

(b) Learning from Chalcedon

- No mixing of the natures
- No dividing of the natures
- No change in God

“Remaining what he was, he became what he was not”

Philippians 2:7 – Christ Jesus “emptied himself” by addition, not by subtraction

“For even if the Word in his immeasurable essence united with the nature of man into one person, we do not imagine that he was confined therein. Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven, he willed to be borne in the virgin’s womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning.”

- John Calvin

- Christ has two natures in one person

e.g. Romans 1:3, “descended from David *according to the flesh*,”

Conclusion: we worship Him

“He has been manifested in a human body for this reason only, out of the love and goodness of His Father, for the salvation of men...”

“In short, such and so many are the Saviour’s achievements that follow from His Incarnation, that to try to number them is like gazing at the open sea and trying to count the waves”

- Athanasius, *De incarnatione*

The person of Christ – Jesus’ incarnation

John 1:14-18

Discuss while waiting to begin

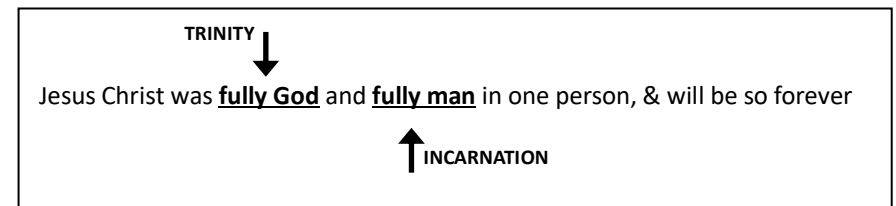
What do you know about “the incarnation” – i.e. when God the Son became a man?

- what happened, where, when, how, why...?
- what questions do you have?

1. The incarnation in Scripture

(a) Definition

God the Son—the second person of the Holy Trinity— took on a human nature without subtracting from Himself any of His divine attributes



(b) Bible texts describing the incarnation

John 1:14, “And the Word 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.”

Philippians 2:7, “but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.”

Hebrews 2:9,14,17, “Jesus... was made a little lower than the angels... “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity... made like his brothers in every way...”

Hebrews 10:5, “Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;”

(c) Bible texts describing the humanity of Jesus:

His birth – Galatians 4:4, “when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman.”

His development - Luke 2:40, 42

Human limitations - hunger and tiredness, (Matt. 4:2, John 4:6); grief, (John 11:35, 38); agonies of Gethsemane, (Mark 14:32-42, Luke 12:50, Hebrews 5:7-10); suffering and death on the Cross

His “ordinariness” – Matthew 13:55-57

Doubted – 2 John 1:7, “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.”

(d) Bible texts describing the deity of Jesus:

e.g. Hebrews 1:3, 1:8, John 1:1, 1:18
creator... revealer... rescuer... declares the future... I AM

2. The God-man: reflecting on the person of Jesus

(a) Cyril of Alexandria & the Definition of Chalcedon (451 AD)

“Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

See also Westminster Confession of Faith, VIII.2