

Why #1 - Why The Incarnation?

Philippians 2:5-8

2 Corinthians 8:9

Introduction:

“Why?”

That tiny word might be **the most persistent knock on the door of the human mind.**

It starts almost as soon as language does. From the moment we learn to talk, we start asking the same question over and over again... **Why?**

Eat your vegetables.

Why?

Because they're healthy.

Why?

Because your body needs them.

Why?

Eventually every parent reaches the same place: *“Because I said so.”*

Or maybe the more refined version, *“You wouldn't understand – just trust me!”*

Here's the thing: Children aren't just being difficult. (Most of the time!)

Their little minds discover something profound: the world has reasons.

The *“why”* instinct is the **beginning of curiosity, understanding, and meaning.**

And, we never really *stop* asking it. “Why?” never leaves us, does it?

- Children ask *why* out of curiosity.
- Teenagers often ask *why* out of **independence or even rebellion.**
- Adults may ask *why* out of **pain, perplexity... the continued quest to understand.**

“Why?” is a driving searchlight in our journey through life.

It has always been that way.

- In the oldest record of Biblical human history, Job is overwhelmed... Over and over, Job asks, *“Why?”*
God never answered the question. Instead, He revealed Himself.

When Job saw WHO God was, the question “WHY?” lost its power.
Our questions and needs are ultimately met in Him.

- **Even Jesus, hanging on the cross, cried from the depth of His humanity: “Why?!”**

It is OK to ask “Why?”

From childhood to the grave, asking “Why?” is not a sign of weakness, but of humanity.

It is a search born within us for meaning.

It is natural instinct – “There must be a reason!”

- **Sometimes**, as in the case of Job, **God doesn’t give answers. Like the ultimate good Father, He simply says, “You wouldn’t understand. You couldn’t handle it. Trust me!”**
- **But sometimes**, **again as the ultimate good parent**, **God patiently explains “Why?” to the things we need to understand most.** The answers that will literally make the difference in life and beyond.

As we enter the season of the passion, and step into God’s Word, we discover something remarkable.

The Christian faith – the gospel - rests on a handful of staggering claims.

- **God became a man.**
- **That man died on a cross.**
- **Three days later He walked out of His grave.**

But here’s the thing: As staggering as those facts of history are, God doesn’t simply tell us what happened. He tells us “Why?”.

God doesn’t silence the question; He steps into it.

The next three weeks we will consider His answers to our “Why?”-

- Why The Incarnation. Why did God become a man?
- Why The Cross? Why did Jesus have to die?
- Why The Resurrection? Why is an empty tomb, a risen, living Savior critical?

So, today, we ask,

- Why the incarnation?
- Why did Jesus come?
- Why did God become a baby... then a man?

I. The Staggering “What” that creates our “Why?”

2:5 - “*Christ Jesus*” – It is all about Jesus!

A. The Description: 100% God!

“Form of God” – “morphe”- same word as next verse. Essence. He was God!

- Jn. 1:1 – “*the Word was God*”; vs. 3 – “*All things were made by Him*”
- 1 Timothy 3:16- “great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory!”
- Colossians 1:15 – “*the image of the invisible God*”

B. The Decision:

To Jesus: His glory was not something to be pursued and maintained at all costs! **Something mattered more: “For God so loved...”**

C. The Descent: Jesus... 100% Man!

- “*took upon him the form of a servant*”: Greek- “Morphe” – **The actual essence** – not just appearance or likeness – of a servant “doulos” – slave.
- “*made in the likeness of men*” – “became like men; became vulnerable, touchable, nailable flesh...” - **Just like us!**
- “*found in fashion as a man*” – A third time? “*Found*” – “*schema*”- **Everything about him: 100% man. Human.**

Paul uses three different words to make the point unmistakable:

Jesus fully became one of us!

- From Heaven’s glory to a manger... to the cross.
- From Holiness and Righteousness to “become sin” for us.
- He would take off the robes of glory and eventually wear a scarlet robe and crown of thorns.
- He would trade the Halleluiahs of heaven for the cries of the mob

II. The Sobering “Why?”

Why?

To keep His promise. (Prophecy)

- Isaiah had prophesied of the coming Savior.

- Matthew records in chapter 1 of his gospel the words of the angel to Joseph:
 - 1:23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Why?

God always keeps His Word. Every prophecy. Every word. Always. He never lies.

But - Why did He make the promise? Why was it so important that God come and be born a baby in Bethlehem?

A. Paul, writing to the Corinthian believers, encouraged them to prove the sincerity of their love for Jesus by their consistent, systematic, sacrificial giving.

2 Corinthians 8:9 – “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.**”

- **“for your sakes”**: His Motive!
- **“that you through His poverty might be rich”** –
Not millionaires – children of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!
Paul to the Ephesians-
1:7 - In whom we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;**
1:18 - The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; **that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,**
2:7 - **That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.**

B. Paul: In our text directs believers to the **“mind... which was in Christ Jesus”**. John tells us, **“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”**

Paul was directing them from the “What” that Jesus He did to the “mind”- the deeper meaning and reason! “WHY?”

1. He Came To Reveal God

The **reality of God** had been **so distorted** through the fall and lies of sin and even religion that they had **no idea who God was and what He was like!**

- How He loved.
- What really matters.
- Genuine righteousness and holiness.
- Life.

Now- they could see it and hopefully be drawn to the God they were made to know!

**Thanks to Jesus - We don't have to guess what God is like anymore.
If you want to know what God is like – look at Jesus!
In Jesus, God put skin on truth.**

2. He Came To Reach Us

As Squire Parsons wrote – “When I could not come to where He was, He came to me”

- *Why a manger?*
- *Why a mantle of flesh?*
- *Why a man?*

To reach us in a way that God, so far above us we couldn't imagine Him, never could!

Religion tells us to reach up to God. Impossible!

The incarnation is God crossing the distance we could never cross.

3. He Came To Rescue Us. Redeem us.

“He humbled himself... obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

We will explore that thought next week, but for now we ask, **“Why?”**
Truth:

If anyone, any person of any time – born a sinner, sinner by practice over and over – could have any hope of heaven. Any glimmer of light. Any whisper of life...

- Someone had to pay the wages of sin.
- Someone had to suffer the wrath of a righteous God and the condemnation which is rightfully ours.

- **A loving God had to be born in a mantle of flesh so that He could be nailed on the cross and shed His blood for all.**

Across the manger of Bethlehem, the shadow of Calvary fell.

The cradle was already pointing to the cross.

He was born, to die.

III. "So What?"

Why would a King leave a throne for a manger? Why?

- He came to show us who God is...
- To do for us what we could never do...
- To make life, light and love a real possibility for the world!

Why?

- The throne was real.
- The glory was real.
- The worship of heaven was real.

Yet something mattered more. You. Me.

But- the deeper question becomes - *What will we do with the One who came?*

Just as God made it clear that **Jesus' coming was absolutely necessary**, He makes it equally clear that we are not only loved and now have a choice, but that **we will choose.**

The Incarnation forces a response. We cannot remain neutral.

- *"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us..." John 1:14*
- *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:11-12*