

## MY RELATION TO THE INCARNATION

- During the time of his incarceration in Rome, Paul wrote four “prison epistles” – Philemon, Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians. The latter two books have been called “twin epistles” because of their subject matter. COLOSSIANS deals with Christ, and His position as the head of the body, while EPHESIANS deals with the body – the church itself – and its position in Christ.

**Colossians 1:15-19** <sup>15</sup> Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: <sup>16</sup> For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. <sup>18</sup> **And he is the head of the body, the church:** who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. <sup>19</sup> For it pleased the Father that **in him should all FULNESS dwell;**

**Colossians 2:8-10** <sup>8</sup> Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. <sup>9</sup> **FOR IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY.** <sup>10</sup> **And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:**

**Ephesians 1:21-23** <sup>21</sup> Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: <sup>22</sup> And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be **the head over all things to the church,** <sup>23</sup> **Which is his body, the FULNESS of him that filleth all in all.**

**Ephesians 3:19-21** <sup>19</sup> And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, **that ye might be filled with all the FULNESS of God.** <sup>20</sup> Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, **according to the power that worketh in us,** <sup>21</sup> Unto him be **glory in the church by Christ Jesus** throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

**Ephesians 4:13-15** <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, **unto the measure of the stature of the FULNESS of Christ:** <sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, **which is the head, even Christ:**

- The word “incarnation” is like the word “rapture.” While the words themselves are not found in the Bible, they are accurate theological expressions that capture valid Biblical concepts. In the case of “incarnation,” the English word is from a Latin root that means “the embodiment of deity or spirit in earthly form; an endowment of bodily human nature and form; the act of being personified; and especially the union of divinity with humanity in the person of Jesus Christ.”
- The word “incarnation” accurately describes what God did when he came to earth as the man Christ Jesus – he was GOD PERSONIFIED in flesh! Jesus wasn’t just part of God, a second God, a junior God, a third of God, another God, or a subordinate God – HE WAS GOD!
- The Bible is uncompromisingly MONOTHEISTIC (mono = one, theo = God). The God we serve is absolutely and indivisibly ONE. All the names and titles of Deity in Scripture refer to one and the same being. Any time the Bible seems to associate “plurality” with God, it is referring merely to His attributes, titles, roles, manifestations, modes of activity, relationships to humanity, or other aspects of God’s self-revelation.
- **This monotheistic view is the central doctrine of both Old Testament Judaism and New Testament Christianity!**
  - **Deuteronomy 6:4** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
  - **Mark 12:29-30** <sup>29</sup> And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: <sup>30</sup> And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.
  - **Colossians 2:9** For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
- The **WORD** “trinity” is not found in the Bible, but more importantly, the **CONCEPT** of a trinity is not found in either Testament! No passage says that God is a holy two, holy three, or holy trinity, but over fifty verses call God the “**Holy One**”!
  - **Isaiah 47:4** As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.
  - **Mark 1:23-25** <sup>23</sup>And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, <sup>24</sup>Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. <sup>25</sup>And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

- The fact that GOD BECAME FLESH is one of the most wonderful and yet one of the most incomprehensible things about God. Jesus was like no other man! **HE HAD TWO NATURES – HE WAS FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN** Most problems in people’s minds concerning the Godhead come from this great mystery. They cannot understand the DUAL NATURE OF CHRIST and cannot correctly separate His two roles.
  - 1 Timothy 3:16** *And without controversy 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.*
- When Jesus speaks of Himself, or when we read a Bible statement about Him, we must determine if it is describing Jesus as **GOD** or as **MAN**. When we see a description of two **NATURES** with respect to Jesus, it is not speaking of two **PERSONS**, but of SPIRIT and FLESH.

As a Man, Jesus ...		But as God, He ...	
Was born a baby	Luke 2:7	Existed from eternity	Micah 5:2 John 1:1-2
Grew mentally, physically, spiritually and socially	Luke 2:52	Never changes	Hebrews 13:8
Was tempted by the devil	Luke 4:2	Cast out devils	Matthew 12:28
Hungered	Matt. 4:2	Was the Bread of Life and miraculously fed crowds	John 6:35 Mk. 6:38-44, 52
Thirsted	John 19:28	Gave living water	John 4:14
Grew weary	John 4:6	Gave rest	Matthew 11:28
Slept in a storm	Mark 4:38	Calmed the storm	Mark 4:39-41
Prayed	Luke 22:41	Answered prayer	John 14:14
Was scourged and beaten	John 19:1-3	Healed the sick	Matthew 8:16-17 1 Peter 2:24
Died	Mark 15:37	Raised His own body from the dead	John 2:19-21 John 20:9
Was a sacrifice for sin	Hebrews 10:10-12	Forgave sin	Mark 2:5-7
Did not know all things	Mark 13:32	Knew all things	John 21:17
Had no power	John 5:30	Had all power	Matthew 28:18 Colossians 2:10
Was inferior to God	John 14:28	Was equal to God; was God	John 5:18
Was a servant	Philippians 2:7-8	Was King of kings	Revelation 19:16

- This was the crucial error of the Jews in rejecting their Messiah (the One True God they knew!), because there were two streams of Old Testament prophecy that referred to His coming. One stream spoke of His **deity**, while the other spoke of His **humanity**, and the Jewish scholars could not reconcile the two – they could not understand how the Messiah could be divine and yet human. **So, they missed the very Messiah that their own Scriptures prophesied would come!**
- It is only in the New Testament that we see how God reconciled these two prophetic streams. **THE MIRACLE OF THE INCARNATION IS GOD’S ANSWER TO THE QUESTION!**
- Modernists may deny the virgin birth, scientific knowledge may not be able to account for it, and spiritual ignorance may state that it is of no real consequence, but the Biblical importance of it cannot be over-estimated! **IT IS ON THE VIRGIN BIRTH THAT BIBLE DOCTRINE HANGS!** If Jesus Christ was not virgin born, He was not sinless; if He was not sinless, then He Himself needs a Savior; if He Himself needs a Savior, then He cannot be our Savior, and the entire plan of redemption crumbles and falls. **Salvation depends on the incarnation!**
  - Isaiah 9:6** For unto us a **child** is born, unto us a **son** is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God**, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
  - 1 Timothy 2:5** For there is **one God**, and **one mediator** between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**;
  - Matthew 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**.
- The fact that Jesus was actually, totally, fully, completely the Almighty God is what we call the doctrine of the “ONENESS.” But why is believing in the Oneness of God so important? **WHAT IS MY RELATION TO THE INCARNATION? WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH ME?**
- To put it simply, because Jesus brought the fullness of God TO humanity, we can now experience the fullness of God IN humanity.**
  - John 14:16-18** <sup>16</sup> And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; <sup>17</sup> Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth **with you (INCARNATION)**, and shall be **in you (SALVATION)**. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you.**

- One thing made the incarnation necessary – the fall of man! Because we sinned and therefore came under God’s eternal death penalty, we needed someone to redeem us. However, all of Adam’s descendants would be born in sin, so they would need redemption for themselves. No man was qualified to be a redeemer!
- God’s law dictated that sinful man must be redeemed by a sinless man. Since no man of Adam’s race was sinless, only God was left to redeem mankind ... but God was not a man! THE ONLY WAY GOD COULD REDEEM US WAS TO BECOME A MAN LIKE US.
- However, if God was to become a man, it must be without sin; otherwise, He Himself would be a sinner, and unable to save others. God’s answer was the miracle of the virgin birth, in which God clothed Himself with a body of flesh, but did not inherit a fallen human nature. By the virgin birth, God brought a sinless being (Jesus Christ) out of a sinful being (Mary).
- In becoming a man, Jesus Christ did not cease to be God. He was God before, during and after His incarnation. But through the virgin birth, the eternal God added to His divine nature a sinless human nature, becoming the GOD-MAN.
- **HERE IS MY RELATION TO THE INCARNATION:**
  - **At the INCARNATION, God added to His already existing divine nature a human nature.**
  - **This makes it possible for us, in SALVATION, to add to our already existing human nature a divine nature!**
- **2 Peter 1:3-4** <sup>3</sup> According as his **divine power** hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: <sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
- **2 Corinthians 5:19-21** <sup>19</sup> To wit, that **God was in Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of **reconciliation**. <sup>20</sup> Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For he hath **made him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; **that we might be made the righteousness of God in him**.
- BECAUSE JESUS TOOK ON MY NATURE, I CAN TAKE ON HIS NATURE!

- **CHRISTMAS ILLUSTRATION #1:**

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator.

If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist.

If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.

But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.

- **CHRISTMAS ILLUSTRATION #2:**

At 10:35 a.m. on December 17, 1903, after many failed attempts, the Wright brothers were finally successful in getting their "flying machine" off the ground at Kitty Hawk. Thrilled, they telegraphed this message to their sister Katherine: "We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas." Katherine hurried to the editor of the local newspaper and showed him the message. He glanced at it and said, "How nice. The boys will be home for Christmas." He totally missed the big news – man had flown! Many people miss the "big news" of Christmas – it’s not just that Jesus came, but it’s why He came!