

question is disputed, whether Jesus Christ is here spoken of in His pre-existent state before He became man, or in His incarnate state after He took upon Himself human nature. Those who affirm that Christ is here alluded to after He became man assert that the name Christ Jesus can only belong to Him after His incarnation ; that it is the exaltation of Jesus Christ as man that is spoken of ; and that only as man can His condescension and humility be proposed as an example for our imitation. We cannot imitate Christ as God ; it is only His human virtues that can be copied by us. But in answer to this objection, it is replied that Jesus Christ is the Person spoken of throughout, being the subject both of the humiliation and the exaltation ; the same Person who was in the form of God took upon Himself the form of a servant. And as we are called to imitate God Himself, to be holy as He is holy, and to be followers of God as dear children, so we may be called to imitate Christ in His Divine nature, and especially in that wonderful condescension which He displayed when He took upon Himself our nature. The passage describes Jesus Christ both in His pre-human and in His incarnate condition : it first states His pre-human condition as God, and then His assumption of human nature. Condescension necessarily implies a previous elevation from which the person who condescended stooped, and it is this condition of previous elevation that is first asserted : Christ was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, before He took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. The elevation must come first, and the voluntary condescension must come afterwards. The two first clauses of the passage then refer to the pre-existent Christ ; and those which follow to the incarnate Christ. A precisely similar statement is made by the Apostle in his second Epistle to the Corinthians : " 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 word *ὑπάρχων* rendered both in the Authorised and in the Revised Version *being*, with a note attached to the