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Section: Doctrine of Christ (Christology)

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q61. What makes Christ’s life different from every other person?**

He was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit, and He obeyed God’s law perfectly: He never sinned.

* **Christ Was Conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit**

**Matthew 1:18-25** Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel”(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

**Luke 1:26-38** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be borne will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

The Holy Spirit did not conceive a new person; rather, He conceived a human nature (including human flesh) that was taken on by the pre-existing person of Jesus.

It is only through the virgin birth (not the joining of a man and woman) that the divine (God the Son) is united to the human in one person.

What we see at the incarnation is not a new person being conceived and therefore falling under the headship of Adam, but rather a human nature that was conceived and taken up by the pre-existing person of Jesus and therefore not under the headship of Adam the way that we are.

**Romans 5:12-14** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

Because of the virgin birth, Jesus is proven not to be under Adam’s federal headship and therefore not imputed with his guilty, fallen nature.

**John Owen**: “Scripture teaches us that through the overshadowing of the Spirit, that which was born was holy [Lk. 1:35], the Son of God. At the very moment of conception and assumption, the Holy Spirit sanctified the human nature of Jesus equipping him as Son of God to be the Savior of men. Consequently Jesus was not only separate from sinners, he was positively endowed with all appropriate grace, and was holy and harmless, as well as undefiled [Heb. 7:26].”

**Hebrews 7:22** This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

**Hebrews 7:26** For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

The virgin birth is a fulfillment of the promise in Genesis 3:15.

**Genesis 3:14-15** The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

God declares that an offspring of the woman would be the victor over the serpent and the serpent’s work. Jesus had to come from the woman, and Jesus had to be conceived by God in order not to be born under the representation of Adam as a new person.

Jesus’s human nature truly did get conceived in a miraculous way; however, it was miraculously done with a real human biological egg of Mary.

If God declares that something will happen, He also ensures that it comes to pass. God’s saying is His doing

**Isaiah 7:14 “**Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

**Matthew 1:21-23** She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

**James M. Boyce**:“The virgin birth is important because of its unique and miraculous nature, which therefore points to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. It is significant that the life of the Lord Jesus is bracketed by two great miracles. At the beginning is the virgin birth; He came into being without benefit of a human father, and so was the Son of God and son of man in a unique way. At the end is the resurrection: He conquers and transcends the greatest of all enemies, death.”

**Galatians 4:4-5** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Jesus’s life was different, yet so real. He was worthy to be made the sufficient sacrifice that brings us—the elect of God—who are sinful and unworthy into the family of God!

* **Christ obeyed God’s law perfectly**

Jesus was sinless: He obeyed God’s law perfectly; He never sinned.

**Philippians 2:8-11** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Our suffering Savior, in the flesh, obeyed unto the wrathful death you and I deserve!

**Hebrews 4:14-16** Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Luke 4:1-13** And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’” And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ And ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

**John 8:29** The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

**John 15:10** “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”

**Acts 3:11-16** While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s. And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

In the flesh, in a truly and fully human nature, Jesus learned obedience.”

**Hebrews 5:8-10** Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

**Hebrews 2:14-18** Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

* Jesus came to obey the Universal Moral Law perfectly: This is the unchanging, eternal moral law that all people in all times are required to obey. This moral law, as we learned, was summarized and expressed by God in the Ten Commandments. This is a crucial part of Christ’s work.
* In addition to the Universal Moral Law, Jesus had to obey any other Positive Law that was applicable during the time He was living bodily here on earth. This means that Jesus had to obey the Positive Laws of the Old Covenant.
* In addition to the Positive Law of the time, Jesus had other positive law—other commands—uniquely given to Him. These Positive Laws were the additional things required so that salvation can be granted to the chosen ones. They are things unique to Him. These things include Him having to die on a cross as a sacrifice for the sins of the elect. Jesus had to do that. It included Him having to become man in the first place: God the Son taking on flesh.

Jesus never had a sinful feeling or thought!

**John 2:13-17** The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

Jesus experienced all human emotions in His human nature and yet in thought, speech, and action, Jesus never sinned.