

identical with "the form of God;" *that* is the glory or outward manifestation of God, which may be laid aside or concealed; but *this* is sameness with God—the possession of the Divine attributes—equality in nature and essence; it is, in short, a direct and plain assertion of Divinity which cannot be toned down or explained away. Christ counted not equality with God as a robbery of God, or a usurpation of the Divine nature. The words cannot denote that equality with God was something which Christ did not previously possess, but evidently that it was something which He did possess, and which to affirm the possession of was neither robbery of God nor a usurpation of the Divine attributes. And indeed this equality with God is already involved in the phrase "the form of God;" for He who is "the image of the invisible God" must Himself be possessed of the attributes of the Godhead.

But the great difficulty of the passage is to give the proper translation to the words *ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο*. Different interpretations have been given. Our Authorised Version renders them, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" whilst the Revised Version translates them, "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God;" and in the margin there is the alternative translation, "counted it not a thing to be grasped." The following are the interpretations of some of the most eminent scholars:—"Deemed not His equality with God a matter of grasping" (Alford). "Not as a robbery did He consider the being equal with God; that is, as seizing what did not belong to Him" (Meyer). "He did not deem His being on equality with God a thing to be seized on or to grasp at" (Ellicott). "He did not treat His equality with God as a prize, a treasure to be greedily clutched and ostentatiously displayed; on the contrary, He resigned the glories of heaven" (Lightfoot). "He did not count it as a robbery, the object of an attempted robbery, to be equal with God, that is, He would not seize upon it, did not think of claiming it" (Lechler). But whatever interpretation we adopt, the words imply that His equality with God was what Christ previously possessed before He humbled Himself. Any other meaning would deprive the