

The Incarnation (and its cultural implications)

- 1Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;
- 1Timothy 2:6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time

The Incarnation is a Scriptural fact

- And it is a very complicated Scriptural fact
- God fully entered humanity, with the exception of sin. Luke 2.52
- This is called the hypostatic union. Hebrews 1.3, 11.1
- Jesus was conceived, born, grew, learned, worked, ate, slept, was tempted, suffered, and died
- He knew joy, sorrow, rejection, love, sympathy, anger

Throughout history, there have been many
wrong views of the Incarnation

- Arianism: The Father created the Son
- Adoptionism: the Father adopted the Son
- Modalism: Father, Son, and Spirit are simply titles, not distinct Persons
- Ebionites: Jesus is Messiah, but not divine
- Apollinarism: Jesus had divine mind and human body

The orthodox position

- Embodied in the Nicene Creed (A.D. 325) We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth, of things visible and invisible.
- And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the begotten of God the Father, the Only-begotten, that is of the essence of the Father.
- God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten and not made; of the very same nature of the Father, by Whom all things came into being, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.
- Who for our humanity and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate, was made human, was born perfectly of the holy virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit.
- By whom He took body, soul, and mind, and everything that is in man, truly and not in semblance

- As a Man, He is the only savior for all mankind. I Timothy 2.1-6
- But He was a specific Man, who came into a specific time, and into a specific group of people, who saw the world in a particular way
- God had spent 2000 years preparing a Jewish people for their Messiah
- And their Messiah was Himself Jewish
- Not just Jewish in “religion,” but in culture: dress, diet, amenities, manners, etc.

It became the task of the Church to take the Good News of Jesus the Messiah to the entire world

- It was not the task of the Church to turn every Gentile into a cultural Jew
- It was the task of the Church to preach the same Christ to Jew and Gentile—which brought two responses:
- I Corinthians 1.23

- The message of the cross was a scandal to Jews: how could the death of a criminal bring about someone else's righteousness?
- The message of the cross was moronic to the Greeks: no one comes back from the dead! (Acts 17.18; 32)
- Enter I Corinthians 1.24-25: Paul did not view a cultural accommodation or alteration necessary
- Yet he did work within the worldview of others. I Corinthians 9.19-23 (this is about his interaction with individuals, not Churches)

- Paul's goal always was to bring all men to Christ, as he said in I Timothy 2.1-6
- At WHBC, our primary concern is not the way others in America, worship Jesus Christ
- Our concern is how, for the sake of the Gospel, we live I Cor. 9.19-27