

Why Did God Become Man?
Christmas Day - December 25, 2014
John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Grace, mercy, and peace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

So the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. Why? Why did the Word become flesh? Why would God condescend to taking on human flesh? What could inspire such an unthinkable act of grace and love? In other words, why did God become man?

The answer to that question is very important if we are going to have a full understanding of what Christmas is all about. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God did become man. So, the question isn't did God become man, but why did God do it.

This morning I'm going to give you three reasons why the apostle John tells us: *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us* (Jn 1:14 NIV).

He became poor so we could become rich.

In his second letter to the Corinthian Christians, Paul tells us: *You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich* (2 Cor 8:9 NIV).

It was an act of God's grace that brought Jesus to earth. Grace is often expressed as God's Riches At Christ's Expense. God's grace, his undeserved favor, brought him from heaven to earth. God saw our need and his love became grace and that grace moved him to pay the ultimate price for our redemption. God willing became poor to we might enjoy the riches of his grace.

Jesus willingly left the glory of heaven, the privilege of being in the very presence of

God the Father, to take on human form. That is something we can't even begin to fathom. We often talk about Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, but how about the sacrifice he made in coming to Bethlehem?

Jesus came here for us, but not just us. Jesus came to Bethlehem for everyone. He even came for those who didn't want him. He came for those who would not believe in him. John reports: *He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him* (Jn 1:11 NIV). Knowing this, he still came.

He emptied himself so we could be filled.

Philippians 2:7-8: *[Jesus] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!*

The phrase “made himself nothing” literally means he emptied himself. He gave up everything that was rightfully his. He laid aside his glory and power to become one of us – and he didn't come as the king that he is, with all pomp and splendor. Jesus came as the lowest of low, the servant of all. That's how much he loves us.

Paul told the Ephesian believers: *I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.* (Eph 3:17-19 NIV).

Jesus became man to fill us with the fullness of God. That fullness was lost when Adam and Eve first sinned. Without that fullness, we are not complete. Jesus became man to complete us. He came to provide what we lack.

If that sounds good, listen to the next verse: *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us* (Eph 3:20 NIV). Did you hear that? If you have faith, the power of God is already at work in you. You have the fullness of God.

He gave up his immunity to sin so we could escape the penalty of sin.

Hebrews 2:17: *[Jesus] had to be made like his brothers 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.*

Jesus became took on human flesh because that was the only way to solve mankind's greatest need. We needed forgiveness for the sin we were born with and the sins we commit. But forgiveness is not as simple as God saying, “I forgive you.” God set the price for sin and that price was a perfect blood sacrifice.

Scripture tells us: *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God* (2 Co 5:21 NIV).

God views sin very seriously. God does not think sin is cute, and God never overlooks sin. Sin is the great barrier between people and God. The only way to restore our broken relationship with God was break down that barrier. For that to happen, someone had to make atonement for our sin, someone had to die.

Sin is a human problem, therefore, a human would have to pay the price of sin. The problem is, of course, there are no perfect humans. Only God is perfect, so only God was able to pay the price he set as the price of sin. That being the case, God had to become man to pay the price mankind could never afford.

The book of Galatians tells us: *When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons* (Ga 4:4-5 NIV).

God took my sins and charged them against Jesus. Then God took Jesus' righteousness and credited it to me. Martin Luther called this the glorious exchange. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ, I can stand clean before God, the Father. This glorious exchange is the basis for our renewed relationship with God.

All of our sins past, present, and future have been atoned for by the blood of Christ. There are no longer any charges against us. The book of Psalms says: *As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us* (Ps 103:12 NIV). In Isaiah we read: *In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back* (Is 38:17 NIV).

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Christmas is more than songs and lights and traditions and presents. Christmas is more than family and parties and holiday cheer. Christmas is about a God who couldn't bear to live without the people he created and dearly loves. Christmas is about the Creator becoming the creation in order to bring his wayward children home.