

**Discipleship:
An
Introduction to
Systematic Theology and
Apologetics**

Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation

The Heights Church March 31, 2019

Jesus the God-man – After class question on March 24

- The idea that the sin nature is transmitted from the father to babies is traced to a theological opinion of Thomas Aquinas in his (*Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q. 81, A. 5.) This was not an uncommon thought in the past.

“Now it is evident that in the opinion of philosophers, the active principle of generation is from the father, while the mother provides the matter. Therefore original sin, is contracted, not from the mother, but from the father: so that, accordingly, if Eve, and not Adam, had sinned, their children would not contract original sin: whereas, if Adam, and not Eve, had sinned, they would contract it.”

Jesus the God-man – After class question on March 24

- As Roman Catholicism “evolved” the claim arose that Mary was conceived without sin and hence was sinless. Therefore, with a sinless mother and the Holy Spirit for a father Jesus was born without the sin nature.
 1. The Bible never states Mary was sinless. It was declared by Pope Pius IX.
 2. Roman Catholic doctrine states that decisions of Church Councils and Papal proclamations have the authority of Scripture. But this is heretical according to the Protestant Doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*.

Jesus the God-man – After class question on March 24

3. Suppose Mary was not tainted by original sin and was sinless then the problem of why Jesus was sinless could be explained by a sinless mother and the Holy Spirit as a father. **BUT** this just pushes the problem back one generation and requires three miracles (1) Mary is born without inherited sin, (2) Mary never sins and (3) Mary gives birth to Jesus without a human father) rather than the Biblical explanation: "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. (Luke 1:35)

Jesus the God-man – After class question on March 24

- Regarding Luke 1:35 Wayne Grudem says:

Such a conclusion should not be taken to mean that the transmission of sin comes only through the father, for Scripture nowhere ever makes such an assertion. It is enough for us merely to say that *in this case* the unbroken line of descent from Adam was interrupted, and Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit...Jesus was not fully descended from Adam, and this break in the line of descent was the method God used to bring about that Jesus was fully human yet did not share inherited sin from Adam. (*Systematic Theology* page 531)

Jesus the God-man - Council of Chalcedon A.D. 451 (Review)

The council of Chalcedon taught the church how to talk about the two natures of Christ without falling into errors.

1. One nature of Christ is sometimes seen doing things in which the other nature does not share.
2. Anything either nature does is done by the person of Christ.
3. In the incarnation Christ gave up the glory of divine life but not the possession of divine powers.
4. In the incarnation Christ gained human attributes without giving up divine attributes.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- Since Jesus looked to those who knew him best as a man, were his wisdom and mighty works a manifestation of his divine nature or his human nature empowered by the Holy Spirit? And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; (Matthew 3:16)
 - And Jesus returned in the **power of the Spirit** to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. (Luke 4:14)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- Suppose Jesus did his work on earth through his divine nature. How then could he say? "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:12)
- So to have a truly human nature Jesus needed to be indwelt with the Holy Spirit even though the eternal Second Person of the Trinity also has a divine nature.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- But if it is **by the Spirit of God** that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Matthew 12:28)
- how **God anointed Jesus** of Nazareth with **the Holy Spirit and with power**. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. (Acts 10:38) [reference](#)
[Acts 1:8](#) But **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form (*morphē*) of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form (*morphē*) of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form (*schema*), he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5 – 8)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- In English “form” can mean just the outward appearance of something but in Greek *morphē* means the inner nature of something. So Jesus has a fully divine nature.

Note: *schema* as in “human form” has the meaning of outward appearance namely he looked human.

- Equality with God also means Jesus has a fully divine nature because nothing is equal to God except God.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- **What does** did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing **mean?**
 - It cannot mean that Christ gave up equality with God or ceased to be fully God because God cannot cease to be God.
 - Rather it must mean he did not hold onto the privileged position, rights and prerogatives afforded to him as being equal to God.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- Some translations say he “emptied himself” rather than “made himself nothing.” The Greek word is *kenoō* meaning to pour out. It does not mean he lost anything of his divine nature but rather that he became an ordinary human baby. This pouring out does not subtract anything from his divine nature but actually adds to the fully divine nature a fully human nature!
- On the other hand while the divine nature remains fully possessed it cannot be fully expressed in a human body.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

- What does he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross mean?
 1. The main reason for Christ's humanity was to give his life for the elect. Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Weakness and Limitations

2. He not only obeyed the Father as a human but he obeyed the Father in coming to earth to live as a human. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. (John 6:38 – 39)
3. While he had been obedient to the Father he displayed an obedience of a degree not previously required, namely death, which required his humanity but not just death but a horrible death – death on a cross (which also required a human body).

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Sinlessness

- If Jesus was sinless how does he qualify as fully human?
- After the Fall the “normal” state of humans is a sinner. BUT before the Fall Adam and Eve were fully human and we will be restored to our original sinless condition. The true normal state of humans is sinless.
- The NT clearly indicates Jesus was Sinless.

Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? (John 8:46)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Sinlessness

- The NT clearly indicates Jesus was Sinless.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. (Hebrews 7:26)

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Sinlessness

- Scripture is clear that Jesus never sinned.

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, (Romans 8:3)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22)

You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Sinlessness

- Scripture is clear that Jesus was tempted just as we are.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. (Luke 4:2)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. (James 1:13)

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Could Jesus Have Sinned?

- The Bible does not directly answer this question, but logically the answer must be NO!
- We have established that Jesus was born without inherited sin, did not sin, and God cannot be tempted to sin.

Jesus the God-man – His Humanity: Could Jesus Have Sinned?

- Was Jesus impeccable? Impeccable has been traditionally defined as Jesus never sinned and was not capable of sinning.
- Most theologians have tried to maintain that Jesus was genuinely tempted and yet genuinely impeccable. How can both these be true?
- The classic argument for impeccability is presented as follows: