

4 More Common Misconceptions About Jesus Becoming Human

She [Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son [Jesus]. (Luke 2:7)

Today, we conclude answering some of the most common questions regarding God entering history as the man Jesus Christ.

4. Did Jesus cease to be God when he became a man?

No, he did not. Jesus proclaims his deity throughout the gospels, and Jesus' opponents admitted that they wanted to put him to death "because you, a mere man, claim to be God" (John 10:33, NIV). Jesus not only said he was God, but he also did things only God can do, like forgive sin (Mark 2:5). Unless he was God, Jesus had no business forgiving other people's sins. Jesus didn't lose his divinity, he added to it humanity. Jesus Christ is not God-minus; he's God-plus.

5. Is Jesus God or man?

Yes. He's the God-man. He's both.

Theological liberals often emphasize Jesus' humanity and describe him as an exemplary leader who helped the poor, fought for justice, and cared for the widow and orphan. They'll put him in a category similar to Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Mother Teresa.

Theological conservatives, on the other hand, often emphasize Jesus' divinity. His suffering and temptation weren't that big of a deal because Jesus was God and therefore impervious. Like Clark Kent, Jesus looked like a regular guy on the outside, but underneath the Galilean peasant garb he was a man of steel.

The truth is, Jesus was fully man and fully God. He lived life perfectly as a man, to serve as our example and a flawless substitute sacrifice in our place. He didn't "cheat" by using his divinity "but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7). At the same time, Jesus never stopped being God. Jesus was one person with two natures: fully God, fully man. And he lived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

6. Did God have intimate relations with Mary?

Mormons believe that God the Father is a flesh-and-blood physical being who had actual intimate relations with Mary and impregnated her as a result. The Bible doesn't teach that at all. The angel Gabriel described the conception to Mary as a miracle of the Holy Spirit. Mary says repeatedly that she's a virgin. Joseph, a godly, honorable man, has been waiting to consummate his marriage with his wife, and it would be a horrendous thing to think that God himself violated Mary.

7. Is the incarnation of Jesus a secondary issue?

Some churches and leaders throughout history, including the present day, have argued that the incarnation is not crucial; we can agree to disagree and it doesn't really matter if Mary was a virgin. There are many reasons, however, to consider the incarnation a primary, non-negotiable element of faithful Christian doctrine. If Mary was not actually a virgin, the implications would be numerous and vast. For example:

- If Mary was not a virgin, then the Bible is not true. Gabriel said that Mary was a virgin. Mary said that she was a virgin. If we don't trust God's word on this point, there is no reason to trust his word elsewhere.
- If Mary was not a virgin, then Scripture remains unfulfilled and our sins are not forgiven.
- If Mary was not a virgin, then Jesus' mother was an ungodly and deceptive woman. If Mary concocted a story

to hide the fact that she was cheating on Joseph or messing around with Joseph, then the entire story surrounding Jesus' birth is greatly altered.

- If Mary was not a virgin, it would mean that Jesus was just a normal guy.
- If Jesus was raised by a woman who made up preposterous religious lies to cover up her own bad behavior, why should we believe the extraordinary claims of her or her son?

Jesus is fully God and fully man. We cannot expect to fully understand this mystery here on earth, but thanks to the God-man we will join him in heaven someday, see him face to face, and know fully as Paul tells the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Which do you tend to appreciate more: Jesus' humanity (his works and example), or Jesus' divinity (his power and perfection)? How would a more complete understanding of the incarnation change the way you serve, follow, and relate to God? {eo}

Mark Driscoll is a Jesus-following, mission-leading, church-serving, people-loving, Bible-preaching pastor and the author of many books, including *Spirit-Filled Jesus*, which you can order [here](#). He currently pastors The Trinity Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, with his family. For all of pastor Mark Driscoll's Bible teaching, please visit or download the app. You can download a free devotional e-book from pastor Mark [here](#).