

their presence is a source of inspiration. We are glad to have Sister Baker with us.

Remember our Society in your prayers.

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Highway Reporter.

THE INCARNATION OF JESUS CHRIST

By Rev. George Rogers, B. A.

The doctrine of the person of Christ is one of outstanding interest. Christ was the founder of Christianity itself. If we get the proper conception of Christianity we must first study the person of Christ in its proper doctrinal view. Without this divinity, incarnation and theanthropic, (both God and man), personality, Christianity is robbed of its Christ. Christ has been the subject of the Gospel and the hope of the Christian in Christianity. Christ is human; Christ is divine. He is the Son of God, incarnate in the nature of man.

The questions naturally discussed in the beginning were concerning the nature and personality of Christ as to whether Christ had two persons, according to his two natures, or was one person in the union of two natures. The divine incarnation was the leading subject for discussion in the early Christian centuries. Different theories led to different doctrines which were established. The Council of Chalcedon met in 451 for the purpose of constructing a doctrine of the person of Christ. In their formula they stated the following: "Christ the incarnate Son, is truly and essentially divine: "Perfect in Godhead," "consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead." He is, "Truly man, of a reasonable soul and body," "Consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin." "One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably." The Constantinopolitan additions to the Chalcedonian symbol are regarded as Nestorian. In this the two wills in Christ were strongly inserted, though not intended.

Christ's divinity is essential so far as the Holy Trinity is concerned and it is just as necessary as far as His personality is concerned. Christ's possession of a divine nature through the incarnation is the only ground of Theanthropic (God and Man), personality. Christ's divinity is backed up by the word.

The reality of the human nature of Christ was made known by the human facts in His life when here upon the earth. He knew what it was to be hungry, weary, thirsty and sorrowful.

With the reality that Christ possessed these two natures, yet He appeared among men as one person, talked and acted as one. When we speak of the personality of Christ we have in mind the unique personality which is the union of the divine nature and the human. He is God in His divine nature and man in His human nature, but God-man in His personality. Such a personality is grounded only in the incarnation of the Divine Son in human nature.

The Scripture proves the truth of the incarnation of Christ. "The Word was in the beginning, was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"—made flesh by the incarnation of himself in the nature of man. "Who being in the form of God" and "Being formed in the fashion of men."

These texts show that Christ was in the form of God, equal with God, and in the likeness of men.

Now there are some facts resulting from the incarnation which we should notice. First, the new facts of consciousness in the personality of the Son; secondly, some decisive facts are to be noticed. The result of the incarnation in the personality of the Son was a modified personality—modified by the possession of new facts of consciousness rather than a new personality. What would the incarnation mean without such a result? We discovered some decisive facts concerning the incarnation while we were studying the doctrine of the person of Christ, and more fully in the treatment of the incarnation. The divine Son united our nature with himself as to share our experiences. Christ is the Son incarnate. He is one person but possesses both human and divine attributes. Therefore, while He is one in personality he must possess both the human and divine natures in a personal oneness. This is the meaning and decisive result of the incarnation. This union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ is a catholic doctrine, accepted by all the churches or with few exceptions. This doctrine is found in most of the Church creeds and in the faith if not in the creed.

The most profound mystery of the incarnation is found in the personal oneness of the divine-human Christ. Personality itself is a great mystery, but the unique personality of Christ is a greater mystery. It deepens in the fact that the finite and infinite blend in His personality. The doctrine of the person of Christ, even though it be a mystery, is grounded in the Scripture and upon this ground we hold it with unwavering faith.

The ground of the personality of Christ is in His divine nature, and not in his human nature.

Jesus had the human nature as we have the divine nature. In His incarnation he became partaker of our human nature that we in regeneration might become partakers of his divine nature. The theanthropic, (God and man), character of Christ is determined by the union of the human nature and the divine nature in His personality. The natures of Christ are permanent. They suffer neither change nor mixture. The divine does not transmute the human, neither does the human transmute the divine. In the life of Christ both classes of facts were ever present. Even in bitter hours in the Garden and upon the Cross at the very brink of death, both human and divine facts were manifested. The theanthropic (God and man), person of Christ is determined only by the divine incarnation. The new facts of consciousness in the incarnation may be a mystery, but are a reality nevertheless.

We have already stated that theanthropic personality of Christ is the result of the incarnation. We shall endeavor to show that the atonement requires a theanthropic personality and that the incarnation is the ground or basis for the Doctrine of the atonement. The Christ was born High-Priest and sacrifice. The Priesthood of the Son is in His incarnation where the nature of man is united in personal oneness to Himself. In the hour of redemption the divine Christ, incarnate in the human, offers up Himself as an atonement for sin. There is where the truth and reality of the atonement is found. "The possi-

bility lies in the theanthropic personality of Christ." And the theanthropic personality of Christ is the result of the incarnation, therefore, the incarnation is the ground or basis of the atonement.

The sympathy of Christ is a point we wish to touch upon because it has been given an open place in Scripture. Human sympathy is far beneath the sympathy of Christ. "We ever associate the sympathy of Christ with his greatness, with the intensity of his sufferings and the infinite fullness of his love." The law of the sympathy of Christ is a truth of Scripture. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." It was through the incarnation that Christ appropriated the law of His sympathy with us. In the incarnation He became as a little lower than the angels and entered into the deepest suffering, and by so doing into a real brotherhood with man. Right here He provided the work of salvation: "Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." If we get a proper conception of the law of sympathy of Christ we must see it in the light of His incarnation. "The divine incarnation was very real; therefore the appropriation of this law of sympathy was very thorough." "In the incarnation the Christ entered personally into the nature of man in a manner to enter into the consciousness of trials like our own. We feel, and the author, Mr. Miley, agrees, that this is the deepest and most luminous truth of the divine incarnation.

One has said that the cross is the point of Christian philosophy. Everything goes back to the incarnation of Jesus Christ. If there had been no incarnation then there could have been no Christ if there had been no Christ then there could have been no cross if there had been no cross and crucifixion then there could have been no atonement, and all would have been lost. But through the incarnation we have the High-priest who suffered, died, rose again and "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

God's people have need of frequent renewals of their Christian courage. Satan continues to "wear out the saints of the Most High" if he can. It is part of the system of evil to beat down the will that opposes sin and make away with some trophy of war before we have renewed our spirits to contend for our ground.

One of the things that should enter into our devotional life is the determined deepening and renewing of Christian courage. Few if any of the Bible saints would have a place in the Book of God if it had not been for their outstanding courage to do and suffer in God's service. Call the roll and they would answer that they could afford to die for the eternal right, but would not betray it.

In another realm, but expressive of invincible determination, a poet-friend wrote of Colonel Goethals in connection with his notable career as builder of the Panama Canal:

"A man went down to Panama,
Where many a man had died,
To cleave the sliding mountains
And lift the eternal tide.
A man stood up in Panama,
And the mountains stood aside."

—Wesleyan Methodist