

Epistles which are hard to be understood ; not only does it disclose mysteries beyond the sphere of human reason ; but the exegesis of the passage is difficult. There are in it certain phrases and words, the exact meaning and the full force of which it is no easy task to assign.

In order to arrive at a correct understanding of these words of St. Paul, we must consider them in their connection. In the passage from which they are taken St. Paul is engaged in exhorting his Philippian converts to humility and condescension : "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." They were to cultivate meekness ; to avoid all pride and exaltation and vainglory, and to take a lively interest in the welfare of others. And as an inducement to cultivate this spirit, and as an example for their imitation, he adduces the instance of the humility and condescension of their Lord and Master Jesus Christ : "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God : but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The drift of the Apostle's argument is plainly this : Imitate the example of Jesus Christ. Be of the same mind with Him. Be humble as He was humble. Although infinitely exalted as God, and dwelling in inexpressible glory, yet He abased Himself ; He did not cling to the glories of His divinity, He divested Himself of them, He assumed human nature, He appeared on this earth as a man, and not only so, but He carried His humility and condescension to such an extent that He became obedient unto death, and that death the most shameful and painful of all deaths, even the death of the cross.

Every word in this passage requires careful attention. The Person spoken of is Jesus Christ. "Of who, that is Christ Jesus, mentioned in the preceding verse. But the