Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

After having studied Theology Proper, the doctrine of God; and after having studied Anthropology, the doctrine of man; we now come to the most amazing truth about God of all: God became a man. He didn’t just appear as a man, and He didn’t just become “part-man.” God became fully human in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The infinite, omnipotent, eternal Son of God took upon Himself a human nature—the infinite became one with the finite—and will remain as a man for all of eternity. And He did this that He might be “God with us” [Matthew 1:23].

I. JESUS AS GOD

The clear testimony of Scripture is that Jesus is fully God—that He is equal to the Father in Godhead, as Paul states in Philippians 2:5-11. Throughout history, the church has used the word incarnation to refer to the act whereby God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, took upon Himself the fullness of human nature when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The Scriptural proof for Jesus’ Godhead [deity] is extensive, and can be considered under several categories:

A. Direct Biblical Claims of Jesus’ Deity—There are direct statements in Scripture declaring that Jesus is God.

1. The word God is directly used of Jesus: Although the word God is normally used in the New Testament for God the Father, there are several places where it is also used to refer to Jesus. Just to give a sampling:

   (John 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

   (John 20:28) “And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”

Other places include, but are not limited to Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8, and 2 Peter 1:1, and of course the famous Old Testament passage in Isaiah 9:6, where He is also called “the mighty God.”

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2. **The title Lord is directly used of Jesus:** The Greek word KURIOS which is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament 6,814 times as a stand-in for the sacred name of Jehovah, is applied to Jesus throughout the New Testament:

(Luke 2:11) “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”
(Luke 1:43) “And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

That’s barely scratching the surface of how many times this sacred title is applied to Jesus in the New Testament. But one noteworthy instance is again Philippians 2:11: “And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” This is a direct allusion to a verse in the Old Testament, where JEHOVAH GOD says: “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear” [Isaiah 45:23]. That verse, which is very clearly Jehovah speaking of Himself, is applied to Jesus Christ by the apostle without reservation.

3. **Other Strong Claims to Jesus’ Deity:** In addition to the uses of God and the Lord to refer to Jesus, there are other passages that forcefully claim deity for Jesus:

(John 8:57-59) “Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”

The reason why the Jews wanted to stone Jesus at that time was because He claimed for Himself the divine name revealed by God to Moses in Exodus 3:14:

(Exodus 3:14) “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Yet another forceful claim to deity is Jesus’ statement at the end of Revelation:

(Revelation 22:13) “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

See also Revelation 1:1, 17 and 2:8. What’s significant about this statement is not only the fact that these are also titles claimed by God the Father in Revelation [see Rev. 1:8 and 2:16], but that this too is an allusion to a statement that JEHOVAH made about Himself in Isaiah:

(Isaiah 44:6) “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

See also Isaiah 41:4 and 48:12. Jesus is not only claiming equality with the Father, but also His sovereignty over all of history, from beginning to end.

4. **Jesus is called the Son of God:** Finally, Jesus is identified as the Son of God, which is the second Person of the Holy Trinity. The times that He is called by this title are too numerous to recount here, but as for one of the most famous ones...

(John 3:16) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The significance of this title cannot be stressed enough. Jesus is the eternal Son of God [John 1:18], who reveals the Father [John 14:9], who has been given all authority to judge [John 5:22], and to grant us eternal life [John 17:2]. Such things could never be said of a mere created being.

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B. Jesus Possesses Divine Attributes – Additionally there are clear examples in Scripture of Jesus exercising divine attributes even during His earthly life.

1. Omnipotence: Jesus demonstrated omnipotence when He calmed the storm with His word [Matthew 8:26-27], multiplied the loaves and the fish [Matthew 14:19], changed water into wine [John 2:1-11], and many other examples could be mentioned. The disciples are right to pose the question: “What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!” (Matthew 8:27). We could also simply point to the fact that Jesus is identified as the Creator of all things [John 1:3; Colossians 1:16].

2. Eternity: Once again, Jesus asserts His eternity when He said “Before Abraham was, I am” [John 8:58]. Also the fact that He “was in the beginning with God” and that He created all things [John 1:2-3], demonstrates that Jesus is eternal.

3. Omniscience: Jesus knows all things [John 16:30]. His omniscience is demonstrated by His knowledge of people’s thoughts [Mark 2:8], and His knowledge of the future [John 6:64]. The only exception to this is that Jesus doesn’t know the day or hour of His coming [Mark 13:32]. But this lack of knowledge has more to do with His economic role as being in subjection to the Father, than it does with His ontological equality to the Father.

4. Omnipresence: While the attribute of omnipresence cannot be applied to Jesus’ human body, Jesus promised to be with us in spirit. He promised for example, “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” [Matthew 18:20]. And He also promised, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” [Matthew 28:20]. This is only possible through the divine attribute of omnipresence.

5. Sovereignty: The divine sovereignty of Jesus was demonstrated, for instance, when He forgave sin [Mark 2:5-7]; it’s demonstrated also in His authority to reveal the Father to whomever He chooses [Matthew 11:25-27]; also in His authority to give eternal life [John 17:2]; moreover in His authority to execute final judgment over all men [John 5:27].

6. Immortality: In 1 Timothy 6:16, Paul tells us that Jesus is the one “who only hath immortality.” This is interesting because Jesus died! But we must remember that Jesus’ “mortality” was voluntary. He said of His own life, “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” [John 10:18]. Peter also adds that it was not possible for death to hold Jesus indefinitely [Acts 2:24]. This is because Jesus possesses immortality.

7. Worship: Another divine attribute of Jesus that is sometimes overlooked, is the fact that He is worthy of worship, and that He receives worship [Hebrews 1:6]. In Revelation 5:8–14, we see a picture of every creature worshiping Jesus:

(Revelation 5:13) “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”

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II. JESUS AS MAN

Scripture also indicates that Jesus is fully man—that he possesses all of the attributes that are essential to humanity. In the incarnation, the eternal Son of God took upon Himself much more than just flesh. He took upon Himself a body, a soul, and a spirit [depending on your view of the soul and spirit], which He shall retain forever. This is proved by the following truths:

A. Jesus was born – To begin our discussion of the humanity of Jesus, we must first consider His birth. It was an unusual birth, but a human birth nonetheless. It was unusual because He was conceived in His mother’s womb by a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, without a human father.

[Matthew 1:18] “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”

Perhaps referring to the miracle as “the virgin birth” is a slightly misleading. It was rather His conception by the Spirit that was miraculous, not necessarily the birth itself. It’s called “the virgin birth” because Mary remained a virgin until after Jesus was born. But other than His supernatural conception, Jesus had a normal prenatal development and birth, just like everyone else. The miraculous conception is what demonstrates that Jesus is begotten of God, and not men. There have been some modern Christians who have downplayed the importance of the virgin birth. But the virgin birth [or virgin conception] is of high doctrinal importance for several reasons:

1. The Virgin Birth demonstrates that salvation comes from the Lord alone: The Savior was not born through human effort, but by the supernatural power of God. If Jesus was born naturally as a man, just like everyone else, then humanity could take credit for the salvation that He accomplished. The virgin birth rather indicates that Jesus is not the son of a man, but the Son of God, who was sent into the world by His Father [John 10:36]. Salvation, therefore, is of the Lord, and not man [Jonah 2:9].

2. The Virgin Birth demonstrates the reality of the “hypostatic union”:” The “hypostatic union” will be discussed in more detail further below. It simply refers to the union of the two natures of Christ [divine and human] in one person. Because Jesus’ conception was miraculous, this demonstrates His deity. Because His prenatal development and birth was “normal,” this demonstrates His full humanity. Because Jesus is fully God and fully man, He can be the true Mediator: fully representing God to us, and fully representing us before God.

3. The Virgin Birth grants Jesus full humanity without inherited [original] sin: Because of Adam’s original sin, all human beings have inherited the legal guilt of Adam’s transgression [the death penalty], and a corrupted sin nature. But because Jesus had no human father, the line of descent from Adam was interrupted. Having only God as His Father, Jesus is very much a “New Adam.” For this reason, neither the legal guilt of Adam’s sin, nor a corrupted sin nature passed to Jesus. This is clear in Gabriel’s description of Jesus:

[Luke 1:35] And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Because He is conceived by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is called “holy thing.” He was neither “shapen in iniquity” nor “conceived in sin” like the rest of us [Psalm 51:5].

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B. Jesus has human limitations – Jesus had all of the faculties and limitations that we have.

1. Jesus has a human body: The fact that Jesus’ body was just like ours is clear from Scripture. In addition to being conceived and born [although the conception was miraculous], He also grew up from infancy to adulthood, experiencing childhood and adolescence along the way, growing and developing like a normal man. Luke, the only Evangelist that gives us a story from Jesus’ youth tells us:

(Luke 2:40) “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”

(Luke 2:52) “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

Additionally, Jesus also experienced our bodily limitations as well. He became tired [John 4:6]. He became thirsty [John 19:28]. He became hungry [Matthew 4:2]. His physical strength failed [Luke 23:26]. He died [Luke 23:26]. And when Jesus rose from the dead, He rose in His human body, although it was glorified and no longer subject to weakness, pain, and death.

(Luke 24:39) Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

Moreover Jesus ascended in His body and will return in His body [Acts 1:9-11]. He will have His body forever [Revelation 1:18].

2. Jesus has a human mind: The fact that Jesus “increased in wisdom” [Luke 2:52] indicates that Jesus went through the learning process that all other children go through. He learned how to eat, to talk, to read and write, and how to obey his parents. His human mind may also be the reason why He doesn’t know the day or hour of His return [Mark 13:32].

3. Jesus has a human soul, spirit, and emotions: Jesus possesses all of the faculties that we do, including the unseen spiritual ones. The fact that Jesus has a soul and spirit is demonstrated by the clear testimony of Scripture:

[John 12:27] “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.”

(Luke 23:46) “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

Additionally, we see that Jesus displayed genuine human emotions. He marvelled [Mark 6:6]. He wept [John 11:35]. He experienced anger and grief [Mark 3:5]. He rejoiced [Luke 10:21]. Jesus has everything and has experienced everything that makes us human.

4. Jesus was perceived as a man: When people saw Jesus, He wasn’t walking around with a halo over His head. They saw a regular man. Sadly, this is only the way some saw him:

(Matthew 13:54-58) “And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

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C. Jesus was sinless – Another fact that proves Jesus humanity is the fact that He never sinned. Some might think that Jesus’ sinlessness makes Him detached from humanity. But the reality is that His sinlessness makes Him “more human” than we are. When God created man, God created man in a state of sinless innocence. When man sinned, his humanity became corrupted. Therefore Jesus, in His sinlessness, is a picture of what humanity was originally intended to be. The testimony of Jesus’ sinlessness is seen throughout the New Testament, but probably the most famous verse is Hebrews 4:15:

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

This means that Jesus was placed under every possible category of temptation that is common to humanity. He felt the full force of temptation with never giving in. Most of Jesus’ temptations recorded in Scripture have to do with Satan tempting Him to be the kind of Messiah that the people wanted Him to be rather than the Messiah that God wanted Him to be. Satan primarily tempted Jesus to be a cross-less Messiah—a Messiah who wouldn’t suffer. And although Jesus was subjected to great sorrows and unthinkable sufferings, He never gave up or gave in to that temptation. Because Jesus never gave into sin, He knows more about the pressures of temptation than we do. Because we all give in before feeling the full weight of the Devil’s temptings.

TO BE CONTINUED...