

2- The Incarnation: Why was it necessary?

12/13/2009 - Jim Johnson

The Scripture clearly teaches that Christ is God incarnate - One person with two distinct natures – one divine - the other very human, forever fused into one awesomely unique individual. A reasonable question might be why. “Why is it important that God would take upon himself human flesh?” The Scripture supplies at least 7 reasons.

Reason 1: God made a promise long ago to Great King David and to the nation of Israel that one of David’s descendents would occupy the throne of Israel.

The First Reason for the incarnation was to fulfill the _____ Covenant.

In Luke 1:31-34 Mary was promised to have a son who would be a direct heir to the throne of David. Meaning that her son must be physically, humanly related to David. Yet the reign of this son would never end. He had to be eternal God in order to fulfill this forever clause.

Reason 2: The one true God cannot be seen, which is why there has been an enormous amount of misinformation about Him through the years. His perception has been grossly distorted by idolatry and even by the Jews who often misrepresented God through stifling legalism. Even when God did reveal Himself, people would find Him to be too mighty, and holy, and scary to look upon and understand. (Ex. 3:6; Isa. 6:5)

The Second Reason for the incarnation was to _____ God to us.

John 1:18 reminds us that, *“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”* (also see John 14:7)

Reason 3: When Adam and Eve succumbed to sin, the earth became the domain of the evil. Jesus called Satan the “ruler of this world.” (John 12:31) He became an adversary that must be confronted.

The Third Reason for the incarnation was to _____ the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8 tells us that God needed to be incarnate, to come to earth, so that He could do battle and overcome the adversary on his own turf.

Reason 4: When 2 people share things in common, it creates bonds of camaraderie and understanding. God wanted to provide that kind of comfort and approachability for mankind.

The Fourth Reason for the incarnation was to _____ with us.

In Heb. 4:14-16 the author speaks of Jesus as a Great High Priest because He is able to sympathize with our weaknesses. He knows what its like to do life the way everyone else does. He had been tempted in every kind of category of temptation and yet was without sin. Because Jesus came in the flesh, we can identify with him and He with us.

Reason 5: It is hard to master a skill when all you have to work with is a manual. In the same way, it is hard to understand how to live a righteous life when all you have to work with is the Scripture. What is needed is an example - someone to show us how it is done.

The Fifth Reason for the incarnation was to provide an _____ for us.

In 1 Peter 2:21, we are told that Christ suffered as a man, and therefore we human beings can learn how to handle our suffering experiences as well. He was our example. And because he is also God, then we understand that this is the way God wants us to do it. (also see 1 John 2:6 and Eph. 5:1-2)

Reason 6: There was a catch 22 situation in redemption. Sin requires death for its payment. (Heb. 9:22). A man would have to die in order to redeem mankind. But it would also require a sacrifice of eternal value. The sacrifice would have to be big enough to cleanse the sins of billions of people who have spanned thousands of years. The value of the sacrifice must endure throughout the ages. Such a sacrifice would have to be made by God – but God cannot die. What was needed was a God/Man – one person – a fusion of perfect humanity with undiminished deity.

The Sixth Reason for the incarnation was to provide a _____ for us.

Jesus became a man in order to be able to die. He maintained His righteousness (without sin) thereby qualifying. But because he was also eternal God, His sacrifice had eternal merit. Once He did the job it was done forever. (Heb. 1:3)

Reason 7: Each of us will answer to a judgment day of our own but the Incarnation makes it possible for us to be judged by someone who knows what its like to walk in our shoes.

The Seventh Reason for the incarnation was to qualify as our _____.

According to John 5:27 Jesus had been given authority to execute judgment because he was the Son of Man. The title - Son of Man - spoke to his humanity. When Jesus sits on the throne of judgment, he will know what could have been, should have been, because he once walked the earth as a man.

CONCLUSION

The incarnate Son of God came to bridge the _____ between heaven and earth.

“He became what we are that He might make us what He is. (Athanasius)

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. Christ became incarnate to reveal God to us. What kind of things would we not know about God if Jesus had not done this?
2. Christ was incarnate in order to identify with us. In what ways can you identify with Jesus?
3. Which of the seven reasons for the incarnation do you appreciate the most?