

**THE INCARNATION - THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST** (The Son of Man)

- 1) **THE SON OF MAN** - This title is used 79 times in the Gospels. In all but two instances it comes from *Jesus' own lips*. The term is used clearly in Scripture to designate "*mankind*" or the "*human race*" - **Psalm 8:3-4** - "**When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, [4] what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?**" See also **Isaiah 51:12** and **Mark 3:28**.

Notice that Jesus, as the Son of Man, *fully partakes of our human nature* - **Hebrews 2:14** - "**Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil....**"

He knows fully what it means to live and think and act and feel *like a human being*. When we speak of Jesus as being "*fully God*" we mean there is nothing about God that can't be seen in Jesus Christ, that He is no *less* God than the Father. When we say Jesus is "*fully man*" we mean exactly the same thing in reverse, and to the same degree. More on this later.

- 2) **THE REPRESENTATIVE MAN** - Jesus is not only the "*Son of David*" or the "*Seed of Abraham*". These two terms link Jesus very specifically to various points of covenant fulfillment. But Paul also designates Jesus as the "*last Adam*" or the "*second Adam*". That means He represents *all men* as fully as Adam himself did in his fallen condition. Notice that Luke traces the genetic roots of Jesus *not only as the son of David, but as fully linked with the descendants of Adam himself* - **Luke 3:23 & 37-38** - "**Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli....[37].... the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan,[38] the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.**"

Among other things, this means that what Jesus did, He did for *all men*, not just a select few. Jesus fully entered the ordinary scene of all human existence. **Traced far enough back, YOU are in the same family tree!** It's truly incredible.

- 3) **HE WAS FULLY HUMAN** - There are so many of our common human activities. Notice His *human birth* (Galatians 4:4). Consider the basic, human activities - *hunger* (Luke 4:2), *eating* (Luke 5:30), *thirst* (John 19:28), *fatigue* (John 4:6), need for *sleep* (Mark 4:38), the paying of *taxes* (Matthew 17:24-25), *prayer* (Mark 1:35), even *caring for His mother* (John 19:27).

*Scripture also documents Jesus experiencing genuinely human emotions.* We see things like sorrow (Matthew 26:37-38), joy (Luke 10:21), anger (Mark 3:5), indignation (Mark 10:14), astonishment (Luke 7:9), He was "much troubled" (John 13:21).

- 4) **FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN** - The Scriptures clearly teach that we are dealing with "*mystery*" here - **1 Timothy 3:16** - "**Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.**"

We will see the nature of some of these mysteries as we proceed:

- a) **All of God's nature was revealed in Christ** - **Colossians 1:19** and **2:9** - "**For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell....[2:9].... For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily....**"

None of God is *absent* in Jesus Christ. He is not *less divine* than any other member of the Trinity. Even the important passage in **Philippians 2:6-11** teaches the *condescension of God in the incarnation*, not in terms of *leaving any of God behind*, but in *taking on the additional role of a servant as the man Christ Jesus*. The passage *does not* teach that God was somehow less God in taking on human flesh.

- b) **The divine nature was not always fully exercised** (Luke 2:40, John 5:19) - This is difficult truth to grasp but we must be faithful to the Scriptures. There are many times when Jesus freely exercises a *self-limiting* of divine potential:

i) **Jesus "learned obedience" to the Father** - **Hebrews 5:8-9** - "**Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. [9] And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him....**" He didn't live as a man on earth *automatically obedient to the Father*. While He never sinned, His holiness wasn't merely the natural result of His divine nature. It came about as the direct result of His daily discipline in pleasing God and shunning sin.

ii) **Jesus was "made perfect through suffering"** - **Hebrews 2:10** - "**For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.**" Jesus was *not* made perfect in the sense of ever being morally *imperfect*, but perfected in the sense of *carrying out in human history what He had always planned to do in the wisdom of eternity*. Jesus completed - fleshed out - the fulfillment of the Divine Will *for the very first time* as a human being. This He had never experienced before.

- iii) **Jesus experienced human ignorance** - See [Mark 9:21](#) and [13:32](#) as examples - "And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood....[13:32].... "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." There clearly seemed to be some things Jesus didn't know. At other times He clearly showed supernatural knowledge (see Luke 6:8, 9:47, John 2:25, see also John 1:48-50). It seems that Jesus had the ability to **limit the horizons of His own perception** in keeping with a full participation with the limitations of being a man.

Notice that **after His resurrection**, when questioned about His Second Coming, He gave an entirely different answer - [Acts 1:7](#) - "He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority."

- iv) **Jesus experienced real temptation, without sinning** - It is true that He experienced temptation **as one who never sinned**, but the temptations were none the less real (Adam and Eve were unfallen when tempted, yet gave in to sin). **Christ's victory over sin wasn't automatic**. See [Matthew 4:1-11](#). Notice how this temptation **wearied** Jesus (angels "ministered to Him"). See also Luke 22:43. Only the One who fully resists sin knows temptation's full strength (who knows the strength of the wind - the one who walks **with** it, or the one who walks **against** it?).

Without a doubt, [Hebrews 4:15](#) is one of the most important Christological statements in the New Testament on this subject - "For we do not have 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."