

An Introduction to a Theology of Worship - Week 6

by Greg Willson
www.gregwillson.com

Incarnation

Review:

imago Dei: dignity and depravity

dignity (Gen 1 and 2):

image of God: humility

image **of God**: dignity

bluegrass and humanity: affirms our emotions. importance of reading/living the psalms

the fall: the image is marred, but not lost (paper example)

the imago Dei is why apologetics works. Without the image Dei present in everyone, we would have no ground from which to have conversations of truth.

there are inconsistencies with *all* other worldviews, Christianity is the only worldview that is not just consistent with itself, but consistent and in full agreement with the soul- because of the imago Dei

people aren't convinced by logical proofs, they are convinced by something that speaks deeper than logic, something that resounds with their very core of being: this is Christianity.

depravity (Gen 3):

the fall

God's salvation always comes with judgment:

Gen 3:15 and 3:20- the seed of hope and its recognition of grace will grow into the tree of redemption.

Reminder: the focus again, is not so much on getting all the answers, but embracing the mystery that is present in some of these hard theological issues. It would be OK if everyone "got it" but that's not my ultimate goal. My goal is for us to come to these profound truths and be in awe, in wonder and ask more questions of ourselves and of God, and to encourage a way of living that is OK with that.

Incarnation

What does it mean that the Word took on flesh?

Liu Bolin's photography: becoming something else and loss of identity
(<http://www.galeriebertin.fr/en/artistes/liu-bolin.html>)

in what ways is the incarnation similar to this? dissimilar?

Beholding the Glory: Incarnation Through the Arts: how do we view flesh?

Jesus Christ was/is/will be fully man and fully God in one person.

Fully Man

Virgin birth

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (Luke 1:35 ESV)

its importance:

1. remember Gen 3:15- seed of the woman
God brought this about by His power

Salvation must come from the Lord

2. full humanity and deity in one person
made it possible for God to send His Son into the world as a man
even though the virgin birth seems extraordinary (it is!), it also seems the best possible way for Christ to come to earth.

we can see how fully human and fully divine Christ is though the virgin birth

3. Christ is fully man, but with no inherited sin.

Adam is father to all of us, but Adam was not Christ's father
why the "therefore"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; *therefore the child to be born will be called holy*—the Son of God. (Luke 1:35 ESV)

Human weakness and limitations

Jesus had a human body, just like any other human baby

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7 ESV)

grew (not just physically):

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. (Luke 2:52 ESV)

His resurrection was in a physical body:

See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” (Luke 24:39 ESV)

Human Mind, Soul, Emotions

Although he was a son, *he learned obedience* through what he suffered. (Heb 5:8 ESV)

“Now is *my soul troubled*. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. (John 12:27 ESV)

When Jesus heard this, he *marveled* and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. (Matt 8:10 ESV)

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, *with loud cries and tears*, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. (Heb 5:7 ESV)

He was sinless (where his humanity is different than ours)

And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.”

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.

(John 8:29; 15:10 ESV)

If Jesus was sinless, and is God, are his temptations real?

Other than an interesting thought, some of the real significance for this question is if Jesus’ temptations are not real, as they are real to us, then he was something less than completely human, not really experiencing our temptations- there would be no vicarious suffering in Christ’s life (For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Heb 2:18)

The truth is, Jesus' temptations are even *more real* or more weighty than ours. No human knows the full weight of temptation- at some point we give in and do not know the end. Jesus never gave in to temptation, He knew the end. And he was still sinless. Because of this, we can uphold vicarious suffering on our behalf, we can believe that Jesus is really human, that He really knows us and what we go through. He has been there- and he has been there in a way we will never know, with a weight we'll never carry.

The necessity of Christ's humanity (from Grudem):

representative obedience

substitutionary atonement

mediator between god and man

to be the new adam: for man to rule over creation

to be our example and pattern

to be the pattern of the resurrection

to sympathize as high priest

Jesus will be a man forever (acts 1:11, 9:5; Rev 1:13-17)

Fully God

theos

word normally reserved for God, but is also used of Christ.

Jn 1:1

Heb 1:8 (quoting Ps 45:6)

2Pet 1:1

kurios

sometimes "sir" "master" addressing some kind of superior, but the Septuagint also translates *yhwh* ("Yahweh" "Jehovah") as *kurios*- ("the lord")

actually 6, 814x in the LXX

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" (Matt 3:3 ESV)

John the Baptist quoting Isaiah 40:3:

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Is 40:3 ESV)

A

In the wilderness

B

prepare

C

the way

D

of the LORD;

B' make straight **A'** in the desert **C'** a highway **D'** for our God

Rev 19:6- Jesus has a tattoo

Other claims

So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:57–59 ESV) Why would they be angry enough to kill him?

Jesus:

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

God:

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Rev 22:13; 1:8 ESV)

Omnipotence: Matt 8:26-27: silencing the sea

eternal: Jn 8:58

omniscience: Matt 2:8

omnipresence: Matt 18:20

sovereignty: Mk 2:5, not a prophet who says Thus says the Lord, he says directly (Matt 5:22, 28, 32, 34, etc...)

immortality: Jn 2:19

Jesus was not kinda god on earth, but fully God-

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, (Col 1:19 ESV)

Hypostatic Union (or Mystical Union)

two natures (human and divine), one person

One Person

contra-Nestorianism (poor Nestorius...)

two separate persons. leads to a division within himself- is Christ acting at such and such a point out of his human person or divine person?

Correction: He is always acting out of his humanity and his deity. They are not separate, (remember the unity of God).

contra-Apollinarianism

human body, but not a human mind or spirit (small view of sin and therefore, or redemption)

Correction: All has been tainted by sin, including physical existence like our bodies. Jesus in order to be fully human must have a physical body. And what about the resurrection? Not to mention a lack of scriptural support.

contra-Monophysitism (the bad cover band theory)

Christ only has one nature, not human or divine, but a third type. Thus resulting in a non-human, non-deity person. Like a bad cover band, in this view Christ does not do justice to any one "style of music."

Correction: If Christ is truly our representative, he must be human. If he is to affect redemption, he must be divine.

Chalcedon Definition of 451 puts forward the orthodox position- we'll get to this when we do creeds and confessions later on.

Two Natures, One Person:

Col. 1:17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
how can the baby in a manger be upholding the universe?
He must, for he is not potentially God, but always fully God.

And how can 2 natures fit into one person?

Try to get away from a physical way of viewing this "problem"
Remember the inadequate physical examples of the Trinity...

"Acoustic space is a world of revelation"

John Hull, *Touching the Rock: An Experience of Blindness*

unthink physical and use some other senses to get a better idea:
sound space is not a space of mutual exclusion, but of relation (Begbie,
Beholding the Glory, 145.)

Example: sympathetic resonance

(read more about sympathetic resonance: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sympathetic_resonance)

We might think the more deity that Christ has, the less humanity he has, or vice versa. But this is not so: He is 100% man, 100% God, and one Person.

In sympathetic resonance, the more the lower note sounds, the more the higher note sounds. In physical space, the more something is in one space, the less anything else can be there- not so in this example. And so it is with Christ, we should not see humanity and deity in Jesus as mutually exclusive.

(This example also has much to say about freedom and obedience, but more on that in a few weeks.)

Importance of mystery

Gregory King - *Compline*

From the *Images of Faith* CD (available from CIVA):

forms of light emanating from a mysterious distance

Referencing the hour Compline signifies both the quiet peace found at the conclusion of a regular day, and the profound mysteries that await in the eternal.

The multi-dimensional space, seemingly created by and yet containing the light source that inhabits it, becomes the architecture for a forest grove whereby tree forms and light merge to create space for jeweled windows in a grand cathedral.

(see also his Constellation paintings: http://www.myartspace.com/viewer/gallery/?subscriberid=6x5g92dok9qbvn31&gallery_id=hbds5n2ki9uqbde1)

combined with my 2-4-09 (*Incarnation*) idea: giving attention to a space larger than what we commonly perceive.

Importance of the Incarnation-

Rouault's theme of clowns and prostitutes. Painted Christ alongside these grotesque figures of culture

downplaying Jesus' humanity:

only caught up in the future: resurrection without suffering
arrogance, high-minded view-
removes the humility in humanity

downplaying Jesus' deity:

only caught up in the here and now: suffering without resurrection
we lose hope
removes the dignity in humanity

so not only is a right view of Jesus important for itself, but it touches every aspect of theology along with it.

the trick is to have complete balance (something that only happens momentarily)

Some practical Implications

incarnational model of the church

what areas do you forget?

how does our community embrace Christ's humanity and deity? How can we do it better?