

# MBC MEN'S STUDY

## LEADERSHIP 8: THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

### CLASS 3: THE INCARNATION OF JESUS, PART I

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Before getting into the book, here is the layout of the framework for our five-month men's study class.

- August 13<sup>th</sup>: Introduction and why this Matters
- September 24<sup>th</sup>: Jesus, before time began.
- **October 29<sup>th</sup>: The Incarnate Christ I**
- November 26<sup>th</sup>: The incarnate Christ II
- December 10<sup>th</sup>: The earthly life of Christ

### PURPOSE OF THIS 5 MONTH CLASS

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- Why do we want to talk about Christ?
- Why should we desire to know more and more about who Jesus was and who He is now?
- What we do with the doctrine of Christ has eternal ramifications.
- We can't believe in the wrong Christ and think that it is the right way to heaven.
- We can't seek to please the wrong Christ and think that we are living in the right way.
- If we want to know that our salvation is secure and that we are going in the right direction, we must know who Jesus is and what He did.
- If we get this wrong, our entire life can be going in the wrong direction and pointing others in the wrong way as well.
- When we know who Jesus is and what He has done for us, it empowers us to live in such a way that brings honor and glory to God.
- When we live like this, it is going to benefit our own walk with the Lord and all of those around us.
- **The center of our faith and the source of our hope isn't a creed, an idea, an experience, a church, or a philosophy. It's a person: Jesus the Messiah.**
- Knowing him isn't only the beginning of the Christian life – *it's the whole Christian life.*
- As believers, we know Jesus personally, which means Christology is deeply practical.
- The more that you about Christ and what Christ did for you, the more you are going to desire to live for Him. We have been given more resources and promises from being *in Christ* than we can imagine.
- We need to understand these things in order to live a life which brings honor and glory to Christ.

## INTRODUCTION

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- Last month we discussed Jesus' eternity and His deity.
- In order for Jesus to be God, He must have always existed. Something cannot be created and be God.
- As we looked at last month, Jesus has the same Biblical attributes which are used to describe God.
- We can know for sure that Jesus is both Lord and Savior, but also the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity.
- **This month we are going to discuss the incarnation of Christ.**
- We are going to have a special focus on the virgin birth of Christ and why it is so vital to the Christian faith and the Christian life.

## THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD

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- The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ is the central fact of Christianity. Upon it the whole superstructure of Christian theology depends.<sup>1</sup>
- The word incarnation comes from the Latin *incarnatio*, meaning to embody in flesh. In systematic theology, the incarnation refers to the *enfleshment* of God the Son, the act whereby the second person of the triune God was embodied permanently in human flesh and nature.<sup>2</sup>
- **Why is the incarnation of Jesus, the Son of God of infinite value and importance to study and know?**
- Only a truly human person could suffer and die, and only a truly Divine person could give that suffering infinite value.<sup>3</sup>
- This is *the* key doctrine for the Christian life. There are no other faiths / religious systems / belief systems which believe their god came to dwell with them.
- Either they believe they become gods, they can't know their god or they become a roaming spirit. But we believe that God came to us because we could not go to Him.
  - This has been the cause of much faith and unbelief. Therefore, as men who study the Scriptures, we need to examine this truth with the utmost care and concern.
  - We need the Bible's clear and consistent teaching on this topic for our own hearts and for those who we would interact with on a daily basis.
- One of the most amazing facts about the incarnation:
  - ...while the incarnation is essential for human salvation, ***it is not essential to the deity of the Son.*** He was God before His incarnation and would have remained such had there been no incarnation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (Galaxie Software, 2008), 96.

<sup>2</sup> Rolland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity: The Doctrines of Man, Sin, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, vol. 2* (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 101.

<sup>3</sup> Loraine Boettner *Studies in Theology* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1947), p. 203; cf. also pp. 198–99.

<sup>4</sup> McCune, 101

- There is nothing in the incarnation which makes God *more* or *less* God...otherwise something would have been missing in Him and He would not have been God.
- This means that God did this because of His love for His creation. **Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
- The coming and subsequent death of Christ gave mankind a real demonstration of God’s love for us. He did not just say that He loved us or try to convince us with good things...He gave us what we needed the most...salvation from our sins.
- This starts with the incarnation of Christ.
- So, why else did God send His Son and why did the Son go from heaven to earth?
- Aside from what we just read, that it was necessary for salvation, the Bible gives many other reasons and descriptions for the incarnation.
- Jesus coming was not just for one reason, but for many.

### **Biblical Descriptions<sup>5</sup>**

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- He is God revealed in the flesh.
  - **1 Timothy 3:16** “By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.
- To see the Father.
  - **John 14:9** “Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’”?”
- He is the second man, the Lord from Heaven.
  - **1 Corinthians 15:47** “The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven.
- He came into the world.
  - **1 Timothy 1:15** “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.
- He came down from heaven.
  - **John 6:51** “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”
- He appeared.
  - **1 John 3:5** “You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.”

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

- He emptied Himself.
  - **Philippians 2:7** “...but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”
- He was made a little lower than the angels.
  - **Hebrews 2:9** “But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.”
- A body was prepared for Him.
  - **Hebrews 10:5** “Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, “SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME...”
- He was born of a woman.
  - **Galatians 4:4** “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law...”
- He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.
  - **Romans 1:3** “...concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh...”
- He was made like His brethren in all things.
  - **Hebrews 2:17** “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”

## WHERE TO START: THE VIRGIN BIRTH

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- We are going to spend a lot of time talking about the virgin birth and simply the birth of Christ.
- The coming of Christ was not a surprise event, it was foretold for some 4000 years before He came.
- The virgin birth of Christ is another load-bearing, fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. It was one of the famous fundamentals of the early fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the 1920s. The doctrine actually encompasses both the conception of Jesus Christ in the womb of the virgin Mary and His actual birth while Mary was still a virgin.<sup>6</sup>
- The virgin birth of Jesus is important because it is the mode by which God deigned to enter earthly history as a member of the human race. On that account it became prominent in the theological reflections of the first Christians and has remained so to greater or lesser degree ever since. While we cannot know for certain

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<sup>6</sup> McCune, 115.

that the incarnation could have occurred only by this very biological miracle we do know that the God of the canonical Scriptures is in charge of employment of miracles.<sup>7</sup>

- Within the **progress of revelation**, God the Father was telling mankind that He was going to be sending their Messiah.
- In each dispensation, the revelation of Christ became clearer and clearer leading up to His birth.
- **Genesis 3:15** “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”
  - How clear is this revelation that God gave to Satan, Adam and Eve? While they would have had no idea that Jesus was going to come, put on flesh, be born of a woman and fulfill dozens of prophecies, they knew that God was going to rescue them.
- **Isaiah 7:14** “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”
  - This was written about 3200 years after God gave this promise (not after the writing of Genesis).
  - What do we see in this prophetic statement about the progress of revelation?
  - God is giving a sign.
    - There is going to be a virgin who gives birth and she is going to name her son Immanuel.
    - The name Immanuel is the Hebrew word for *God with us*. (עִמָּנוּ אֵל)
- In the NT, we have the prophetic announcement of the coming Christ to both Mary and Joseph.
  - **Luke 1:31-35** “‘And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.’ Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ The angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.’”
  - **Matthew 1:20-21** “‘But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.’”
- The virgin birth of Jesus is an example of God’s gracious work on our behalf. God took the initiative—Mary was not looking to become pregnant—it was all God’s idea. Joseph had no role in the conception—his body was not involved—so the power had to come from God. In a similar way, our salvation is based solely

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Duncan Culver, *Systematic Theology: Biblical and Historical* (Ross-shire, UK: Mentor, 2005), 469.

on God's initiative and God's power—we did not seek God, but He sought us; and we did nothing to earn our salvation, but we rely on God's power.<sup>8</sup>

- Many of the records we have in the NT only contain a few verses covering the birth of Christ. We know that He was born in Bethlehem, born in a manger and came from very humble beginnings.
- We know that the shepherds wasted no time getting to him after the announcement from the angels. We know that the multitude of angels were in heaven chanting “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.” (**Lk. 2:14**)
- This is, as of now, the most amazing event which has ever taken place in all of history. Without the virgin birth, the death and resurrection of Christ would have been without value.
- Therefore, to deny the virgin birth is to deny the very essence of Christianity.
- Carl F. H. Henry, argues that the virgin birth is the “essential, historical indication of the Incarnation, bearing not only an analogy to the divine and human natures of the Incarnate, but also bringing out the nature, purpose, and bearing of this work of God to salvation.”
- The first coming of Christ was almost a secret. Something that took place with no fanfare, no high visibility nor was it the event of the year.
- There are dozens more prophecies about where Jesus would be born and what tribe He would come out of and much, much more. The point is simple, there were thousands of years of prophecy which were continuously pointing to a coming Messiah.
- While this is a teaching that is essential to the Christian faith and the salvation of mankind, it should not be looked at as so much a teaching as it is an historical event which took place in time.
- **Galatians 4:4** “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law...”
- This was the “plan” from all of eternity, but it was only enacted once the right time came.

### **Why Jesus could not have an earthly father.**

- The announcement of the victorious “offspring” (or seed) of the woman in Genesis 3:15 implies that this individual will not be the offspring of a man (see Gal. 4:4). Thus, the very first messianic prophecy directs attention to the woman, unlike the genealogy of Genesis 5, which lists only fathers. By omitting any relationship to Adam, God suggests that the promised offspring will not partake of Adam's sin. As the first Adam was fathered by God (see Luke 3:38, “Adam, the son of God”), so the second Adam, Jesus Christ, was fathered by God, not by a human male (Matt. 1:18–20).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/virgin-birth.html>

<sup>9</sup> John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 261.

## **The Necessity of a Virgin Birth.**

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- Now, even some revisionist evangelicals claim that belief in the Virgin Birth is unnecessary. The meaning of the miracle is enduring, they argue, but the historical truth of the doctrine is not really important.<sup>10</sup>
- This begs the questions...*must someone believe in the virgin birth in order to be saved?* In other words, is the virgin birth a tier 1 doctrine or is it something that we can agree to disagree on.
- I like the way Albert Mohler states his answer “This is not a hard question to answer. It is conceivable that someone might come to Christ and trust Christ as Savior without yet learning that the Bible teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin. A new believer is not yet aware of the full structure of Christian truth. *The real question is this*: Can a Christian, once aware of the Bible’s teaching, reject the Virgin Birth? The answer must be no.”<sup>11</sup>
- Mohler goes on to say “If Jesus was not born of a virgin, who was His father? There is no answer that will leave the Gospel intact. The Virgin Birth explains how Christ could be both God and man, how He was without sin, and that the entire work of salvation is God’s gracious act. If Jesus was not born of a virgin, He had a human father. If Jesus was not born of a virgin, the Bible teaches a lie.”

## **Why the virgin birth is a tier 1 doctrine necessary for salvation.**

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- **The virgin birth is necessary to preserve Jesus’ sinless humanity.** That is, that which is born of normal human procreation is sinful (cf. John 3:6 and Rom 5:12). And, a sinful human would be unable to redeem other sinful humans; rather, he too would need a savior.<sup>12</sup>
- **The virgin birth is necessary to maintain the integrity of the Gospels and God Himself.** If Matthew and Luke are undependable in their accounts of Mary’s pregnancy occurring without male human involvement, then their entire histories of Jesus become suspect. Scientists might claim that a virgin conception is impossible, but the Gospel evidence remains authentic and credible in the light of the consistent testimony of the New Testament writers concerning the sinless human nature of Jesus.<sup>13</sup>
- **The virgin birth allows for the preexistence of the divine person and nature.** The eternal Son of God existed before the miraculous conception in Mary’s womb. The normal human process of conception would have produced a second person, not just a human body and nature. Jesus, as the God-man, is but one person with two natures. The Son of God already existed—as a divine person. An addition of a second personhood to Jesus would necessitate the existence of four persons in the Godhead, rather than preserving the three. And that fourth person, though a sinless human being, would be inferior to the other three persons by the finitude of his humanity. Jesus’s humanity is not eternal—it had a beginning.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://albertmohler.com/2011/12/14/must-we-believe-in-the-virgin-birth>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> McCune, 121.

<sup>13</sup> MacArthur, 262.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

- **The elimination of the virgin birth would jeopardize the entirety of Jesus’s life and ministry and the attendant doctrines.**<sup>15</sup> If the virgin birth were not true, then everything else that we claim to be true about Jesus’ life would come under suspicion as well.
- **The virgin birth proves that Jesus came in the flesh, contrary to false teachers. 1 John 4:1-3** “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.”

### **Contrary Explanations to the Virgin Birth**

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- Millard Erickson suggests that Jesus’ sinlessness does not depend on the virgin birth. Rather he says that such an assertion rests on two faulty assumptions: (1) The male is the source of depravity (i.e., sin is passed through the male parent) and, as such, (2) this depravity is passed on at conception. In objecting to these, Erickson adds that Mary’s depraved nature was enough to make her offspring sinful (cf. Luke 1:35). He, therefore, alternatively suggests that “it seems likely that the influence of the Holy Spirit was so powerful and sanctifying in its effect that there was no conveyance of depravity or guilt from Mary to Jesus.”<sup>16</sup>
- **Rebuttal:** Erickson’s objections and alternative proposal are erroneous, not least because they are based on assumptions that are not held by the position he critiques. Jesus’ sinlessness demands a virgin birth not because Joseph was any more sinful than Mary was but because normal human procreation produces sinful persons. As such, because Jesus was not the result of normal human procreation, He was not a sinful human person. Rather, the second person of the Trinity, the eternal, sinless Logos took on human nature by means of the virgin birth.<sup>17</sup>
- The Roman Catholic View asserts that the reason Jesus was sinless was because of His mother, Mary.
- They believe that Mary was free from both original *and* actual sin and therefore could not have passed the sinful nature to Jesus.
- **Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854:** The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.<sup>18</sup>
- To become the mother of the Saviour, Mary “was enriched by God with gifts appropriate to such a role.” The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as “full of grace”. In fact, in order for

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> McCune, 121-122.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 122.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/8-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-immaculate-conception-by9oa7nm>



Mary to be able to give the free assent of her faith to the announcement of her vocation, it was necessary that she be wholly borne by God's grace.<sup>19</sup>

- Did Mary need Christ to die for her sins? The “splendour of an entirely unique holiness” by which Mary is “enriched from the first instant of her conception” comes wholly from Christ: she is “*redeemed, in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son.*”<sup>20</sup>
- **Rebuttal:** This alternative is erroneous for the following reasons. First, there are clear indications that Mary considered herself a sinner in need of a savior. In her song of praise (i.e., magnificat), Mary rejoices in God her Savior (Luke 1:46–47). Further, she and Joseph present sin offerings for themselves (Luke 2:24). Also, were Mary sinless, this would sever Jesus’ ties with the human race. As Strong notes, “Instead of springing sinless from the sinful race, [Jesus] derives His humanity from something not like the rest of us.”<sup>21</sup>

## THE PERSON OR HUMANITY OF THE INCARNATE JESUS CHRIST

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- There are often times much weight put on the deity of Christ (and rightfully so), but the doctrine of His true humanity is of equal importance when studying the person and work of Christ.
- Why should we attempt to know this doctrine?
  - The ones who would seek to minimize or completely ignore the humanity of Christ do just as much harm to Christianity as those who seek to ignore His deity.
- There is much which “rides” upon the fact that Jesus was fully man:
  - If Jesus was not fully man, He could not have died on the cross.
  - He could not be Israel’s Messiah.
  - The promise that He is going to be the descendant of David to sit on the throne.
  - His offices of prophet and priest could only be fulfilled by Him being a man.
- Just like when one studies the deity of Christ, we must not overemphasize His humanity.
  - “How did the **story of a man** who taught and practiced unconditional love, peace, and kindness; who spent **his life** defending the poor and the marginalized; **a man who** even forgave his killers while they executed him unjustly — whose life inspired a radical movement that is still impacting the world thousands of years later — how did **this man’s story** become associated with hatred and oppression for so many people?”<sup>22</sup> (emphasis is mine)

When we forget about His deity, we are just left with a “good guy” to follow, not a Savior from our sins.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> McCune, 122.

<sup>22</sup> <https://hegetsus.com/en/articles/he-gets-us-has-an-agenda>

## Hypostatic Union

- **The study of the person of Christ is one of the most complicated and intricate studies that can be undertaken by a biblical theologian.** The many single volumes which have been produced, such as B. B. Warfield's excellent book *The Person and Work of Christ*, as well as such massive works as the five-volume set by J. A. Dornier on *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, are evidence of the importance of the subject. Contemplation on the person of Christ is an exhaustless mine of theology and vital preaching as well as the heart of any true devotion to the Saviour. **Every systematic theology worthy of the name gives considerable attention to the person of the incarnate Christ.**<sup>23</sup>
- The main reason (though there are many...) that we struggle with the personhood of Christ is because we have God and man coming together as one...but equally still both.
- This is referred to as the **hypostatic union** of Jesus Christ.
- The meaning of hypostatic union is much easier than the term sounds, but the concept is as profound as anything in theology. "Hypostatic union" sounds fancy in English, but it's actually a simple term. Hypostatic means personal. The hypostatic union is the personal union of Jesus's two natures.<sup>24</sup>
  - Our English adjective hypostatic comes from the Greek word hupostasis. The word only appears four times in the New Testament — maybe most memorably in Hebrews 1:3, where Jesus is said to be "the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature." Here the author of Hebrews uses the word in reference to the oneness of God. Both the Father and the Son are of the same "nature." Jesus is "the exact imprint of his nature."
- However, in early church discussions, as Greek thinkers tried to find agreeable terms with those who spoke in Latin, the word hupostasis came to denote not the sameness in the Godhead (God's one essence) but the distinctness (the three persons). So, it began to be used to refer to something like the English word person.
- We can easily say that the hypostatic union is the peculiar uniting of the divine and the human in one person, Jesus Christ.
- The hypostatic union is distinct from the virgin birth and from the incarnation. The incarnation refers to the whole concept of God manifesting himself in human flesh. The virgin birth constituted the means by which the incarnation was accomplished. As Charles Feinberg once explained, "The hypostatic union is that which was effected and brought into being by the incarnation." The hypostatic union differs from theophanies in that there were multiple, temporary theophanies, while the existence of two natures in Christ since his incarnation is eternal. He is now and forever the God-man.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Walvoord, 106.

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-hypostatic-union>

<sup>25</sup> MacArthur, 264.

- Jesus did experience the fullness of humanity, but once again it is important to note that He did not exist as two persons. He has two natures that are in one person.
- The true humanity of Christ is first evidenced by His *natural birth*, like all births, and the fact that He was seen as having flesh and blood.
- What about **Luke 2:52** “And Jesus *kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*”
- It appears that Jesus was like any other child, growing at normal intervals throughout His life.
  - “He passed through a natural but perfect spiritual and physical development. At every stage He was perfect for that stage. But there is a big difference between perfection of a child and that of an adult – the difference between innocence and perfect holiness. Therefore it is stated that Jesus *increased* in wisdom...according to His human nature and character, he grew and developed in such a manner that His life and condition were at all times in full agreement with God’s will.”<sup>26</sup>
- As being full man, Jesus grew in His humanity and in His relationship with mankind.
  - He experienced in His life similar feelings and limitations as other human beings, and His physical movements were such as corresponded to a genuine human nature and human body. He, according to the Scriptures, was able to suffer pain, thirst, hunger, fatigue, pleasure, rest, death and resurrection.<sup>27</sup>
- Jesus possessed everything that is needed to be an actual human, like us, except the sinful nature.
- He had a soul, a body, a will, etc. He was made like us.
- **Hebrews 2:17** “Therefore, He had to be *made like His brethren in all things*, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”
  - ὁμοιῶ – to be made like. Jesus was *made like* His brethren in all things.

### **What does the Scriptures say about the hypostatic union of Christ?**

- When Jesus talks about Himself, it is always in the singular person. His human nature never addresses His divine nature, nor the divine speaking to the human nature. (he is not schizophrenic)
  - **John 17:23** “**I** in them and You in **Me**, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent **Me**, and loved them, even as You have loved **Me**.”
- Christ differentiates Himself from others.
  - **John 8:18** “I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”
- It is not correct to divide the activities of Jesus and to ascribe some purely to His human nature and some to His divine nature. In the actions of Jesus He may have manifested one nature over the other, yet all His actions were still those of the one person. All that Jesus did and said was done theanthropically, by the one

<sup>26</sup> Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Purnell and Sons, Great Britan, 1952), 129.

<sup>27</sup> Walvoord, 110.

indivisible God-man with the two natures. “Whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of the one person.”<sup>28</sup>

- Each nature in Jesus possessed its own will, and they were never contradictory.
  - In **John 17:24**, Christ’s divine will appears in his Trinitarian relationship to the Father before the foundation of the world. But in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus conforms his human will to the Father’s will (**Matt. 26:39**). This duality within the one person can be seen also in the early youth of Jesus when he astounded the teachers in the temple with his wisdom and knowledge of the Scriptures as he spoke from his divine nature but then submitted his human will to his parents’ wishes (**Luke 2:47, 51–52**). This was a matter not of dueling personalities but of two distinct yet perfect natures.<sup>29</sup>
- His deity never ceased when He was on earth. We can talk about the importance of this next month.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

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- We have alluded to some of these already, but I think they are worth mentioning.
- If Jesus was not fully man, He could not fully understand what mankind goes through.
  - **Hebrews 2:17-18** “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.”
- What did He go through, as a man, and experience here on earth?
  - He was tempted, **Mark 1:13** “And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan...”
  - He was angered by sin, **John 2:15-16** “And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, ‘Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business.’”
  - He was tired, **John 4:6** “So, Jesus, being wearied from His journey...”
  - He was disappointed with the response of those whom He loved, **Luke 13:34** “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!”

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<sup>28</sup> McCune, 142.

<sup>29</sup> MacArthur, 264-265.

- He was rejected by those whom He tirelessly ministered to, John 6:66 “As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.”
- He was sorrowful, **Matthew 26:38** “Then He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death...’”
- He was physically beaten and verbally ridiculed, **Mark 15:17-19** “They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.”
- He was lonely, **Matthew 27:46** “About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying... ‘MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?’”
- Without His humanity, He could not have represented mankind on the cross when He died.
  - **Hebrews 10:4** “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”
- As stated before, without Jesus’ humanity, the Bible would not be true and God would be a liar.