

How God was Man – I Timothy 3:16

I. Introduction:

- A. Last Wednesday our lesson was entitled: *“How God Became Man.”*
1. I tried to explain the incarnation of God’s Son as the child of Mary, the woman betrothed to Joseph.
 2. With more than a dozen scriptures I endeavored to show that *“the LORD” became a man.*
 3. Mary, then Elizabeth, and even the Lord’s angel added that *“the SAVIOUR” became flesh* and dwelt amongst us in the person of the Lord Jesus.
 4. I didn’t try to explain the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, because it defies any explanation from me.
 5. So I simply tried to say: there it is; it is in the word of God.
- B. Now I’d like to take that a step farther, examining *“How God WAS a Man”* or how God **existed** in Jesus
1. In looking at Mary’s son, at times we can see **a human being**, similar to her other children – and like billions of people from the beginning of time.
 2. But Christ Jesus was **not exactly like** any of the other children who have been brought into the world.
 3. Jesus, was **God’s own eternal Son**, sent into the world that we might receive the adoption of sons.
 4. Combined in a miraculous and inscrutable way were **both Jesus’ humanity** and **Jehovah’s divinity** for the purpose of saving our souls.
- C. This morning, I have three points to share with you, but admittedly each of them deserve their own lesson(s).

II. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is **DIVINE**; He is **GOD**.

- A. There are verses like **Titus 2:14** where Paul was *“looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”*
1. I know that unbelievers argue against it, but this is referring to the return of our Saviour – who is God.
 2. God the Father will never *“appear”* before the eyes of men, but God the Son definitely will come again.
 3. Then the Apostle Thomas said to Jesus, without rebuke or correction: *“My Lord, & my God.”* – **John 20:18.**
 4. And in speaking about Israel, Paul said, *“whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”* – **Romans 9:5.**
 - a. This isn’t telling us that Christ has been blessed by God.
 - b. It says that Christ is **THE blessed God** – the God who is worthy of all praise.
 5. And in one more scripture, taken out of many, the writer to the **Hebrews** describes **Christ** as *“the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of His person”* – **Hebrews 1:3.**
- B. Not only did **good men** recognize Jesus’ deity, but **He Himself** expressed or exposed it.
1. He said *“I and my father are one”* (**John 10:30**) referring to their shared, divine nature.
 2. This takes us into the equally inscrutable subject of the Trinity – the tri-unity of the God-head.
 3. Jesus later tells us *“The Father is in me, and I (am) in him.”* – **John 10:38.**
 4. And *“the Father dwelleth in me”* – **John 14:10.**
 5. I believe **THAT indwelling** is entirely different from the Holy Spirit’s indwelling of the child of God.
- C. As we see in Thomas, **Jesus received worship** – because He is God.
1. And worship also came from unlikely sources – such as demons.
 2. In one often recorded occasion, as Jesus dealt with a possessed synagogue attendee, the unclean devil cried out with a loud voice, *“Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.”* – **Luke 4:34.**
 3. I know that unbelievers, again, deny that this is a declaration of deity, but I respectfully disagree – *“Jesus, thou art God, the holy One.”*

- D. I believe that **Jesus' miracles** prove His deity – miracles like raising the dead in His own power.
1. Paul claims that Christ created all things and maintains all things – **Colossians 1:16-17**.
 2. The same is suggested in **Hebrews 1:3** – Christ Jesus, *“upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”*
 3. But then Jesus changed the nature of some of those things He created – such as turning water into wine.
 4. He displayed both divine omniscience and omnipotence by telling the disciples to move their nets from one side of their boat to the other side in order to engulf a multitude of fishes.
 5. And there was that single fish which Christ ordained for Peter with a piece of money in its mouth.
- E. There are many more things which give evidence to Jesus' deity, but I must hurry on.

III. There are those scriptures which remind us that Jesus Christ was also **THOROUGHLY MAN**.

- A. But I will add at the outset that He was thoroughly man – **without** man's **sin nature**.
1. That was possible through the miraculous birth which we looked at on Wednesday.
 2. In the incarnation, the Son of God came into the world without inheriting the nature of Adam, because Jesus' father was God – not Joseph or any other man.
 3. Mary supplied an egg and her womb, but the sinful DNA of Adam was not present.
- B. Nevertheless, Jesus was thoroughly human and had a **human family**.
1. In **Luke 3** we have more than a dozen verses describing **Jesus' legal genealogy**.
 2. And in **Matthew 1** we have sixteen verses giving us the details of all Jesus' **literal ancestors** through Mary.
 3. As we saw on Wednesday, **Jesus had a mother**, like every other baby who was ever born.
 4. Did Christ have a belly button? He certainly did – as did His siblings – His brothers and sisters.
- C. The Bible clearly says that Jesus Christ had **flesh**; He had a human being, but nothing like an animal.
1. He said to His disciples after His resurrection, *“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have”* – **Luke 24:39**.
 2. He was made of the seed of David *“according to the flesh”* – **Romans 1:3**.
 3. *“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory”* – **I Tim. 3:16**.
 4. But in that regard: *“his soul was not left in hell, neither his FLESH did see corruption”* – **Acts 2:31**.
 - a. And by the way, Christ possessed **body, soul** and **spirit**, just as you do.
 - b. *“His SOUL was not left in hell, neither did his FLESH see corruption,”* and this was after He said, *“Father, into thy hands I commend my SPIRIT”* – **Luke 23:46**.
- D. As we have seen, the Son of God came into this world as a six or eight pound baby.
1. And He immediately **started to grow** in physical **size** and **strength**. He was a true human baby.
 2. *“The child grew, & waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; & the grace of God was upon him”* – **Luke 2:40**
 3. Christ Jesus had a physical body which got **physically tired** and which **required physical sleep**.
 4. Why did Jesus send His disciples into that Samaritan village as He sat at the side of Jacob's well?
 - a. They went to buy meat – food. And what did He say to the woman who came to draw water?
 - b. *“Give me to drink.”* His body needed food and water as much as your body needs these things.
 5. And while on the cross, He said, *“I thirst.”*
 - a. That was not just to fulfill prophecy, even though it did. He really was thirsty.
 6. Christ also sometimes wept, which is not something that deity is said to do.
- E. There are a couple more aspects of Christ's humanity that I'd like to save for our third point & a later message.
1. But here we have two immense continents: Christ's eternal deity and His humanity – which began with his conception inside the womb of His mother Mary.
 2. And by the way there is no reason to think that His humanity existed in eternity past. It began in time.

IV. How can we bridge these two widely separated Biblical facts?

- A. We have nothing else with which to compare this doctrine. We have no human or earthly analogies to use.
1. This is unique and impossible to fully understand. It is inscrutable.
 2. It is like the doctrine of the Trinity. It is actually a part of that impenetrable truth.
- B. The union of deity and humanity is **not like** the **friendships** we have with one another.
1. And it is **not like** our **salvation** in which we are united with Christ through the Spirit.
 2. It is **not** that in Christ there were **two separate beings**, with one revealing himself in some circumstances and the other coming out at other times.
 3. **Marriage** comes as close as we can get as an illustration, but still there are irreparable differences.
 - a. While the Bible says, two shall become one flesh in marriage, the fact remains that I can be in my study while my wife goes to the grocery store.
 - b. We may have the same heart, but at the same time our hearts sometimes yearn for different things.
 - c. These things were never true of the God-man.
- C. Because of His very special incarnation, Christ became the one and only **"Theanthopic Person."**
1. That word is theological, coming from a combination of two Greek words: **"theos"** translated as **"God,"** and **"anthropos"** which speaks of **"man."**
 2. Beginning when He was here on earth, in Jesus' teaching, in His miraculous supplying of needs and eventually dying on the cross, it was **as** the **God-man** – the **"Theanthopic Person."**
- D. Another term which theologians sometimes use is **"the hypostatic union"** between Jesus' deity and humanity.
1. I suppose that those who are predisposed to shy away from theology will also deny theology's terms.
 2. But even though this word sounds a little scary, it is really relatively simple.
 3. It is the anglicized form of **"hypostasis"** – the Greek word which is found in **Hebrews 1:3**.
 - a. Speaking of God's Son, the writer says – **"Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of His PERSON, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."** The word **"person"** is **"hypostasis."**
 4. According to Webster it means: **"Distinctly personal; or constituting a distinct substance."**
 - a. And another dictionary expresses it as: **"The mode of being, by which any substantial existence is given an independent and distinct individuality."**
 - b. In other words, when Christ became incarnate, there was created a single person but with both – the attributes of deity and the characteristics of a man.
 5. That union was **not metaphysical, theoretical** or **abstract**; it was real and practical.
 6. Jesus was the one and only God-man – He was, and continues to be, **"theanthopic."**
 7. But if someone says he doesn't like the term **"hypostatic union,"** because it implies a new kind of creature – some sort of **hybrid demigod**, like **Hercules** – then I am in total agreement, let's not use that word.
 8. But most theologians take it to mean a miraculous unifying of 100% deity and 100% humanity in such a way that neither the deity nor the humanity are lost – or hindered – in any way. And it is **to that** I agree.
- E. Now let me take you to several scriptures which I think unite those two natures.
1. I'm not going to tell you that they answer all the questions or they check all the boxes.
 2. I'm telling you that they illustrate, or bring together, the human and the divine in Christ.
- F. **John 1:1** – **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."**
1. I won't try to prove it, but **"the Word"** in this verse refers to **the eternal Son of God**.
 2. **The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.**
 - a. As the **Book of Colossians** tells us, God's Son, who is the image of the invisible God, created and maintains all things. Christ is the creator of all **things** – and the creator of all **life**.

3. *In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*
4. *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*
5. *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*
 - a. The world was not ready for the *"Theanthropic Person"* – not even the religious world of the Jews.
 - b. It **couldn't recognize Him**, because, like us in our study this morning, an **essential key is faith**.
6. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*
7. *"The Word"* – the Second Person of the God-head – the eternal Son, was made flesh and dwelt among us.
8. We see here that the gap between deity and humanity was bridged by the miracle of the incarnation.
9. And we can behold His *"theanthropic"* glory, only when we receive by faith the testimony of the Word and the revelation which Christ makes of Himself.

G. Twelve years after the scriptures we looked at last Wednesday, Jesus went to Jerusalem with Mary & Joseph.

1. **Luke 2:41** – *"Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.*
 - a. *And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.*
 - b. *And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.*
 - c. *And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*
2. *And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.*
3. *And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.*
 - a. *And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.*
4. *And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."*

H. I cannot satisfactorily explain all of this, but I will point to two things:

1. **With divine knowledge**, Jesus conversed with and confounded the greatest religious scholars in Israel.
 - a. It appears to me that Jesus had for several years been increasing in **divine wisdom** as well as **stature**.
 - b. He was, **over time**, accessing the infinite knowledge that was His by right. But **why** was it *"over time?"*
 - c. That I can't answer that. But I will tell you it was the will of God, and quite natural in a human sense.
 - d. In Jesus' access to infinite wisdom there was a blending of the divine and the human.
2. He said to his parents, *"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye know I must be about my Father's business?"*
 - a. Jesus **apparently knew** of His **special relationship** & His **special responsibilities**, to God the Father.
 - b. He came into this world, in part, to become the living revelation of all that is God.
3. But then, as soon as His earthly parents told Him to return to Nazareth with them, He instantly obeyed.
 - a. It was required in the law that children obey their parents, and Jesus always did. Never did He sin.
 - b. We see the divine Son of God behaving as the human son of Mary – sinlessly.
4. Again, there is a bridge between the divine and the human – between Christ's heavenly responsibilities and His earthly responsibilities.

- I. In **John 8** Christ was in the midst of one of his many debates with the scribes and Pharisees.
1. He said, *"Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world."*
 2. Isn't that another bridge? Christ was **not of this world**, and yet **there He was** in the world.
 3. Eventually the subject turned to **Abraham**. They said, *"We be Abraham's seed..."*
 4. He replied, *"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with MY Father; and ye do that which ye have seen with YOUR father."*
 5. Again, He pointed out that His Father – and in effect, His home – were not of this world.
 6. Back and forth the argument went, until the Pharisees lost their tempers, *"Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"*
 7. At that point, again the conversation went back to **Abraham**, but it ended with attempted murder when Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM."*
- J. Jesus could have said, *"I was there and talked to Abraham*, but He didn't say that.
1. What He said was, *"Just as I was there with Abraham, I have always been."*
 2. It is a profession of His divine timelessness – His eternity. It was a subtle declaration that He is God.
 3. If we had time to read **Genesis 12 to 25** we'd not be able to find Jesus or someone called *"Christ."*
 4. But we would find *"the Lord"* – *"Yahweh,"* and we'd find the *"angel of the Lord,"* who I believe was Christ.
 5. In **Genesis 18** Abraham entertained an angel with a meal and conversation, but in **verse 33** we are clearly told that it was *"the Lord"* – *"Yahweh."*
 6. And in our last lesson we learned that it was *"the Lord"* whom Mary brought into the world.
 7. Christ Jesus was *"before Abraham,"* while at that time talking to some first century Pharisees, because He is both God and man.
 8. Time is something to which God is confined. God, is superior to time. Christ is both God and man.
- K. I probably have not really clarified the subject of the *"hypostatic union"* or even properly addressed it.
1. But I am convinced that I have shared with you scriptures which give evidence to Christ's divinity, while not taking anything away from His humanity.
 2. I believe it is absolutely necessary that Christ be both God and man in order to be the perfect Saviour that I need.
 3. And that is the subject of the sermon which is coming up in a few minutes.