

ON THE INDWELLING OF DEITY WITHIN HUMANITY

Mt.1:18-23

Ed Dye

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Specifically we have reference to the indwelling of deity within the man Jesus of Nazareth – God incarnate. “Incarnation” Theol. “The union of Divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ.” – Web. Dict.
2. The subject before us is perhaps one of the grandest concept to confront the human mind.
 - a. It is admittedly a very deep and intellectually demanding subject.
 - b. It is a theme that causes the mind to stand back in awe at each stage of new understanding, and brings an awesome soberness at the realization that what the inspired literature before us clearly affirms is that -- in the person of Jesus of Nazareth – God was here on the earth living among men!
3. Think concerning the identity of Jesus of Nazareth and the miracle of the incarnation.
 - a. How did God become man?...the answer lays somewhere in the fact that deity (one of the three personalities of the Godhead) at a point in time in the history of the world entered into our space-time realm of existence and indwelt humanity.
 - b. This one in whom and through whom God dwelt among men was himself a man, historically known as Jesus of Nazareth; but the wonder of this man lay in the fact that he was more than a man – he was God – by virtue of the fact that within his humanity dwelt deity.
4. One of the major christological titles in the discussion of the deity of Christ is the Greek word “*logos*.”
 - a. It is found as a christological title in Jno.1:1,14; and Rev.19:11-13, where Christ is pictured as a conquering war general: “And his name is called The Word of God.”
5. He was the *logos*, the Word (*ho Logos*), in the fullest sense of the word. He fulfilled the meaning of the term in both the ancient Grecian and Hebrew senses.

6. There is also a dual application of the expression “word of God” in the Scripture.
 - a. It may apply to (1) Scripture in its most ancient sense; and (2) it may be applied to Jesus.
 - b. In this, perhaps, an analogy may be drawn which beautifully exemplifies the sense in which Jesus may be called “the Word.”
 - c. One is the word of God inscribed, where the other is the Word of God personified.
 - d. The Scriptures are the thoughts or ideas of God, as revealed by God, clothed in ink and parchment, set forth in the form of a book or ancient scrolls.
 - e. Jesus was, in a similar sense, the thought or idea of God, as revealed by God, clothed in human flesh, set forth in the form of a man called Jesus of Nazareth.
 - f. Jesus was the word of God in the form of a man rather than in the form of a book; he was the very idea or concept of God clothed in humanity.
7. As the revelation of Scripture to man was given miraculously and through human personality, so also was the revelation of the Messiah given miraculously and through human personality.
 - a. The Hebrews writer wrote, “...a body didst thou prepare for me.”
 - b. A body (including the essential elements of human life: mind, soul, and spirit) was prepared through a miraculous conception, the Word of God (*ho Logos*) united with and filled that body, and became a man; the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.
 - c. He was in the beginning with God, he was God in the name of “*ho Logos*,” and was made flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us Jesus of Nazareth.
 - d. He was both God and man; more explicitly, he was “God-man” – Immanuel – “God with us!”

II. DISCUSSION

A. SOME TRUTHS ABOUT HIS PRE-EXISTENCE.

1. He existed in the beginning with God and was God.

- a. In Jno.1:1,2 we read: “In the beginning was (*hen* – imperfect indicative of *eimi*, the imperfect tense conveys the idea of continuous action in past time) and the Word (*ho Logos*) was with (*pros* – in motion, process, or activity with) God (*Theos*), and the Word (*ho Logos*) was (imperfect indicative of *eimi* the verb “to be”) God (*Theos*). The same was (imperfect indicative of *eimi*) in the beginning with (*pros* – in motion, process, or activity with) God (*Theos*).
- (1) Here John clearly affirms the deity and the pre-existence of Jesus in the name of “the Word” (*ho Logos*).
 - (2) He was in the beginning with God (his pre-existence affirmed) and was God (his deity affirmed).
 - (3) Psa.33:6-9 affirms that God spoke the worlds into existence and “the Word” was the means by which the decree went forth, as is exemplified in Gen.1:3,9,14,20,24,26.
- b. In Jno.8:23 Jesus said to his Jewish antagonist, “Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world, I am not of this world.”
- c. IN Jno.8:51 he referred to himself as the “...living bread which came down out of heavens.”
- d. In Jno.8:58 he clearly affirms his pre-existence with the Father: “Before Abraham was (*genesthai* – was begotten) I am (*ego eimi* – a combination of the 1st person personal pronoun and the present indicative 1st person singular of the verb ‘to be’).”
- (1) He used the same pronoun-verb construction as used by God in the Exo.3:14, “*ego eimi*.”
 - (2) It is clear that Jesus is here in Jno.8:58 affirming his pre-existence with the Father.
- e. Further, in his prayer recorded in Jno.17:5, he prayed “Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”
- f. There is no question but that the inspired apostle understood and taught Jesus to be deity, and one who pre-existed with God before the world was.

2. He existed in the form of God and was equal (the same) with God.
 - a. What is so beautifully written by John is further confirmed in Paul's writings. In Phil.2:5,6 he writes: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."
 - (1) Here it is clearly affirmed that Jesus pre-existed with God, in the form of God, and was "equal" (the same) with God."
3. He was the image of the invisible God who was before all things: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - a. The term *prototokos* when used actively it is to be understood as the first to bring forth, the first cause.
 - b. Here the immediate context evidently demands the active usage; i.e., the first cause of all creation; especially is this so in the light of Vv.16,17.
4. He is the brightness (effulgence) of the glory of God, and the express (very) image of his person (his substance), Heb.1:1-3.
 - a. In Heb.1:1-3 the writer declares Jesus to be the brightness (the effulgence, radiance) of the glory of God, which literally means a breaking forth of life, a radiant reflection.
 - b. Not only is Jesus the effulgence of the glory of God, he is the image of his person (his substance), an exact representation of his nature.
 - c. Jesus is here in V.3 clearly described as an exact representation of the substantial nature, essence, actual being, or reality of God.
 - d. Again he is affirmed as deity and in the previous verse, V.2, as the one through whom the worlds were made; hence, he is pre-existent.
 - e. There can be no doubt to the fact that the voice of Scripture, in clear-cut explicit language, affirms the deity

and pre-existence of Jesus in the name and activity of “the Word” (*ho Logos*).

B. NOW TO FURTHER THOUGHT ON THE INCARNATION.

1. The term “incarnation” is a Latinism (*incarnates*, past participle of *incarnare*) from *in* –in; and *carnis* – flesh, resulting in the meaning, “imbodied in human flesh.”
 - a. “In carnation.” Theol.: “The union of Divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ.” – Web. Dict.
 - b. As has been established, Jesus pre-existed in the name of “*ho Logos*,” he was with God and was God.
 - c. In the fulness of time, “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”
 - d. “...the Word became flesh and dwelt among men, Jno.1:17. This “coming” of God to dwell among men was foretold in the messianic prophecies of the O.T. Scriptures:
 - (1) In Isa.7:14 a miraculous conception of a Son within a virgin maiden was foretold; at his birth he was to be called “Immanuel” – God with us.
 - (2) In Isa.9:6 another prophecy was written, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
 - e. That the Messiah would be God himself was never fully understood by those to whom these inspired words were given; perhaps because the old Hebrew Scriptures depicted him as human – a man.
 - (1) He was to be of the seed of woman, Gen.3:15.
 - (2) A descendant of Abraham, Gen.22:18; 26:6.
 - (3) A prophet like unto Moses, Deut.18:15-19.
 - (4) And he, by virtue of human birth, would be an heir to the throne of David, 2Sam.7:12,13.
 - f. These Scriptures the ancients readily understood.
 - (1) But that he would be the Son of God (Psa.2:2,7; 8:4,5 in addition to Isaiah) they understood not.

- g. Herein lies the paradox of the doctrine of the incarnation; and this grand fact the N.T. explicitly affirms and beautifully documents.
2. The pre-existent Logos who was with God and was God, became flesh and dwelt among us, Jno.1:1,2,14.
- a. Westcott says of V.14: The general scope of the whole verse may be briefly summed up under four heads:
 - (1) The nature of the Incarnation. *The Word became flesh.*
 - (2) The historical life of the Incarnate Word. *He tabernacled among us.*
 - (3) The personal apostolic witness to the character of that human-divine life. *We beheld His glory.*
 - (4) The character of the Incarnate Word as the Revealer of God. *Full of grace and truth.*
 - b. Westcott continues: “It may be added that the fact of the miraculous conception, though not stated, is necessarily implied by the Evangelist. The coming of the Word into flesh is presented as a Creative act in the same way as the coming of all things into being was. (B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John*, p.10)
 - c. The Word did not become “a body” although a body was prepared for him in the miraculous conception, Heb.10:5; rather, he “became flesh,” he did not simply clothe himself in human flesh.
 - (1) The term *sarx* (flesh) implies “humanity.” Westcott says of the word *sarx*: “... ‘flesh’ expresses here human nature as a whole regarded under the aspect of its present corporeal embodiment, including of necessity the ‘soul’ (12:27), and the ‘spirit’ (11:33; 12:21; 19:30), as belonging to the totality of man (comp. Heb.2:14). – (Ibid. p.11.)
 - d. 1Th.5:23 depicts man as a trichotomous being consisting of body (*soma*), soul (*psuche*), and spirit (*pneuma*).
 - (1) Jesus possessed all three aspects of man’s trichotomous make-up.
 - (2) (Cf. Rom.8:3; 1Tim.3:16; Heb.2:14;5:7 with reference to his flesh.
 - (3) Ac.2:25-27 for his soul; and

(4) Mt.27:50 for his spirit.

III. CONCLUSION

1. The truth that must be seen here is that Jesus was really human, he was as much man as he was God and as much God as he was man.
2. He was not simply “a god” nor “a man;” rather, he was “God” and “man,” i.e., “God-man.”
3. Never has a hyphen separated so great a unity or united so great a separation.
4. The fact that he was really human (man) is further evidenced by the facts that:
 - a. He was called “man”: Mt.8:27; Jno.7:46; 8:40; 10:33; 19:5; Ac.2:22; 10:38; 17:31; Rom.5:15; 1Cor.15:21,45,47; Phil.2:8; 1Tim.2:5.
 - b. He possessed the nature of man; i.e., body, soul, and spirit: *Body*: Mt.26:12,26; Lk.24:39; *flesh and soul*; Ac.2:25-27; *soul*: Mt.26:38; Jno.12:27; *spirit*: Mt.27:50 (Lk.23:45; Jno.19:30); Jno.11:33; 13:21.
 - c. He appeared as a man: he had a human body (Lk.2:16; Heb.10:5); a human genealogy (Mt.1:1-17; Lk.3:23-38); he grew and waxed strong, and was filled with wisdom (Lk.2:40); he was thought to be Joseph’s son (Lk.4:22); was called a man by the Jews and Pilate (Jno.18:29; 19:5); was a Jew (Jno.18:33-35); he bled and died as a man (Jno.19:17,18,32-34); appeared as man even after his resurrection (Jno.20:14-17; 21:4,5); and was called a man even after his resurrection (Ac.2:22; 17:30,31; 1Tim.2:5).
 - d. He behaved as a man: Mt.4:2; 21:28 (hungered); 8:24 (slept); 9:36 (was moved with compassion); Mk.3:5 (felt anger and grief); 10:21 (loved); Jno.4:6 9 (became weary); 11:33 (groaned and was troubled); 11:35 (wept); 19:28 (thirsted); 19:17,18,23,28-37 (suffered, bled and died).
5. Jesus of Nazareth was a man in the fullest sense of the word.
6. He was man in fullest sense of the word, but let it never be forgotten that he was God; God with us in person, or better, in “a person” whose name of Jesus of Nazareth.
7. Existing in the form of God and being equal to or the same as God, he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, he was found in fashion as a man, Phil.2:6-8.

- a. The Greek word for “emptied” in this text is *keno* which is lexically defined as, “to empty...to deprive of power, give up or lay aside what one possesses.
 - b. He emptied himself of his powers and prerogatives of Deity -- those of his pre-existent state in his equality with God – but not of his Deity; he was still God – God and man – God-man.
8. As we have seen in the N.T. portrayal of Jesus of Nazareth, he was man (human) in the fullest sense of the word, but so also was he God (deity) in the fullest sense of the word; yet he was one – he was “God with us.”
 - a. This fact must be fully grasped.
 - b. God has entered into human history and walked among us.
 - c. God has been here, and because of this we can never be the same again.
9. How can we fail to see, in the light of all this, that the N.T. Scriptures teach that to affirm The Personal Indwelling of The Holy Spirit, who is God or Deity, is to affirm The Indwelling of Deity in human beings? For the Holy Spirit is deity, the same as the Father and the Son. He is one of the Godhead three.

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