

# The God-Man

## I. Part One: The Debate

- A. **Serapion** [Bishop of Antioch (190-211)] *refuted* the belief that Jesus' body was an illusion.
  - 1. Docetism meaning 'to seem to be'
  - 2. denied the full humanity of Christ
  - 3. Denial of Incarnation
  - 4. Today: New Age beliefs, and some Hindu sects
- B. **Arius [early 4th Century]** believed that Jesus had to be created as the Son of God.
  - 1. He couldn't just 'be' God.
  - 2. the Son is not God but a creature with a beginning.
- C. **Nestorius [Patriarch of Constantinople 428-431]** never recognized Mary as the 'Mother of God.'
  - 1. **Defended the full humanity of Christ.**
  - 2. posits two separate persons within Jesus Christ: one divine and one human.
  - 3. "Theotokos" (God-bearer) for the Virgin Mary, which Nestorians rejected, arguing she was only the mother of a God-inspired man not a God-made man.
  - 4. Nestorius referred to the incarnation as a "prosopic union." The human Jesus manifest Himself as the Son of God.
  - 5. Scholars today question whether this view was actually Nestorius'
- D. **Apollinaris [4th Century bishop of Laodicea]** believed the Jesus was God's mind in a human body. He **denied that Christ had a rational human soul**. He argued that the divine Logos, the principle of God, took the place of the human mind or will in Jesus.
  - 1. Jesus had one nature not two.
  - 2. He **denies the full humanity** of Jesus Christ
- E. **Eutyches [5th century]** maintained that Christ had a human nature but it was unlike the rest of humanity.
  - 1. Monophysitism - the person of Jesus Christ there is only one nature (wholly divine or only subordinately human), not two.
  - 2. He asserted that Jesus Christ has **only one, divine nature**, claiming that the human nature was absorbed or "swallowed up" by the divine nature after the Incarnation.

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## II. Part Two: The Theology

### A. **Jesus** - Two **natures** in One **person**.

1. Explaining our belief might be intellectual overload making the truth of little academic value. We might be saying things too deep for our logic or reasoning ability. But the Scripture is clear enough! We know it by Faith.
2. Person - a human being regarded as an individual
3. Nature - the innate or essential qualities or character of a person
4. He had a human nature and a divine nature but was only one individual.

B. **Anselm** of Canterbury in his work "*Cur Deus Homo*" [**Why God Became Man**] reasoned "Sin, as a failure to render to God what is his own, incurs a debt. This debt has to be repaid to God, without there being any possibility of *gratuitous* forgiveness of this debt. ... Our situation is compounded by the fact that in order to compensate God we need to give back more than we owed originally and by the gravity of our offense, having dishonored God, so that the debt we have incurred is of infinite proportion. So **no one but God could pay a debt** of such magnitude, but **no one but man is obliged to pay it**. It follows that our salvation requires God become man"

C. Would our salvation have been possible were Jesus other than the God-man?

1. We know it took Jesus' death on the Cross and His resurrection to bring about our salvation but this truth says nothing about who He was by nature.
  - a) Romans 10:9 if you shalt confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved.
  - b) Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. [only through Jesus]

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- c) John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
  - d) John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.
  - e) Romans 3:25-26 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: **that he might be just**, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.
2. We know had Jesus not died on Calvary, there would. have been no salvation.
- a) Matthew 26:39 O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as you will.
  - b) 1 Corinthians 15:17 if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; you are yet in your sins.
3. We know that the God-man explains the character of the Divine Mystery, what is so mysterious about His death and resurrection.
- a) 1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh [The incarnation], justified in the Spirit [“that He might be just”], seen of angels [1 Peter 1:12 the gospel ... which the angels desire to look into.], preached unto the Gentiles [by Grace], believed on in the world [through faith, received up into glory [Hebrews 1:3 when he had **by himself** purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; ... 7:25 he ever liveth to make intercession for us.].
  - b) Son of Man referencing his humanity
    - (1) 94 times in Ezekiel God called the prophet by this moniker, sobriquet—never by his given name. But his given name “Ezekiel” meant “whom God strengthens” [Philippians 4:13]
    - (2) One time Daniel [8:17]

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- (3) One time in Daniel about Christ: Daniel 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven
- (4) In The New Testament about Jesus 84 Times.
  - (a) actually *The* Son of [*the*] man
  - (b) Matthew 26:2 the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.
- 4. Did Jesus have to be God on the Cross?
  - a) That is precisely the message of Grace! If we had any part in planning or carrying out the plan of our salvation it would have been by works and it wasn't
    - (1) Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:
    - (2) 1 Peter 1:18-20 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were ... redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ,... Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world ... for you,
  - b) We know God said He would be the one:
    - (1) Isaiah 43:25 I, *even* I, *am* he that blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember your sins.
    - (2) John 3:16 For God so loved the world He sent *His* only begotten son ....
  - c) And to die He had to be human.
    - (1) Philippians 2:8 being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
    - (2) The doctrine of passibility - only the *humanity* of Jesus is regarded as passible.

D. Faith is engendered by revelation: depends on God revealing Himself and not our ability to reason.

- 1. Romans 10:17 faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the *word* [not logos] of God.
- 2. Matthew 16:16-17 Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the living God*. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed

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art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

3. Christianity is divided over our logic not our hearts.

4. 1 Corinthians 14:6 what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

a) You wrote the Word of God? by Revelation. God.

b) What is it made of? What does it contain? **Promises**. Knowledge [gnosis, livable truth. 2 Peter 1:3 that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him [Jesus]

c) What form does it take when spoken or preached or presented? Prophecy: “under the influence of the Divine Spirit.”

d) And what form [purpose] does it take in order to pass it on to others: doctrine [teaching].

5. Faith requires a heart that accepts God’s word not a mind that understands it all perfectly.

a) N. T. Wright: I have often reflected on the strangeness of the task to which Paul devoted his life telling pagans that there was a single Creator. God, rather than a multiplicity of gods [this was bad enough], but adding that this God had made himself known in a crucified Jew, who had then been raised from the dead. [This] was bound to cause hoots of derision, and if Acts is to be believed [and it is] sometimes did [Mar’s Hill in Acts 17:22f.]. Yet Paul found that when he told his story, when he proclaimed that this Jesus was indeed the world’s true Lord, people to their great surprise, [no doubt], found this announcement making itself at home in their ... hearts, generating the belief [faith] that it was true, and transforming their lives with a strange new presence and power.

b) Acts 16:14 Lydia ... whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

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E. Philippians 2:6-8 - a closer look: God's reasoning is not subject to our logic. Isaiah 55:9, 11 "my thoughts than your thoughts. [they're higher] my word ... shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please."

## 1. KJV:

a) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

(1) International Children's Bible, incorrect and vague: was like God

(2) Philipp's NT accurate: God by nature

b) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant

(1) Philipp's NT accurate: slave by nature

(2) Living Bible incorrectly: the disguise of a slave,

(3) Easy to read incorrectly: the role of a servant

c) and was made in the likeness of men

(1) Philipp's NT clearer: born as mortal man.

(2) Easy to Read, weak: appearing in human form

(3) Modern English, weak: form instead of likeness:

(4) Easy English, close: He became like a human

d) And being found in fashion as a man,

(1) Douay-Rheims 1899 vague: in habit found as a man

e) he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

## 2. Geneva Bible:

a) Who being in the form of God

(1) Such as God himself is, and therefore God, for there is none in all parts like to God, but God himself,

b) thought it no robbery

(1) Christ, that glorious and everlasting God, knew that he might rightfully and lawfully not appear in the base flesh of man, but remain with majesty meet for God: yet he chose rather to debase himself.

c) to be equal with God

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(1) If the Son be equal to the Father, then is there of necessity an equality, which Arrius, that Heretic, denies: and if the Son be compared with the Father, then is there a distinction of persons, which Sabellius, that heretic, denies:

d) But he made himself of no reputation

(1) He brought himself from all things, as it were to nothing,

e) and took on him the form of a servant

(1) By taking our manhood upon him.

f) and was made like unto men, and was found in shape as a man.

g) He humbled himself, and became obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross.

3. Learn 3 words in KJV: Form, Likeness, and Fashion.

a) “**Form**” must be differentiated from “fashion”.

(1) Searching through a number of dictionaries for the best definitions for these two terms, we find form “always signifies (that) which truly and fully expresses the being which underlies it.” - Moulton & Milligan

(2) Form according to Bishop Lightfoot “has a more important function in making the thing what it is.” [Lightfoot. 129].

(3) Or as my own Bible School Greek teacher taught, “Being in the form of God says Jesus is God.”

(4) Jesus being in the “form” of God meant that in every sense, by nature Jesus is totally God

(5) Parmenides, born c. 515 BC, considered the founder of metaphysics or ontology, according to Lightfoot used the term “form” to explain the essence or unchanging nature of the universe.

(6) He bore 2 forms: God and Servant. It was His servanthood that is described by the word “emptied”

(a) Matthew 22:42-45 “Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The*

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*Son* of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

(b) How can God who is Lord over all be anyone's servant?

b) **Fashion** - while form is unchangeable, fashion is changeable. Like clothes being "in fashion."

(1) The dictionary calls fashion an "external bearing" (behavior or appearance) as distinguished from form which is "essential and permanent." - Moulton & Milligan.

(2) Paul taught that Jesus was "fashioned as a man" (KJV) He was in a physical body in order to experience death. His earthly body (as distinguished from His glorified body) was necessary to experience suffering and, ultimately, crucifixion for our Salvation.

c) This basic distinction bears true even with the composite uses of the terms: fashion and form. In English this distinction is not always honored in translation.

(1) **transfigure, Phil 3:21** God will "change [fashion, because this body was always temporary] our vile body [of humble estate], that it may be fashioned [formed permanently and essentially] like unto his glorious body"

(a) Hebrews 2:7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor

(b) 1 John 3:2 when he shall appear, we shall be like him;

(c) 1 Corinthians 15:44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body



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(2) Look at **transform** and **conform in** Romans 12:2 are distinguished “be not conformed to [fashioned after] this world: but be ye transformed” [made in Christ’s image].

(a) Unfortunately the translations, in an effort to explain, may unintentionally not hold to this clear distinction]. The fashion of this world is passing away according to Paul (1 Corinthians 7:31).

d) **Likeness**. “not mere resemblance but conformity.”

(1) Jesus was human which means he grew in wisdom

(a) Luke 2:40 And the child **grew** and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him. NEW INT.

(2) **learned** obedience,

(a) Hebrews 5:8 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered NEW INT.

(3) and was tempted,

(a) Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. NEW INT.

So we come to accept by faith, our hearts in full agreement with this exciting and undeniable truth from God’s Word that Jesus was, indeed, the God-man.

We are like the Centurion at the foot of the Cross we stood there, too in our hearts the day we accepted Christ as our Savior.

Mark 15:39 So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, [‘38, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom] he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”