

The Exchanges of Christmas

Advent 2018 – Week #2

Made Like His Brothers in Every Way



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A Meditation on the Incarnation



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- From Helper to Helpless (infant)
- Sovereignty for Servanthood
- Son of God became Son of Man



Hark the Herald Angels Sing

- 1739: Lyrics by Charles Wesley entitled Hymn for Christmas Day. "Hark How All the Welkin Rings".
- 1758: Charles Whitefield adapts it with the familiar opening line, other minor tweaks.
- 1855: English musician William H. Cummings adapts Felix Mendelssohn's secular music from Festgesang to fit the lyrics.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing 2nd Verse

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:

Hark the Herald Angels Sing 2nd Verse

veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing The Incarnation!

- Col 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.
- John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Not Reincarnation!

“The rebirth of a soul in a new body”

Popular idea throughout history among many traditions; one fifth of Americans believe in it!
BUT ...

Not Reincarnation!

Hebrews 9:27
...people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment ...

Incarnation

“God became flesh; God assumed a human nature and became a man in the form of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the second person of the Trinity. Christ was truly God and truly man.”

Encyclopedia Britannica

Incarnation

“God the Father is fully God. God the Son is fully God. God the Holy Spirit is fully God. The Bible presents this as fact. It does not explain it.”

Billy Graham

The Incarnation is Important both Theologically and Practically (Experientially)

Both are essential, as Paul wrote to Timothy: “Watch your *LIFE* and *DOCTRINE* closely”
(1 Tim 4:16)

Theological

*1 John 4:2-3 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ **has come in the flesh** is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. (Gnosticism)*

Theological

Atonement ("At One-Ment")

God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood.

Romans 3:25

Theological

Atonement ("At One-Ment")

...you were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 1:18-19

Theological

First Adam ~ Second Adam
 First Adam created sinless, was tempted, and sinned.
 Second Adam born of a woman, was tempted "in every way" but remained sinless. As such, He was the perfect sacrifice through His shed blood.

Practical

What was Jesus's life on earth like?
 And what do we learn from it?

Gospels only give only snapshots of Jesus's life on earth prior to his public ministry, contained entirely in Matthew 2 and Luke 2.

Jesus Narrative Timeline

- Birth to Age 1 or 2 (between 6 BC and 4 BC).
- 10 year gap (Childhood): Luke 2:40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.
- Age 12 (Incident at the Temple – Luke 2:41ff)

Jesus Narrative Timeline

- 18 year gap – Adulthood: Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

- **Public Ministry:** Started with his public baptism in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar (26 AD) at about 30 years old (Luke 3:1 & 3:23). Based on Gospel narrative details including a count of Passovers scholars estimate his ministry lasted about 3 years.

- **His Last Week** (Triumphal Entry, Last Supper, Betrayal, Crucifixion and Resurrection) comprise about 33% of Gospel narratives.

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation

In what ways was Jesus “made in every way like His brothers (us)” and “tempted in every way”, such that He became the perfect High Priest, the Mediator between God and man?

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Family Life

- Born into a poor family.
- Refugees escaping to Egypt.
- Apparent loss of earthly father.
- Grew up with brothers and sisters, who later would come to think Jesus was “out of his mind” (Mark 3:21).

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – The Daily Grind

- Lived in a backwater town.
- Worked as a *tehton*, a craftsman / builder.
- Paid taxes (Matt 17:27)
- Lived a normal life until his first “miraculous sign” at the Cana wedding (John 2:11).

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Emotional / Physical

- Thirsted and hungered.
- Anger (Pharisees, Temple Cleansing)
- Compassion for lost
- A single man among many women.
- He wept (John 11:35)
- Rejected by his own people, own home town. (Luke 4)

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Emotional / Physical

- Was Betrayed.
- Deserted.
- Ridiculed.
- Tortured.
- Crucified

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us

- God is conforming us into the image of Christ, whose character is reflective of the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us

- 1 Peter 2:20-21 - But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us Dependence on God the Father!

- John 5:19 - Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us Dependence on God the Father!

- Mark 1:35 - Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us Dependence on God the Father!

- Hebrews 5:7 - During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

Practical Aspects of The Incarnation – Example for Us Dependence on God the Father!

- If Jesus had this dependence on His heavenly Father, how much more do we need it!

The Incarnation

- Jesus knows what it means to be human (the Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak!)
- Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.