

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

WSC Question 22: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

Answer: Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin (Heb. 2:14, 16, 4:15, 7:26; Gal. 4:4; Luke 1:27, 31, 35, 42).

An explanation: Christ's became man in the Incarnation because of His love for His own people, and a commitment to fulfill the Covenant of Grace that He had made with the Father and the Spirit before the foundation of the world (Heb. 13:20-21; Eph. 1:3-14). He said in obedience to the Father: *"Sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart..."* (Psa. 40:6-8; cf. Heb. 10:5ff). The Eternal Son of God did not merely appear to be a man in the Incarnation, but he did take upon Himself a real human body in personal and permanent union with Himself: *"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). The Apostle John teaches the importance of confessing this of Jesus Christ: *"By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God..."* (1 Jo. 4:2). Jesus Christ not only has a real human body, but also a true and reasonable soul like all other men, yet without sin (Heb. 2:14, 17a; 4:15). During His earthly suffering, Jesus said: *"My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me"* (Matt. 26:38).

The conception of Jesus Christ was unique in that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary: *"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). The Spirit of God prevented Jesus from being contaminated from sin, and although He was like man in every way, He was sinless, and *"holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners"* (Heb. 4:15; 7:26). Although unique as Savior and God-Man, Jesus Christ, grew up and matured, and completed His work of salvation for all of His own similar to other men dependent upon God's Word and the Holy Spirit: *"And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him....And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man"* (Luke 2:40, 52). Jesus willingly laid down His life in our nature (John 10:18), and was raised in our nature for the justification and vindication of His people (Rom. 4:25). Now Jesus Christ is seated at God's right hand in heaven as a glorified man united permanently to Deity as our only Mediator (1 Ti. 2:5), to send forth His Spirit to uphold, equip, and sanctify and comfort His people (Acts 2:32-33; John 14:26ff; 16:12-15), and to forever intercede for us according to God's will (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). We can summarize the Gospel thus:

"Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Ti. 3:16; cf. Col. 2:9).

Prayer: Thank you, dear Jesus, Savior and Friend, for ruling and reigning in heaven as my Mediator. Full of power, grace, and truth to help and encourage me as I journey to heaven, keeping my eyes on you, the Glorious Author and Perfecter of my faith!

**In Christ's love,
Pastor Biggs**

*"The Lord Christ, as man, did and was to exercise all grace by the rational faculties and powers of His soul, His understanding, will, and affections; for **He acted grace as a man....** His divine nature was not unto Him in the place of a soul, nor did [the divine nature] immediately operate the things He performed...but being a perfect man, His rational soul was in Him the immediate principle of all His moral operations, even as ours in us..."*

- John Owen