

I. The Apostles' Creed moves us to the second person of the Trinity by stating "I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary." The Creed asserts that Jesus is really God and at the same time Jesus is really human. He is truly God and truly Man. The God-Man.

- a. The story of Jesus is the story of God becoming one of us and sharing in our humanity so that He might redeem humanity. As the great Martin Luther used to say, "No other God have I but thee, born in a manger, died on a tree."
- b. In Jesus we see divine majesty clothed in human frailty. Now the entering of the second person of the Trinity into His own creation is what theologians call the Incarnation. The Incarnation essentially means "that the eternal Son of God became 'flesh,' that is, He assumed an additional nature, namely, a human nature."
- c. In the incarnation, Jesus' divine nature is married to a human nature. Please note, Jesus is not a divine being who pretends to be human (that is the heresy of Docetism) nor is Jesus a human who becomes divine (that's the heresy of adoptionism). He is fully divine and fully human at the same time.
- d. The first is found in John's Gospel, chapter 1 and it falls under the heading of Jesus is really God.

II. He's really God (John 1:1-5; 14)

- a. **Read Verses 1-2:** There's so much right here! First you see the phrase 'the Word?' "The Word" comes from the Greek term *logos*. *Logos* refers both to a concept, idea, or inward thought and to the verbal expression, spoken or written, that gives expression to that thought and reveals it to others. The inward thought remains invisible and unknowable until it is expressed through a word (*logos*). John begins his gospel by stating that the second person of the Trinity is the Word whom will fully reveal God's heart, God's mind and God's will for humanity because He's the embodiment of God. (Hebrews 1:2,3)
- b. **John states that the 2nd Person of the Trinity**
 - i. **Is Eternal:** The phrase "In the beginning" refers to a point in eternity past beyond where our mind can go. Before the earth, before the planets and

stars, before light or darkness, matter or time---in the beginning that never really had a beginning, Christ existed!

- ii. **Equal to God the Father and God the Spirit:** *‘The Word was with God’* implies an open, face to face equal relationship with God the Father and God the Spirit.
- iii. **Yet Distinct from God the Father and God the Spirit.** In His essence, Jesus is equal with the Father and the Spirit, but He exists and has always existed as a separate person within the Godhead. So, John makes this great Trinitarian statement that the Pre-Incarnate Christ shares the essence of God, yet is distinct from God...
- iv. **And He’s the Creator:** v.3, *“Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.”* So, the second person of the Trinity was actively involved in the creation of the cosmos. He’s the project manager of creation. (Col. 1:16).
- c. John opens up His gospel by declaring that the Word, the *logos*, the 2nd person of the God-head is eternal, equal to God, yet distinct from God, and the One through whom creation came about---John presents the Pre-Incarnate Christ as the eternal Word who exists eternally in intimate relationship with God and is identified as God.
- d. But wait, there’s more! John states in verse 14, *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
- e. The profound news of the Gospel is that God has become a part of His own creation! He is truly Immanuel, God with us. .

III. **How did the Incarnation Happen? (Luke 1)** What the Creed asserts and the Bible proclaims is that He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- a. **Lk. 1:26-38:** Please note 3 things that the Angel Gabriel tells Mary. Before the birth, even before the conception of her child, Gabriel tells Mary the baby’s...
 - i. **Identity:** V.31, *“You are to give him the name Jesus.”* The name, Jesus means “Yahweh Saves.” This child that will be born to you Mary, will save people from their sins.”

- ii. **Mission:** V. 32-33, *“The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”* This child will be the Messianic King, that will rule and reign forever!
 - iii. **Character:** V. 35, *“The child to be born will be called holy—The Son of God.”* So this child will live His entire life in obedience to God the Father, He will live the life you and I were supposed to live, but never could. He will live a completely sinless, Spirit filled life....
- b. Did you know your kids’ identity, character and mission before they were conceived? No, but Christ’s identity, character and mission was known before He had been conceived...why? Because His life is rooted in eternity!
- IV. **He is Really Human (Luke 2)** So the first thing the Creed asserts is that this Jesus is really God. He is the eternal, 2nd person of the Trinity taking on human flesh and becoming one of us. In the weakness of human flesh, the almighty Creator of the universe came to earth!
- a. **Luke 2:1-7:** Diety in diapers! There’s nothing that speaks to humanness like a newborn baby. A newborn baby is every parent’s joy and every grandparent’s great delight and Jesus, the eternally existing 2nd person of the Trinity, entered into human history as one
 - b. **Philippians 2:5-7:** While He had every right to stay comfortable where He was, in a position of power, His love drove Him to a position of weakness for the sake of sinful humanity.
 - c. J.I. Packer states, “The really staggering Christian claim is that Jesus of Nazareth was God made man—that the second person of the Godhead became the “second man (1 Cor. 15:47), determining human destiny, the second representative head of the race, and that He took on humanity without loss of deity, so that Jesus of Nazareth was as truly and fully divine as He was human.”¹
 - d. When Jesus entered into human history, He didn’t cease to be God, but rather He set aside His rights as God and the continual use of His divine attributes and chose instead to live as you and I do, under the direction and power of the Holy

¹J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, pg. 46

Spirit, which means everything that Christ did in His life, all the temptations He faced, all the trials He endured, all the work He accomplished for the Father was done through the enabling power of the Spirit.

- e. Which means you can in this day, in our world, live just like Christ, in obedience to God the Father by staying in step with God the Spirit.
- v. **What was God doing in the Incarnation?** What was God doing by entering into His own creation? Let me give you 4 things and then a fourth and they are incredibly important.
1. **He was Revealing Himself to Us Fully:** Jesus is our window into the mystery of God. In John 1, verse 18, John writes, “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” You want to know what God’s like, you look to Jesus and more important, you want to know God, you come to Jesus.
 - a. Jesus (Jn. 14) when talking to His disciples tells them, “If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen Him.” And then Philip one of the 12 says, “Lord, show us the Father, and it’ll be enough for us....”
 - b. And do you remember what Jesus told Philip? He says, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” **Hebrews 1:1-3a:** Jesus is the final and full revelation of God. If you want to know what God’s like, you simply must look to Jesus.
 2. **He’s Reconciling Sinful Humanity to God:** He’s making a way for you and I to be reconciled to God! God in Christ took on mortality in order to make humans immortal. Paul tells us in 2 Cor. 8, “You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich.” Jesus tasted human death so that we would taste divine life (Jn. 10:10).
 - a. The author of Hebrews puts it this way, “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death He might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.”

- b. Jesus became a priestly mediator to stand between God and humanity through the incarnation. To redeem humanity, the Son had to become what they are. He had to be both fully God and fully human. If Jesus is only partly human, than He can only partly save us. If Jesus does not have a soul, than He cannot save our souls. If Jesus does not have a real, physical human body, than He cannot redeem our bodeis, but if He's fully human, than He can fully reconcile us to God....
 - c. This is why Paul marvels in 2 Cor. 5 says, "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself....For our sake he made Him to be sin, who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
3. **He was Rightfully establishing His Kingship:** Philippians 2; we looked at the first part of Philippians 2 earlier, which highlighted how Jesus as the 2nd person of the trinity was in very nature God, and then through the incarnation, took on the nature of humanity.
- a. **Verses 8-11:** Because Jesus humbled Himself and came and lived the life you and I were supposed to live, in complete obedience to God the Father and in step with God the Spirit and died the death we deserved to die, God then raised Him from the dead and highly exalted Him, He super exalted Him, this is what the incarnation is ultimately about. He ruled in the beginning and then Adam and Eve rebelled against His rule and we all followed suit!
 - b. God is looking at His creation, us, and He's saying, "You've tried to rule your own life and you've made a mess out of it, and I'm going to come in love and win you back and establish my kingship in your life, not in a domineering way, but in a gracious and loving way....which means from the Cradle to the Cross to the Crown, it was all done with your good in mind, is that not amazing!?!"
 - c. **Jesus is the rightful King and in His mercy He offers you amnesty!** Amnesty is a decision by a government to grant a pardon to a large group of people.
 - d. Well, who needs amnesty? All of humanity. And amnesty is what this King offers to all who have rejected kingship up to this point, which is why John in 1 John 2: 2 says, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

- e. This King offers you amnesty, all you need to do is lay down your rebellion, accept His forgiveness and pledge unending love and loyalty to Him as your King than you will live forever with Him in His kingdom.
4. **He's presenting a paradigm for us to follow.** Jesus incarnational ministry to us becomes our paradigm for our ministry to others.
- a. Think about this; God saw us in our plight, saw us in our rebellion and would have been perfectly just to cast us off and leave us, but that's not what He did and what we see in the ministry of Jesus is that He came into the mess of human history and didn't separate Himself from the culture or sinners, but that He spent time with believers and unbelievers alike...
 - b. And in John 20, Jesus comes to His disciples and says, "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you, and when He had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
 - c. His ministry to us becomes our paradigm. And therefore, like Jesus, we must be willing to cross cultural barriers, whether those barriers are geographical or engaging people of different nationalities, races, income levels or backgrounds.
 - d. He calls us to take up and tell of His kingship whether that means your going around the world or across the street because the world is our mission field, and Jesus is our model as He went before us and now goes with us as we continue His work by His Spirit for His glory.