

Subject: *Why God Became Man*

Scripture: *1 John 1:1-4*

The focal point of human history is the birth and life of Christ. This is acknowledged in the world by the way we mark time and divide history into two categories, B.C. and A.D. In modern times these divisions are now called B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era), but the dividing point is still the same, the birth and life of Christ. No matter what you call the time before Christ and after Christ, all history revolves around His birth and life.

The miracle of Christmas is the Virgin Birth of Christ and the unique nature of Christ as God and man. Isaiah prophesied that His name would be Immanuel (God with us). John tells us that the divine Word became flesh. Christ was fully God and fully man. The question is this...why did God become man?

Much has been written about Christ coming to earth as a man. A very famous book was written by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the 11th century, with the Latin title *Cur Deus Homo*, Why God Became Man. About 1,000 years before that, the apostle John wrote the letter of First John in which he gives several reasons why God became man. Let's take a brief look at them.

1. To reveal God and establish fellowship with Him and other believers (1:1-3)

The eternal God has entered time and the invisible God has become visible. God by nature is uncreated spirit, but in Christ He became flesh. John and other looked (gazed) on Him and touched Him. Christ was manifested (revealed) to us (vs. 2). This is a key word in this letter. Christ came so that we might have fellowship (*koinonia*, translated communion, common life). The end result is fullness of joy (vs. 4). One of the candles we light during Advent is the candle of joy. Christmas is a time of joy because we can know God and enjoy fellowship with Him.

2. To take away our sins (3:4-5)

Sin is any transgression of the law. Christ, the sinless one, came to take our sins away. He did this by dying on the cross. That's why He is called the Lamb of God.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

3. To destroy the works of the devil (3:7-8)

The word "destroy" (*luo*, to break up, loosen, dissolve). When Christ came, the devil had the world in his grip. Christ came to set us free from the dominion of Satan and the bondage of sin.

4. To demonstrate God's love for us (4:9-10)

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

5. To bring us into the knowledge of Christ and eternal life (5:20-21)

1 John 5:11-12 ¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

The book of 1 John ends with a warning in 5:21. Don't share your supreme heart devotion with any other person or thing. Christ is the only one who deserves that. If we put anything in the place of Christ, we have an idol or substitute God. An idol is a cheap imitation of the true God. John is warning us that Christ alone is worthy of our worship, our love, and our devotion.