

## THE GOD-MAN

- A. Introduction: We are discussing the fact that Jesus warned His followers that prior to His return there will be much religious deception, specifically false christs and false prophets ( Matt 24:45; 11; 23-24). We are looking R Jesus as He is revealed in the Bible so that we can recognize counterfeit christs.
1. When Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant before they married, he planned to put her away. But an angel (most likely Gabriel) told him not to do so because the child she carried was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The angel instructed Joseph to name the child Jesus or Savior. Matt 1:20-21
    - a. The angel further stated that this was fulfillment of a prophecy given to Isaiah. A virgin shall bring forth a son and his name will be Emmanuel. Isa 7:14; Matt 22-23
    - b. Emmanuel literally means the God-man. “According to orthodox interpretation the name denotes the same as God-man (*theanthropos*) and has reference to the personal union of the human nature and the divine in Christ” (*Unger’s Bible Dictionary*).
      1. There is a two-fold aspect to the name Emmanuel. First, God and man united in Jesus when He took on a full human nature in the womb of Mary and became the God-man.
      2. Second, through saving men from their sins by the sacrifice of Himself on the Cross, He established relationship between God and man and brought God and man together. I Pet 3:18; Rom 5:1; Eph 3:12; Heb 4:16; etc.
  2. Who is Jesus? Is He God or is He man? Is He equal with or less than God? Inaccurate as well as heretical ideas about who Jesus is come out of not understanding what it means that He is the God-man. That is our topic in this lesson.
- B. To understand who Jesus is, we need some understanding of the Godhead or the Divine nature, the Deity, the One True God. We could but aren’t going to do a whole series on this. For now, consider these points.
1. The word Godhead is used three times in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9). It is used of God’s power and nature—the Divine nature. It denotes that which proceeds from God Himself (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*).
    - a. The Bible reveals that God is One God (one Being) who simultaneously manifests as three distinct Persons—the Father, the Son (or the Word) and the Holy Spirit.
      1. These three persons are distinct, but not separate. They co-inhere or share one Divine nature. They are persons, in the sense of being self aware and aware of and interactive with each other.
      2. God is not one God who manifests three ways—sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Holy Spirit. You can’t have one without the other. Where the Father is, so is the Son and the Holy Spirit.
    - b. This is beyond our comprehension because we are talking about the Infinite God (eternal and without limits) and we are finite (limited) beings. All efforts to explain the Godhead fall short. We can only accept and rejoice in the wonder of Almighty God.
    - c. Jesus is not a created being. He is God become fully man without ceasing to be fully God. This is also beyond our comprehension in many ways. I Tim 3:16
  2. John the apostle (an eyewitness of Jesus) contrasted two Greek words for the verb *was* to illustrate this point in his gospel. John 1:1-18
    - a. He used *en* (was), which expresses continuous action in the past (or no beginning point), when referring to the Word (v1-2). He used *egeneto* (was), which denotes a time when something came into existence for everything else in the passage—all created things (v3), John the Baptist (v6).
    - b. John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, reported that at a definite point in time (two thousand years ago) the Word was (*egeneto*) made flesh. v14 (*egeneto*)
      1. The Word took on a human nature in the womb of Mary—a body prepared by the Father and the

Holy Spirit. At that time, He became the Son of God. Jer 31:22; Isa 7:14; Luke 1:35; Heb 10:5

2. Jesus became the only begotten of the Father. The Greek word (*monogenes*) has the idea of unique. Jesus is the only God-man, the only man whose birth did not mark His beginning.
  3. The apostle Paul (personally taught the message he preached by Jesus, Gal 1:11-12), in his epistle to the Philippians, gives us insight into what happened when the Word was made flesh.
    - a. Note the context. He was instructing Christians on how to humble themselves for the good of others. Phil 2:5—Let this same attitude and purpose and [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. — Let Him be your example in humility (Amp).
    - b. Paul went on to explain that Jesus was in the form of God before He came into this world, yet He was willing to humble Himself and take on the form of man. Form is the Greek word *morphe*. It literally means shape, but is also used figuratively to mean nature.
      1. v6—Who although being essentially one with God, and in the form of God [possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God God], did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained (Amp).
      2. v7-8—But stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity] (Amp); He stripped Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature (*morphe*) of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, He humbled Himself and even stooped to die (Weymouth).
      3. This is why Jesus is called man in a number of places in the New Testament (Acts 2:22; Acts 17:31; I Cor 15:47; Heb 3:3; etc.). This is how He (God) could get tired and hungry, be tempted, and die (Matt 4:1-2; Matt 8:24; Matt 21:18; John 4:6; Heb 2:14-15).
    - c. v7—The KJV says Jesus made Himself of no reputation. The Greek word is *keno* which means to divest oneself of rightful dignity by descending to an inferior condition, to abase oneself.
      1. Jesus veiled His preincarnate glory (the glory He had with the Father before the world was created) so that He could live among men. John 17:5; Matt 17:1-8; etc.
      2. Jesus did not cease to be God because God cannot cease to be God. He voluntarily limited Himself and did not use His divine attributes to live on earth.
  4. Jesus is God become man without ceasing to be God. While on earth He did not live as God. He lived as a man in dependence on God as His Father.
    - a. This is why Jesus needed to be anointed by the Father with the Holy Ghost and power when He began His public ministry. Acts 10:38
    - b. Yet He was able to take the title I Am for Himself in a confrontation with the Pharisees. John 8:58.
      1. The Greek translated I Am is *ego eimi*. Jesus used this title of Himself numerous times because, although He became fully man, He was still fully God. He was and is the God-man. John 4:26; John 6:20; John 8:24; John 8:28; John 13:19; John 18:5-6; John 18:8;
      2. The Old Testament was the first book translated into another language. It was translated into Greek during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries before Christ (200's to 100's BC). Those scholars used the Greek *ego eimi* for Ex 3:14.
      3. Because Jesus identified Himself with Jehovah, the Pharisees took up stones to execute Him.
    - c. Some mistakenly say that the Godhead is only Jesus, and that the Father and the Holy Spirit are simply different roles that He takes, then many statements in the gospels make no sense. Why would Jesus anoint Himself with Himself?
    - d. When Jesus prayed to the Father, if Jesus is also the Father, then He was praying to himself. And, when talked to and about His Father as He frequently did, then He was talking to Himself about Himself. John 5:19; John 8:29; John 11:41-42; John 14:10-11
- C. God is both transcendent (separate from, beyond) and imminent (close at hand). He is incomprehensible,

yet He is knowable and wants to be known. He has progressively revealed Himself to men as He works out His plan of redemption. Consider this example.

1. Once Israel was delivered from Egypt, the Lord met with Moses numerous times for various purposes (lots of lessons for another day). Note these points.
  - a. When Moses needed to talk with the Lord, he would set up a tent (or tabernacle) far outside of Israel's camp. It was called the Tabernacle of the Congregation (KJV) or the Tent of Meeting.
    1. Moses would go into the tent (as everyone watched from afar) and when he did, the pillar of cloud (God's manifest presence) would come down and hover at the entrance while the Lord spoke with Moses. Ex 33:7-10
    2. Ex 33:11—The Lord spoke to Moses face to face. Face to face is the same word translate presence in v 14-15. It literally means face, but most often is used for the entire person.
      - A. Moses didn't see God (have a vision or dream). He saw the cloud (or manifest presence) and heard the voice of God.
      - B. v11—The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, or as a man speaks to his friend (NLT); as one man would speak to another (AAT).
  - b. The idea expressed is the confidence and familiarity with which the Lord treated Moses (a man who has been redeemed, Ex 6:6; Ex 15:13), as a friend.
2. Ex 33:18—Moses asked the Lord: show me your glory (splendor); glorious presence (NLT); your majesty (Moffatt); Thine Own Self (Spurrel).
  - a. The Lord answered: Ex 33:20—You may not look directly at my face (same word translated face to face and presence). Thou are unable to see (YLT); Mortal man cannot see me, and live to tell of it (Knox); For no son of earth (Rotherham).
    1. No man in His present mortal, corrupt state can see God's face or the fullness of His perfection and being—not because He will kill us, but because we can't bear it. I John 3:2
    2. Consider two examples: When Saul of Tarsus saw the resurrected Lord on the road to Damascus, Syria, he was temporarily blinded (Acts 9:8). When Roman soldiers came to arrest Jesus the night before He was crucified, when He said I am (*ego eimi*) they fell over backwards (John 18:6).
    3. The Lord answered Moses: I'll let you see my back parts—a form you can bear. Ex 33:23
  - b. Ex 34:6—When Moses went back up Mt. Sinai with two more stone tablets to replace the ones he had earlier broken, the Lord passed by him. Moses was on Sinai for forty days in the manifest presence of God.
    1. Ex 34:29—When Moses came down from the mountain, his face shone or was glowing: after conversing with God (AAT); by reason of his speaking with him (ASV). The word shone means to shine out or dart forth like horns from an animal or rays of light reflected off a polished surface.
    2. Ex 34:33-34—Moses put a veil over his face for the sake of the people, but when he went into the Tent of Meeting he took it off to speak with the Lord.
  - c. II Cor 3:7-18—Paul used this incident to express the greater benefit that God has provided for us through Jesus. There are lots of lessons for another time in Paul's words.
    1. But one of his points is that through Jesus and because of Jesus, we can approach God with no veil, with complete confidence. Relationship has been established.
    2. II Cor 3:18—And all of us have that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more (NLT)
3. Remember the big picture. Before God created the heavens and the earth He chose us to become His children (lit. sons) through Christ, chose us to be holy and blameless (unblemished, without blemish,

fault, spot) “before him (KJV)”. His motive was love. Eph 1:4-5

- a. Before is used two times in these verse, but it is two different Greek words. The first means prior to. The second means directly in front of, in the sight of (Col 1:22), in the presence of (Jude 24).
  - b. God created us for relationship with Himself. But man’s sin made such a relationship impossible.
    1. Apart from Christ, we are neither holy nor unblemished. Sin cut man off from living in God’s presence. Isa 59:2
    2. We are guilty of sin before a holy god, cut off from Him, and deserving of continued, eternal separation from Him, from His presence both in this life and the life to come.
  - c. Jesus died to pay for sin and satisfy Divine Justice so that we can be justified (declared not guilty) and made righteous (restored to right relationship with God). The Cross was a means to an end: Make us holy and blameless through His sacrifice so that we can be restored to His presence.
4. Back to John 1:18. He wrote that no man has seen God, but that the Only Begotten (unique) Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
- a. The Greek word translated seen means to stare at, and by implication, to discern clearly. It’s more than the act of seeing. It’s the actual perception of an object. It is translated perceive (Acts 8:23), seen or known (I John 3:6), and take heed (Matt 18:10).
  - b. No man has fully known God, except for the Man Jesus, and He has declared Him or made Him known (RSV).
    1. In the bosom of is a reference to the custom of reclining at meals with the head resting on the person behind (to lie in his bosom). The one who had this place at the master of the feast was in a state of utmost favor and intimacy.
    4. John 1:18—Absolute deity in its essence no one has ever yet seen. God uniquely-begotten, He who is in the bosom of the Father, that One fully explained deity. (Wuest)
  - c. Jesus is the full revelation of God to man. Heb 1:3—He is the sole expression of the glory of God—the Light—being, the out-raying of the divine—and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God’s nature] (Amp).
    1. Express image is one word in the Greek. It has the idea of a stamp or impress as in a coin or a seal. All the features in the seal correspond to the imprint made by it; distinct, but equal.
    2. An exact representation of his very being (Rotherham); very image of his substance (ASV); flawless expression of the nature of God (Phillips); is the copy of his being (Beck).
- D. Conclusion: We have much more to say next week, but consider one thought as we close.
1. God is Invisible (I Tim 1:17). Jesus is the visible manifestation of the Invisible God (Col 1:15). He not only is God and shows us God, He has made it possible for us to be restored to God.
  2. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost have enjoyed each other’s presence since forever. John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God
    - a. (KJV). The Greek word translated with (*pros*) has the idea of intimate, unbroken, face-to-face fellowship. Before there was anything there was God (the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit). They were (and are) perfect and perfectly complete—in loving fellowship with one another.
    - b. We are invited into this fellowship and are qualified to participate because of Jesus, the God-man. God and man came together in Jesus to show us what God is like. Because of what Jesus did through the Cross, God now indwells us. God and man together through Jesus.