

**Begotten, Not Made - Philippians 2:5-11**  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

Batman and Superman. While we love the superheroes, I mentioned last week that these characters represent the two tendencies we tend to drift toward as we think about the doctrine of Jesus. Last week we looked at the Batman ditch, the danger of denying or reducing the divinity of Jesus. Arius believed Jesus was god like, yet still a created person, really just a man with really good toys and gadgets at his disposal. At the Council of Nicaea the gathering of bishops rejected this view, firmly affirming that Jesus was and is “God of God, light of light, true God of true God.” He is the same substance, the same essence as God the Father. In doing so they affirmed the very Biblical view that Jesus is the God revealed in the Old Testament, the same as the One True and Living God.

If Jesus is God, then, how human could he have really been? As we try to understand this it becomes easy to see why many turn Jesus into Superman. Kal-El is never really a true human being. Yes, he looks human. And when Superman puts on glasses he even pretends to be the very human and awkward Clark Kent. But when trouble arises the true being comes out, the alien from planet Krypton. Well before the fourth century the early church encountered several false teachers who denied the humanity of Jesus. The most significant was a belief known as docetism, a title that comes from the Greek word that means “seems”. These people struggled to embrace the true humanity of Jesus, believing that Jesus just seemed or appeared to be a man. He didn’t have a human will, human mind, human emotions, or any human needs. How could he if Jesus is God? So, while the creed was not written primarily to confront docetism, it does not lack clarity about the true and full humanity of Jesus. The one who is true God of True God “came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit by the Virgin Mary, and was made man.” This is the beauty and miracle we call the incarnation, that God put on flesh, stepped into our story and suffering, and became one of us.

So how human was Jesus? First, he was a zygote that became an embryo. Fathom that, in some mysterious way God became a zygote. Jesus was born, he pooped his diaper, cried, and nursed. Jesus went through adolescence, and as he did Luke tells us that Jesus “grew in wisdom, and stature, and favor with God and man.” The infinite and omniscient one grew in wisdom and stature. Jesus ate, had friends, went to parties (a lot of parties), walked around and rode a donkey. He had the full range of human emotions, including deep grief (Jesus cried), and amazing joy. The New Testament writers are clear about the full and true humanity of Jesus. He didn’t just appear to be human, he had a full human mind, soul, emotions, and body.

Our text this weeks seeks to explain the meaning of this. Paul quotes another early church hymn when writing to the Philippians. He is appealing that they love one another deeply and serve each other in humility. Both the reason and example for this is the incarnation of Jesus. In humility Jesus did not cling to the rights of His deity, but he emptied Himself and put on flesh. The text tells us that he became a servant, was born in the likeness of men, and he was seen or found in human form. That right there is amazing, that true God was born and took on human form. But it goes beyond this, as we know. This man humbled Himself further, being obedient to His Father, he went to the cross and died for us. Of course, He did not stay dead. The man Jesus (who is also God, so mind blown) walked out of the grave as a man who defeated death. And He is now the most exalted One in the universe.

But this is where it gets complex, and we need to search the Scriptures and gain clarity from church history and good theologians. We need to be careful about blending the divinity and humanity of Jesus. His nature is not like mixing blue and yellow together and getting green (a third thing). Jesus did not lay aside His divinity, nor did it change and mix in

with His humanity. He has two natures, that of God and man. On the other hand, we need to be careful about dividing the person of Jesus. He is not schizophrenic with multiple personalities, and He does not show up as God in some situations and man in others (like Clark Kent). Jesus is one person, the God-man, and will remain so for all eternity future. Finally, we need to be careful about seeing one of the natures as absorbed into the other. Jesus did not deny or lay aside His deity to become man. Nor is his humanity merely a costume. At the end we have one of the two amazing and deep mysteries in Christian theology (along with the Trinity). Theologians call the reality that Jesus is one man with two distinct natures they *hypostatic union*. “Hyposis” is a Greek word that means nature, therefore this refers to the union of two distinct natures in Jesus. This is a deep, but amazing truth. We should spend our lives looking deeply, and yet know we will never fully understand. Yet, the God who became man and died in our place is the only One who can save us. And He alone has the name exalted above every name!

### **Bible Reading for the Week**

#### **Daily Bible Readings**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Romans 4	Romans 5	Romans 6	Romans 7	Romans 8	Romans 9	Romans 10

Reading from this past week’s sermon: Philippians 2:5-11

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: John 14:8-31

### **Family Worship**

Song - *God So Loved*

<https://youtu.be/jasoo3UDSwY?si=IRTbfkTjbhWUAIGX>

#### **Gospel Project**

Unit: The Northern Kingdom

Story: Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh

Big Picture Question: Why do Christians continue to sin?

Answer: Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

Scripture: Jonah 1-4

#### **New City Catechism**

Question 42: How is the Word of God to be read and heard?

Answer: With diligence, preparation, and prayer; so that we may accept it with faith and practice it in our lives.

Verse: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

#### **Philippians 2:5-11**

- What does Pastor Mike mean when he speaks of making Jesus Batman or Superman? Which do you tend to do?
- How does our text speak of Jesus’ humanity? How do the New Testament narratives show us the fullness of Jesus being made man?
- What is the hypostatic union and why is this doctrine important for our faith?
- What did God accomplish for us through the humanity of Jesus?

#### **Prayer**

\*Give thanks and praise to Jesus for coming to us and becoming a man for us.

\*Pray for our Genesis Kids Trunk or Treat this weekend.