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SIMPLE DEFINITION: The Doctrine of the Incarnation

The word comes from the latin, incarnatio, which means "being or taking flesh" derived from the Latin version of John 1:14.

The word incarnation simply means that in Jesus,
the **Son of God**, took on human **flesh/form**
- being miraculously conceived and born of a virgin.

SIMPLE DEFINITION: The Doctrine of the Incarnation

As the God-Man, He mediates God to humans;
as the Man-God, He represents humans to God.

SOME CLARIFICATIONS

A. The Doctrine of the Trinity:

God eternally exists as three distinct Persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the one Being of God.

Being is different to Person. Being (or Substance) has to do with WHAT something is or its existence. Person has to do with WHO something is.

SOME CLARIFICATIONS

B. The Subject of the Incarnation

The incarnation is the 'in-fleshing' of the Second Person of the Trinity - God the Son.

It does NOT mean that God the Father or God the Holy Spirit became a man.

WESTMINSTER CATECHISM

A37. Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul (Matt. 26:38), being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her (Luke 1:27-42), yet without sin (Heb. 4:15, 7:26).



1. WONDER: GOD'S STORY

A. THE INCARNATION IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY



i. FULFILLMENT: Old Testament Prophecy

3 Biblical themes Jesus fulfills in Matthew:

- He brings Israel into the promised land: Jesus is the Greek for Joshua.
- As Immanuel, he embodies God's presence with his people.
- As the new David, he is the messiah born at Bethlehem.

Jesus interprets the OT in light of His coming:

- Isaiah 'saw his glory and spoke of him' (John 12:41; Isa. 6).
- Jesus, not the manna, was the heavenly bread which fed Israel in the wilderness (John 6:31ff., 47ff.).
- Abraham 'saw his day' (John 8:56f.).



ii. FORESHADOWING: The OT in the NT

Connection with the OT Feasts

The Jewish Rabbis taught that the prophet Elijah would appear at Passover to declare who the Messiah would be.

John the Baptist is born around the time of Passover, and Jesus calls John the 'Elijah who was to come' in *Matthew 11:13-15*.



ii. FORESHADOWING: The OT in the NT

Connection with the OT Feasts

Jesus was probably born around the time of the Feast of **Tabernacles** and John starts his Gospel by saying that the Word became flesh and, literally 'tabernacled' among us (John 1:14).



ii. FORESHADOWING: The OT in the NT

Born to Die

In Matthew 2:11, one of the gifts the Magi bring is myrrh, which was a spice and was used in embalming. Myrrh symbolizes bitterness, suffering, and affliction.



iii. **FULLNESS: John and the NT Letters**

John's writings, Paul's letters and Hebrews & Revelation attest to Jesus being:

- **co-equal** with God the Father
- the Redeemer sent in the **fullness of time**
- the **fulfillment** of what Adam had failed at
- a **perfect representative** of God & Man
- predicted to come back in the **fullness** of His **glory**



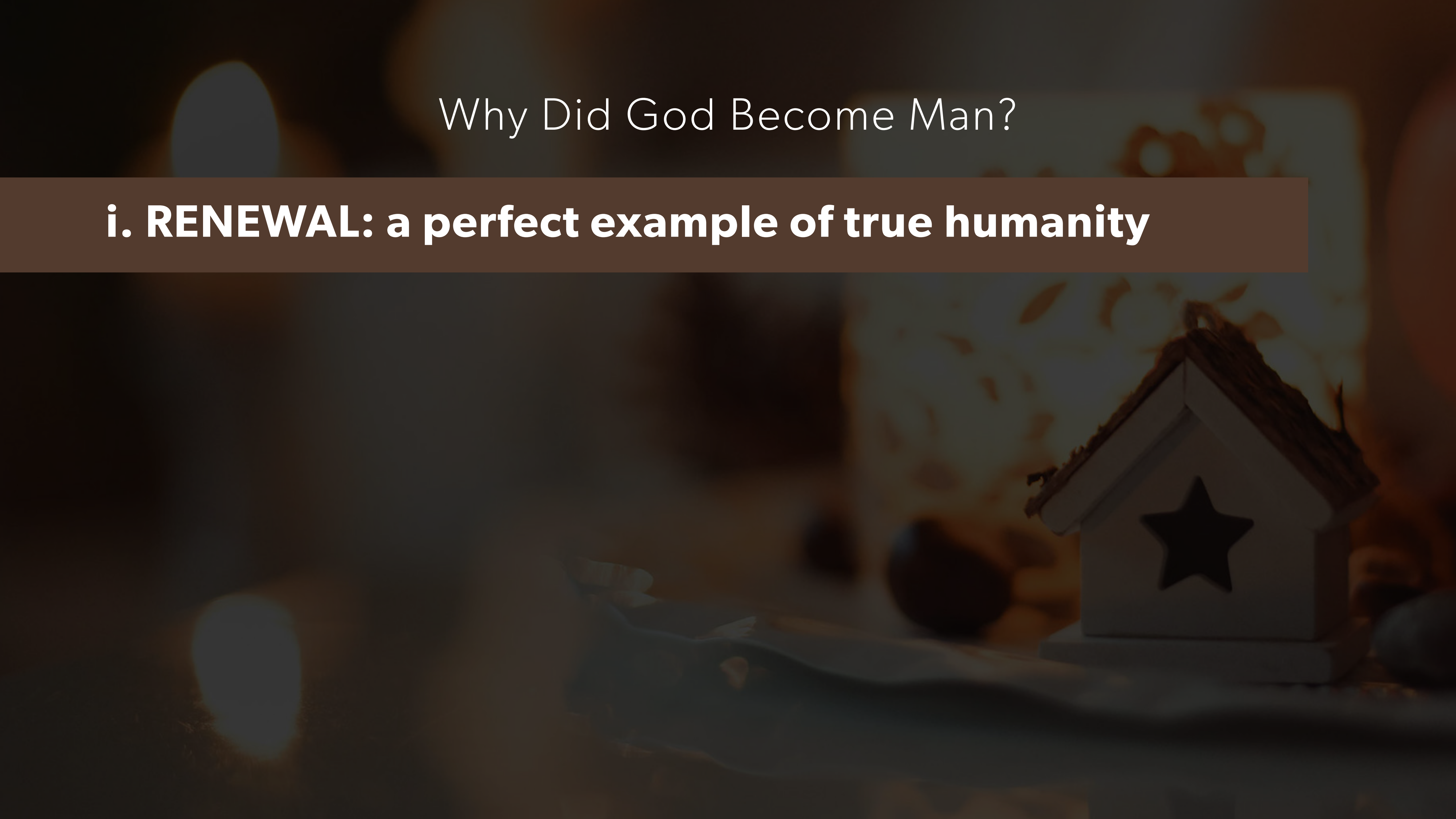
1. WONDER: GOD'S STORY

**1B. THE NECESSITY OF THE
INCARNATION**



Why Did God Become Man?

i. RENEWAL: a perfect example of true humanity



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ii. RELATIONSHIP: The incarnation helps us know God

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i. RENEWAL: a perfect example of true humanity

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iii. REDEMPTION: God pays the price we couldn't

iv. RESCUE: We're hopeless unless God came down to



2. WORSHIP: ORTHODOXY & HERESY

**2A. THE INCARNATION IN
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**



What we believe about Jesus as the God-Man is tremendously important because if we get the wrong Christ, we're worshipping the wrong God.



i. The Hypostatic Union

NATURE

The term “nature” denotes the sum-total of all the essential qualities of a thing, that which makes it what it is. It is the qualities possessed in common for a given substance.



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PERSON

The term “person” denotes a complete substance/thing endowed with reason/consciousness, and, consequently, a responsible subject of its own actions. Person refers to the “who” of a thing.



i. The Hypostatic Union

When we talk about the Hypostatic Union, we mean that Jesus Christ has 2 **natures**: a human and a divine nature that are distinct and unmixed, and One Person - who is, the Second Person of the Trinity - God the Son.



ii. The Humanity of Jesus

- Jesus referred to Himself as a man (John 8:40).
- He grew and developed in normal human development (Luke 2:40).
- He experienced fatigue (John 4:6); His body required sleep (Matt. 8:24), food (Matt. 4:2; 21:18), and water (John 19:28).
- Human emotional characteristics: Jesus expressed joy (John 15:11) and sorrow (Matt. 26:37); He showed compassion (Matt. 9:36) and love (John 11:5); and He was moved to righteous indignation (Mark 3:5).



iii. The Deity of Jesus

- “All the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him” (Col. 1:19; John 20:28; Titus 2:13).
- Jesus was aware of His divine status (John 10:30; 12:44–45; 14:9).
- Jesus did things and claimed authority ascribed God: He forgave sins (Matt. 9:6) and has all authority (Matt. 28:18–20).
- He is the Agent of creation (John 1:3) and sustains it (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).
- He raised the dead (John 11:43–44), healed the sick (John 9:6–7), and vanquished demons (Mark 5:13).



2. WORSHIP: ORTHODOXY & HERESY

**2B. THE INCARNATION IN
HISTORICAL THEOLOGY**



i. Heresies and Councils

- GNOSTICISM & MARCIONISM: denying the true humanity of Jesus
- ARIANISM AND KENOSIS: denying the true deity of Jesus
- OTHER HERESIES: confusion over the natures and person of Jesus



ii. The Chalcedonian Creed (451 AD)

Important phrases:

- Truly God and truly man
- Reasonable soul and body
- Begotten before all ages
- Two natures - unmixed/divided/separated/confused
- One Person



3. WITNESS: GOD SENDS CHRIST, JESUS SENDS US

**3A. HOW THE INCARNATION
EQUIPS US FOR WITNESS**



i. AN EXAMPLE

- **God stoops low to come to us.** Our outreach should likewise be 'incarnational.'
- **God becomes one of us to sympathize with us.** How does this affect us reaching people in hurt?
- **Jesus lays aside what was rightfully his for our benefit.** How can we count others needs more significant than our own?
- **The incarnation was costly to God.** How should we be sacrificial in giving of ourselves for the sake of the



ii. AN APOLOGETIC

The doctrine gives us a powerful apologetic to engage people with the Gospel.

- It shows the necessity and hope of the incarnation in offering us renewal, relationship, redemption and rescue from God.
- It helps us correct error: the wrong Jesus is the wrong Saviour.



3. WITNESS: GOD SENDS CHRIST, JESUS SENDS US

**3A. SOME PRACTICAL
EXAMPLES & TIPS**

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS INITIATIVES:
HOPECHURCHTW.CA/CHRISTMAS

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



YOU ARE LOVED

