



Nicene Creed: Foundations of the Christian Faith

Session 5: God the Son | His Ministry, The Incarnation

OPENING DISCUSSION

1. What comes to mind when you think of the word “incarnation”?
2. What do you think makes someone truly human?

MEMORY PRACTICE

TEACHING NOTES

Who For Us and Our Salvation

- The Plot of the Christian Story: *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”* (Genesis 3:15, ESV)
- The Conflict: *Behold I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.* (Psalm 51:5)
- The Unthinkable Solution: The **grace of God the Son becoming man.**

He Came Down From Heaven

- The uniqueness of the Christian Story is not only in **who God is**, but in **what He has done for us**.
- “Come Down” - *“He is said to have come to us, not from place to place through space, but by appearing to mortals in mortal flesh. He came to a place where he was already.”* - St. Augustine

He Became Incarnate

- God’s Humility ≠ Losing Something
- God’s Humility = **Taking On Something -> a Human Nature**

- Incarnation: The act by which the Son of God **takes on our nature, truly human**, of His own choosing.
- *“And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”* (Philippians 2:8)
- Apologetics Point: Why does God allow suffering and evil? We may not know fully. But we do know **He entered it with us**.

By the Holy Spirit And the Virgin Mary

- *“God’s power always flows forth from the Father as from a spring, is put to work by the Son, and the grace is perfected by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* - Gregory of Nyssa
- For the Perfect Man/Sacrifice, Divinity and Humanity Must Meet
- God took on Humanity
 - Through the Holy Spirit’s Power - He has made Mary “the mother of my Lord” (Luke 1:43, ESV)
 - Through Mary’s Obedience - “Let it be to me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38, ESV)

And was Made Human

- The Son **did NOT cease being God**. Rather, He was “in-humanized.”
- Truly God and Truly Man
 - Jesus = **one person / two natures**.
 - Jesus **retains attributes of divinity and humanity** fully and truly. (Sin is not essential to humanity)
- Therefore, He is the **perfect means of salvation for us**, all of His own choosing.
 - *“how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”* (Hebrews 9:14, ESV)

DISCUSSION

- How might it change your perspective to think of Christianity as a story about what God has done, not what we do?
- What part of today’s lesson challenged or surprised you the most?

Homework: Read pp. 127-138 in *The Nicene Creed: An Introduction* by Phillip Cary. Practice memorizing “He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate” through “He suffered and was buried”