

The Doctrine of the Incarnation

(The Message of Christmas)

Each Christmas we celebrate the incarnation of Christ. It is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call His name

Immanuel, the “with us” God. John 1:14 states the Word became flesh and dwelt (*eskhnosen*) literally “tabernacled” among us. Jesus pitched His tent for a while among the humanity. The eternal Word became flesh to be visible and tangible so that the human mind could comprehend who and what God was like (see Jn 14:9).

Jesus repeatedly declared that He had come from God and that He was, in fact God (6:46; 7:29; 16:27; 17:8). The phrase actually reads “He was the only begotten [one] from the Father.” He was the one about whom John the Baptist spoke (v. 15; see e.g. vss. 19-34). The incarnation teaches us four very significant lessons:

1. **The incarnation shows us Jesus’ Birth and our salvation is supernatural.** John states that those who accept Jesus as Savior are born “not of the will of the flesh or the will of man, but of God” (Jn 1:13). Our salvation is not a product of human accomplishments but it is a supernatural work of God alone.
2. **The incarnation shows us our supernatural salvation is a work of God’s grace.** Mary was not some super holy woman that God felt obligated to use. God used her faith and her dedication, but the birth of Jesus was all an act of God’s merciful grace (see Lk 1:38, 46-55). God chose someone who was incapable of having a child on her own, i.e. without a husband, so we would see that it was a miraculous work of God’s grace alone.
3. **The incarnation shows the unique nature of Jesus.** Jesus could have come into the world by some other means had God so ordained. His miraculous conception shows us that Jesus was no ordinary human being. He was a human being conceived by the miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit. This made Jesus different from any other human being, and allowed him to fulfill the prophecy that He would be born of the “seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15).
4. **The incarnation is evidence of God’s sovereign power.** God provided for the birth of the Messiah from a virgin, who had not known a man (Lk 1:34-35). This shows us that if God could perform this miracle, He also could change the life of a sinner by the “new birth” (Jn 3:3, 7). With human effort this “new birth” is impossible, but with God all things are possible (Mt 19:26).

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