

Heidelberg Catechism 35 – The Benefits of Christ’s Humanity

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The Virgin Mary evokes great sentimentality in millions, even billions around the world. A betrothed woman finds herself pregnant. Her fiancé is not the father. But he marries her anyway. She is expecting her first child in a strange place with strange unhelpful people and without conveniences for giving birth. But the poor young woman somehow manages, maybe by herself, to give birth to a baby boy even in the poverty stricken circumstances. She takes care of herself and the baby. Soon after birth shepherds show up in the cow pen and announce to Mary that the baby is the means by which God brings peace to the world. Then Mary and Joseph registers as they law requires they head home. But soon the story takes another turn. The family must flee to bad Egypt and waits until King Herod dies, as he tries to murder all the boy babies. There are so many twists and turns in the story it makes it all the more exciting and moving. But you know that the story is more, much more. And you must keep this in mind as we move into Advent season. The focus is on the Baby, not on the mother, as some religions like to make it. That Baby would do something that none other baby could do...and it was even more special because he would do the thing that man needed the most.

Our headings are: **Jesus took on Human Nature-How, Jesus took on Human Nature – Why, and Jesus took on Human Nature – Now What?**

Our goals are: **That you will see the Christ’s Incarnation afresh and so love him better, and then spread his message so the world can enjoy peace on earth and in heaven.**

Q&A 35 What does it mean that He "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary"? That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to Himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, a truly human nature so that He might become David's true descendant, in all things like us His brothers except for sin.

Jesus took on Human Nature - How

- 1. Christ, the eternal natural Son of God, took the human nature– real human nature. It wasn’t some fusion融合 of man and God. He wasn’t a man with a great soul. He wasn’t God with an “apparent表面上” human body. He was fully God who took on a fully human body with a reasonable soul.**
Philippians 2:6 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
John 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- 2. Christ’s human nature was from Mary, a virgin. Christ was real flesh and real blood. Christ had appeared before (pre-incarnate form道成肉身前的形式), but never from going through process of taking human flesh from another human. He miraculously appeared to Adam in the Garden in the cool of the day, to Abraham in his tent in the heat of the day, to Moses on the mountain in the burning bush, to the 3 Hebrew boys in the fire, etc. But, when the time was right, he took on a full human nature...a body...and a reasonable soul. He had a fully human nature.**
Matthew 1:24-25 - Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.
Galatians 4:4- But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
- 3. The Holy Spirit miraculously used the Virgin Mary’s body to create a body for Christ.**
Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow覆庇 you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.
This miraculous overshadowing of Mary was necessary because Christ could not have a biological earthly father...If Christ had a biological earthly father he would be sinful for sin would have passed through natural conception自然怀孕
- 4. Furthermore, Jesus Christ was a true real Son of David – a descendant of David – provable from both sides.**
Luke 1:32 –"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. (Romans 1:3, and 9:5 also.)
Psalms 132:11 The LORD has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: "I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.
Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow

out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Yet this real human Son was the real natural and eternal Son of God...and would be known for being the Son of God when he came. (Quoting from Psalm 2:7) Jesus was simply called "Jehovah" when he appeared before in his pre-incarnate form.

Acts 13:33 "God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'

5. The angels from heaven, the shepherds, the wise men, his parents, his friends, his brothers and sisters, his followers, the Roman soldiers and his enemies **proved that Christ was human. He ate, drank, slept, got tired, was hungry, felt pain, was hurt in his spirit, and cried.**

Jesus took on Human Nature – Why?

1. Christ had to be a man as required in the "seed" Gospel promise that God gave to Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

And it was the same promise to the Patriarchs...The Christ would be a man...

Genesis 22: 18 -"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

2. Christ had to be fully man in order that he might bear God's anger – dying for your sins.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Romans 5:15 - ... For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

If man sinned, man had to die. No animal or sinful person would suffice 满足 God's justice .

Isaiah 53:3-5 - He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief 熟悉痛苦的人 And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken 受责打, Smitten by God, and afflicted 被神打和虐待 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions , He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement 惩罚 for our peace was upon Him. And by His stripes 鞭伤 we are healed.

Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

God himself could not wish away your sins. If he did, he would have contradicted his own nature.

And as God, Christ was without sin, so he was qualified to die for sinners such as we. A sinner could not die for another sinner. A sinner was not an acceptable substitute 代替者 for a sinner.

3. Jesus Christ had to be fully man to obey in our human nature. (See also Hebrews 2:17)

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

The love letters of the Old Testament were not enough. Jesus had to make a personal appearance.

1John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

4. Yet, taking on human flesh **did not take away from his Divine nature.** See Philippians 2:7.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

He was one person with two natures: a Divine nature and a human nature (body and soul).

Jesus took on Human Nature – Now What

1. Because of Christ's incarnation you will bring glory to God. This was predicted, expected, and is being completed in every Christian's life.

Luke 2:1-14 - And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God

and saying: 14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"
You would naturally want to glorify God as you realize what God has done for you.
You are obligated to glorify God based on what God has done for you.

2. Because of Christ's incarnation there will be peace and goodwill from God to man – a peace that passes all understanding... It is a peace between God and sinful man. Enemies from the beginning of the world, God and man now have peace. This promise of peace between God and man was often repeated in the Old Testament. Micah said that Jesus would be peace incarnate.

Micah 5:5 And this One shall be peace.

Isaiah said that Jesus would be the "Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

This promise of peace is experienced in the New Testament as well.

Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace

Of course this is speaking of inward peace...as Judah was already peaceful at this time. Remember the old saying: Know Christ, know peace. No Christ, no peace.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

3. There will be peace between man and man. The Israelis and Palestinians will stop fighting.

Isaiah 55:12 "For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

4. There will be joy to man. Joy – a joy that lasts for all eternity – a joy beyond your ability to understand. And this joy will not be just much joy, but great (mega) joy.

Luke 1:14 "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

Romans 15:10 And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"

This is why Paul commands that you must rejoice.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Conclusion:

Christ, the eternal God, took a real human nature from a real woman in order that he might obey and suffer in your nature. He had to obey the law as a man – human nature and a male person as covenant head - so you get credit for obedience. He had to suffer and die as a man to take your punishment for breaking the law of God. He did this to meet the righteous requirement of God. The result of this is that you have true peace with God, you'll have goodwill from him, and you'll have a joy that lasts forever. You also have a basis of peace and joy now in this world with enemies...

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Do you have peace with God on account of Christ, or are you afraid of him? If you are sometimes afraid of God it is because either you are not a Christian at all, or because you don't realize in fullness what Christ has accomplished for you. And are you enjoying your salvation – knowing you have been saved from your sins? I hope this lesson today serves as a reminder of what God did for you-and how he continues to be present with you always. Christ is very real with a real presence. He is the real deal. May this conviction信念 then move you to spread the means of peace-the only means of earthly and heavenly peace... which is goodness to man and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, why is there still so much sadness and no peace in this world? Answer: Isa 57:21 "There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked." There is no peace with God and there is no peace among men. Yet, there is peace between God and men, if men would just accept it. It is a peace that comes from accepting by faith what that Jesus lived and died to you, which satisfied God's righteous anger. When you do this, men will have peace in their hearts and then they can have peace with each other.