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Research Paper on

The Incarnation

By
Charles Frederick

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What is the meaning of; “The Incarnation?” According to Christian doctrine it is that God became man in the form of Jesus, the Son of God and second person of the Holy Trinity. In Jesus the divine and human nature are joined but neither is changed or diminished. This difficult doctrine gave a rise to a variety of heresies, some denying Jesus’ divine nature, others His human nature. For Orthodox believers the conflict was settled at the councils of Nicaea (AD 325) and Chalcedon (AD451). But by whose standards was this question settled? Ref: Miles

I found intriguing the question, “was Jesus fully God or was He fully man,” had to be settled by the Council of Nicaea. They were the First Council of Churches in 325AD and because they could not come to an agreement Emperor Constantine ordered them to come to an agreement. Both sides took a position that Jesus was man but one side said He was fully God and the other He was fully man. Since they could not agree they agreed not to agree. In their agreement they concluded that Jesus was Fully God and He was fully man.

When looking for a starting point when writing any article the writer must insure that the reader has a point of reference. Our point of reference will be that I agree that Jesus was in a mortal body of a man. Which I then can say Jesus was a mortal man from all outward appearances. I also agree that Jesus was fully God. But the question is can He be both fully God and fully man? And if so or if not why do we write about the second nature of the Godhead as the Incarnation Of Jesus?

The backbone of Christian belief is that Jesus was God and assumed the body of man through the conception of birth through a woman without the father’s participation. In (FF) **Matthew 1:18** “However, the origin of Jesus the Messiah was thus: Mary, His mother, was promised in marriage to Joseph; but before their union, she was found to have conceived from the Holy Spirit.” When reading this verse and comparing comments written by Brian Hebblethwaite, (ref) I noted that he felt that you can eliminate the discussion of the Holy Spirit since the question is whether Jesus is fully man and is He fully God. His argument was, “what we needed to prove is whether God the Father and God the Son were in fact operating as one in the incarnation and birth of Jesus.” How after birth, did Jesus the man, remain a man while still being the God of Israel?

Because Hebblethwaite eliminates the role of the Holy Spirit I believe he weakened his conclusions. Although we both arrive at the same place at the end he would have better served by intertwining the full natures of the Godhead. In Matthews 1:18 we read that Mary was provided the seed of man not by man but by the third nature of the Godhead, “The Holy Spirit.” The importance of this conception through impregnating Mary by the Holy Spirit should show that Jesus at birth already had two Natures: One the Son of our Father and two the Holy Spirit. In my writings concerning the Godhead I wrote, and many theologians would agree that God is of three natures, The Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghost. None of these three can be separated. If none can be separated then all three must be active in all that is created. Logically Jesus the Messiah must be by definition all three.

If theologians prove the Trinity (Godhead) as being inseparable how can they now write that Jesus was separated from the other two natures while being fully man. We

cannot separate them at any time and because theologians miss the mark many lay teachers and students are misled.

A better example would be by answering the question, "How did God live in a box?" **Exodus 25:8** "and make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell amongst you." **Exodus 25:10** "You shall also make and ark of-" The Ark was made and placed behind the Holy of Holies and until Jesus' death no one but the High Priest was allowed behind the veil. But at the Glorification of the resurrection of Jesus: **Matthew 27:51** "And the veil of the temple was torn into from the top to the bottom;" Incarnation without reconciliation is meaningless, for the purpose of incarnation was the death of the flesh and the birth of the new Spirit that now indwells in us. We became liberated from sin. We saw the formulation of God's works when the children of Israel were lead from Egypt. We see today through the works of the Holy Ghost as Blacks, Jewish, Indians and the rest of mankind through out the world have been release from slavery and the greater unity of Christians.

There can be no incarnation without the full Godheads involvement. The Nature of the Holy Spirit impregnating and fertilizing woman made conception possible without the aid of the male donor, 'Joseph'. The incarnation must be viewed as not the second part of the Godhead but in fact the full participation of all three Natures.

The complexity of understanding the Incarnation is the same as understanding the Bible. It is only complex because we search for hidden words. We invent new words and when we do not like a word we transliterate the word with a word, which reflect our opinion. Transliterated words however give the scripture a new meaning. Take a moment and reflect on what you just read.

Lets now define the Holy Trinity (Godhead) The Godhead is; "The Father" "The Son" and "The Holy Ghost". But who is the Son? The Son is "The Word"! Since the Word and the Son are interchangeable we can now say the Father, The Word, and the Holy Ghost is God. God has three natures that are used for our recognitions. As the Father we are to know and understand Him because we became His son through adoption. We became heirs of the promise. The Father incorporated all of His natures as written in the Old Testament (OT) into one Nature. (See attachment, which is provided to be used with both this paper and the one written for the Godhead.) The importance of us understanding who God is in the New Testament (NT) was for us to be able to separate the three natures of the Father, Son/Word and the Holy Ghost. Now the Father is all the natures as seen on the attachment, but what about the Word? In **John 1:1** "The Word existed in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" it is not written that the Word is the Son of God. Had it said that the Son and the Word would have been separated. But the Word/Son are synonymous by they implying the same ideal or meaning so they cannot be separated. If something is true then it must always remain true. So by trying to prove something false, which is true in the final analysis, you must end up proving it true. If you wanted to prove that you cannot interchange the Word with the Son or the Son with the Word you would in fact prove that they are the same.

Why is it important to know this? The Godhead with the actions of His third nature the Holy Ghost/Spirit became man in the sense He took on the body of man. But as stated previously this body was not conceived from a seed of man. Before the Law Adam was made from the dust (earth), under the Law Jesus was given human form through woman. All the other creations of God lacked intelligent (Life containing Soul; **Genesis 2:7**). Other then Adam and Eve, all male and female were birthed by the seed of man. This man Jesus (Son of God) the Word was birthed by Himself-The Godhead- I

discussed the Godhead in previous writings but in order for this paper to stand on its own merit I must restate, "The Godhead is One God! What is always, must remain always unless the Godhead changes it to something else. Man calls these changes miracles. God calls it His Word doing His Work through the Holy Spirit.

Now we know that Jesus must have been the Word in a mortal body. But why did He want to call Himself the Son? Many theologians create confusion by stating what the Son does rather than what the Word/Son has done. The reason God took on the name Father was so that He can combine all of His Natures. Then we became His sons and daughters by adoption. The clarification of the Word/Son I believe not only enhances the understanding of the Trinity (Godhead) but also allows us to see the purpose of God's decision to impregnate Mary by the Holy Spirit.

The book written by Brian Hebblethwaite, "The Incarnation" has a collection of essays in which opinions of other writers written over the past forty years. His gathering these essays together have been a great benefit to me and this paper. Throughout the book he gives his thoughts and although I do not agree with all of them at least they help me understand my own revelation. To me the Word came alive to show us the Way. Before exploring these essays I would like the reader to ask, "Am I a son/daughter of God the Father?" If you do not know this answer then the revelation of sonship will be difficult to understand.

According to Brian his colleague Don Cupitt wrote, "The eternal God, and a historical man, are two beings of quite different ontological status. It is simply unintelligible to declare them identical." Brian's answer to this is, "It is doubtful whether the God-manhood of Christ is a strict contradiction, e.g., Christ was for a time in Galilee while God is from eternity in Heaven, and Christ is God; does this constitute a contradiction? Only if heaven and Galilee are both places in the sense of "place" Although Brian was heading in the right direction I believe his rebuttal should not have used the name Christ but instead used the name Jesus. Christ means anointed, and also shows Christ within us, and Christ can also be seen today as the Holy Spirit. Where as Jesus is one of the three natures of the Godhead and He walked the earth and it is His body that ascended into Heaven to be the right hand of the Father. Second where is heaven? The Godhead is omnipresent so He occupies all of His arrangement. God through the Holy Spirit engulfs us by heaven. He is not only part of His arrangement He is the Arrangement. Remember there was nothing and He created all from this nothingness because of this it becomes His images reflected by His Thoughts through, "The Word/Son."

Brian writes about the views of John Hicks and the possibility of many Incarnations, "(The notion of many incarnations cannot carry the same force, if God is one, and a particular man can be God to us in a fully human personal context. Suppose that God might have several human faces is to lose the real personal revelatory significance of the incarnation.)" When reading this I wondered what would Brian's thoughts be concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. One of the revelations I have is that when Jesus ascended to be the Right Hand of the Father we took over His earthly duties. I do not believe that I am the only one that knows this but yet the importance of our works is sometimes not given full consideration. He goes on to write, "Certainly there are ways of picturing the incarnation – the kenotic model, for instance, or Kierkegaard's model of the king and humble maiden – and they are admittedly highly anthropomorphic. No doubt, as Williams suggest, we need a mutually qualifying plurality of models of the

Incarnation. Incarnation is not itself one of these models Rather it is what is being pictured in these various inadequate ways” It would seem Brian did not agree that one model could properly explain God working through incarnation. Think about this. The Godhead created His arrangement from nothing and we want to construct a model to explain how He was birthed of woman! If He wanted, Joseph could have had the Baby Jesus, then what model would we use?

In chapter two Brian writes, “Trinitarian theology proper appeals to revelation. It is, as Leonard Hodgson put it, ‘the product of rational reflection on those particular manifestations of the divine activity which center in the birth, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church ... It could not be discovered without the occurrence of those events, which drove human reason to see that they required a Trinitarian God for their cause.’ Brian’s response is “The starting-point of the argument is that the incarnation and particularly the relation between the incarnate one and his heavenly Father reveal and portray to us in terms we can readily understand the eternal relation of love given and love received within the deity. Now the doctrine of the Incarnation is itself under attack – not surprisingly, by the same people who would have us demythologize the Trinity” By being the incarnation under attack they also want to argue against Trinitarian belief and they argue for Binitarian by eliminating the Holy Spirit’s and the Works of the Spirit. It is because of the teaching of Binitarian (two natures not three) incarnation becomes difficult to understand. For without the Holy Spirit who impregnated Mary? Brian’s writing goes along with what I just wrote.

I believe that students or lay teachers can get a good understanding from Brian’s book and as I have written, ‘a book is only outdated when the concept is wrong’. Because of the collection of essays any reader will be able to better formulate his/her own concepts, which brings you closer to the Father.

In chapter three Brian expresses that in the earlier Church (assembly) members were more willing to accept the Godhead because they were closer to history and the love of God and Jesus. Where as 2000 years later we may have become complacent. We see complacency in our homes and families. Needless to say this same attitude carries over into the assembly. The lack of men in the assembly is reflected by the number of women that are the head of the household. The book I wrote “Foundation of God’s House” is about how do we turn this around? It starts with one seed, which becomes two and through the principle of multiplicative the numbers become endless and all men will be brought back to Him.

What about multiple incarnations? Is it because 2000 years ago those that knew Jesus were closer and they knew the truth. They knew there is but one incarnation because their grandparents, their mothers, or they themselves saw it. Are we so separated from the truth because two thousand years have passed? But why would He need to be incarnated a second or third time? He said sin could only be forgiven once. The problem as I see it they failed to take in consideration Grace. If incarnate means to be given a body can we say that through the Grace of the Holy Spirit when we turn our lives over to Jesus and the old man dies and we in fact become reborn/incarnated. With this new birth and the new Spirit of Christ indwelling within us would be one of the multiple incarnations? Is there a parallel between Jesus birth through woman and the

forgiveness of sin through Grace? Theologians want to write about, glorification, sanctification, redemption but few write about absents of sin after the Man Jesus took His rightful place. We see the sadness of Jesus death but we miss the glory of the gift.

Brian writes a chapter on the moral and religious values of incarnation. I do definitely that believing in the incarnation has a moral value but incarnation defiantly brings us to a better understanding of our relationship with our Father through sonship. So if we understand religion as the worship and praising of our Father then believing in the Son/Word brings us closer to Him. Brain quotes Jurgen Moltman, "If Christian belief thinks in Trinitarian terms, it says that forsaken men are already taken up by Christ forgiveness into the divine history and that we 'live in God', because we participate in the eschatological life of God by virtue of the death of Christ. God is, God is in us, and God suffers in us, where love suffers. We participate in the Trinitarian process of God's history." The only comment I would like to make is the classification of where Jesus is and where Christ is. Christ is within us Jesus is the Word/Son and is the resurrected One. It is necessary that we understand this difference to eliminate the confusion of the Godhead.

The use of the word 'incarnation' draws criticism due to the mystery sounding the birth of Jesus as well as the mystery of the Godhead. We are not meant to understand everything God has done or is to do. But what is revealed we are to pray for insight and wisdom. Remembering with grace we can discern spirits and we do have the gifts of:

Revelation (wisdom, knowledge and discerning of Spirits)

Inspiration (Prophecy, unknown Tongues, and interpretation of Tongues)

Power Gifts (faith, working of Miracles and the gift of Healing)

Previously I wrote briefly of the Ark of Faith as an example of Gods uniqueness of His coming among us and sharing His presence with us. The greater glory today is that we are now the temple, the ark, and the place of the Holy of Holies. God lives within all creation through the Holy Ghost-Many will be called but few will know this and understand unless we ask Him to send more to teach and help seed the earth for His harvest. The Spirit of the Holy Ghost will remain dormant waiting for us to teach His Word.

The purpose of the incarnation is to establish a new relationship between the Godhead and us. We became the heirs of the promise, we received sonship and our sins "all of them for everyone" were removed. We are reborn and the old man has died. Give thanks to the Lord who showed us the Way. Brian quotes Rashdall, "We can form no higher conception of God than we see exhibited in humanity at its highest, and in Christ, as in no other man before or since, we may see what humanity at its highest is, and therefore in Him. We believe that God has made a full and sufficient revelation of Himself. His character is the character of God. In Him God is once and for all revealed." The Godhead had to interact in the (OT) by coming upon those which He wanted to do His works through. There are many scriptures attesting to this. This Spiritual gift was limited and used for the purpose of miracles back before Jesus birth. After His death the gift of Grace stayed and lives in all of His creation waiting for Him to awaken it, to bring unity and glory to Himself.

Brian assumes that Jesus was not aware of His Godliness. Accordingly he wrote:

“Moreover we have to assume that while the man Jesus in his earthly life was presumably unaware of his divinity, the Blessed Trinity was perfectly well aware of what was being done, experienced and suffered. This is not to attribute two consciousness of the man Jesus. But it is to assert that the consciousness of the man Jesus was the limited human expression of omniscient divine consciousness. God, qua God, knew what he was doing; qua man he learned obedience like any other Jewish child. Similarly we do not predicate two wills of the man Jesus. But his human will perfectly dedicated to do his heavenly Father’s will, was nevertheless the earthly expression of the divine will. There is thus a sense in which we must speak of two consciousness and two wills, just as we speak of two natures-”

While reading what Brian wrote I went to the scriptures and I concluded that the divine will of God and the divine will of Jesus were intertwined and could not be separated, unlike our will, which the flesh tries to overcome and lead us from our Godly works.

When writing a paper or teaching I turn to the Bible for these answers and then I let the reader draw his or her own conclusions. Through out this essay I have refrained from interjecting scripture but now the Holy Spirit directs me toward the following:

John 1:1 “The Word existed in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” They cannot be separated just as our soul, spirit and flesh remain as one working nature.

John 1:36 “and watching Jesus walking, he exclaimed: “See! There is the Lamb of God!”

John 6:37 “An the Father Who sent Me has Himself given evidence concerning Me,-”

John 7:57 “As the living Father sent Me, I also live through the Father; so that the one who eats Me, shall also live through Me.”

John 8:28-29 “Jesus, therefore, said to them: “When you lifted up the Son of Man, then will you know that **I Am**, and that I do nothing from My own self; but as the Father has instructed Me, I must speak. And My Sender is with Me; He has not left me alone-;”

John 9:58 “Jesus said to them: ‘Most assuredly I tell you, before Abraham was born, **I Am**.’-”

John 9:37 Jesus answered him, ‘You have seen Him, and it is Himself Who is now talking with you.’”

John 14:6-10 “**I am** the Way, the truth, and the Life,” Jesus answered him; “no one can come to the Father except through Me. 7) If you had known me, you would have known My Father also; from now you do know Him, and have seen Him.” 8) Philip replied to Him, “Master show the Father to us, and that will satisfy us.” 9) “Have I been with you all this time,” replied Jesus, “ and yet you have not known Me, Philip: why then do you say, 10) ‘Show us the father?’ Do you not believe that **I Am** with the Father, and the Father with Me?”

Matthew 3:17 “-This is My Son, My Beloved, in Whom I have delight.”

Matthew 11:4-6 “And Jesus, in reply, said to them, “When you return, report to John what you have heard and seen. 5) The blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor is given hope. 6) And happy is he who is not ashamed of Me.”

Matthew 12:26 “Yes, Father; for thus it was decided of old by You. All has been committed to Me under My Father: and none except the Father fully knows the Son; and none fully knows the Father but the Son, and the one to whom the Son will decide to reveal Him.”

Matthew 16:15-16 “ He said to them, ”But Who do you say I am?” 16) Then Simon Peter, replying, said, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!”

Matthew 26:64 “You have stated the fact, “Jesus made answer. “I tell you more: in the future you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and advancing upon the clouds of the heaven!”

I normally like to write scriptures with the sentences as a reply or confirmation of the revelation. In this case however the point I want to prove is that Jesus knows who He is, and that there is no separate nature between Him and the nature of the father. The Godhead is at work and all three are in unity as one God.

I would like to make a point here that because of the translations, cultures and background of each individual reading or being taught the Bible their understanding can be vastly different. It is up to the teacher to insure the purity of the Word. An example of this can be seen in the book written by; Josiah U. Young, “Black and African Theologies.” While doing his doctrinal; degree Young had an opportunity to travel to Africa although he was born in the United States. His observations give us an extreme view how cultural difference can impact our understanding. On page 21 he writes about a comment made by reverend Majola Agbebi in front of the Universal Race Congress in 1911. “The eating of human or non-human flesh differs only in kind, and human flesh is said to be the most delicious of all kind . . . Christianity itself is a superstructure of cannibalism . . .In administering the Lord’s Supper to converts I have often felt. . . uneasiness in repeating the formula “Take it, this is my body . . .my blood.” The reason I choice this quote is because while teaching in the U.S. in front of different races, creeds, religions and nationalities; we must be able to convey the meaning that the listener can understand. Talking to them at a level of their customs and believes. Feeding them milk until they are able to grow from children to sonship. He goes on to write on page 70; “Incarnational theology on one hand, emerges from sustained and critical enterprise in which the relationship of Christianity to a people’s traditional religion is examined in depth. How can Christian theology reflect the traditional ethos of a people and be, nonetheless, an orthodox theology? To be examined, then, are African theologians’ conscious attempts to go beyond the superficialness of adaptation to a theology as indigenous as the Bible and the strictures of Western orthodoxy will allow.” In simply terms you must be able to walk the walk and talk the talk of the people you are teaching. You cannot expect everyone in an assembly to understand all that you say. But with preparation and understanding of the diversified cultures in the assembly you can prepare and deliver God’s Word.

He writes on page 75; “Because, then Jesus in some sense, saves humankind from death and reconciles it to the creator, the notion of Jesus as the savior is attractive to Africans.” In the next paragraph he writes, “ If “Messiah” and “son of David” prove to be stumbling blocks for and appreciation of the humanity of Christ, traditional notions of intermediaries adequately interpret Jesus’ divinity. – Certain folktales, for example, reveal that humans are referred by God to dimities who may best serve human needs. __ In the eyes of African peoples, for [whom] those writes the passage are so

meaningful, Jesus fulfills everything which constitutes a complete, corporate member of society.”

Since my ministry is separate from the main stream; being that we are a five fold ministry and non-denomination, the difficulties faced by teachers from the West going to other countries is the same as my teaching here. The diversity of religions, cultures and people has enabled me to gain a better understanding. Many of my teachings are not accepted immediately. However after several months these same individually come back and say, “they have been given the same revelation by some other teacher.” After reading the “Pentecostalism” by Hollenweger and the book, “Black and African Theologies” I have a better understanding of my own teachings and the difficulty Christ had and we have bringing forth new thoughts. I have ordered and made Hollenweger’s book part of my schools required reading as well as the book by Hebblethwaite “The Incarnation” Although much has been written from Hebblethwaites book and little from Hollenweger they both played an important role in the writing of this paper. When reading the book by Young I found you must prepare for the student you’re teaching. The book “Systematic Theology” does not address the incarnation as a subject but viewed Jesus birth through the Trinity. The writers view is: “1. God is three persons 2. Each person is fully God 3. There is one God.” However I do not believe that his view that Jesus knew the Godhead is the same as mine. The book, “Christian Theology” by Erickson; covers incarnation and he would agree with Hebblethwaite. Jesus was Fully God and He was Fully man. I quote these writings only because they take an opposing view than mine.

I am convinced that Jesus left with His body. In His immortal body and while He was here He knew that He was the Word. His purpose was to show that through suffering the Godhead is with us. He came to show us the way home. We are now incarnated and reborn in His name. Some readers will take exception to the usage of the words, “we are incarnated.” A birth by the Holy Spirit making us reborn and our taking on the body of Christ is not something done by other men but by the Godhead’s calling us to sonship. The understanding of incarnation allows us to understand the relationship of sonship. When Jesus comes for the last time He will come as the Godhead not just as the body of Jesus. The understanding of the oneness of the Godhead is important to the understanding of this paper. As we are one in God He is one within us.

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