (1 Peter 1:15). The ἀναστροφὴν, the way of life, is explained in Romans 12:2 and 1 Peter 1:15. In the same way it is said in 1 Cor. 3:31 that the σχῆμα of this world is passing away, that is, the way of life of this age, life in this world, the actions of this life and at last the entire world, all as one, will pass away. Therefore the sense is that Christ was found in the disposition of this way of life (Luther “*an Geberden*”) as another man, who did not separate himself from the common company of men, who came not as John, neither drinking wine nor eating common foods (Matt. 11:17; Luke 7:33), but eating and drinking. That is, he ate with others in common intercourse, attended banquets, indeed he even ate with sinners. Jacobus ad Portum c. 22 p. 207 writes, “That human disposition, in which Christ is said to have been found, primarily and *per se* signifies not the human nature and essence itself, whose completeness consists in the inner *forma*, but *schema* signifies the suffering of life which Christ endured, even up to death. Therefore secondarily and consequently it signifies the human nature.”

**301.** The sixth point in the second category is that he humbled himself, acting obediently to the Father even up to death, moreover death on a cross. That is, he showed humble obedience to his heavenly Father during the entire time of his life and manner of living, from the beginning, from conception, up to the glorious resurrection and ascension. For τὸ μέχρι denotes not so much a quantity of time as the striving for obedience, namely, that he did not refrain from true and sincere works of obedience to God on account of the salvation of the human race, but that he endured the various sufferings and finally crucifixion, the most disgraceful and most bitter kind of death.

### **Assertion 3: What the Heavenly Father Made Him**

**302.** These parts of the predicate belong to the third category: 1) That God ὑπερήψωσε Christ, that is, he elevated him into the highest sublimity. 2) That the name which is above every name was given to him. These things will be dealt with more completely in thesis 3.

### **Conclusions about the Exinanition**

From the things which are said about the exinanition of Christ we will draw two conclusions.

The first conclusion is that the exinanition ought to be ascribed to Christ not according to the divine nature nor according to both natures, but according to the human nature. We prove this

1) By definition: The exinanition is defined by the apostle as the obedience of Jesus Christ or his subjection in the *forma* of a humble servant even up to death on a cross. From this we conclude that according to which nature Christ was emptied, according to the same nature he was changeable, he was a servant, and he was able to die on the cross. Now truly he was changeable, he was a servant, and he was able to die on the cross not according to the divine nature, but according to the human nature. Therefore according to this same human nature he was emptied; that is, he underwent the exinanition.

2) By contrast: According to which nature Christ was emptied, so also according to this nature he was exalted, as the particle διὸ καὶ (v.9) shows. Now truly Christ has been exalted according to the human nature, as will be clear from the definition of the exaltation below.

3) From the state of the divine nature: The divine nature is ἀμετάβλητος, immutable and unchangeable. According to the divine nature Christ is always at work with the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 5:17). Therefore according to the divine nature no kind of emptying can be ascribed to Christ.

**303.** The second conclusion is: The exinanition, which the apostle ascribes to Christ according to the human nature, is by no means a lack or absence of divine power, not an absolute deprivation, removal,

despoiling, divesting, throwing away, putting down, removing, ceasing, want or emptiness of the fullness, deity and majesty communicated to the flesh. Rather, it is the retraction and leaving off from the use of them. Christ, constituted as a man and concealed by weakness, did not always display the glory and majesty which were truly and in fact communicated to him. Rather, he retracted and drew back from their use, until the time of the exaltation followed. We prove this

1) By the definition of the union: The apostle in Col. 2:9 defines the union as the indwelling of all the fullness of the deity in the assumed body or the human nature. Therefore, since the union was not absent in the state of exinanition, so also the habitation of the fullness of the deity in the assumed body was not absent.

2) From the apostle's explanation: The apostle describes κένωσις as the assumption of the *forma* of a servant, the humbling and obedience, even up to death on a cross. However, in no way do these imply an absence or throwing away of the majesty of the communicated divine attributes.

3) From the performance of miracles: Christ performed divine miracles in the middle of the state of exinanition in the flesh and through the flesh. In these miracles he made his glory known (John 2:11). He was transfigured before his disciples (Matt. 17:3); he instituted the Holy Eucharist, in which he distributes his body by means of the mediating bread and his blood by means of the mediating wine to his disciples, etc. These particular miracles which I have mentioned and other similar ones were rays of the divine power, majesty, and glory which were communicated to him according to the flesh. The fuller use of these was finally to follow in the state of exaltation; meanwhile, from these it may be confidently concluded that Christ was not devoid of that power and glory even in the middle of the state of exinanition, but rather that he willingly and freely abstained from their fuller use.

4) From the testimony of the Church Fathers: Hilary, lib. 12 *de trin.*, p. 253: "The one who emptied himself was not lacking, since the power of strength remained in a powerful way in the one who emptied himself, and by going about in the *forma* of a servant he did not destroy the nature of God." Gregory of Nazianzus *tract. de fid.* p. 84 (another example in tom. 2 fol. 134.): "The sun, when it is hidden by a cloud, has its light concealed, but not darkened, and that light, which fills the whole earth with clear splendor, even when spread out in the whole world, is obstructed but not removed by the small obstacle of the cloud: in the same way also that man, the Lord Jesus, our Savior, God and the Son of God did not cut off God in himself but hid him." The same judgment is repeated in so many words by Ambrose *lib. de fid. contra Arianos* c. 8 p. 175. Likewise Ambrose in *comm. Phil.* 2: "He emptied himself, that is he withdrew his power from work, so that, having been humbled, he might appear to be weak and devoid of strength." Ibid.: "He was in the *forma* of God, because, although he appeared to be a man, he did the works of God, so that it was evident that he was God from the things which he, who ordinarily appeared to be a man did. Moreover, he retained his strength, in such a way that it was not evident in him, so that he seemed to be a man." Augustine *de fide ad Petrum* c. 2: "Christ did not lose that fullness in the exinanition. Otherwise, what could he have given to us from that fullness, if he certainly did not have it?" Bede in c. 2 *Philip.* ex Augustino: "He emptied himself not by losing the *forma* of God, but by assuming the *forma* of a servant." Theodoret *Dial.* 3 ex Chrysostomo: "At times the divinity of the Word left the assumed human nature ἐρήμην καὶ γυμνὴν ἀφίησι τῆς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας, lacking and as if destitute of divine working during the time of the exinanition, in order that he might prove that he had the very nature of humanity by a display of weakness. However, at other times he hid his infirmity by a display of his divinity, since he was not merely man." Leo the Great defines the exinanition: "The assumption of the *forma* of a servant by darkening the immensity of the divine majesty." Fulgentius *libr. de incarnat. et grat.* c. 2: "The exinanition of the only-begotten of God was the assumption of the *forma* of a servant, not a loss or lessening of the deity." Some declare from the apostle's statement in Galatians 4:1 that this was prefigured by the type of king David going into exile from Absalom, at which time he nevertheless was king (2 Sam. 15). Compare the Apology of the Formula of Concord chapter 4.

### Phases of the Exinanition

**304. Thesis 2: To the state of exinanition belongs the conception in the womb, the nativity, the increase in stature and wisdom, the obedience in the *forma* of a servant even up to death on a cross, and finally the burial.**

The state of exinanition began at the first moment of the incarnation and continued up to and included the time of the burial. The whole course of the life of Christ in this world is called the “days of flesh” by the apostle in Hebrews 5:7. By using this Hebraism that time is signified when Christ dwelt among men and was capable of suffering (2 Cor. 5:16); when he was susceptible to weaknesses of the flesh, nevertheless he was without any sin. Augustine lib. 11 *contra Faustum* c. 7: “In this passage he does not want flesh to be understood as the essence itself or our body, which the Lord also calls his flesh after the resurrection, but the corruption and mortality of our flesh, which will not be in us after the resurrection, just as now it is not in Christ.” One Thaddeus from the seventy disciples, who was sent by the apostle Thomas to Edessa, describes these days of flesh, that is the acts pertaining to the state of exinanition, in a sermon which he preached about Christ before king Agbarus with these words (among others), according to Eusebius libr. 1 *Histor. eccles.* c. 14: “I will teach about the advent of Jesus and about his apostleship etc. and how he was diminished and weak and how he was humble, in the external appearance of a man, and in what way he humbled himself and was mortal and diminished his divinity, ἐσμίκρυνεν αὐτοῦ τὴν θεότητα (which cannot be understood as the lessening of the deity itself since it is immutable in and of itself; rather, it is to be understood as the withdrawal and the appearance of the lessening of the deity in its external manifestation) and how much he was oppressed by the Jews.” Neither should it seem strange or doubtful to anyone that we assign to the state of exinanition not only the passion, crucifixion, death, and burial of Christ, but also his conception and nativity, since one must distinguish between the incarnation and the mode of the incarnation. The Son of God could have formed a human nature by direct creation and could have become man by assuming that newly created human nature in the personal union. For instance, he could have become man without being conceived in the womb of his mother. This was, as I have said, the internal nativity: having been borne in the womb of his mother for nine months. Then he came out of the womb into the light, which was the external nativity. For Adam existed as a true man, although he was neither in the womb nor born from the womb. But for us and for our salvation, he willed not only to become man, but also to assume the human nature from our flesh and to willingly subject himself to the infirmities which are customary in the conception and birth of infants. He did this to sanctify our impure conception and birth and to obtain salvation for infants, including those still enclosed in the womb.

**305.** The most ancient church writers explain this point beautifully: Justin in *dial. cum Tryph.* p. 204: “He submitted [ὑπέμεινεν] to being made a partaker in the flesh.” p. 222: “He submitted [ὑπέμεινεν] to being made man through the virgin.” (The same word is used to describe the passion in *Apol. 2. pro Christ.* p. 75: “He submitted [ὑπέμεινεν] both to being despised and to suffering.” Irenaeus lib. 2, c. 39 p. 137: “Christ sanctified every stage of life by being in the likeness of every age. For he came to save all men through himself: all men I say, who are born again through him into God as infants, as small children, as youths, as young men and as old men. Therefore he went through every age of life: he was made an infant for the infants, to sanctify them; he was made a small child to sanctify those who were of the same age, setting an example of piety and righteousness and obedience for them at the same time. He was a young man for the young men, setting an example for the young men and sanctifying them for the Lord. In the same way he was also an old man for the old men, in order that he might be the perfect master in all things, not only according to the exposition of the truth, but also according to age, while at the same time sanctifying also the old men.” lib. 3, c. 4, p. 172: “Christ the Son of God underwent generation from the virgin, uniting man to God through himself.” libr. 3, c. 20 p. 211: “He went through every stage of life to restore communion with God to all stages of life.” Libr. eiusd. c. 31 p. 220: “Why did God not take up dirt a second time (and from this dirt form the human nature of Christ, just as Adam was made), but rather caused his form to be made from Mary? He did this in order that he not make a different form, nor be another form, than that which would be saved; rather, he replicated the very same likeness of a servant. Hilary, lib. 2 *de trin.*, p. 20: “The image of the invisible God did not refuse the disgrace associated with the beginning of human life, but he was born through conception, passed through

crying, the cradle and every insult of our nature, so that his humility might be our excellence, so that his insult might be our honor.”

### Definition of Exaltation

**306. Thesis 3: The exaltation of Jesus Christ is his elevation into the highest sublimity after he acted obediently even up to death on a cross and the endowment of the name which is above every name, at which the knees of all must bend (Phil. 2:9,10). Or, as it is described in other Scripture passages, it is the solemn enthronement and inauguration of the resurrected Christ into the full and perfect exercise of the heavenly dominion and his government of heaven and earth, especially of the Church.**

In the same way that we spoke of the exinanition in both an ecclesiastical sense and a biblical sense, so also by force of contrast the same distinction must be made regarding the exaltation.

The exaltation in the ecclesiastical sense is understood as the elevation of the human nature in the person of the Λόγος, which can be called the exaltation of the incarnation. Just as there was a certain humiliation when the Son of God went forth from the hidden seat of his majesty and lowered himself into our flesh, so also the exaltation may refer to this: that the assumed human nature in the person of the Λόγος was elevated through the personal union, and that it has been made a true and actual participant in the divine idioms, majesty, and glory in the union and through the union. Therefore, in the middle of the state of exinanition, before he took up the fuller exercise of the dominion in heaven and on earth, he is called King and Lord (Luke 2:11; Matt. 21:5; John 18:37).

The exaltation in the biblical sense is the opposite of the exinanition properly defined and described in Phil. 2:5, and can be called the exaltation of glorification, the exaltation to the right hand of God. It is described by the apostle in this passage with these words: v. 9 “On account of which God also raised him up and gave him the name which is above every name, v. 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee would bend, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth; v. 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

### The Subject of the Exaltation

**307.** The subject is Christ Jesus, in the exaltation just as in the exinanition, in order to show that he was restored. Therefore the full apostolic proposition is this: Christ Jesus, who emptied himself by assuming the *forma* of a servant and humbled himself by acting obediently even up to death on a cross, has been exalted by the heavenly Father. Therefore, properly speaking, we say that the θεάνθρωπος, the whole person of Christ put together is the person who was exalted just as he was emptied, for the actions and passions are those of the whole person put together. But if it is next asked: since Christ is in two natures, divine and human, according to which nature is the exaltation ascribed to Christ? the response must be: according to the human nature, which we shall confirm below. Also the exaltation in the proper, biblical sense is distinguished from the exaltation in the ecclesiastical sense. For the former is ascribed to the person put together, but according to the human nature, just as the exinanition in its proper sense is also ascribed to the person put together or to Christ the θεάνθρωπος, but according to the human nature. However, the latter is ascribed to the human nature, just as the exinanition improper in the ecclesiastical sense is ascribed to the divine nature and merely to the Λόγος.

### What is Asserted about the Exaltation

**308.** The following pertain to the predicate:

1) ὑπερύψωσις, that is, superexaltation, elevation into the highest sublimity, exaltation above all: The preposition ὑπέρ added to the simple verb expresses this emphasis. Chemnitz in *Harm.* c. 28 p. 151 cautions that Christ's exaltation is spoken of in three ways in Scripture:

- 1) For the passion and crucifixion. John 8:28: When you have lifted up [*exaltaveritis*] the Son of Man from the earth, then you will know who I am. John 12:32: When I have been raised up [*exaltatus*] from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.
- 2) That he has been exalted to the right hand of God as the victor over sin and death (Acts 2:33; Hebr. 9:24).
- 3) That the merit of Christ is placed before all through the ministry of the gospel as an exalted banner (Isa. 11:10).

In this passage "exaltation" is used in the second sense, as the context makes clear, because it is contrasted to κενώσει καὶ ταπεινώσει, exinanition and humiliation. This exaltation is described by the most emphatic words in Isaiah 52:13: "Behold, my servant acts wisely מַעַל וְנִשָּׂא וְנִרְוֶם וְנִשָּׂא וְנִרְוֶם, he will be raised, lifted up and highly exalted." The apostle wishes to express the same thought later with ὑπέρ. The apostle describes Christ's ὑπερύψωσιν thus:

- 1) He adds the particle διὸ καί, which does not describe the meritorious cause of the exaltation, but only the order and consequent recompense of the exinanition, as will be demonstrated below.
- 2) He ascribes that superexaltation to God, whether the name "God" is taken οὐσιωδῶς, as it expresses the entire Trinity and all three persons of the deity, or ὑποστατικῶς, as it refers to the first person, namely the Father, for both interpretations are consistent with the analogy of faith as it stands in other Scripture passages: Psalm 2:9: "I have made you king." Psalm 42:11 [41:10]: "You, Lord, raise me up again." Psalm 110:7: "He himself will raise up his head." John 17:5: "Glorify me, Father, before yourself." Acts 2:36: "God made this one Christ and Lord." Acts 5:31: "God exalted this Prince and Savior to his right hand." See also the things that are brought forth in the second genus of the communication of attributes, especially thesis 1.

**309.** 2) That the Father gave to him the name which is above every name, etc.: The Church Fathers interpret this name as:

- 1) what that man, the son of Mary, is called: God and the Son of the Most High. Epiphanius *haeres.* 69, p. 341: "As man with God, the Word, he was called the Son of God."
- 2) that the divine majesty, glory and power were communicated to the human nature, because to the Hebrews a name signifies the thing itself and to be called by a name is to be [what that name signifies]. See Ephesians 1:20 and Hebrews 1:4.
- 3) that Christ according to his human nature is our Mediator, Redeemer, Priest and King, ruling us by his Spirit, defending us by his power, freeing and saving us by his grace.

Therefore at the name of Jesus (which encompasses both natures) it is said that knees ought to bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue ought to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. By saying

that every knee will bow [γονυκαμψίαν], the apostle means subjection since knees are also ascribed to heavenly beings and beings under the earth. Origen lib. 9 *comm. ad Rom.* c.14: “One must not understand the knee-bending and every tongue confessing God in a bodily sense, lest we think that even the heavenly beings, who are said to bend the knee, would do this with their bodily members; lest the sun or moon or stars or even angels or anything else that might be called heavenly is thought to adore him by bending bodily knees, or lest we also think that they have carnal tongues and other such members, with which we speak, and that they use these carnal members to confess God. Since it is said about these heavenly beings that they are spirits and fires, what can be understood as a knee in spirits? Or what tongues are looked for in fire? Rather, he defines the knee-bending as total subjection and obedience to God in worship.” This exposition is confirmed by Ephesians 1:20. Thomas lect. 3 in c. 2 *Phillip.*: “Creatures of every kind, whether angels or men or demons are subject to Christ. Moreover, this subjection is of two kinds: one kind is willing, the other unwilling. The holy angels and saints are subject to Christ willingly, but demons and the condemned are not subject to Christ willingly, but unwillingly.” Finally, the phrase that is added, εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς, pertains to this:

- 1) That “the one who honors the Son honors the Father” (John 5:23).
- 2) That in the exaltation of Christ the highest work of God, his grace to us, is seen.
- 3) That the glory of God is the ultimate goal of both Christ’s exaltation and our glorification, which we owe to the exaltation of Christ.

In other Scripture passages Christ’s ὑπερύψωσις is described in this way: that him who had risen from death the Father “seated at his right hand in the heavens (Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:33), above every principality and power and strength and dominion and every name, that is given not only in this age, but also in the coming age, and he has placed everything under his feet and has made him head over all for his own Church” (Eph 1:20-22). That “he gave to him power and honor and the kingdom, so that all peoples, tribes, and languages would serve him” (Dan. 7:14). That “he made him Lord” (Acts 2:36). That “he seated him in the throne of his own majesty” (Heb. 8:1).

### **Conclusions about the Exaltation**

**310.** We draw two conclusions from the things which we have said about the exaltation of Christ.

The first conclusion is that the exaltation proper, as described in Philippians 2:9, is not fitting for Christ according to his divine nature, nor according to both natures, but according to the human nature. We prove this with the same arguments that we used above to demonstrate that the exinanition is fitting for Christ according to his human nature.

1) From the definition: The exaltation is defined by the apostle as the elevation of Jesus Christ into the highest sublimity after he showed humble obedience to the Father, even up to death on a cross, and the endowment of the name that is above every name. However, this definition cannot be ascribed to Christ according to his divinity, because according to his divinity he does not receive anything in time.

2) From contrast: The contrast makes clear that according to which nature the exinanition was fitting for Christ, according to this same nature the exaltation will also be fitting for Christ. Now, as we have seen, the exinanition is fitting for Christ according to the human nature. From the start we have emphasized the particle διὸ καί. Because Christ humbled himself, therefore God exalted him. But would this be the connection: Christ humbled himself according to his humanity, that is, he acted obediently to the Father even up to death on a cross, therefore God exalted him according to his divinity?

3) From the state of the divine nature: According to the divine nature Christ is supreme. He does not receive anything in time as a gift, but he possesses all things by nature through the eternal generation from the Father. Now the vocable ἐχαρίσατο [it was given as a gift] shows clearly that the exaltation happened in time as

a gift to Christ. Therefore it cannot be ascribed to Christ according to his divinity. Jerome in c. 2 *Philipp.*: “Because he, having assumed a human nature, as man deigned to be humble, the divinity, which cannot be humbled, exalted him who had been humbled. But he was also given a name, because he did not have one before.” Didymus of Alexandria lib. 3 *de Spiritu sancto*: “Every creature has been made subject to the divine Word, existing as the Son of God, as to an omnipotent king. And because the divine Λόγος assumed humanity and, raising that humanity from the dead, established it over all principalities, powers, strengths and dominions, all angels are subject to it (the assumed humanity) by an order of God, knowing that it is united with the divine Word, since it is at the right hand of the divinity, and at its name not only earthly and infernal, but even heavenly knees bend and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” All these arguments refer to those points we used in the second genus of the communication of attributes, especially thesis 2. With these arguments we demonstrated that truly divine and infinite gifts were given to the man Christ or according to the human nature. See the Appendix of the Book of Concord p. 831. and the Apology of the Book of Concord p. 36, as well as Chemnitz, *de duabus naturis*, c. 25.

**311.** The second conclusion is this: The exaltation which the apostle describes does not presuppose any lack or absence of divine majesty, power, and glory, which things were certainly communicated to Christ through the personal union prior to the exaltation. Rather, the exaltation brings forth only a fuller use of that majesty and dominion, and, as we have said, the solemn enthronement of Christ for the full and complete use of the dominion given to him according to the human nature. Confirmation of this conclusion may be found in those things which are said about the exinanition and exaltation of Christ up to now and what is said in the questions below.

**312. Thesis 4: The descent into hell, the resurrection from the dead, the ascension into heaven, and the session at the right hand of God pertain to the state of exaltation.**

The fullest treatment of these acts pertaining to the state of exaltation is found both in the discussion of the resurrection of Christ and in the harmony of the Gospels.

### Antitheses

**313. Antithesis 1: The Jesuits pervert the doctrine of the exinanition and the exaltation of Christ in many ways.**

- 1) They explain the exinanition and the assumption of a *forma* of a servant absolutely and directly to be the work of the incarnation. (Cornelius a Lapide in *comm. Phil.* 2. Salmeron, *ibid.*)
- 2) They maintain that the session at the right hand of God, of which the exaltation of Christ principally consists, has been given to the humanity not in itself, but in supposition, for the session was not done so that the humanity in itself would sit at the right hand of God, but rather so that it would be the humanity of that person who is sitting at the right hand of God. Bellarmine lib. 3 *de Christo* c. 15.
- 3) They explain the exaltation and session at the right hand of God as a certain limited power and dominion in absentia, (just as the king of Spain is ruler in the new islands through his vicars), and, lest any impiety be lacking, Bellarmine argues about this passage: “To sit at the right hand was less honorable to the ancients than to sit at the left hand.”
- 4) They support many errors in connection with the acts pertaining to the state of exinanition and exaltation, as is shown in the locus which discusses those acts.

**314. Antithesis 2: The Calvinists**

- 1) The Calvinists state that Christ was emptied and exalted according to both natures. (Beza p. 1. *Resp. ad colloq.* p. 96. Sohnius in *Exeg.* p. 246. Anhalt. in *apol. Germ. contra Elector.* p. 417. Jacobus ad Portum *defens. fid.* p. 209.) Their erroneous hypotheses are opposed and proved false by the apostolic text, Philippians



2, which is expounded above. Polanus in *Syntagm.* lib. 6, c. 22. p. 2681. uses this argument: “As Christ emptied himself as far as his deity is concerned, by not displaying it in himself, but by hiding it in the assumed *forma* of a servant, thus again he was exalted as far as his deity is concerned by powerfully and fully displaying his deity in his glorified flesh.”

We respond:

- 1) Neither the exinanition nor the exaltation is defined this way in the apostolic text.
- 2) If the exinanition is to be defined as a concealment of the deity and divine power, then the exaltation must be its revelation, and consequently the state of exinanition would have often been to a certain extent the state of exaltation and vice versa. For Christ at times during the state of exinanition made his glory known (John 2:12).
- 3) We have not yet seen all things subjected to Christ (Heb. 2:8); therefore Christ would not yet have been exalted.
- 4) According to that definition, the exinanition and exaltation could be attributed even to the Father, namely when he first delays his assistance, but afterwards displays his power against his enemies. See D. Mentzer. in *disp. contra Martinium*.

**315.** 2) They define the exaltation solely through the communication of only finite gifts. Sohnius tom. 1. *Oper. disp.* 7. th. 55: “The exaltation or glorification of Christ according to his human nature is nothing else than the working and simulated creation of limited qualities or gifts in the human nature through the personal inhabitation of the deity as though in the subject. And the exaltation does not differ in genus or kind from the glorification of the blessed angels or men, but in quantity, that is, in magnitude.” The contrary can be proven from Ephesians 1:20, Philippians 2:9 and Hebrews 1:13.

3) They understand the assumption of the *forma* of a servant to simply refer to the incarnation.

4) They support many errors concerning the actions pertaining to the state of exinanition and exaltation, as is shown in the locus which discusses those acts. See argument 8 concerning the glory of God § 14 and following.

### Questions

**316.** It is asked regarding this passage:

**Question 1: Whether the exinanition is properly described by κρύψις [hiding], and whether the exaltation is properly described by φανέρωσις [revelation].**

We respond:

1) If a simulated exinanition is understood by κρύψις or hiding, then we deny that the exinanition is described by hiding, since the exinanition was both true and actual. It embraced both ἄρσιν, that is, putting away the use, not just any use, but the full use of the divine majesty and power which was communicated to him, which the apostle calls κένωσις [emptying]; and θέσιν, that is, taking on the *forma* of a servant and the lowest humility, which the apostle joins together with κένωσις. By force of contrast the exaltation is comprehended in the same way, both ἄρσιν, namely putting off the *forma* of a servant and human infirmities, which Christ had willingly took on, and θέσιν, namely the full use and administration of dominion in the whole universe, all of which is neither simulated nor a fantasy, but is truly ascribed to Christ.

2) That κρύψις can refer either to the communication of the majesty or to the use of the communicated majesty. The former can properly be called emptying, because the divine majesty was hidden in the assumed flesh; moreover, it was not inwardly separated from the flesh. Also, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are said to be hidden in him (Col. 2:3). But the latter was not only κρύψις, but a true and actual κένωσις, as is shown by taking on the *forma* of a servant which Christ later put off in the exaltation.

**317. Question 2: In what sense can Christ in *actus primus* be called omnipotent, Lord of heaven and earth, etc. in the state of exinanition?**

We respond: *actus primus* sometimes means raw power as opposed to action, as when I say that the boy is a grammarian by *actus primus* because he can become a grammarian with the passage of time. But at other times *actus primus* means a disposition which does not show itself by external working, as opposed to *actus secundus* or operation, as when I say that Priscianus, even while sleeping, is a grammarian by *actus primus*, although he does not display this grammatical knowledge by *actus secundus*. When we say that Christ, in the state of exinanition, was omnipotent and Lord of heaven and earth by *actus primus*, this use of the term is closer to the latter definition than the former. For although omnipotence is not fit for the assumed flesh subjectively and by way of its disposition, nevertheless it is truly and actually fit for the flesh through the personal union. Therefore that the man Christ is called omnipotent in the state of exinanition by *actus primus* is not to be taken in this sense: that omnipotence would have been given to Christ with the passage of time. Rather, it is to be taken in the sense that all the fullness of the deity, and therefore also omnipotence, personally dwelt in the assumed flesh, although ὁ Λόγος did not always display this omnipotence communicated to the flesh in its full light, but emitted only certain rays at times by performing miracles.

**318. Question 3: Was Christ truly ignorant of some things in the state of exinanition?**

Luther in *Post. eccle. in Epist. fest. nativ.* affirms: “Although the humanity of Christ is the domicile and instrument of the divinity, and the divinity with all its fullness dwells personally in the flesh as in its proper temple, nevertheless in the state of exinanition he did not know and understand all things at any time. During this time the divinity did not always display its working through the flesh.” We have confirmed this judgment of Luther above in chapter 12, question 9 from Mark 6:6; 13:32, Luke 2:40, Philippians 2:7 and Hebrews 2:17.

**The Application or Practical Use of the Doctrine**

**319. The practical use of the doctrine:**

1) As consolation: It serves for an examination of Christ’s love and kindness. The apostle demonstrates this use in 2 Corinthians 8:9: “You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, since he became poor on account of you, although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich. Christ was rich on account of the true and actual communication of divine idioms to the flesh, since the entire fullness of the deity dwelt in him bodily (Col. 2:9). He was rich on account of his endowment with the name that is above every name (Heb. 1:4). He was rich on account of the communicated power and government over heaven and earth (Matt 28:18). He was rich on account of the participation in divine and infinite knowledge, since all treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hidden in him (Col. 2:3). He was rich on account of the subjection of all (Matt. 11:26, John 3:35). Now Christ had been endowed with these riches from the first moment of the incarnation, as is shown by the personal union, the working of miracles and particularly by certain demonstrations of that majesty and power. However, he made himself poor by the exinanition, humiliation, and the assumption of the *forma* of a servant. Therefore he was born as a pauper in a stable, rested in the lap of a poor mother, slept in a peasant’s hut, was given an honorarium of gold by the Magi, was presented to God with a pair of turtle doves (which was the offering for poor people), learned as a pauper in his parent’s home, and was thought to be the son of a poor

carpenter. He experienced poverty in fasting, he lacked a proper dwelling place, was divested of his garments on the cross and finally was buried in a stranger's grave. All of these things pertain to the poverty and exinanition of Christ. But by this poverty he made us rich. Just as he obtained life for us by his death, so also by his poverty he restored heavenly riches to us. Therefore his poverty is presented to us as a cause of rejoicing (Zech. 9:9). Christ's poverty is our inheritance: our property in life, our *viaticum* [literally, money for the journey] in death, since by that poverty he acquired heavenly riches for us.

2) It serves to inform us how to imitate Christ's humility: The apostle shows this use in Philippians 2:5: "τοῦτο φρονεῖσθε ἐν ὑμῖν, [that is] let this attitude be in you, which was in Christ Jesus," etc. He places before us

- 1) the example of Christ, an example which is worthy of being followed. Let the weak human be ashamed to act proudly, since in the same way the divine majesty humbled himself. Augustine *serm. 39 de verb. Dom.*: "Deign to be humble on account of God, since God deigned to be humble on account of you." Christ, without whom nothing was made, emptied himself, that he might appear to be almost nothing, and you are immensely boastful and think that you are something when in fact you are nothing! How absurd and preposterous it is that the highest sublimity would humble himself, and the lowest baseness would wish to elevate himself!
- 2) the consequent recompense of humility. Christ humbled himself, therefore God exalted him. In the same way, you will pass through to the heavens only through a life of humility. The most excellent way to exaltation is humility. (Bernard. *serm. 2. adscens.*) Christ, since he had no way to grow through the divine nature, found the way in which he grew through his descent. In the same way the gate to sublimity will not lie open to you except through humility.