

Eternity Church
Sunday morning, December 19, 2021

***“When God Became Man”* By Garrett Milovich**

Summary

- Genesis 1:1-4, 26-28
- John 1:1-5, 14
- Hebrews 2:14-17
- Galatians 4:3-7
- John 10:31-36
- Psalm 82:1-8
- Matthew 9:1-8

Flip to Genesis 1

Intro

- Thank you, Pastor Jarrod and Lucinda for allowing me to teach from your pulpit...
- The greatest tragedy would be for you to come to church on a Sunday morning, hear the gospel preached, and then wake up tomorrow morning entirely unchanged
 - The Word of God is meant to bring you life
 - It's meant to make you uncomfortable sometimes
 - It's meant to transform you
 - So let's not just hear the Word taught this morning. Let's be changed by the Word this morning
 - Let's not be hearers only. Let's be doers of the Word

If you're the sort of person who takes notes, today's message is called "When God Became Man"

Genesis 1:1-4

- "In the beginning, God..."
 - God existed before "the beginning"
 - God doesn't fit into our universe
 - ***“God does not belong to the class of existing things. Not that He has no existence, but that He is above all existing things, nay, even above existence itself.” (St. John of Damascus)***
 - From the very first words of the Bible, we are introduced to a God who is greater than anything that we can imagine or think of
- So to start off, we have a God who existed before the beginning of everything
 - We have chaos and darkness
 - And then we have the Words of God, speaking light into existence

You know what happens next...

- God creates land and trees and stars and elephants

Genesis 1:26-28

- “likeness and image” These words only appear together in scripture in one other place
 - Genesis 5:3 “And Adam... begot a son in his own **likeness**, after his **image**, and named him Seth.”
 - God created mankind to be just like Him; He created men to be His sons and daughters
 - That’s why Luke 3 calls Adam “the Son of God”
- God created mankind to be just like Him
 - To look like Him, to talk like Him
 - To have the same power and authority that He has

But we all know what happened next...

- Adam and Eve sinned, they corrupted their nature
- Paul tells us we became dead in our trespasses and sins
 - Instead of being sons of God, we became sons of disobedience, children of wrath

So what did God do in response?

John 1:1-5

- “In the beginning...”
 - John frames his gospel as a repeat of Genesis 1, a redemption of creation
 - We might say, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... and God created the heavens and the earth”
 - Which is exactly what John tells us
- Everything about God that we got from Genesis 1 (His greatness, His grandeur, His infiniteness) we are now told is also true of Jesus
 - Paul told the Colossians, “*He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (or “are held together”)*” (Colossians 1:17)
 - Hebrews 1 says that Jesus “*upholds all things by the word of His power.*” (Heb. 1:3)
 - Jesus is the same infinite God that was before time began, that created the heavens and the earth
- And John hits all the same notes as Genesis 1
 - “In the **beginning**”
 - “the **light** shines in the darkness”
 - God bringing **life** into the world
 - And the next thing that Genesis 1 told us was about God creating mankind

John 1:14

- “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*”
 - This is what we celebrate at Christmas God Himself, the Infinite Creator of the world, becoming just like us

- And yes, He really did become just like us

Sometimes we get this idea that Jesus wasn't a real human

- We think that Jesus was pretending to be human, just sort of cosplaying to beat the devil on a technicality
- But the fact that Jesus became 100% human was actually the most important Christian doctrine for the first thousand years of the Church

Hebrews 2:14-17

- "Inasmuch" just as much as you are a human, Jesus Himself shared in the same
 - For what end? to release those in bondage
- "in all things"
- "He had to be made"
 - If Jesus weren't a bona fide human, then His life wouldn't have worked for us
 - He HAD to become human, which means that He was subject to everything we were
 - In fact, Hebrews 4 tells us that *He was tempted in all things just as we are, and yet without sin* (Heb. 4:15)

God created mankind to be just like Him

- But man screwed it up
- So God came to the earth and became a man
- In order to restore us to what God always intended for us to be
- And what is that?

Galatians 4:3-7

- "We were in bondage" just like it said in Hebrews
- Once again we are received as sons
- And if you're a son, you're an heir of God

Jesus became human so that we might become divine

- ***"He was made human so that He might make us gods" (Athanasius)***
- ***"Jesus became what we are, that he might bring us to be what He Himself is" (Irenaeus)***
- ***"The Word of God became a man so that you might learn from a man how to become a god" (Clement)***
- ***"If then we have been made sons of God, we have also been made gods." (Augustine)***

Up until the Reformation, this is what the Church consistently taught

- Before you throw me out for blasphemy, let's look at what Jesus Himself said

John 10:31-36

- V. 33 In the minds of the religious leaders, to be a "son of God" was to make yourself God
- V. 34 Notice that Jesus doesn't correct them or tell them they are wrong in their understanding of what it means to be a child of God
- Jesus' response is, "Yes, that's what the Bible says"

Psalm 82:1-8

- V. 1 “the gods” is a reference to God’s people
- And what were “the gods” supposed to be doing?
 - Defending the poor and helping the afflicted
- V. 8 By verse 8, it’s apparent that God’s people are NOT going to do what they are supposed to, so God Himself—as Jesus—comes to the earth to show us how it’s done

When we say, “God became human so that we might become divine”...

- Most of us probably start thinking of miracles
 - And it’s absolutely true that we should be healing the sick and raising the dead and walking in miracles
- But God doesn’t make us like Him just so that we can serve ourselves
- How often does Jesus perform a miracle for Himself?
- How often do the disciples perform miracles for themselves?
- Jesus came to the earth not to be served, but to serve
 - And when we become partakers of His divine nature, we become children of God and servants of man
- And gearing up for this Christmas season, let’s prepare to serve those around us

We’ll close in Matthew 9

Matthew 9:1-8

- V. 2 “When Jesus saw their faith” when people look at you, what do they see?
 - Do they see your faith?
 - When people can see your faith, God can work miracles around you
- V. 8 Why did they marvel?
 - Because God had given such power to MEN

God has given you such power

- You are a child of God and a joint heir with Christ
- You are a partaker in His divine nature
- The power of God flows through your veins
- **What are you going to do with it?**

Let’s pray.

Extra notes

"All things that exist came into being only from the truth of His existence... aside from Him, there is no true existence like His." (Maimonides)

"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:16-17)

"[He] upholds all things by the word of His power." (Hebrews 1:3)

"For in Him (Jesus) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9)

"For in Him (Jesus) dwells all the *fullness* (pleroma) of the Godhead bodily, and you are *complete* (pleroo) in Him, who is the head of all principality and power." (Colossians 2:9-10)

The word "complete"—describing our status in Jesus—is derived from the word "fullness"—which describes Jesus' status within the Trinity.