

EQTH105 Basic Bible Doctrine

Unit 4c Humanity of Christ

Presented by the



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Hello and welcome back as we continue our study of basic Bible doctrine, and in this unit, some specific theology about the second person of the Trinity and the center of our faith, Jesus Christ. When you stop and think about it, there is one unique and specific foundation to the Christian faith, a doctrine that is completely unlike the belief system of any other religion or any other worldview. The great truth revealed in the New Testament is that the eternal God became one of us. He became a human being. In the very beginning of John's gospel, he reveals this astounding fact. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind." [John 1:1-4] But then a few verses later, John drills this idea down even further when he says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld His glory, a glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." [John 1:14]

The apostle Paul echoes John's thoughts when he writes, "Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of humanity." [Phl 2:6-7] God became human in Jesus Christ. This is known as the incarnation, from the Latin word meaning "in flesh." Although it is not a biblical word, it presents a biblical truth. Jesus is the eternal God who became flesh and blood. Jesus became a man at a point in time in history, and he did so without giving up his oneness with God. He became a human being without a sin nature. "In flesh" means more than Jesus had a physical body. It means he was a complete human personality. However, by the incarnation, we do not mean that God was turned into a human or that Jesus ceased to be God while he was a man. The incarnation means that while remaining God, Jesus took upon a new nature, a human nature. The incarnation was the uniting of the divine and the human into one being, one person. Jesus Christ was fully God and fully human.

It's hard to understand and, frankly, even harder to explain, but in becoming a human being, Jesus laid aside his heavenly glory to live among us. The question is "Why did he do that?" So to answer that question, we will, of course, turn to the only source that exists that can tell us that truth. The Scriptures give us ten reasons why Jesus came to earth. First, he wanted to further reveal God to humanity. If you wish to know what God is like, you need go no further than to look at Jesus and to listen to what he tells of himself. In the gospel of John, there is an exchange between Jesus and his disciple Philip. Jesus says, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" [John 14:9] He goes on to tell the disciples, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. The Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. Yes, to your amazement, He will show Him even greater things than these." [John 5:19-20] Jesus said, "But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." [John 10:38] Jesus' work of reaching out to the worst of sinners revealed the heart of God the Father. Those who criticized his work among the worst of the sinners revealed their lack of understanding with God's desires.

Reason number two: Jesus came to fulfill God's promises. If you think back to the Old Testament covenant, God made a number of promises to people like Abraham, Noah, Adam, and David. To Adam, he was the promised Messiah, the seed of the woman. You can read this in Genesis 3:15. To Abraham, Jesus was his one descendant who would bless the entire world. To David, Jesus was the promised king that would come from his family. And nearly a thousand years after David, the angel said to Mary, "You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." [Luke 1:31-33] The covenants God made promised salvation for both Israel and the Gentiles. With the coming of Jesus to the world, these promises were fulfilled.

Reason number three: Jesus came to fulfill the Law of Moses. Jesus, in Matthew, said, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished." [Mat 5:17-18] By living a perfect life here on earth, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law in every respect. Number four: Jesus came to die for the sins of the world. When Adam and Eve ate the apple, sin entered the world. So God instituted the concept of substitutionary sacrifice, which was the system in place for the time of the Old Testament. However, the sacrifices of animals could not take away sin. What was needed was the *perfect* sacrifice. This was accomplished with God becoming a human being. Christ's coming was to die on the cross for the sins of the world. When Christ came, he sacrificed himself for all of mankind. Jesus said, "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but *to serve*, and to give his life as a ransom for many." [Mat 20:28]

Reason number five: Jesus came to bring in a new covenant. So there was an old covenant with Moses and Abraham and David. But Jesus came to bring a new covenant into existence. In Matthew, we read, "While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'" [Mat 26:26-28] So Jesus himself was that new covenant.

Number six: Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. In 1 John, we read, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." [1Jo 3:8] Jesus' death on the cross frees us from the power of sin. The devil no longer has any right to control us because Christ has given us the freedom to choose not to sin. Reason number seven: Jesus came to judge the world righteously. Jesus is pretty clear about this in John 5. "Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son." [John 5:22] This is why the doctrine of the Trinity is so important. Jesus is qualified to judge humanity because he became a human being. Since he has lived his life as a human being, his judgment will always be righteous and fair.

Reason number eight: Jesus came to sympathize with believers as the great high priest. The Bible says, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” [Heb 4:14-16]

Then number nine: Jesus came to be an example for believers, to show people like us how to live our life. When we put our faith in Christ, we are not only born again. We have an example to follow. Jesus lived the perfect life as the perfect man with faith in his father. This is why we are told “to walk just as he walked.” [1Jo 2:6] Then finally, reason number 10 on why Jesus came to live among us to live in the flesh: He came to earth to prepare humanity for their heavenly destiny. The Son of God became a human so that human beings could eventually be fitted with a new nature, a perfect one. One day, we shall be with him. Paul tells us in Philippians, “Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” [Phl 3:21]

All of this points to one inescapable attribute of Jesus Christ. He was God incarnate. He was born on Christmas. He was crucified on Good Friday, and he rose again on Easter for one single purpose: to redeem mankind. Redemption, properly understood, means this: Jesus bought humanity out of the slave market of the world. The price he paid was his own blood. When he bought us, he gave us our freedom. We cannot be sold again as slaves. We have become part of his family and participants in his rightful inheritance. And all this is obtainable if we choose to place our faith in the sacrifice he made on our behalf. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” [John 3:16] It was love that motivated Jesus to come to earth and die in the cross and take the punishment as our substitute.

So let me summarize. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world was for the following reasons. Jesus came to provide a further revelation of God. The Old Testament was incomplete and the coming of Christ completed God’s revelation. Jesus also came to fulfill promises to individuals. The Old Testament records promises made to a number of individuals that were fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus also came to fulfill the Law of Moses. He perfectly kept the commandments of the law. Jesus came to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world. Because he lived a sinless life, he could sacrifice himself. The coming of Christ not only fulfilled the old covenant; it brought a new one into effect. Christ’s coming destroyed the works of the devil. Christ also became an example for believers. His perfect life sets the standards. Finally, Jesus’ coming prepared the way for believers to receive their new body, one without sin. The life and death of Christ was in the eternal plan of God. It was not an afterthought. Jesus’ death was necessary to complete the plan of redemption for this sinful world. He had to die so that others could live. Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world. He was the sacrifice that was made acceptable to God. The death of Christ was also a visible demonstration of the love of God for sinful humanity.