

# *Admirable Conjunctions: The Person of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11*

Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology  
August 10, 2016

**Wesley Hill**  
Trinity School for Ministry  
whill@tsm.edu

*“There is an admirable conjunction or meeting of diverse and paradoxical elements in the Person of Jesus Christ.”* — Jonathan Edwards

*“A non-competitive relation between creatures and God means that the creature does not decrease so that God may increase.”* — Kathryn Tanner

<sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11, RSV)

1. A non-competitive relationship between the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ (vv. 6-8).
2. A non-competitive relationship between Jesus Christ and God the Father (vv. 8, 9-11).
3. A non-competitive relationship between human salvation and submission (vv. 5, 10-11).

Questions for discussion:

- What are some of the implications of God’s radical *transcendence*? Where and how does Scripture emphasize this theme, and what difference does it make to our life of faith?
- Why is it important to emphasize the equality of God the Father and the Son? What do we lose if we believe that the Son is inferior to the Father? How does that particular heresy (“subordinationism”) undermine our faith and hope?
- What are some of the problems to avoid when describing the Christian life as a life of “humility” and “obedience”? What are some of the gains and benefits of using those descriptors?