

# The Bigger Picture of 'Why The Incarnation?'

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Thank you. Well, this morning I thought it would be worthwhile having a wee look at the incarnation and perhaps looking at some more unfamiliar implications or reasons for the incarnation.
- But firstly, let me read from John chapter 1 just to introduce us, but we'll be a bit about the Bible, so don't worry about that.
- John chapter 1, beginning from the start, John writes this. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- The true light which gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him. Yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him.
- [ 1 : 3 7 ]     But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.
- And we have seen Him. We have seen His glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God.
- The only God who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known. Amen. Well, the question that I wanted to ponder this morning was, why did the Word become flesh?
- Why the incarnation? And so, perhaps your mind goes to salvation. Why did the Word become flesh?
- Well, to forgive our sins. To die, perhaps. Only by becoming flesh could He die. Perhaps even to lift humanity out of death.
- [ 2 : 5 1 ]     That the Word joined to Himself humanity to lift humanity out of death. But what I want to explore is perhaps some other reasons and implications that we don't hear as often.
- What does salvation look like? If Word became flesh for salvation, what does salvation actually look like? And so, three things that I want to explore this morning.
- One, three reasons why the Word became flesh, or three implications why the Word became flesh. Firstly, that God's creation purposes would be fulfilled.
- Secondly, that God would be revealed like never before. And thirdly, that God the Son would be glorified forever.
- And so, we're just going to briefly look at each one of those things. And so, firstly, God's creation purposes would be fulfilled. God is the Creator.
- [ 3 : 5 6 ]     And as Creator, creation was inevitable. If God is by nature the Creator, how could there not be a creation? But this creation of God seems to have gone wrong.
- If you've been living for any length of time, you feel this. Do you feel like God's creation is as it, as He intended it to be? Have you ever read the first page of the Bible that God made this and made that, and it was good, and it was good?

And have you ever felt like there are some things on earth that don't feel very good? Thank you. This creation of God seems to have gone wrong.

But has it? Has God lost control? is creation. This creation of this Creator God is His creation at the mercy of creatures.

You see, we did that little thing about power, and you think of nature like lightning bolts and tsunamis and tornadoes. We're at the mercy of these things.

[ 5 : 05 ] They're not at the mercy of us. Don't believe the climate change agenda. We are much more at the mercy of nature than nature is at the mercy of us.

But even beyond that, regardless of what you think, is God's creation at the mercy of creatures?

And so, this is something that a guy called Athanasius pointed out. Two important points in relation to creation.

Number one, God's command must come to pass. Whatever God commands, it must come to pass. And number two, God's creation must reach its goal.

So, for instance, Athanasius says this. When God commanded in the garden that the day of, the man should eat of the fruit that he's not supposed to, and that day he should die, Athanasius says that if that didn't happen, it would be a monstrous thing.

[ 6 : 06 ] It would make God to be a liar. And God cannot be made out to be a liar. What he says must happen. So, Athanasius says death must happen because God commanded it and God's word must come to pass.

But Athanasius presses on and he says, it would equally be a monstrous thing that God's good creation would go to ruin because of some demon, because of some creature.

What does that say about God? So, if you think God is a creator, is his creation failed? Is God a failed creator? Can God not create something and have it reach its goal?

Can God not have his purposes reach their goal? And so, Athanasius says it's a monstrous thing to think that God's good creation should go to ruin because of some creatures.

Is God not the creator? Of course God is the creator. And so, by joining himself to humanity, God ensures that his creation reaches its goal.

[ 7 : 11 ] See, what God intended in creation hasn't gone awry. What God intended in creation isn't failing. God is fulfilling everything that he said he would do.

And so, in John chapter 1, verse 3, it says that the Word who was with God, who was in the beginning and who was God, it says that all things were created through the Word and that Word became flesh.

And then in Revelation 21, verse 5, it says the one sitting on the throne, that is the Word who became flesh, the one sitting on the throne says this, Behold, I am making all things new.

And so, here's a takeaway of why the Word became flesh. Because what started through Christ is going to be fulfilled through Christ.

Everything that started through Christ is going to be fulfilled through Christ. All this stuff that seems to be going wrong, God is going to bring it to full fruition in Christ.

[ 8 : 20 ] Nothing that God intended is not going to come to pass. Who can thwart the plan of God? Secondly, Revelation. In the Bible, it says that God is invisible, that He dwells in unapproachable light, that He is Himself so different from anything in creation, that He is Himself uncreated, eternal, infinite, immutable.

immortal, invisible, God only wise. John writes this, doesn't he, in John 1, 18. He says, No one has ever seen God.

Paul writes that in 1 Timothy 6. No one has ever seen God or will ever see Him because He is uncreated and we can't, as creatures, cross that boundary. However, John, the apostle, friend of Jesus, recognizing the impossibility of any creature being able to see with created eyes or detect with created senses that which is not created.

How impossible? How impossible with such limited faculties is it to perceive the infinite and eternal Creator? Tell me if you can do it because I cannot.

How can we possibly behold the one who hung the stars and galaxies in place? We cannot. As created beings, we can never cross the border into that which is uncreated.

[ 9 : 49 ] More so, as created beings, we can only ever detect things through created ways, through our creaturely faculties and senses. We can only see the band of light that we can see.

We can only hear the frequency of hearing that we can hear. We can only sense the things that our creaturely beings can sense. And therefore, God has to reveal Himself in created ways.

Doesn't He? And so, David writes this. He says in Psalm 19, the heavens declare the glory of God. And Paul writes in Romans 1, what can be known about God is plain because God has shown it for His invisible attributes, namely His eternal powers and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made.

So, God has been revealing Himself through the things that have been made. Furthermore, through His Word, He has made Himself known, as Hebrews 1 says, long ago, many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers through His Word by the prophets.

Not only that, in dreams and visions and theophanies, the veil between our realm and the heavenly places was removed. However, even although some people were able to peer into the spiritual realm, remember that even heaven is a created place.

[ 11 : 11 ] Heaven is a created place. Heaven was made as the place where God's presence and glory are manifest. Heaven is God's throne and earth is His footstool. But heaven is not the realm of the uncreated.

Nor can even heaven contain the infinite creator. This is what Solomon said when he made the temple and dedicated it. In 1 Kings 8, 27, after building the temple, Solomon says, but will God dwell on the earth?

Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built. Solomon realized that even heaven couldn't contain God. Yet John the Apostle, he reflects on the fact that no one has ever seen God.

He concludes that Jesus came not only from heaven, but Jesus came from the realm of the uncreated where no man has ever seen or will ever see. But he came from there by the side, the Father's side.

The one who was with God and was God was at the Father's side. He has made him known. How else could we know God unless someone came from the uncreated place into the created world and made him known?

[ 12 : 27 ] And who could do that but God Himself? He has made God known. And this is what he says to Philip in chapter 14 of John's Gospel.

Philip says, just show us the Father and it will be enough. Show us God, Jesus. We're just longing to see God. And Jesus says, oh Philip, how long have I been with you and you do not know me?

If you have seen me, says Jesus, you have seen God. You have seen the Father. And so Jesus became flesh so that God would be revealed like never before.

Now imagine this. Back in the Garden of Eden if things hadn't have gone the way they'd have gone. Now I'm not saying God is the author of sin. He's not the author of sin. But God knew what was going to happen.

And God had a plan to reveal Himself through Christ in a way that He would never be revealed otherwise. otherwise. And so for revelation, so for creation, for revelation, and for glorification.

[ 13 : 33 ] Now already we should see that there's cause to praise and glorify Christ. Yet even without our lips praising Him, He will be glorified. It's been argued that the universe is far too big for it to be made for us.

Have you ever heard that? This was a, Carl Sagan had this quote that if the universe was created for earth and humanity, then it's far too big and it's a waste of space.

We are insignificant in the universe. Now the universe is really huge. If you were around last week, we explored some of that. The universe is incredibly huge, but it wasn't made for us.

It wasn't made for us. And you'll know this if you've ever read Colossians. Colossians 16, Colossians 1, 16 and 17, Paul has this little poem.

And this is what he says. Paul writes this, For by Him, that is Jesus, by Him, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through Him.

[ 14 : 46 ] But then he has this little last bit that we often forget. All things were created through Him and for Him.

For Him. All of this is for Him, not for us. That little corner of the poem in Colossians is often left out of our understanding of the incarnation, our understanding of who Jesus is.

All things were created by Him, through Him, and for Him ultimately, not for us, for Him. So think of it this way. Though He came into the world for you, more properly, you and I came into the world for Him.

And this is what the Puritan Thomas Goodwin argued. He said that the benefits procured by Christ, so the things that we benefit from Christ, such as salvation, are all far inferior to the gift of His person unto us, and much more the glory of His person.

And so what He's saying is the benefits are far inferior to His person. His person is of infinite more worth than all of they could be.

[ 16 : 01 ] And so Goodwin says this, Goodwin says, God's chief end was not to bring Christ into the world for us, but to bring us into the world for Christ.

Christ, and God contrived all things that do fall out, even redemption itself, for the setting forth of Christ's glory more than for our salvation.

God caused all things to be more for Christ's glory than for our salvation. And so ask yourself, you might ask, why? Why did the Father send His Son?

Why didn't the Father go instead? Have you ever thought about this? Wouldn't an earthly father take the place of the Son? Wouldn't the earthly father go and receive this cruel treatment before the Son?

Why would God send His Son? This is what some atheists call cosmic child abuse, because they think the Father sends the Son to the cross, and that's cruel.

[ 17 : 01 ] Surely a Father would go instead of the Son. But what if it has more to do with the fact that the Father wants the Son to be glorified? What if it has more to do with the fact that the people who are both made and redeemed are made and redeemed by the Son for His glory?

What if it has more to do with the fact that the only one who can reveal God is the image of the invisible God? And as such, He is glorified by all creation as the image of the invisible God.

Do you not see how all these things ensure that the Son is glorified? And that God is happy with that? And if you know anything about God in the Old Testament, He shares His glory with no one.

With no one. But His Son, who was in the beginning, who was with God, was God by the Father's side. And so Stephen Charnock, another Puritan, says, there is something in Christ more excellent and comely than the office of a Savior.

The greatness of His person is more excellent than the salvation procured by His death. Think about that. The greatness of His person. And so Mark Jones, the author, concludes that all that Christ has done and continues to do depends on and reflects the glory of His person.

[ 18 : 28 ] It's all for the glory of Christ. Not that we should not praise Him for our salvation, we should praise Him for our salvation, for His death on the cross.

But it's much more than that. We mustn't think that the glory of His person is somehow subservient to our salvation or even our existence. The glory of His person is greater than the benefits procured by Him.

And so likewise, we think about the love of God. His love towards the Son does not depend on His love towards us. It's the opposite way. His love towards us depends on the Father's love towards the Son.

And so we look at this grand story of redemption and we think, what a great demonstration and revelation of God's love towards us, which is true. It's so true.

But one thing we often forget is the great demonstration of God's love towards His Son. And so this is what Jesus says in John's Gospel chapter 17.

[ 19 : 33 ] The incarnation of God the Son is not only for our salvation, but so that the Son can be glorified forever. The Father wants to glorify the Son. He wants all creation to be a gift to the Son, to glorify the Son forever.

Part of our salvation is that we will behold His glory. as He said in John 17 verse 24. And I'll finish with this. Jesus says this in His prayer, Father, I want those that You have given Me.

Notice that we are a gift to Him from the Father. The Father loves the Son and wants to glorify the Son. And so Jesus says, Father, I want those that You have given Me to be with Me where I am so that they see My glory.

the glory that You have given Me, Father, because You loved Me before You created the world. The Father loved the Son before the foundation of the world and gave Him glory because He loved Him and He wants us to be with Him so that we see the glory of the Son.

And so indeed, our salvation, our salvation is bought by the cross. But the incarnation, what our salvation is, what is salvation? salvation. Salvation depends on creation fulfilling its purposes.

[ 20 : 52 ] And that happens through Christ. Salvation depends on God being revealed to us. For Jesus says, what is eternal life but that we would know God, the only true God and Jesus Christ who may be sent.

So salvation depends on creation being fulfilled in Christ. Salvation depends on revelation coming through Christ. And salvation depends on Christ being glorified forever.

what a glorious thing it was that the word became flesh. Much more for our salvation, yes, included, but for the glory of the Son. And so let us praise the Son, because one day we will behold His glory.

Amen. Amen.