

Study 2: Rejoicing in Jesus’ Humanity

Michael Reeves: “Jesus has satisfied the mind and heart of the infinite God for eternity... If the Father can be infinitely and eternally satisfied in him, then he must be overwhelmingly all-sufficient for us.”

“Incarnation” is a Latin word that means “become flesh.”

Here are some descriptions given to depict this incarnation

- Infinite One became bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh.
- Prince of Glory became the babe in a manger.
- The Son of God became the Son of Man.
- The creator came out of the creature.
- He who made the world and was above the world came into the world.
- The Almighty One became a little Child.
- The immortal Son was clothed in rags of mortality.
- The Eternal One became a child of time.
- God, who made man after His image, was Himself made in man’s image.
- He whose dwelling is in the heavens was let down into the hell of this earth.
- He who thunders in the heavens cried in the manger.
- The invisible God was made visible.
- God took our flesh and dwelt in it with His divine fullness so that our flesh could become more glorious than the angels – through that flesh, God opened up His gospel treasures by being Savior, Redeemer, Kinsman, Elder Brother, and Shepherd of His own.
- The Son of God became the Son of Man so that the sons of men might become the Sons of God.

Joel Beeke wrote, [“The sheer magnitude of the incarnation is so incomprehensible; we could borrow the language of the apostle Paul that we see it only through a glass darkly. Describing the incarnation in human language is like painting a mountain on a grain of sand.”](#)¹

The language of the incarnation is not that of myths... but of testament.

Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) states that Christ is one person with two distinct natures, human and divine.

Westminster Confession 8.2 says, “Two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ. the only Mediator between God and man.”

Larger Catechism wrote the questions and answers of...

Q. 54. How is Christ exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God?

A. Christ is exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God, in that as God-man he is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father, with all fullness of joy, glory, and power over all things in heaven and earth; and doth gather and defend his church, and subdue their enemies; furnisheth his ministers and people with gifts and graces, and maketh intercession for them.

¹ Beeke, *Puritan Reformed Theology: Historical, Experiential, and Practical Studies for the Whole of Life*, 23.

Q. 55. How doth Christ make intercession?

A. Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, declaring his will to have it applied to all believers; answering all accusations against them, and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings, access with boldness to the throne of grace, and acceptance of their persons and services.

The West tends to separate everything into subjective and objective categories. Yet the "Word," often mistakenly held solely as an element of faith, became "flesh", sometimes mistakenly held solely as fact.

Federal Heads:

Reeves writes, "Have you ever noticed that when Paul writes of Adam and Christ, he writes as if they were the only men in the world, as if no others existed? That was the big picture of humanity for Paul. It is not that humanity is a vast throng of disconnected individuals. Adam and Christ are the two men: the heads, the first fruits of the old and the new human race. Each one of us is merely a seed in one of those fruits, a member of one of their bodies, dependent for our fate, not on ourselves but on the fruit in which we belong. When Adam sinned, we sinned in him; when he died, we died. At my birth I was born into a sinful, guilty, dead humanity. I was born into that identity (and identity I then managed to live out rather well)."²

Patterns of rulership, bearing the image of God, being a son of God, marriage, and finally, the pattern of sin and salvation.

Rulership:

Adam was crowned ruler over creation (Gen 1:28).

Jesus will be crowned the everlasting king of all (Phil 2:9-11)

Image of God:

Adam was created in the image of God (Gen 1:27).

While Jesus is the exact imprint of God's very being (Heb 1:3-6).

Son of God:

Adam is called the "Son of God" (Lk 3:38).

Jesus is the Son of God, Adam was modelled after and for.

Marriage:

Eve was created out of a wound in Adam's side while he slept in the garden of Eden.

² Reeves, *Rejoicing in Christ*, 41.

Jesus' Bride, the church, was created from a wound in Jesus' side while he slept the deep sleep of death.

Calvin writes, "In this we see a true resemblance of our union with the Son of God."³

"In this (as in many other things) Adam was a figure of him that was to come; for out of the side of Christ, the second Adam, his spouse the church was formed, when he slept the sleep, the deep sleep, of death upon the cross, in order to which his side was opened, and there came out blood and water, blood to purchase his church and water to purify it to himself."⁴

Sin and Salvation:

In Adam, all the human race fell in sin (2 Esdras 7:118; Rom 5:12, 15, 17-19).

In Jesus, believers find a new identity (1 Cor 15:20-23).

How human was Jesus?

Heresies:

- Docetism is from the Greek word *Dokein*, meaning "to seem". Jesus did not have an actual physical body or a true human nature. He only "seemed" to have a body but was a phantom sort of being in reality.⁵ He was more akin to a spirit that didn't eat, breathe, or die. He pretended to be in front of the disciples.
- Monophysite states that Jesus did not have two natures but one. This nature was not genuinely divine nor truly human but a mixture of the two.⁶ This is still present in the church.
- Gregory of Nazianzus held that Jesus was human of the body alone but retained a divine mind.

"What [Christ] has not assumed he has not healed."⁷

Beeke "He took on our feet, our legs, our chest, our arms, our mouth, our hair, our eyes, our ears. His hands were roughened by the wood of the carpenter's shop; His back was torn by the lash of the scourge. He was truly human. When He died, He was truly dead. His pulse stopped and His brain activity ceased. When He rose from the dead, His physical body rose to new life. He spoke. People touched Him. He ate fish. Jesus was fully human."⁸

The gospel is not concerned simply with ideas but with facts and objects.

³ J. Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1847), 2:21.

⁴ M. Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (1706), Gen 2:21-25.

⁵ R. C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1992), 85.

⁶ Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, 85.

⁷ G. o. Nazianzus, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, (2nd Series; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 7:438.

⁸ Beeke, *Puritan Reformed Theology: Historical, Experiential, and Practical Studies for the Whole of Life*, 29.