

## Then Darkness Turned to Dawning #2

December 24, 2023

**Series Title: Then, Darkness Turned To Dawning!**

**Today's Message: The God-man Jesus Christ! Luke 2:1-20**

The most vital and important question ever asked is, "Who is Jesus Christ?" Is He merely a good man, or possibly a great man? Is He the greatest prophet and teacher who ever lived on earth? Who is He?

In Matthew 19:13-16 we read that one day Jesus asked His disciples this question, "Who do people say the Son of man is?"

His men were quick with an informative answer. They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

And then Jesus asked them the question that you and I need to answer. He asked them, "But what about you? Who do you say that I am?"

And Peter answered with no hesitation, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!"

Peter's answer is profound because he is clearly talking with a person, a human, the man Jesus. But His answer is directly asserting the deity of Christ when he calls Him "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Peter's theology was spot on! He understood the real and full humanity of Jesus, but he also understood the real and full deity of Jesus, who is Christ, the Son of the Living God. His theology is too often ignored.

But it is so very simple and yet profound. Many people down through the centuries have erred in several different ways. Some deny the deity of Jesus Christ and only acknowledge His humanity, while others affirm His deity but stop with that description of Him. He is truly fully God. But another equally important fact is that Jesus is also fully man. He is not a man from eternity past, as is true of His Godhead. The fact is, He became a man at a particular point in time through the Incarnation. So, that now, having become a man, He is the God-man in whom alone we look and trust for salvation! The Apostle John describes this union precisely in John 1:14 when he declares, "The Word became flesh, and made His dwelling among us!"

Isaiah the prophet captures this perfectly as well in Isaiah 9:6 as he describes the two-fold nature of the coming of Christ. "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called 'Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'" Notice the two critical points concerning Christ's coming: His "is born" and "is given." As a child He is *born*, but as a Son He is *given*.<sup>1</sup>

For us as Christians our remembrance of the birth of Christ is extraordinary. For we are celebrating more than the birth of a great person; we are declaring that His birth did not signal the beginning of His existence, but that this One, the Christ, existed from eternity as the second person of the Godhead, and this person became flesh. In other words, He who existed from eternity as God the Son took upon Himself the additional nature of humanity. So, when we read in Matthew 1 that what was conceived in the womb

---

<sup>1</sup> In this and the preceding paragraph I was greatly helped by Dr. James M. Boice.

of the virgin Mary was of the Holy Spirit, we are to understand that this child is both fully God and fully man in one person!

I want to take some time today to first look at the beautiful way the Gospels of Matthew and Luke communicate the full deity and humanity of the person of Jesus Christ, especially Luke 2 this week. Second, some key aspects of the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. And third, I want to give a brief answer as to why Jesus has to be both fully God and fully man in His person. And what does that mean for us?

# I. The Beautiful Simplicity of the Communication of the Truth about Jesus as the God-man.

## A. Both Matthew and Luke affirm both His humanity and deity

### 1. Matthew beautifully weaves the deity and humanity of the person of Jesus Christ.

#### a) The Genesis of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:1)

##### (1) Born to Mary, who was from the line of David

##### (a) See Matthew 1:16

##### (i) Not fathered by Joseph

##### (2) Conceived through the Holy Spirit

##### (a) Matthew 1:18, 20

#### b) The Implications of His name

##### (1) Human implications: Matthew 1:21: "You shall call Him Jesus

##### (a) A human person with a human name and nature

##### (i) His name means, "God save!"

##### (2) The Divine implication of His name: **"He shall save"**

##### (a) This means that Jesus is God and He will save His people from their sins!

##### (i) This fully human person is also fully God in one person!

##### (b) And, to underscore this, Matthew 1:23 tells us what the prophet Isaiah foretold concerning this child to be born:

##### (i) "The virgin shall be with child (human) and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14)

##### (a) Which means, "God with us!"

#### c) So, Matthew covers both the humanity and deity of Christ, but seems to lean more toward informing us with certainty of His deity according to Scripture.

### 2. Luke certainly reveals His deity and humanity but seems to lean more toward informing us of the *hypostatic union* more by the revelation given to people.

#### a) His deity confirmed by Luke by way of revelation given to Mary:

##### (1) Luke 1:32a: "Son of the most high"

##### (2) Luke 1:32b-33: David's greater, covenant son

##### (a) Born in David's line (Human descent)

##### (b) *The Son* of promise who will rule and reign over the house of Jacob and His Kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7)

##### (3) Luke 1:35: It is revealed by an angel that

##### (a) The conception of the child will be by the power of God

##### (i) The Holy Spirit will move over you

##### (a) Sounds like Genesis 1:2, "and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

- (ii) "The Power of God will overshadow you"
      - (a) God is the first-cause of the conception
    - (b) The child born to Mary will be "*the* holy one and will be called the Son of God."
      - (i) Singularly and uniquely set apart by God for God "The only begotten" (see John 1:14 and 3:16)
  - (4) Luke 1:43: It is revealed by Elizabeth that the child in Mary's womb is "Lord"
    - (a) Elizabeth reveals the supremacy of the One to be born.
  - (5) Luke 2:11: An angel of the Lord revealed His humanity and deity
    - (a) To the shepherds was revealed
      - (i) A child to be born in Bethlehem, the town of David
      - (ii) "He is Christ the Lord"
- B. The doctrine of the *hypostatic union* (the union of Christ's humanity and divinity in one person) is predicted in Scripture and revealed by angels.
  - 1. A foundational doctrine believed by everyone who is born again.
    - a) Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.

## II. The Significance of Humanity and Deity of Jesus Christ explored in brief.

- A. Christ's humanity
  - 1. He bore our sin and griefs in His body during His ministry and on the cross. (Isaiah 53:4; Matthew 8:17; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24)
    - a) G.Campbell Morgan: "He gathered up into His own personality all the misery resulting from sin..."
      - (1) A good example of this is when He wept at Lazarus' tomb.
  - 2. He was made like us in temptations and sufferings
    - a) "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)
    - b) He suffered physically and suffered in His soul
      - (1) Physically: Hunger when tempted in the desert (Matt. 4:2ff); thirst: at the Samaritan well (John 4), and on the cross: "I thirst", and His need was NOT met (John 19:28-29); He suffered weariness as evidenced when He fell asleep on the boat.
      - (2) Soul Suffering: He suffered anguish of soul and body on the cross. (See Luke 22:39-46; Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42)
  - 3. In His humanity "He had to be made like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service for God, to make propitiation for the sins of His people. For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted." (Hebrews 2:16-18)
- B. His deity
  - 1. Jesus is Christ, God's Messiah fulfilling God's will to save His people from their sins
    - a) Jesus/ Yeshua: God saves
      - (1) If Jesus is God, then nothing is impossible for Him especially the salvation of His people, the people given to Him before the foundation of the world!

- b) Immanuel: God with us!
      - (1) Colossians 1:19: "In Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.
      - (2) Colossians 2:9: "For in Christ, all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form."
      - (3) Sent into the world to save, John 3:17
  - 2. Jesus is God: The Eternally Preexistent Word (John 1:1-2), Creator (John 1:3, 10); The I Am (John 8:58); the radiance of God's glory (Heb. 1:3); Truly equal in nature and glory with God the Father (John 10:30; Jn 17:5, 11)
- C. There are hundreds of references to Christ's humanity and deity. It is impossible for the natural man to accept this divine paradox. But, we must believe it. But why the God-man? Why did Jesus have to be fully God and fully man in one person? Could not God have simply forgiven sinful men? No. God sent His Son to do for us what we could not do. In the next section I will attempt to give a brief answer as to why God's Savior had to be both fully God and fully man.

### III. The short answer as to why Jesus has to be both fully God and fully man in His person.

- A. Why did Jesus have to be fully human in order to be our Messiah? Why was His full humanity necessary?
  - 1. Representative: Adam sinned, plunging **all** humanity into sin and disobedience (by nature). Adam became our unfaithful representative.
    - a) Jesus became our faithful representative and obeyed for us where Adam failed us by disobeying the command of God.
      - (1) Read Romans 5:18-19**
    - b) Christ Jesus is called the "last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45) and the "second man" in 1 Cor. 15:47).
      - (1) Adam, of Genesis 3, is the first Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), of the earth (1 Cor. 15:47)
      - (2) Jesus Messiah had to be a man from Heaven (1 Cor. 15:47) in order to be our *representative and obey in our place*.
  - 2. Substitute Sacrifice: He took responsibility for our sins. If he had not been a man, he could not have died in our place and paid the penalty which was due us.
    - a) **See Hebrews 2:16-17** "Had to be made like us in every way so that He would become the propitiation for us.
      - (1) The sacrifice of Himself on our behalf (for us) *propitiated/ appeased* God's justice and turned away His wrath from us.
  - 3. Mediator: We were separated from God. We need a man to come between ourselves and God to reconcile us to God. Only Jesus could rightfully do this.
    - a) "There is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5)
      - (1) Note: This mediator had to be fully God and fully man.
  - 4. Other: To Reclaim God's purpose for mankind and rule over Creation (Heb. 2:8-9); To be our example of obedience (1 Jn. 2:6); to be the firstfruits of our resurrection bodies (Col. 1:18); to sympathize with us as our High Priest (Heb.2:18; 4:15-16);
- B. Why did Jesus have to be fully God? (This is a doctrine we must insist on.)
  - 1. Only someone who is infinite God could bear the full penalty for all the sins committed by those who believe on Him. A finite human could not.
  - 2. Salvation is from the Lord (Jonah 2:9); "Jesus": He shall save His people..."

3. Only someone who is fully God could be the sufficient Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)
  - a) Only someone who is fully God could reconcile us to God (2 Cor. 5:18-19) and also reveal God most fully to us.
- C. The union of God and man is found in Christ alone. Will you trust Him today?