

We Believe

What We Believe about the Incarnation

December 24, 2017 am

HDBC

This is part 7 in the series, ***We Believe***. Looking at some of the more important things that we believe. Why we believe them. What difference it makes. Remember . . . **Theology Matters**.

This morning . . . **What we believe about the Incarnation**.

It is God the Son taking on humanity in every way, except sin.

This is what Christmas is all about. When we celebrate Christmas we are celebrating the incarnation. God, becoming one of us. Because of the incarnation we can speak of Jesus as being **fully God and fully man** in one person, forever.

The combination of human and divine are seen in his . . . 3 things

1. Birth

It was a normal human birth. It was not a normal human conception. I'll touch on that in a moment. But the birth demonstrated that he was fully human. Mary went through labor pains leading to the birth of Jesus. The same processes that happen in every human birth happened in his. We have no reason to believe that the process of his birth was anything but normal. Think about it . . .

He did not beam in like some Star Trek traveler.

He did not land in a spacecraft from Heaven.

He was born, just like you and I. He took his first breaths of air into his lungs and cried. Cord was cut. He had to be cleaned up. She wrapped him in cloths to keep him warm, just like moms all over the world were doing during that time. He had to learn to eat. As an infant, he was helplessly dependent upon his mother and father.

Though his birth shows that he was completely human, **his conception** demonstrates that he was fully divine. There was nothing natural or normal about his conception. Think of the statements in Scripture . . .

Mary was a virgin. She had never had sexual relations with a man. There was no human way for her to conceive. Completely outside the realm of possibility.

The Holy Spirit came upon her. The conception of the baby growing in her womb was conceived through a divine act of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible draws a privacy curtain around the conception, offering no details other than what I have just said. This conception did not occur through the natural process involving a man and a woman. This points to the divine nature of Jesus.

2. Body

He had a physical, human body with all the physical weaknesses and challenges that we all have. He was not simply an apparition that appeared to have a body. He had one! Because he had a body . . .

He was hungry and thirsty. On the cross he acknowledged his thirst. Fasted 40 days and was hungry.

He grew tired. He experienced physical exhaustion. Unable to carry his cross because of weakness and exhaustion.

He felt pain. When he was injured on the job it hurt. When he was slapped it hurt. Felt thorns on his head. Nails in hands.

He died. His physical body ceased to live. Heart stopped. Lungs empty. His body was placed in a tomb where it remained, lifeless for a period.

These all point to his humanity. But there were things he did with His body that also point to his deity.

He performed miracles.

With his body, he healed sick people, multiplied food, raised the dead, calmed storms. He did things through his spoken word and through physical touch that normal humans cannot do with their bodies. **I can't touch a blind person and make them see. I can't touch a cripple and make them walk. I can't speak to a storm and cause it to cease.**

He never sinned.

Though fully human with body, mind and emotions, he never sinned.

He never used his body to commit adultery.

He never used his hands to take what belonged to another.

He never used his tongue to gossip.

He never used his mind to think evil thoughts.

He never used his eyes to look at a woman to lust after her.

He was resurrected.

After lying in a cold tomb for 3 days, his body was resurrected. Life returned to his dead body and it lived again. He had a physical human body, that did what no other physical human body had ever done. It was resurrected to never die again. I want to point out that Jesus will forever have a physical human body.

When we look at his body we are reminded that he is fully God and fully man.

3. Mind and Soul

The Bible says that Jesus ***increased in wisdom*** as a boy. That indicates He went through a learning process as other children did and do. He had to learn how to talk, read and write. Mentally he was fully human. **He had emotions.** He wept. He was troubled by things. He was sad. He marveled at things. He had the full range of emotions that we have.

But he also knew things that a mere human could not know. He understood things about Heaven and Hell, angels, eternity past and future that could only be known by one who is God.

When we think of his mind we are reminded that he is fully God and fully man.

4. Why was it important?

Why did Jesus need to enter into humanity and become fully one of us?

Here are three reasons

1) So that he might represent us to the Father

As a fully human person, Jesus **obeyed for us** where Adam had failed and disobeyed. Adam and Eve were tempted and failed. Jesus was tempted and remained obedient and sinless. That put him in a position to represent us before the Father. Here is how Paul put it in Romans 5:18-19

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Paul reminds us that in Adam we all fall into sin. Adam led us into sin. Christ, however, leads us into righteousness by represented us to the Father. We are considered righteous, right with God because Jesus and His righteousness stands in our place before God. He could not represent sinful humanity before God without become humanity like us.

2) So that he might die in our place for our sins

Had Jesus not become one of us, he would not have been eligible to die in our place **to pay the sin debt that we owed**. Hebrews tells us Jesus became a human because God was interested in saving humans. Had God been interested in saving angels, Jesus would have become an angel. But he did not. He could only be a substitute for humanity if he was human.

3) So that he might be a mediator between us and God

Because of our sins we were alienated with God. We needed someone to come between us and God and bring us back together. We needed a mediator who could represent us to God and God to us. To do this, he needed to be fully God and fully man.