

The Coherence of the Incarnation*

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INTRODUCTION

The New Testament affirms both the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. As a human being Jesus was born (Lk. 2.7, 11), experienced physical and mental limitations (Lk. 2.52; cf. Mt. 4.2; Jn. 4.6; Mk. 4.38; 13.32), and was tortured and executed (Mk. 15.15). Nevertheless, the New Testament authors affirm that Jesus was God (Jn. 1.1-3, 14, 18; 20.26-29; Rom. 9.5; Tit. 2.13; Heb. 1.8; II Pet. 1.1) and describe him as the fullness of deity in bodily form (Col. 1.15-20; 2.9; Phil. 2.5-8). The New Testament church called him *kyrios* (LORD), the Greek translation of the word for “Yahweh,” God’s name in the Old Testament, and applied to Jesus Old Testament passages concerning Yahweh (I Cor. 16.22; Rom. 10.8, 13).

But how can Jesus be both God and man, infinite and finite, Creator and creature? How can we unite in a single person both omniscience and ignorance, omnipotence and weakness, moral perfection and moral perfectibility? The attributes of deity seem to drive out the attributes of humanity, so that it seems logically inconsistent to affirm with the historic Christian Church that Jesus is truly God and truly man (*vere Deus/vere homo*).

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As a result of the Trinitarian Controversy culminating in the Councils of Nicea (325) and Constantinople (381), a new chapter in intellectual church history opened, the Christological controversies of the fourth through the seventh centuries. The central question addressed by the Church Fathers was how we should understand the affirmation that Jesus Christ is both human and divine.

Alexandrian vs. Antiochean Christology

Two broad schools of Christological thought emerged among the Church Fathers. Often labeled Alexandrian vs. Antiochean Christology, these competing schools are perhaps best seen as a struggle between “one-nature” (Monophysite) vs. “two-nature” (Dyophysite) Christology. The presupposition of both schools is that members of natural kinds of things do have natures, or essential properties which make the things what they are. Thus, there is such a thing as human nature, and this differs from the divine nature. According to Aristotle, the nature of man is that he is a rational animal, so that being truly human involves having both an intellectual soul and a physical body, and the Church Fathers seem to have accepted this view. At the same time they believed that God possesses certain essential attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience, eternity, moral perfection, and so forth. The question was how to understand the Incarnation of the divine Logos, the second person of the Trinity, in the man Jesus of Nazareth. The Fathers were unanimous in thinking that the Incarnation did not involve the Logos’s divesting himself of certain divine attributes in order to turn himself into a human being. Such a conception would be akin to pagan, mythological ideas, such as Zeus’s transforming himself into a bull or swan. The notion of the Incarnation was not that the Logos turned himself into a human being, thereby ceasing to be God, but that Jesus Christ was both God and man simultaneously. Since the divine nature was not abandoned by the Logos, the Incarnation could only be conceived as the acquisition by the Logos of the additional, essential properties of the human nature. The question was how this acquisition of a human nature by the Logos is to be understood.

Advocates of a one-nature Christology held that after the Incarnation the Logos possessed a single divine-human nature. Some understood the Incarnation to be the Logos’s clothing himself in flesh, assuming as his own

a human body. Christ's flesh was sometimes taken to be deified in virtue of its union with the Logos. By contrast, proponents of a two-nature Christology emphasized that in the Incarnation the Logos took on, not merely human flesh, but a complete human nature, and therefore both a rational soul and body. The Logos was joined at conception to the human being borne by Mary, Jesus' mother. The Incarnation thus involved the existence of a complete human being and a complete divine being.

One of the most creative Christological thinkers and a seminal influence throughout the Christological controversies was Apollinarius (d. 390), bishop of Laodicea during the mid-fourth century. Apollinarius argued that it is impossible that Christ should have both a complete divine nature and a complete human nature, for that would amount to a mere indwelling of God in a human being, which falls short of a true Incarnation (*Fragments*). If, in addition to the divine intellect of the Logos, there was in Christ a human intellect, then the Logos did not achieve a full Incarnation. The key to Apollinarius's ingenious solution to the problem of achieving a true Incarnation lay in his anthropology. Each human being consists of a body (*soma*), an animal soul (*psyche*), and a rational soul (*nous*). The *nous* was conceived to be the seat of the sinful instincts. In Jesus, the divine Logos took the place of the human *nous* and thus became embodied. As a result, in Christ God was constitutionally conjoined with man. Just as the soul and the body are essentially different but in man are combined in one human nature, so also in Christ there exists one nature composed of a part co-essential with God and another part co-essential with human flesh. The Logos came to experience the world through his flesh and to act through the flesh as his instrument. Having only a single intellect and will belonging properly to the Logos, Christ was without sinful desires and incapable of sin.

In advocating such an understanding of the Incarnation, Apollinarius stood in the train of the great Alexandrian theologians. Athanasius always spoke of the Logos's taking on flesh and never refers to the human soul of Jesus. Athanasius typically affirms: "in nature the Word Himself is impassible, and yet because of that flesh which He put on, these things are ascribed to Him, since they belong to the flesh, and the body itself belongs to the savior" (Athanasius *Orations against the Arians* 34). Apollinarianism achieved a genuine Incarnation which, given anthropological dualism, is no more inherently implausible than the soul's union with the body. It insured

the unity of Christ's person, and it explained how God through the assumption of a body could participate in suffering.

Nevertheless, Apollinarianism was attacked and condemned as heretical at the Synod of Rome in 377. Two deficiencies of Apollinarian Christology seemed especially serious. First, a body without a mind is a truncation of human nature. By merely clothing himself with flesh, the Logos did not truly become a man. For essential to human nature is a rational soul, which Christ lacked. He was like us only with respect to his flesh, which is a mere animal nature. Gregory of Nyssa thus charged that Apollinarius had reduced the Incarnation to God's becoming an animal! Apollinarianism is thus unacceptable, since it denies the true humanity of Christ. Second, if Christ lacked a human mind, then he did not redeem the human mind. This inference was based upon the fundamental principle which underlay the doctrine of the Incarnation that that which is not assumed is not saved (*quod non est assumptum non est sanatum*). Apart from the truth of this principle, there is no rationale for the Incarnation at all. Thus, Apollinarius undermined the Christian doctrine of salvation.

The Antiochean theologians who opposed Apollinarius insisted upon Christ's possession of two complete natures, human and divine. Such a doctrine implied that Christ possessed all the elements essential to a complete human nature, including a soul and a body. Theodore of Mopsuestia, the most prominent of these thinkers, conceived of the Incarnation as a special sort of indwelling by means of which the Logos attached himself to the man Jesus at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb (*On the Incarnation* 7, Fragments 2-3). Because He is omnipresent and provident, God is present according to His essence to all things in their existence and operation, but by His good pleasure He chooses to be more intimately related to some things than to others. In Christ God was pleased to dwell as in a Son. Theodore affirmed that there is but one person in Christ, but he also held that each nature considered in itself is complete and has its own *hypostasis*. Moreover, he thought of the union of the Logos with the man Jesus in terms of a functional unity of will and mutual love, so that the person they constitute seems to be a person in the sense of a functionally unified "face" (*prosopon*) which they present to the world. Thus, his affirmation that there is in Christ one person was viewed with suspicion by his detractors. But it was the name of Nestorius, Patriarch of

Constantinople (428), which came to be associated with the view that there are two persons in Christ. Nestorius affirmed that in Christ there are two complete natures. He objected to Mary's being called *theotokos* (the bearer, or mother, of God), since Mary bore only the man Jesus, not the divine Logos. What was formed in her womb, crucified, and buried was not God; but the one assumed in the womb is called God because of the divinity of the One who assumed him (*First Sermon against the Theotokos*).

The Alexandrian theologians believed that Nestorius was committed to the view that there are in Christ two persons or Sons, despite his protestations to the contrary. It is easy to see why they thought so. If each of Christ's two natures is complete, each having its full complement of rational faculties, then it is difficult to see why, indeed, one does not have two persons, two Sons. Alexandrians, now forced by the condemnation of Apollinarius to admit the existence of a human soul in Christ, could not explain the solution to the dilemma, but they were certain that the Bible does not teach two Sons. Cyril of Alexandria insisted, "when he was made flesh, we do not define the indwelling in him in precisely the same manner as that in which one speaks of an indwelling in the saints; but being united by nature and not changed into flesh, he effected such an indwelling as the soul of man might be said to have in its own body" (*Second Letter to Nestorius*). The problem of the analogy is apparent: It either supports Apollinarianism (the soul being equivalent to the Logos and the body to Jesus's body) or Nestorianism itself (the Son assumes a whole person, body and soul). Condemned at Ephesus in 431, the fundamental flaw in Nestorianism was that it posited no real union of God and man in Christ, but simply an ontological juxtaposition or, at best, an indwelling. But if the concept of personality is bound up with that of a complete human nature, then it seems very difficult, given the rejection of Apollinarianism, to affirm two natures in Christ while avoiding Nestorianism.

Council of Chalcedon

In 451 the Emperor Marcion convened the Council of Chalcedon at the request of Pope Leo the Great. Formulated in the light of the numerous controversies over the person of Christ, the Council's statement carefully charts a middle course between the competing schools preceding it:

We . . . confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial [*homoousios*] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial [*homoousios*] with us according to the manhood, like us in all things except sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God [*theotokos*], according to the manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means taken away because of the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person [*prosopon*] and one Subsistence [*hypostasis*], not divided or separated into two Persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

The settlement is a ringing endorsement of Dyophysite Christology. Christ is declared to exist in two natures, whose distinction remains real even in their union in Christ. Moreover, Apollinarianism is implicitly rejected in the statement that Christ is not only perfect in his deity and is truly God but is also perfect in his humanity and is truly man, having both a rational soul and body. At the same time, however, in agreement with Monophysite Christology, the settlement insists on there being only one person, one Son, in Christ. Thus, the excesses of Nestorianism are proscribed. “Person” and “*hypostasis*” are taken as synonyms, so that the Incarnation becomes a sort of mirror image of the Trinity: just as in the Trinity there are multiple persons in one nature, so in Christ there are multiple natures in one person. The famous series of four adjectives *asynchytos*, *atreptos*, *adiairetos*, *achoristos* (without confusion, without change, without division, without separation) serve as a reminder that the two natures of Christ must be kept distinct and that the unity of his person must not be compromised. The first two adjectives are aimed at the Alexandrian tendency to blend the two natures together as a result of the Incarnation; the last two are directed at the Antiochean failure to achieve a real union of the two natures so that they are “divided or separated into two Persons.” As result of Chalcedon, it has become an imperative of orthodox Christology that we must neither “confuse the natures nor divide the person” of Christ.

The Chalcedonian formula itself does not tell us how to do this. It does not seek to explain the Incarnation but sets up, as it were, channel markers for legitimate Christological speculation; any theory of Christ’s person must be one in which the distinctness of both natures is preserved and both meet in one Person, one Son, in Christ. It admirably fulfilled the purpose for

which it was drawn up, namely to exclude two possible but unacceptable explanations of the Incarnation and to provide a convenient summary of essential facts which must be borne in mind by all those who attempt to penetrate still further into the mystery.

Kenotic Christology

During the Protestant Reformation the old dispute between Alexandria and Antioch was replayed in the debates between Lutheran and Reformed theologians. But in the nineteenth century a radical, new school of Christology emerged: Kenotic Christology (from the Greek word *kenosis* used in Phil. 2.5 to characterize Christ's Incarnation as an "emptying"). We may define Kenoticism as that view according to which Christ in the Incarnation ceased to possess certain attributes of deity so that he might become truly human. Of course, this view raises several questions concerning the extent of the *kenosis*, the relationship between the Logos and the man Jesus, and the status of the divine attributes, and kenotic theologians answered these questions differently.

Kenoticism represents a distinctively non-Chalcedonian approach to Christology, since it holds that the Logos in becoming incarnate changed in his nature. This fact raises the question as to whether Kenoticism does not in fact amount to a denial of the deity of the incarnate Christ. Baillie demands,

Does Christianity, then, teach that God changed into a Man? . . . That at a certain point of time, God. . . was transformed into a human being for a period of about thirty years? It is hardly necessary to say that the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation means nothing like that. . . . it would be grotesque to suggest that the Incarnation has anything in common with the *metamorphoses* of ancient pagan mythology the deity and humanity of Christ are not merely successive stages . . . as if He had first been God, then Man, then after the days of His flesh were past, God again, with manhood left behind.¹

The Incarnation is the doctrine that Christ is both God and man simultaneously. But Baillie charges that *kenosis*, while affirming that the Son of God keeps his personal identity in becoming the subject of the human attributes which he assumes, nevertheless holds that he has divested himself of the distinctively divine attributes, so that in becoming human he ceased to be divine. If Jesus is in every sense human, then the Kenotic theologian is in the position of saying that God has turned Himself into a human being, which seems absurd.

¹ D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 82.

The question raised by kenotic Christology is the content of the divine nature, that is to say, which properties are essential to deity. Baillie holds that any change in God is a substantial change from deity. But it is exactly at this point that Kenoticists question the traditional doctrine, for they argue that many of God's most prominent attributes—such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence—are, in fact, merely contingent properties of God and therefore that He may yield up these non-essential properties and yet continue to be God. The decisive question, then, will be whether so profound a change as Kenoticists envision is a merely accidental change compatible with God's nature.

A PROPOSED CHRISTOLOGY

Having reviewed all too briefly some highpoints of the history of doctrine with respect to the Incarnation, I believe that from these precedents one may formulate a rational doctrine of the person of Christ. Before I present such a Christology, let me say that I am attempting to provide a *possible* model of the Incarnation. One cannot presume to dogmatize; but if one can draft a coherent model of the Incarnation, then objections to that doctrine will have been defeated. My proposed Christology has three postulates:

1. *Let us postulate with Chalcedon that in Christ there is one person who exemplifies two distinct and complete natures, one human and one divine.* In one sense the Alexandrian theologians were right in postulating a single nature in Christ, in the sense, that is, of an individual essence which serves to designate the unique individual who is Jesus Christ. But when the framers of Chalcedon affirmed two natures in Christ, they were, of course, not talking about individual essences, but kind essences or natures which serve to demarcate certain natural kinds of things. For example, according to Aristotle, every human being belongs to the natural kind designated by "rational animal." In affirming that the incarnate Christ had two natures, the Church Fathers were stating that Christ exemplified all the properties which go to constitute humanity and all the properties which go to make up deity. In that sense, he had two natures and so belonged to two natural kinds, Man and God. Only the divine nature belongs essentially to the Logos, and in the Incarnation he assumed contingently a human nature as well. Thus, Christ's individual essence, while including some of the properties which serve to

constitute humanity (for example, rationality), does not include all of them (for example, animality), for any property that he might lack cannot belong to his individual essence. The Logos possesses his human nature only contingently.

My first point entails a rejection of any form of Kenotic Christology which suggests that in the Incarnation the Logos surrendered various attributes belonging to the divine nature. For if Christ divested himself of any attribute essential to divinity, then he thereby ceased to be God, which is incompatible with the biblical data and therefore unacceptable as a Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. On such Kenotic views the Logos would be the same *person* after *kenosis* as before, but that person would no longer be God, since it is one's nature, not one's person, that determines one's deity. Hence, if the Logos's nature were changed, His deity would change, and He would no longer be divine. Moreover, typical members of natural kinds are plausibly taken to be essentially members of that kind. Thus, if an individual undergoes a substantial change (that is, a change of substance or essence), it ceases to exist as that individual and becomes something else. For example, a man who is cremated and ground to dust has undergone a substantial change and so is no longer a human being. Although Christ is not a typical member of the natural kind "man," he is a typical member of the kind "deity" and therefore cannot cease to be God without ceasing to exist. (Of course, God cannot cease to exist, since He is necessary and eternal.)

Now the Kenoticist might avert the above problems by denying that attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and so on, are essential to deity and so could have been abandoned by the Logos without his thereby ceasing to be God. Such a Christology, however, entails a concept of God which might strike us as far too thin to be acceptable. Various of the traditional theistic arguments imply that a being exists which is necessary in a broadly logical sense, as well as omniscient and wholly good. Moreover, it seems theologically untenable to think that a being could lack such properties and be God. On Kenotic theology there is a possible world in which a being exists which is no more powerful, no more intelligent, no less limited spatially, no less logically contingent than an ordinary human being, and yet that being is God and is worthy of worship. That seems incredible.

Moreover, certain divine attributes cannot be temporarily divested in the way envisioned by Kenoticists. For example, consider the divine attributes of necessity, aseity, and eternity. It makes no sense to say that these were given up temporarily, for by their very nature if one has such properties one has them permanently. But then how could Christ die unless these were given up? One seems forced to say that Christ died only in his human nature, while these attributes are preserved in the divine nature--but then why not say the same for the other divine attributes as well? Christ can be omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and so on in his divine nature but not in his human nature--which is to revert to Chalcedonian orthodoxy.

2. *Let us postulate with Apollinarius that the Logos was the rational soul of Jesus of Nazareth.* What Apollinarius correctly discerned was that if we are to avoid a duality of persons in Christ, the man Jesus of Nazareth and the divine Logos must share some common constituent which unites their two individual natures. The orthodox view is that there is a single *hypostasis* which exemplifies the human and divine natures. That *hypostasis* is identified as the person Christ is. The question is, how can this be? If there exists a complete, individual human nature in Christ and a complete, individual divine nature who is the Logos, then how can there not be two persons? Apollinarius proposed that the Logos replaced the human mind of Jesus, so that there was in Christ a single person, the Logos, who was united with a human body, much as the soul is united with a body in an ordinary human being. On Apollinarius's view, it is easy to see how a single *hypostasis* can exemplify the properties proper to each nature.

Unfortunately, Apollinarius's view was defective as it stood. For a complete human nature involves more than a hominid body, so that on Apollinarius's view the Incarnation was really a matter of the Logos's assuming, not humanity, but mere animality. Moreover, Apollinarius's opponents rightly charged that such a view undercut Christ's work as well as his person, since Christ did not have a truly human nature, but only an animal nature, and so could not have redeemed humanity.

But are these defects irremediable? I think not. Apollinarius may have been misunderstood when his critics charged him with giving Christ a truncated human nature. When Apollinarius argued that the Logos was not only the image of God but also the archetypal man and in this latter sense already possessed human nature in His preexistent form, his opponents like

Gregory of Nazianzus understood him to mean that the *flesh* of Christ was pre-existent. Apollinarius may have been more subtle than this; what he may have meant is that the Logos contained perfect human personhood archetypically in his own nature. The result was that in assuming a hominid body the Logos brought to Christ's animal nature just those properties which would serve to make it a complete human nature. Thus, the human nature of Christ was complete precisely in virtue of the union of his flesh with the Logos. As a result of the union Christ did, indeed, possess a complete, individual human nature comprised of body and soul; for that nature was made complete by the union of the flesh with the Logos, the archetype of humanity.

Such an interpretation of the Incarnation draws strong support from the doctrine of man as created in the image of God (*imago dei*). Human beings do not bear God's image in virtue of their animal bodies, which they have in common with other members of the biosphere. Rather in being persons they uniquely reflect God's nature. God Himself is personal, and inasmuch as we are persons we resemble Him. Thus, God already possesses the properties sufficient for human personhood even prior to the Incarnation, lacking only corporeality. The Logos already possessed in His pre-incarnate state all the properties necessary for being a human self. In assuming a hominid body, He brought to it all that was necessary for a complete human nature. For this reason, in Christ the one self-conscious subject who is the Logos possessed divine and human natures which were both complete.

This reformulation (or rehabilitation!) of Apollinarius's view nullifies the traditional objections lodged against his original formulation of it. For on this view Christ is both fully God and fully man, that is to say, he is all that God is and all that man ought to be. All he lacks is sin, since his individual human nature, like Adam's, is uncorrupted by sin. To ward off misunderstanding, let me underscore that what Chalcedon affirms is that Christ had a complete human nature composed of body and soul; it does not affirm that Christ had a merely human soul. From the fact that Jesus' soul is not a created substance it does not follow that Jesus' human nature is not a created substance. If Christ's individual human nature is, as orthodoxy affirms, that body-soul composite which walked the hills of Galilee and uttered the Sermon on the Mount, then the fact that Jesus' soul is uncreated in no way implies that Christ's human nature is uncreated. On the proposed

view, the Logos by assuming flesh in the virginal conception brings into being a new substance, namely Christ's human nature, which is contingent, created, finite, and so on. Because Christ has a complete human nature and has thus fully identified with our humanity, his atoning work on behalf of mankind is efficacious. Our rehabilitated Apollinarian Christology thus lies safely within the boundaries of orthodoxy marked out at Chalcedon.

The principal difficulty with the proposal as described thus far is that it seems to founder upon the human limitations evinced by Jesus of Nazareth according to the Gospel accounts. The Church has typically dealt with the problem of Christ's evident limitations by means of the device of reduplicative predication, that is to say, by predicating certain properties of the person of Christ with respect to one nature or the other. Thus, for example, Christ is said to be omniscient with respect to his divine nature but limited in knowledge with respect to his human nature, to have been omnipotent with regard to his divine nature but limited in power with regard to his human nature, and so on. Such a device seems to work well with respect to certain properties like omnipotence and necessity. It is easy to see how Christ could have limited strength and mortality relative to his humanity in virtue of his having an ordinary human body, though he is omnipotent and imperishable in his divine nature. But for other attributes, reduplicative predication, especially on an Apollinarian scheme, does not seem to work so well. How could Christ be omniscient and yet limited in knowledge if there is a single conscious subject in Christ? How could he be impeccable (incapable of sin) with respect to his divine nature and yet peccable in his humanity? Regarding Apollinarianism, A. B. Bruce objects, "There is no human *nous*, no freedom, no struggle; . . . the so-called temptations and struggles recorded in the Gospels are reduced to a show and a sham, and a cheap virtue results, devoid of all human interest, and scarcely deserving the name."² If one stops with the model as thus far described, then Bruce's objection will surely prove decisive. But as we shall see, the model can be enhanced in such a way as to turn back this criticism.

3. *Let us postulate that the divine aspects of Jesus' personality were largely subliminal during his state of humiliation.* We suggest that what William James called the "subliminal" self is the primary locus of the superhuman elements in the consciousness of the incarnate Logos. Thus,

² A. B. Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ* (New York: George H. Doran Company, [no date]), p. 46.

Jesus possessed a normal, human, conscious experience. But the human consciousness of Jesus was underlain, as it were, by a divine subconsciousness. This understanding of Christ's personal experience draws upon the insight of depth psychology that there is vastly more to a person than his waking consciousness. The whole project of psychoanalysis is based upon the conviction that some of our behaviors have deep springs of action of which we are only dimly, if at all, aware. Multiple personality disorders furnish a particularly striking example of the eruption of subliminal facets of a single person's mind into distinct conscious personalities. In some cases there is even a dominant personality who is aware of all the others and who knows what each of them knows but who remains by unknown by them. Hypnotism also furnishes a vivid demonstration of the reality of the subliminal. As Charles Harris explains, a person under hypnosis may be informed of certain facts and then instructed to forget them when he "awakens," but

. . . the knowledge is truly in his mind, and shows itself in unmistakable ways, especially by causing him to perform . . . certain actions, which, but for the possession of this knowledge, he would not have performed. . . . What is still more extraordinary, a sensitive hypnotic subject may be made both to see and not to see the same object at the same moment. For example, he may be told not to see a lamp-post, whereupon he becomes (in the ordinary sense) quite unable to see it. Nevertheless, he does see it, because he avoids it and cannot be induced to precipitate himself against it.³

Similarly, in the Incarnation--at least during his earthly sojourn--the Logos allowed only those facets of His person to be part of Christ's waking consciousness which were compatible with typical human experience, while the bulk of His knowledge and other cognitive perfections, like an iceberg beneath the water's surface, lay submerged in his subconscious. On the model I propose Christ is thus one person, but in that person conscious and subconscious elements are differentiated in a theologically significant way. Unlike Nestorianism this view does not imply that there are two persons, anymore than the conscious aspects of one's life and the subconscious aspects of one's life constitute two persons.

Such a model provides a satisfying account of the Jesus we see in the Gospel portrait. In His conscious experience, Jesus grew in knowledge and wisdom, just as a human child does. One does not have the monstrosity of the baby Jesus lying in the manger possessing the full divine consciousness.

³ Charles Harris, cited in A. M. Stibbs, *God Became Man* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1957), p. 12.

In his conscious experience, we see Jesus genuinely tempted, even though he is, in fact, impeccable. The enticements of sin were really felt and could not be blown away like smoke; resisting temptation required spiritual discipline and moral resoluteness on Jesus's part. In his waking consciousness, Jesus is actually ignorant of certain facts, though kept from error and often supernaturally illumined by the divine subliminal. Even though the Logos possesses all knowledge about the world from quantum mechanics to auto mechanics, there is no reason to think that Jesus of Nazareth would have been able to answer questions about such subjects, so low had He stooped in condescending to take on the human condition. Moreover, in His conscious life, Jesus knew the whole gamut of human anxieties and felt physical hurt and fatigue. The model also preserves the integrity and sincerity of Jesus's prayer life, and it explains why Jesus was capable of being perfected through suffering. He, like us, needed to be dependent upon his Father moment by moment in order to live victoriously in a fallen world and to carry out successfully the mission with which he had been charged. The agonies in Gethsemane were no mere show but represented the genuine struggle of the incarnate Logos in His waking consciousness. All the traditional objections against the Logos's being the mind of Christ melt away before this understanding of the Incarnation, for here we have Jesus who is not only divine but truly shares the human condition as well.

Some Christian philosophers such as Thomas Morris have postulated an independent conscious life for the incarnate Logos in addition to the conscious life of Jesus of Nazareth, what Morris calls a "two minds" view of the Incarnation. He provides a number of intriguing analogies in which asymmetrical accessing relations exist between a subsystem and an encompassing system, such that the overarching system can access information acquired through the subsystem but not vice versa. He gives a psychological analogy of dreams in which the sleeper is himself a person in the dream, and yet the sleeper has an awareness that everything that he is experiencing as reality is in fact merely a dream. Morris proposes that the conscious mind of Jesus of Nazareth be conceived as a subsystem of a wider mind which is the mind of the Logos. Such an understanding of the consciousness of the Logos stands in the tradition of Reformed theologians like Zwingli, who held that the Logos continued to operate outside the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The main difficulty of this view is that it threatens to

lapse into Nestorianism, since it is very difficult to see why two self-conscious minds would not constitute two persons.

If the model here proposed makes sense, then it serves to show that the classic doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ is coherent and plausible. It also serves religiously to elicit praise to God for His self-emptying act of taking on our human condition with all its struggles and limitations for our sakes and for our salvation. The Christian philosopher's heart rejoices with the words of Charles Wesley:

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King!"

