

The Incarnation of the Son of God

by Olin Alfred Curtis

The Incarnation is the central idea of the Christian faith, where the Son of God becomes man for the redemption of man.

Scripture: John 1:14, John 14:9, Philippians 2:5, Philippians 3:21, Hebrews 2:17

Topics: "Christology", "Incarnation"

Description

Olin Alfred Curtis preaches on the doctrine of the Incarnation, emphasizing the Son of God becoming man for the redemption of humanity. He discusses the importance of starting with the Son of God in the glory of the Godhead, highlighting Jesus Christ as God become man. Curtis delves into the significance of the virgin birth in the Incarnation, addressing its inherent fitness and connection to the miraculous nature of the Incarnation itself. He explores the humiliation of the Kenosis, focusing on Saint Paul's teachings and the deep theological implications of Jesus' self-emptying and taking on the form of a servant. Curtis also examines the ethical and moral aspects of Christ's sacrifice, the reality of his temptation, and the authority of Jesus Christ, shedding light on the complexity of his divine and human natures.

Transcript

The central idea in the doctrine of the Incarnation is this: The Son of God given as man, for the redemption of man. This means that we are to start, not, as many theologians do, with the man Jesus, but with the Son of God living, personally, self-consciously, in the glory of the Godhead. Jesus Christ is God become man, and not man become God. We must instantly reject this view of a very peculiar man, or even of a miraculous man, gradually coming nearer and nearer to God, gradually being more and more filled with divine potency, gradually being more and more conjoined with God, until at last Christ is very God ("*ganz und schlechthin Gott*" - Rothe). "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth "(Saint John 1.14).

In recent years the question of the virgin birth has become one of "the points of fire" in theological discussion; and there are some who hold the miracle still, as a veritable New Testament teaching, and yet say it is "only a minor matter connected with the Incarnation and should have a subordinate place in the doctrine." I do not think that this apologetic treatment is wise; nor do I think that it represents the real Christian consciousness concerning the matter. It is true that the miracle of the virgin birth is not necessary, philosophically speaking, to the accomplishment of the Incarnation. There are several other conceivable ways by which the Son of God might have become truly man. The virgin birth is also entirely

unessential (many famous theologians have taught the contrary, however) in securing our Lord's freedom from depravity. Becoming man in anyway whatsoever, our Saviour would have been able to organize his whole being about his moral ideal, with the supreme motive of moral love, and the real companionship with God his Father. All this we may admit; but the virgin birth, nevertheless, belongs to the process of the Incarnation by the most inherent fitness. To have the stupendous miracle of the Incarnation itself actualized by a natural method would be as much out of place as to have the sun rise without manifesting its nature in heat and light. The nature of the miracle should come out; the method great miracles at the close of our Lord's earthly ministry, the resurrection and the ascension. The profoundest Christian consciousness will, I am very certain, more and more intensely do two things, namely, banish all miracle after the apostolic period, and demand every biblical miracle which tends to emphasize the extraordinary ethical meaning of our Redeemer's sacrifice for sin. The question for Christian men is not a scientific question in the least, but only a question of moral emphasis, a question of redemptive ethics. We will at last have everything which renders more real, more glorious, our salvation through the Incarnation and Death of our Lord.

Although we start with the preexistent Son of God, yet as a result of the virgin birth we come in our thinking to the proper manhood of Christ. But this is the precise point where we must begin to avoid even the faintest color of humanitarian thinking. We should not allow even the chill of the climate of that thinking to penetrate our hearts. The humanitarian conception of Jesus Christ is wrong, not only in theory, but in feeling also. And the feeling is more poisonous than the theory. The manhood of Christ is not that of a human person. All the personality of our Lord he brought with him into existence. He takes on an addition, a human addition, to his individuality, that is all. The manhood is ever impersonal, never anything but a lower coefficient for the abiding person of the Son of God. The Christian value of this view is very great, for it means that the human nature of our Lord will never come to personal emphasis, never come to triumph, so to speak, but will always stand out for the Redeemed as evidence of the sacrifice the Son of God made for man's salvation. The dignity of man, man's worth in God's sight, is not to be found in the humanity of Christ, as if our nature were so wonderful that even the Infinite One might be proud to wear it. That method of magnifying man is humanitarian and not truly Christian. No, the worth of man is to be found in the one fact that God cared enough about us to redeem us at such awful cost. Thus the best place for a man to discover his inner value is not at Bethlehem but at Mount Calvary. The manhood of Jesus Christ is ever to be regarded as part of the humiliation of the Son of God.

This prepares the way plainly to ask the question. Had there been no sin, and so no need of salvation, would the Son of God have become man? Bishop Martensen says: "Are we to suppose that that which is most glorious in the world could be reached only through the medium of sin? that there would have been no place in the human race for the glory of the Only Begotten One but for sin?" This conception of a cosmic meaning of the Incarnation -- that the universe itself could be made complete only by God's Son becoming man; that sin is but an accident which gave a peculiar occasion for the carrying out of a great original plan -- is fascinating to every Christian theologian having Martensen's philosophical cast of mind; but the splendid thing should, however we may cling to it in our dreams, be given up. For it is out of emphasis with the New Testament teaching as to the appalling nature and consequences of sin; and it tends to obscure the divine costliness of redemption. Indeed, this cosmic conception, once fully held, would entirely change the Christian mood, for it would lift Christianity out of its tragedy by giving the Incarnation place among the normal and majestic processes. The ethical stress, the abiding moral sorrow, in the Christian life must be preserved in the most jealous manner. No grander view in philosophy shall be allowed to entice us away from our rejoicing sorrow in our Lord -- rejoicing, that he so loved us as to

rescue us; sorrow, that the rescue cost so much -- cost even the breaking up of the normal plan of the divine life.

In his exceedingly helpful work, *The Christian View of God and the World*, Professor James Orr has made a suggestion with a purpose to mediate between the cosmic conception and the purely redemptional conception of the Incarnation. The passage reads as follows: "It seems to me that the real source of difficulty in thinking on this subject lies in not grasping with sufficient firmness the fact that, however we may distinguish from our human point of view between parts and aspects of the divine plan, God's plan is in reality one, and it is but an abstract way of thinking which leads us to suppose otherwise. In our human way of apprehension we speak as if God had first one plan of creation -- complete and rounded off in itself -- in which sin was to have no place; then, when it was foreseen that sin would enter, another plan was introduced, which vitally altered and enlarged the former. But if we take a sufficiently high point of view we shall be compelled to conclude, I think, that the plan of the universe is one, and that, however harsh the expression may sound, the foresight and permission of sin was from the first included in it." I do not discover any worth in Professor Orr's suggestion. Under all our imperfect language about two divine plans, there is a reality which is not affected in the least by "the foresight and permission of sin." The reality is this: Sin is contrary to God's ideal. Sin is foreseen and permitted as a second best rather than to have no personal creatures at all. The present plan, although from all eternity, is not what Infinite Holiness wanted, but even this plan is better than to have the whole universe automatic. And when we speak of two plans we are thinking of the actual plan over against the divine ideal. And, coming to the point at issue, the Incarnation, the real question is: Does the Incarnation of the Son of God belong to the divine ideal, does it express the normal relation of God to the cosmos, or is it a part of a plan which is the divine ideal modified by the certainty of sin and the purpose of redemption? My only possible answer has been given -- to this question. No Christian man should allow any touch of Hegelian philosophy to place the Incarnation in the divine ideal, in the normal life of God; for so to place it gives it cosmic majesty at the expense of intense redemptional import.

The Humiliation of the Kenosis

The Teaching of Saint Paul. The Scripture passages involved are four: Saint John's gospel 1.14; 2 Cor. 8.9; Heb. 2.17; and Phil. 2.5-8. Inasmuch, though, as the great passage in Philippians more than covers the other texts, it is necessary to discuss that one only. Saint Paul's words are: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God (*en morphei theou hyparchon*), counted not the being on an equality with God (*to einai isa theoi*) a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself (*heauton ekenosen*), taking the form of a servant (*morphen doulou labon*), being made in the likeness of men (*en homoiomati athropon*); and being found in fashion as a man (*schemati euretheis os anthropos*), he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Fully to understand this passage, one first needs firmly to grasp the distinction between the term *morphe* and the term *schema*, a distinction so convincingly brought out by Bishop Lightfoot in his commentary. The term *morphe* is the deeper term, meaning the essential form of being, while the term *schema* means merely the fashion of actual life. As a most simple illustration, let us take an ash tree, say a mountain ash. The *morphe* of this tree is the entire combination of essential characteristics which are necessary to constitute and manifest that individual thing we call a mountain ash. Take away even one of these characteristics, and it would not be a mountain ash, but something more or less different. Thus, the *morphe* of the tree is the tree's typical or mountain ash individuality; that is, all the peculiarity which constitutes the tree just that sort of an individual which is classified as a mountain ash. But this tree also

has a *schema*, or fashion of life, which has no necessary connection with the fact that it is a mountain ash. It is crowded, or it stands alone in the clearing; it has a suitable soil, or an unsuitable soil; it is bathed in the sun, or struggles upward in the shadow -- such things make up the tree's *schema*. The discussion is not complete here, but it is full enough to suggest all that we now require.

To Saint Paul, God himself has an essential form of being and a fashion of life. The divine *morphe* comprises all of God's essential characteristics -- all the interlaced attributes which are necessary to make God what he is and to express what he is. The divine *schema*, on the other hand, is but the manner of God's life, or, as he is personal, we may say, more closely, the manner of God's experience. It is, I think, precisely what Saint John means by *doxa*, that "glory" which the Saviour had with the Father before the world was. If you say that this "glory" is also essential to God, I answer, It is necessary from the standpoint of inherent fitness in a perfect divine experience, but it is not necessary to the very existence of God himself.

Keeping in mind this distinction between the essential form of being and the more superficial fashion of actual life, we are prepared to study Saint Paul's conception of our Lord's humiliation. Of what did our Saviour, the Son of God, empty himself? Of that thing, surely, which he counted not a thing to be grasped, as one holds fast to a great prize, whether or no, namely, the *to einai isa theoi*, "the being on an equality with God." It is plain enough that the Son of God, according to Saint Paul, gave up being on an equality with the Father. Right here it has been urged, however, that originally our Lord was on an equality with God in two ways: one way as to the form of being, the other way as to the fashion of life. If so, which of these two, the form of being or the fashion of life, did he give up? Or did he (keeping to the exegesis) give up both? Canon Gifford has, as far as I am concerned anyway, forever settled the grammatical question at this point, showing that the Greek cannot mean that the or essential form of being, was surrendered. And we also reach the same conclusion under the principle of exegetical economy. The aim of the passage is to teach a deep humiliation and to protect that aim completely we need to hold no more than that the fashion of life was given up. In other words, the ineffable glory of God's experience is enough, certainly, to make a full contrast with the limitation of a human life ending in death upon a cross. And, further, this double exegetical conclusion would be confirmed were we to press the question into a philosophical consideration. And, last of all, we have the consciousness of our Lord, as given by Saint John, that to redeem men he had given up the glory of God and not the Godhead.

What did our Saviour, the Son of God, take on? "The form of a servant." The word *morphe* is again used here, and it means precisely what it means in the verse before. Our Lord took on the attributes of a servant, or that essential form of being which pertains to the cramping existence of a slave. Not the accidental experience of a slave; but, profounder than all that, the very *morphe*, the essential form, the fundamental being of a slave. The idea here is not that Jesus Christ lived, suffered, died like a slave, but he was a slave. He had the whole essential structure of a *doulos*. And now Saint Paul tells us the exact kind of a servile *morphe* which our Lord took on, the exact kind of a servant that he became. "Being made in the likeness of men." The word used here is not *morphe* but *homoion*, of which Bengel says that it "denotes a relation to other things of the same condition." Saint Paul means that the Son of God became, not only a servant, but also that special kind of a servant which men are. He was a human *doulos*. It is simply saying that our Lord became a man, but saying it in such a way as to put extreme emphasis upon the servile limitations of manhood. Even this is not all. The humiliation is still greater. Our Redeemer not only became man; he also took the actual experience -- the *schema* -- of a man; and a peculiarly humiliating *schema*, one that ended in death, and even in the shame and torture of the death

of the cross. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Analytically given, the teaching of the apostle Paul as to the humiliation of the kenosis is as follows: 1. Being originally, and continually subsisting in the essential form of God, our Lord had an inherent right to enjoy the actual manner of life, or the transcendent experience of God. 2. But this transcendent divine experience he would not cling to regardless; but gave it up as an act of redemptional humiliation. 3. This impoverishment of himself was not all. There was a second stage of humiliation in the further fact that he took on the servile essential form of being which men have; and then lived the actual life of a man. 4. And there was a third stage of humiliation; for our Saviour obediently lived this actual life of a man down to the experience of death. 5. And this third stage of humiliation was emphasized by the suffering and ignominy of crucifixion.

The Teaching Transferred to Systematic Theology. By making a few changes in the words, the Pauline conception of the kenosis can be expressed in the spirit and form of systematic theology: As a preexisting person our Lord had two things, namely, first, a divine nature with all the attributes of the Godhead; second, a divine personal experience equal to that of God the Father. The divine nature he did not give up, but has it eternally. But the divine experience he could and did give up in redemptional humiliation. And, further, he not only surrendered this divine experience, but also had, in place of it, a servile human experience of the most humiliating extreme, reaching down to death, and that death even by crucifixion. The possibility of this servile human experience was due to the fact that to his original and eternal divine nature he had added a human nature which is the nature of limitation and dependence.

A Deeper Study of the Kenosis. If we are ever to appreciate the profound significance of our Lord's humiliation our discussion of the kenosis must be deepened. This study is all the more important because the doctrine of the kenosis has been so manipulated as to seem to impair the supreme authority of Jesus Christ; indeed, has been so manipulated as to be made to lend itself to a purely humanitarian view of him.

What do we mean by the term nature when we are speaking of an individual? Some writers seem to think that an individual's nature is a sort of inner pulp out of which qualities are extracted as literally as pins are taken from a cushion. Toward such a crude, materialistic conception there is no worthy mood short of impatience. The fact is that there are many Christians who are materialistic, not as to man's destiny, but as to man's constitution. By the nature of anything I understand neither more nor less than that structural law by which the thing is precisely what it is. With Professor Bowne's idea of being as active, one would say that this structural law is the law of the thing's action: "Now, this rule or law which determines the form and sequence of a thing's activities represents to our thought the nature of the thing, or expresses its true essence." This view is, I am convinced, the only full stopping place; but for our present purpose it is quite enough to say that under every individual existence there is a basal plan or law which determines all individual difference in characteristics. Coming again to Saint Paul, I would say that his *morphe* is the individuality which expresses this structural law. But we need to be cautious here. The *morphe* is not a separated consequence. The nature, the structural law actually appears in the morphe. The common people come quite close to the fact when they say, "It's the very nature of the thing to be that way."

Making now our application to the kenosis, we can hold that the original structural law of our Lord's being is exactly that law which makes God what God is - self-existent in organism, omnipotent -- in short, having all the divine attributes. Then, we can make a distinction between this law as actually in the attributes and the attributes as actually in self-consciousness. Holding fast to this distinction, we can, I think, at least

begin to apprehend what took place in the Incarnation. The divine life as a personal experience -- as "glory over glory streaming" Our Lord could and did give up; but he did not, and he could not, give up the original structural law, the basal plan of his being, that intrinsic fundament by which alone he had the possibility of the ineffable experience of God. Our Saviour did not achieve manhood by a reduction of his deity. Truly he became man, but after he became man he had every divine capacity, every divine power, every divine attribute. I well know how impossible it seems, at first, that a person can have a complete attribute and yet not seize it in self-consciousness; but perhaps I can convince you not only that such is the fact, but also that the fact is quite common in human life. Here is a mother, for example, who has the full attribute of love. By this I mean that she has the habit of love fundamental in her womanhood. Her capacity for love, we will say, has been gathered up into a definite habit of love for her child. If you take away this habit of love for that child, what remains will not be the same individual woman at all. The attribute of love belongs to her very nature. Indeed, we can go further; for this habit of love may have been so personalized, so indorsed by crucial self-decision, that the mother must love that child forever. The habit has become a part of her everlasting individuality. And yet, basal as the attribute is, it does not always appear in the woman's self-consciousness. The child may be sick unto death, and the mother, in sheer exhaustion, may have fallen asleep. Would you in such case say that she had lost out of her nature her love for her child? Not a man of you would say such a thing as that; you would say, She has lost the love out of her consciousness, but she has it still deep in her heart. If it be urged that the mother is only a finite creature, I answer, That fact does not change the other one, namely, that it is possible for a person to have an attribute in the individual nature and yet not to have the attribute in self-consciousness.

But some brother, who is thinking of the present biblical situation, says: "You would not claim, though, that Jesus Christ was, in his earthly life, omniscient?" That is precisely what I do claim. By the attribute of omniscience I understand the inherent power for the perfect intuition of all reality and all possibility; and I believe that our Lord never for an instant even lost that structural feature out of his being. But this does not mean that the attribute of omniscience was aplunge in self-consciousness all through that period of humiliation. As men, we ourselves have the inherent power for some intuition -- for instance, that a half is less than the whole. Do we drop the power out of our nature every time we drop the intuition out of consciousness? Or take even acquired knowledge, as we term it -- does a learned man need to carry in self-consciousness all the time, day and night, every item which he has acquired? May he not dare to take some rest from his terrible burden? Sir William Hamilton, I have read, could banish from his consciousness all his vast erudition, and live for hours at some one delicate point in philosophy; but I have never read that when he came out of his mood of abstraction he discovered that he had lost every other truth and every other fact which he had ever acquired. In my own thinking I have considered not only omniscience, not only love, but also all the remaining divine attributes, and my firm conclusion is that our Lord emptied himself of no divine thing save the transcendent personal experience of God.

What we have said now makes it necessary more closely to study our Saviour's humanity. When we say that our Lord took on a human nature, precisely what do we mean? I mean this: He added to the original structural law of his being another law, namely, the law of a finite, dependent creature such as man is. Under this new law man's limited existence could be real to him. Under the law of his divine nature he had an infinite intuitive knowledge of man, but he could not have human life as an actual personal experience. In the absolute God there is no normal capacity for the finite. This is not an imperfection in God any more than it is an imperfection in the sun not to be small enough for a candlestick. Or, take this illustration in suggestion: John Burroughs knows much more about a snow-bird than the "little, nervous, fastidious" Junco knows about itself; and yet the great, kindly naturalist cannot without a miracle have the actual

limitations and peculiar experience of the bird. The miracle of the Incarnation, as I lay hold of it, is the conjoining of two structural plans of being so that the incarnate Son of God has now two inherent capacities, one for divine experience and the other for human experience. For example, he can actually be *doulos* in spatial limitations, as when, on the way to Emmaus, he "drew near, and went with them"; or he can override these limitations, as when he "vanished out of their sight." If it be objected that all this took place after his resurrection, I answer, first, that the resurrection simply made fitting a revelation of capacity which was in his nature all the time; and, second, that the same philosophical significance belongs to the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration, or to the scene at the grave of Lazarus. Indeed, time and time again, our Saviour plainly showed a double capacity in nature.

Before thoroughly testing my conception of the incarnate person of the Son of God I wish to state it clearly and succinctly. After the Incarnation our Lord was one person, living under two abiding structural laws of being, and thus having two kinds of capacity, one kind divine, the other kind human. His impoverishment, therefore, was not as to nature but as to personal experience. And the degree of this impoverishment was due to his redemptional aim to live a typical human life "down to its dregs of death." For to live such a life there must be either an erasement (as in infancy) or a modification (as in the temptation) of his original seizure in self-consciousness.

The Infancy of Jesus. Under this theory that the kenosis applies only to self-consciousness, what is our conception of our Lord's human infancy? There can be no severer test than to answer this question. That babe was not a human babe in a profound philosophical sense. Never under any possible conditions could that child have become a mere man; a human creature. We must instantly banish every trace of creaturehood from our conception. That babe was as truly God as when he was absolute in the glory of God the Father. The self-consciousness of the Son of God is now in total eclipse, but he himself is still organic in the Godhead and has still all the inherent divine capacity. Not one divine attribute has he lost out of his nature. And yet there is not an atom of docetic life here. He does not seem to be living the life of a human infant, he is living it. His dependence upon Mary, all the first tiny outreachings of a child's instincts, the first perceptions crawling slowly into clearness -- all are completely real -- why? Simply because the structural law of a human being is at this time in supreme dominion, and there is no personal experience of his divine nature.

But not yet am I fully understood -- some one is thinking, "Would you, then, say with John Milton, 'Our Babe, to show his Godhead true, can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew?'" Can this infant exercise the prerogatives of his deity? Certainly not, for such an exercise of prerogative would require self-decision, and such self-decision would require not only a divine nature, but also the self-grasp and self-estimate of that nature in consciousness.

Repeated Personal Choice of Humiliation. As the child Jesus grows the two structural coefficients of consciousness are less and less exclusive, and at last (we cannot be sure as to the time) Jesus Christ is in positive seizure of the structural law of his divine being. From this point on he can at will overwhelm the human side of his life. He has taken on the human nature for time and eternity, but this does not mean that he may not banish it from personal experience. The Son of God does not now need to be hungry and weary and powerless, he chooses to be so. Thus, there is a perpetual ethical quality in his humiliation; and just before his death this ethical quality reaches its loftiest point. The death of Christ is not a humiliation which was chosen once for all before the Incarnation, but rather a humiliation chosen again and again, and at last chosen in finality in Gethsemane. The death of Christ was not necessary because he had a human nature; the human nature merely rendered the experience of death possible. The death of Christ

was necessary only ethically, was necessary only redemptionally. Even here there is almost no Christian emphasis upon the fact that Jesus was a man. The manhood was but a means to an end. Because he was man he could die, and because he was God he would die for an atonement. Thus, that cross itself is perfectly saturated with moral meaning.

The Temptation of Christ. This point of repeated personal choice naturally brings our discussion to the question of our Lord's temptation. And here we need to satisfy two kinds of men: First, there is the man who fears that we may destroy, or obscure, the reality of the temptation. This man says: "If you emphasize the Master's Godhead so greatly, you make, as far as I can see, his temptation into a mere deceptive exhibition. My own temptations mean life or death, and never can I allow you to take away from me the courage which has come to my heart from believing that my Saviour's victory was a real victory in a real conflict." The feeling expressed here is genuinely Christian, and it may partly explain the extreme modern emphasis upon the true humanity of Christ. I only wish that the entire humanitarian emphasis could be explained in this manner, for an error which grows out of a Christian sentiment is never deeply dangerous; at least, never so deeply dangerous as an error which grows out of a rationalistic root. But the man's fear is the result of a superficial understanding of the psychology of temptation. The reality of temptation, and the strength of temptation, too, depends simply upon the consciousness of pressure in motive. At this point the popular notion that a weak person has the greater temptation is altogether incorrect. The greater the person, the greater the clarity of self-consciousness, the greater the temptation, provided there is motive for wrongdoing. .But, as I have already shown, the strength of a motive never can, in and of itself, mean the defeat of a free person. Our Lord had, at the time of his temptation, very great motives to keep loyal to his ideal and to his Father; but his human nature did furnish motives to violate that loyalty, and these motives were actual in consciousness, and were felt with all the mighty seizure of his personality. In short, our Lord was, in self-consciousness, under real pressure to reject the demand of his own conscience, and this made his conflict real.

Again, there is the man who is in theoretical fear of the very reality which the other man dreads to lose. In apparent desperation, he asks: "Suppose Jesus Christ had yielded to the temptation, what would have become of the plan of salvation? You dare not teach that his temptation was real in the sense that he could have become a transgressor!" And the strange thing is that scholastic ingenuity has laboriously tried to meet this theoretical fear, when the answer is as clear as a cloudless sky. The premise of the whole plan of redemption is the omniscience of God. Let a man once master the significance of redemption in its relation to personality and moral character, and he must premise omniscience; he can no more believe that God is nescient than he can believe that man is coerced. It was foreknown that when the Son of God took on a human nature and thereby came to have a human probation, because of the new motives in consciousness, he would in his personal freedom come off more than conqueror. Our Lord's temptation was real, his triumph was real; but the result was certain (not necessary), just as the final, total outcome of redemption is secure in the absolute omniscience of God.

The Authority of Jesus Christ. Some years ago I wrote, in another connection, these words: "Practically, the Incarnation has no bearing whatever upon the authority of our Lord; for he had, in his human life, instant access to the resources of his Father. With such resources at command he might choose not to know; but in such chosen ignorance he would never speak as if he knew. Surely the Son of God did not become man that he might make false statements." Then I added a quotation from Canon Gore's Bampton Lectures, which runs thus: "Let it be said at once that we could not, consistently with faith, hesitate to accept anything on any subject that our Lord meant to teach us." The aim and spirit of this

former utterance satisfy me still, but the point of view does not satisfy me. It is superficial. When we speak of the authority of Jesus Christ we are not thinking of his infancy, but of his manhood after he had obtained his redemptional self-consciousness. And, I must hold that this redemptional consciousness involved a self-grasp of his divine nature, and therefore of all his divine attributes, and therefore of the attribute of omniscience itself. So much as to theory; now let us turn to the gospel record. Those writers who emphasize the kenosis with a humanitarian intention are ever eager to call our attention to our Lord's saying that even the Son knew not "of that day and hour," but why do they not call our attention also to those places where, as in the case of Peter's denial, our Lord evinced a vision of future events, some of these events entirely contingent upon man's freedom? The gospel account, I think, does not fit into their theory, but does fit into mine. The record bears out my contention that in his manhood our Saviour had, and had in personal command, the attribute of omniscience, sometimes using it, and at other times refusing to use it, in order that he might experience human life to its bottom. His humanity did render it possible for him not to know, but his humanity did not render it impossible for him to know what he would and when he would. With such a conception of our Lord, I cannot admit that he ever mangled a fact. To a certain extent he might accommodate himself to the ignorance of men and to the imperfections of his time; to a certain extent he might wish to have an inner world as poverty-stricken as their own; to a certain extent he might wish to compel himself to live in the unopened scene of today; but it is too much to ask us to believe that Jesus Christ ever held a false opinion or spoke a false word.

The Question of Two Wills. "After the Saviour took on a human nature did he have two wills, one divine and the other human?" The very asking of such a question is indicative of crude thinking in psychology; but the question has some historical importance in theology, and is also troublesome to many students, so I will take the time to answer it. My answer must be: In one sense, No; in another sense, Yes. The will is not a thing added to a person, nor an item distinctive in a person, say as a mainspring is distinctive in a watch. When we say that a person has will, we mean, or should mean, nothing other than that he can will, that is, he has the inherent capacity for decision. The person is one all the time, now feeling, now thinking, now making volition, and now, perhaps, doing all three at a personal stroke. Our Lord, also, was not two persons, but unitary personal being; and when he willed anything, he did not have, lying in behind, a second will like a machine's supplemental attachment which is kept in reserve to do a second kind of work. But inasmuch as our Saviour did have, added to his original divine nature, a human nature; and inasmuch as that human nature could at times dominate his consciousness, we should, it seems to me, call that volition human which was made under such domination. Taken in this manner, I could agree with men like Canon Liddon; but I would, of course, need to add that there were occasions when our Lord's decision was, exactly speaking, neither all divine nor all human, but rather divine-human. For there were occasions when both natures were explicit in self-consciousness. But the entire question of two wills, I apprehend, comes out of a blundering effort to protect the integrity of each nature in Christ; and I believe that such protection I have secured.

The Incarnation and the Cosmic Process. The theory of "the double life" is held by a number of Christian theologians who, like Bishop Martensen, do not find any way to provide for the ongoing of the universe without the constant volition of the Son of God. Thus the Incarnation is isolated from the cosmic process, and our Lord is conceived of as living two lives, one life as God absolute and the other life as God incarnate. At one and the same time he is (Proclus of Cyzicus) "in his mother's arms and on the wings of the winds." Professor Briggs seems to hold to this view, for he says: "The kenosis is conceived in its relation to the work of Christ Jesus for man in this world. So far as the Son of God has other relations to the universe, the kenosis here mentioned does not apply. As the Mediator of the divine government of the

universe, in whom 'were all things created,' and in whom 'all things consist,' he continues in the form of God, at the same time as in the Incarnation he empties himself of the form of God." I can accept any miracle which is essential to the Christian faith, but this view of a "double life" is to me not so much a Christian miracle as a psychological monstrosity. It is like saying that a man can be himself and his own elder brother, and then calling it a miracle. In fact, there is in the view no serious consideration of the integrity of personality. And not only so, but I must regard the view as peculiarly dangerous. In consistent thinking, it is likely to mean no more than that Jesus Christ is the under and necessary agent of the Son of God, who remains intact in the glory of the Godhead. Held in this way, it would, equally with Ritschlianism, destroy the ethical import of the self-sacrifice in the Incarnation. And, equally with Ritschlianism, it would be likely, in unskillful hands, to drop into an unrecognized humanitarianism. And not only so, but the view is not even required to protect the cosmic process. For the ongoing of the universe only two things are necessary, namely, the organism of the Godhead in its entire integrity, and this perfect divine organism brought to volitional point by the infinite will. The organism of the Godhead is not, even during our Lord's human infancy, impaired in any structural way by the Incarnation; and this perfect divine organism is brought to volitional point by the will of God the Father. In fact, the will of the Father is always the primary efficiency, for the Son does not originate anything, but merely carries out in obedient love the Father's purpose. Whether the work is redemption or creation, the volitions of the Son are but the will of the Father accepted and made doubly personal in projection.

After the Ascension. Our Saviour never ceases to be both very God and very man. He never ceases to have the two structural laws fundamental in his being. But after the ascension his life is different from his earthly life. His body now is a glorified body (Phil. 3.21), and his human nature is lifted out of the cramping limitation of the time process. And yet he has the memory of all the poverty and slavery and suffering of his earthly life; and he also has inherent capacity for all the finite experience which redeemed men will have after their own glorification. Thus, in the most literal sense, our Lord is "one of us everlastingly."

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