

The Person of Christ: the God-Man

10/27/21

Is Christ fully God and fully man: Romans 1:3-4, 1 Timothy 2:5, Matthew 8:24-27

Texts to consider about the Deity of Christ

The Son of Man is Divine: Daniel 7:13-14, Matthew 9:6-8, Matthew 25:31-32

The Son of David is Divine: Psalm 2:6-7, Psalm 45:6-7, Isaiah 9:6-7, Romans 1:2-3

Jesus is called Lord and God: Matthew 1:21-23, Romans 9:5, Titus 2:13

Jesus claimed to be God: John 8:54-59 & John 10:30-33

Jesus is worshipped as God: Luke 24:50-53, Philippians 2:9-11, Hebrews 1:6

Jesus is divine and does the work of God: John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-4, Colossians 1:15-20

Jesus was God who became human, he was not a human who became God: Phil. 2:6-7 & 2 Tim. 1:9-10

Texts to consider about the humanity of Christ

Jesus was born of a virgin: Isaiah 7:14, Matt. 1:18-25, Luke 1:35

Jesus had a human body: Luke 2:7, 52, 24:42, John 19:28, Matt. 4:2

Jesus had a human mind and emotions: Luke 2:52, Mark 13:32, John 12:27

Jesus was human and yet without sin: 2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 4:16-17, 1 Peter 1:19

Jesus was the second Adam: Romans 5:18-19 & 1 Cor. 15:45

As the God-man he is the perfect sacrifice: Hebrews 2:14-17

Could Christ sin: Hebrews 4:15-17 & James 1:13

Historical explanations of the God-Man:

Interacting with Islam on the God-Man: See handout contrasting Christianity with Philips on Islamic views of God.

Homework:

Read: <https://www.imb.org/2016/12/16/how-to-explain-the-incarnation-to-muslims/>

Review: Hebrews 1-4 noting ways in which Christ is God and Christ is man.

Read and reflect on the Chalcedonian Definition from 451AD: We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us

Prepare: Read "The Multifaceted Diamond of Christ's Atoning Work" by Trevin Wax

Philips says:

“If God did not become Man, did He have a son? Since He is able to do all things, He should be able to have a son.

However, this claim reduces God to the lowly status of His creation.” —p.23 in “Did God Become Man,” A. B. Philips, <http://www.islamreligion.com/ebooks/Did-God-Become-Man.pdf> on 12/19/2014.

Christianity says:

Exactly! That is the point! Philippians 2:6-7 teaches us that Christ humbled himself and took on manhood. In Jesus, we have God’s display of love through his humble identification with mankind for the purpose of mankind’s redemption (Hebrews 2:14,17).

Philips says:

Based upon the Qur'aan, he says "in reference to Jesus and his mother, Mary, He confirmed their humanity by saying simply: "They both used to eat food."

[Surah al-Maa`idah (5):75]."

—p. 25

Christianity says:

Exactly! That is the point! Jesus did not just appear to be a man, he was a man! And as a man, he was able to eat, sleep, and grow as we see in the Gospels. As a man, he was also able to die. Without becoming man, God could not die for man's sins. Without also being God, no man could be the perfect sacrifice (2 Cor. 5:21).

Philips says:

“The concept of God not becoming man is very important for every human being to grasp because it lies at the foundation of the difference between Islam and all other existing religions. All other religions have a distorted concept of God, to one degree or another.” —p.25

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Christianity says:

“The important idea which needs to be understood, is that God did not become man. God is unique; He alone deserves to be worshipped by His creation.” He deserves this worship even more

because He became a man to display his love for the unworthy. (Romans 5:8)

Philips says:

“This understanding is most important because it forms the foundation for salvation. There can be no salvation without it. However this belief alone is not the key salvation...A person has to live a righteous life based on the correct belief to attain salvation.” —p.25 in “Did God Become Man,” A. B. Philips, <http://www.islamreligion.com/ebooks/Did-God-Become-Man.pdf> on 12/19/2014.

Christianity says:

“This understanding is most important because it forms the foundation for salvation. There can be no salvation without it.” This belief is the key to salvation. A person cannot live a righteous life (Romans 3:10, 23) based on any belief and cannot attain salvation on their own (Ephesians 2:8-9).

3 Ways to Explain the Incarnation to Muslim Peoples

By: Greg Handley / December 16, 2016

/ CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES - FEATURED



The first “Christmas” evoked polarizing responses: magi from the East came to worship the Messiah while Herod trembled at the thought of his kingdom falling. Mary treasured the whole experience while Joseph wrestled through the shameful implications of marrying a miraculously pregnant woman. Angels declared good news of the promised Savior while this same news unsettled others. A treasure to some, a threat to others—this event, so great and world-shaking, allowed for no middle ground.

This polarization continues in our day, particularly among religions that give an account of Jesus. Islam suppresses the incarnation by teaching against it. According to Islam, God could never become man. An average Muslim has heard so many false ideas concerning what Christians believe about Jesus’s birth that the incarnation’s true implications aren’t discernible to them.

A Threat to Their Worldview

As you discuss the gospel with Muslims, it’s good to understand the threat the incarnation poses for them. To even consider whether God became a man would bring Muslims shame due to their “betrayal” of their religious community and cause them to fear the implications of differing from that community. The character of Allah, the teachings of the Qur’an, and their religious moorings are rendered suspect if God really did dwell among us in the person of Jesus.

Some well-meaning Christians attempt to soften this blow by minimizing the doctrine of the incarnation, but this is neither loving nor right. Faithfulness to God and being good friends to Muslims requires us to keep the edges of this truth while patiently remaining alongside questioners as they wrestle with the massive implications of the manger. During these discussions, your Muslim friends will need to have three facets of the incarnation clarified.

1. Clarifying How God became Man

Muslims are taught that Christians believe God had some type of physical relationship with Mary to have a son. After all, isn't that the normal way sons enter the world? But Christians don't believe this, as that would negate the virgin birth and impugn the very character of God. I've found that if you ask a Muslim how he believes Mary began carrying the baby Jesus, surprisingly you arrive on some common ground. We both can agree that the process transcended physical norms and was, therefore, miraculous. We may differ on the details, but we can build upon the commonality of the miraculous origin of Jesus's birth.

2. Clarifying What "Son of God" Means

God can't have a son in an Islamic worldview. He is too distant, too holy. It's physically impossible and theologically inconceivable. Some Christians also struggle with what exactly we mean when we say Jesus is God's Son. After all, the Bible uses the "son" language in a variety of ways. Sometimes it's functional: a son does the deeds or has the role of his father (Matt. 5:9). Sometimes the son language designates a special representative of God or unique relationship with God (Ex. 4:22).

But it's also used in a greater way, designating the very person of God himself. Muslims think Christians believe Jesus became the Son at his birth. But Christians believe the Son existed before the world and stepped into the world, receiving the name Jesus while on earth. Christians believe the Son is coexistent with the Father. If a selfie existed of the unchanging God, he would be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This one-in-three-persons being is who God is. God didn't have a son two thousand years ago. The Son is God and has been with God since before the world came into being (John 1:1-3, 14).

Muslims believe Jesus is a prophet who spoke truthfully, so opening the Bible and reading Jesus's words together is the best thing to do to bring clarity here. "Have you read what Jesus said about himself?" is a good question to ask to transition into Scripture. Jesus claimed to exist before Abraham (John 8:53-59), and for this, the Jewish leaders wanted to stone him. When one of Jesus's disciples requested that Jesus show them God the Father, Jesus's answer was clear: he himself is the physical embodiment of the Father on earth. There was no need for more revelation or another prophet to come after Jesus for us to know the Father (John 14:8-11, 8:19). Jesus even claimed to have the same authority as God to give life and to judge (John 5:19-23). Jesus didn't teach people as the former prophets had by saying "God says this or that." He began his statements with "I say," assuming the very authority of God himself.

In light of these claims, we're faced with a choice: submit to his claims as a true prophet or pick up stones to suppress his claims. This will inevitably lead to the discussion of whether the Bible has been changed. I've found the best proof for the Bible's unchanging nature is the book itself. If you can open the Bible with Muslims, then you are exposing them to Scripture with self-authenticating power.

3. Clarifying Why God became Man

The manger brings joy to a Christian's heart because it speaks of a God willing to embrace sacrifice in order to save sinners. This is good news, but this doesn't line up with the god of the Qur'an. At its core Islam rejects the

God who became man, thus denying he died on the cross and was raised to new life. In the absence of a Savior, we are left to save ourselves, which is just what Muslims believe. This isn't liberating good news. We must connect the dots between Jesus's coming, his suffering, and his victory over death. This is the news that must be heard in order to be saved (Rom. 10:9-13).

As we bring clarity to their misconceptions, Muslims need to see us embodying the way of Jesus if they are going to forsake their whole identity for a new path. We can't change hearts, but we can show them the evidence of our changed hearts. Seeing God's love in Scripture alongside Christians whose lives embody its power has the potential to make this news, once a threat, their greatest treasure.

Greg Handley, his wife Rachel, and their four children have lived among the Muslim peoples of Central Asia for the past five years. They meet weekly with local believers who will be celebrating the true meaning of the incarnation this Christmas, by God's grace.

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The Multifaceted Diamond of Christ's Atoning Work

TREVIN WAX | APRIL 17, 2014

The atonement is like a multi-faceted diamond. What Christ accomplished on the cross is so massive, and the win into the heart of God is so big that no one explanation or description of the atonement can tell the whole story.

Because the atonement is at the heart of who God is and what he has done for us, we can never fully exhaust the riches that flow from this event. But recognizing our inability to mine all the theological treasures represented in cross of Christ should not keep us from pondering the beautiful truth of this event.

In recent weeks, guest contributors have written about the different aspects of Christ's atoning work. Here is a summary of their posts, with links for you to dig deeper into the significance of each truth.

On the cross, [Christ slays the Dragon](#) and wins our victory:

In the cross and resurrection, Christ the warrior king is the new and better Adam who delivers a head crushing blow to the serpent. He is the new and better Joshua who drives out all his enemies from the Promised Land. He is the new and better David who establishes the eternal kingdom of God.

On the cross, [Christ drinks the cup of God's wrath](#) as a substitute sacrifice:

Because of this, when God looks at us, he no longer sees a sinner destined for wrath; he sees His Son nailed to the cross, shedding His own blood in our place. He died so that we may truly live, free from the shackles of sin and death.

On the cross, [Christ redeems us](#) from slavery to sin and death:

Can you see that this is what the redeeming love of God looks like—buying you back from the slave market? He wooed you to himself with gospel promises of mercy instead of punishment, belonging instead of estrangement. He loved you by redeeming you from your enslavement to all lesser lovers, and He is loving you even now as He cuts away from your character every lingering tether to your old way of life.

On the cross, [Christ pays the ransom](#):

The ransom now paid, we have been delivered from the domain of sin and death into perfect union with the Son of God, in whom there is therefore now no condemnation.

On the cross, Christ is the Lamb who takes away our sin and shame:

Expiation is that angle on the atoning work of Christ that means we are clean. Clean. What we need is the good news that Jesus Christ died not only to forgive us, but to cleanse us.

On the cross, Christ is our liberator:

Redemption is not for our restriction, but for our joy. Christ did not die for our duty, but for our delight. I have been set free, but this freedom is not an unfettered pursuit of my desires, for that's slavery all over again. It's the joyful mission of bringing God pleasure because He has liberated and set me free.

On the cross, Christ shows how God is with us in our suffering:

There, in the midst of God's own grief and sorrow, we see God *with us* and believe that he is able somehow to take up our burdens upon himself and deliver us from our despair. He is not distant from our pain. He understands our suffering because Jesus Christ – God in human flesh – suffered.

On the cross, Christ is the propitiation that makes us right with God:

Everybody needs a plan for getting on the right side of the gods. But if the true God has made his character known as it is found in the Bible, then there's only one way of propitiation: the one that God himself put forward in the blood of Jesus, to be received by faith, the one who is his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the cross, Christ becomes our ultimate example:

Jesus Christ is the supreme model of Christian discipleship, the ethical exemplar of the Christian life. The compelling force of Christ's sacrificial example is one answer to indifference and inaction in our broken world. Once we truly grasp what Christ did on our behalf, we will be compelled to live our lives in a way that reflects his self-sacrifice for all others.