

As we come now to our twelfth week of Christology, we come to the topic of His incarnation. Last week we looked at our Lord in His pre-incarnate state, but tonight we are looking at His incarnate state. This topic is our transition topic from the deity of Christ into the humanity of Christ.

If I could summarize what we will learn tonight I'd word it this way:

**THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO BECAME A MAN.**

Jesus is the most unique individual of all time because He is God of very God, and He is also man of very man. By the fact that He is God who became a man, that means there was never a time in all of eternity where He was not God, but there was a time where He was not a man. He has always been God, but He has not always been a man.

He added humanity to His deity. He added humanity to His deity. He was already God, then He added to Himself humanity. His character never changed (Hebrews 13:5). His essence never changed. He remained God, but in addition to Him being God, He became a man as well.

The way I'd like for us to cover this is in a question/answer format.

**Question #1** - What is meant by the incarnation?

By the term incarnation, we mean that God became a man. The word 'incarnate' means to have bodily and especially human form and substance. 'Incarnation' has the idea of the embodiment of a deity or spirit in an earthly form. Based off our stance that the God of the Bible is the one true God, we believe that the incarnation of a deity to humanity can only be accurate if referring to the God of the Bible.

George P. Pardington wrote about this word incarnation: "*Incarnation* is a word from the Latin; it means, literally, *enfleshment*, i.e., the assumption of humanity. This is brought out particularly clear in such passages as Romans 8:3 and Hebrews 2:14."

*Outline studies in Christian Doctrine*, Pg. 229

*Romans 8:3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,*

Romans three teaches us that Jesus is the Son of God that was existing before His birth. He was sent into the world from the Father, and the way that He was sent was by Him showing up on earth in human flesh.

*Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,*

Hebrews agrees with Romans that Jesus partook of flesh and blood like every other human.

**Question #2** - Does The Lord Jesus Christ becoming a man require us to say that it was actually God that became a man?

Yes, we are required to say the God became a man because Jesus became a man, and I'll give tonight a few references that teach us that Jehovah/Yahweh of the Old Testament took on flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

*Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah predicted a union of deity and humanity in a person who would one day come. He said that a child would be born. That refers to His humanity. Isaiah also wrote that a son would be given. This refers to Him being the Son of God who would be sent into the world by the Father. Lastly, Isaiah wrote that His character and the essence of who He is would be described as the Mighty God. In Isaiah 9:6, we see a prophetic anticipation of one who would be both Divine and human.

I want us to compare Isaiah 44:6 with Revelation 1:17-18.

*Isaiah 44:6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.*

There we see the LORD (Jehovah/Yahweh) of hosts saying "I am the first and I am the last."

*Revelation 1:17-18 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*

Obviously we know that Revelation 1 are the words of Jesus. Jesus is the one who died and rose again, and the way He describes Himself is by using the phrase "I am the first and the last." Jesus used the same phrase that the LORD used to speak to Israel through Isaiah.

When we say Jesus took on human flesh we mean that God became a man.

**Question #3** - Are there other texts of the Bible that prove the incarnation?

*Philippians 2:5-8*      *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

This text is a very important text of Scripture. It is known as the Kenosis passage. What we find in these verses is that Jesus Christ existed in the form of God before He was born, but then He took on the form of a man. This is why we are so emphatic that the incarnation was an addition to Jesus, not a subtraction or a division. Jesus did not subtract Deity in order to become a human. He also did not divide His deity in order to become human. What was happening was an addition. He added humanity to His deity.

*John 1:14*      *And the Word (who was God 1:1) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John agrees with what Paul wrote. Jesus existed as God and was with God for all eternity, then He became flesh. He took on human flesh. He became a man.

We have already looked at Romans 8:3 and Hebrews 2:14. Both of those verses teach about The Lord Jesus Christ coming into the world, and living life in the flesh, in a human body.

*1 Timothy 3:16*      *Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.*

What Paul writes is that there is this great mystery involved in the Christian faith. A mystery is something that was not known in the Old Testament, but then revealed in the New Testament. The great mystery is the mystery of godliness. Paul writes that referring to the Christian faith being a the wonderful belief system that has revealed godliness to men. Mankind can know God and mankind can live godly because God Himself has revealed godliness to the world. Paul wrote "He was manifest in the flesh." Everything that godliness can be describes as is seen in the person of Jesus, because He is God who came in the flesh.

**Question #4** -      How is it that God could become a man?

Jesus' birth was very unique. Isaiah had prophetically described the birth of Christ.

*Isaiah 7:14*      *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Immanuel, we know from Matthew 1:23, means "God with us." How is it that God could become a man? He would be born to a women, but His conception would not be a natural conception.

Jesus' birth was different than any other birth. He was not born by the coming together of one man and one woman. That is how every other person is born, but Jesus was not born that way. Jesus was produced within the woman by God, without the natural means of conception. Mary had known no man intimately (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34), and she would remain in that virgin state until after the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:25). God did not come down and have physical relations with her, because God the Father is a Spirit. He is invisible. He is not a man. Jesus is the only member of the trinity who is a man, so God the Father would not have had relations with Mary. Instead, Mary conceived by God's Spirit and His power provided a child for her. It is that simple. If God created Adam without a mother. I am sure that God could place a baby in a woman without a need of physical contact.

So what we have in Jesus' birth is Him being born with an earthly mother, but no earthly father. This historical event was recorded in detail by Matthew and Luke (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35). The New Testament confirmed that the one predicted to be born of a virgin actually did come into the world in that exact way. Mary gave birth to the one that was predicted to be the character of Immanuel - God with us.

The Immanuel - God with us - was born. He was born of God. He was conceived in the womb of a woman who was a virgin. He is the eternal Son of God, equal to Father (John 5:18), God of very God (John 1:1), and He became a man through being born of a woman (Galatians 4:4). Jesus' conception and birth was the event that He added humanity to His deity. Before that event, He was always God, but not yet a man. During that event God became a man.

"The Bible presents many contrasts, but none more striking than that Christ in His person should be at the same time very God and very man. Illustrations of these contrasts from Scripture are many: He was weary (John 4:6), yet He called the weary to Himself for rest (Matt. 11:28). He was hungry (Matt. 4:2), yet He was the water of life (John 7:37). He was in agony (Luke 22:44), yet He healed all manner of disease and soothed every pain. He "grew, and waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 2:40), yet He was from all eternity (John 8:58). He was tempted (Matt. 4:1), yet He, as God, could not be made to sin. He became self-limited in knowledge (Luke 2:52), yet He was the wisdom of God. He said (with reference to his humiliation, being made for a little time lower than the angels – Hebrews 2:6-7): "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28), yet also "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9) and "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). He prayed (Luke 6:12), yet he answered prayer (Acts 10:31). He wept at the tomb (John 11:35), yet he called the dead to arise (John 11:43). He asked, "Whom do men say that I am the son of man am?" (Matt. 16:13), yet he "needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John 2:25). He said, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34), yet it was the very God to whom He cried who was at that moment "in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). He died, yet He is eternal life."

Lewis Chafer/John Walvood. *Major Bible Themes*, Pg. 56-57.

Jesus is the God-man. He is fully God who became a man. That is what the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ means.