

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

This reading of quotes regarding the Incarnation of Christ is intended for a few things:

- 1) To introduce and expound on concepts that we could not address on Sunday Mornings
- 2) To cause you to reflect deeply on what it means that God became a man
- 3) To introduce you to some of the best Christian thinkers and song-writers of ancient and modern times so that our faith will be biblical, well-thought-out, and historically informed.
- 4) So that we can be thankful for those faithful saints who walked before us and join them, across the barriers of time, to worship Jesus Christ, God in the flesh.

For the sake of ease of listening, we begin with more modern thinkers and will end with some of the best songs ever written. But I would counsel you not to skip over the ancient contributions in the middle as these are thoughts *on* which we now build our theology and *by* which we articulate it.

I regret not being able to bring you more. Some of the best records of Christian thought have either been lost to history, or I am not a scholar enough to have them ready to present to you. But please take this offering of your pastor for the feeding of your soul and drink deeply from the well of Christ's Church.

With Love,  
Pastor Sonny

### “No King But Jesus!”

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#### **John 1:14,16-18 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>16</sup> For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

### **QUOTES FROM MODERN THINKERS**

Charles Spurgeon

-“In the wilderness the Lord only dwelt in the abode of man, but now His approach to us is closer, for He dwells in the flesh of man. The substance far excels the shadow”

-“He is not full of the news of grace and truth, but of grace and truth themselves”

-“...there is a bottomless depth of grace about the fellowship [brought about by the incarnation]. The Lord Jesus cannot curse me, for He has borne my curse. He cannot be unkind to me for He has shared my sorrows. If every pang that rends my heart has also rent His heart, and if into all my woes He has descended even deeper than I have gone, it must mean love to me. It cannot mean anything else.” –Spurgeon

“-[Let us use] that other word: Representative. Remember that whatever Jesus did, He did as the covenant head of His people. If He died, they died in Him; if He rose again, they rose in Him; if He ascended up on high, they ascended in Him; and if He sits at the right hand of God, they also sit in the heavenly places in Him. [so that it can be said]; ‘where I am there you may be also’ (John 14:3)”.

### C.S. Lewis

-“Something really new did happen at Bethlehem: not an interpretation but an *event*. God became Man. On the other hand there must be a sense in which God, being outside time, is changeless and nothing ever “happens” to Him. I think I should reply that the event at Bethlehem was a novelty, a change to the maximum extent... But that is quite different from saying that the incarnation was simply an interpretation or a change in *our* knowledge. When Pythagoras discovered [his formulas] he was discovering what had been just as true the day before though no one knew it. But in 50 B.C. the proposition “God is Man” would *not* have been true in the same sense in which it was true in 10 A.D. because though the union of God and Man in Christ is a timeless fact, in 50 B.C. we hadn’t yet gotten to that bit of time which defines it.”

-“God could, had He pleased, have been incarnate in a man of iron nerves, the stoic sort who lets no sigh escape Him. Of His great humility He chose to be incarnate in a man of delicate sensibilities who wept at the grave of Lazarus... Otherwise we [would] have missed the great lesson that it is by his *will* alone that a man is good or bad, and that *feelings* are not in themselves of any importance.”

-You needn’t worry about not feeling brave. Our Lord didn’t...  
How thankful I am that when God became man He did not choose to become a man of iron nerves; that would not have helped weaklings like you and me nearly so much.

-“The central miracle asserted by Christians is the Incarnation. They say that God became man. Every other miracle prepares for this, or exhibits it, or results from it... Every Christian miracle manifests at a particular place and moment the character and significance of the Incarnation. There is no question in Christianity of arbitrary interferences just scattered about...and all discussion of [miracles] in isolation of [the Incarnation] is futile.”

-“If the thing happened, it was the central event in the history of the earth”

-“In the Christian Story, God descends to re-ascend...He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world with Him.”

-Lying at your feet is your dog. Imagine, for the moment, that your dog and every dog is in deep distress. Some of us love dogs very much. If it would help all the dogs in the world to become like men, would you be willing to become a dog? Would you put down your human nature, leave your loved ones, your job, hobbies, your art and literature and music, and choose instead of the intimate communion with your beloved, the poor substitute of looking into the beloved's face and wagging your tail, unable to smile or speak? Christ by becoming man limited the thing which to Him was the most precious thing in the world; his unhampered, unhindered communion with the Father.

-“The Incarnation illuminates and orders all other phenomena. It explains both our laughter and our logic, our fear of the dead and our knowledge that it is somehow good to die, and which at one stroke covers what multitudes of separate theories will hardly cover for us if this is rejected.”

-“The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God.”

-“It seems then,” said Tirian, smiling to himself, “that the stable seen from within and the stable seen from without are two different places”. “Yes,” said Lord Digory. “It’s inside is bigger than its outside.” “Yes,” said Queen Lucy. “In our world too, a stable once held something inside it that was bigger than our whole world.”  
—From: *The Last Battle*

-“I sometimes wonder if we have even begun to understand what is involved in creation...to be created is, in some sense, to be ejected or separated. Can it be that the more perfect the creature is, the further this separation must at some point be pushed? It is saints and angels, not beasts, who rebel. Inanimate matter sleeps in the Bosom of the Father. The “hiddenness” of God perhaps presses most painfully on those who are in another way nearest to Him, and therefore God Himself, [having become] man, will of all men be by God most forsaken?... Perhaps there is an anguish, an alienation, a crucifixion involved in the creative act. Yet He who alone can judge judges the far off consummation to be worth it.

#### Assorted Quotes

-“The proof of the Incarnation is that you can prove nothing without it.”  
Sonny Meyers

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-“at the end of this long discussion, it may be easy for us to lose sight of what we actually taught in Scripture, It is by far the most amazing miracle of the entire Bible, far more amazing than the resurrection. And more amazing even than the creation of the universe, the fact that the infinite omnipotent eternal Son of God could become man and join Himself to a human nature forever so that infinite God became one person with finite man will remain for eternity the most powerful miracle and the most profound mystery in all the universe.” -Wayne Grudem (**GROO-dum**)

-“The mystery of the humanity of Christ, that He sunk Himself into our flesh, is beyond all human understanding” –Martin Luther

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### **QUOTES OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

#### Calcedonian Confession of 451

“...born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the unity, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.”

#### Gregory of Nazianzus (**NA-zee-AN-zus**)

-“We do not separate the man from the Deity, no, we assert the dogma of the unity and identity of the Person who aforesaid was not man but God, the only Son before all ages, who in these last days has assumed manhood also for our salvation... at once earthly and heavenly, tangible and intangible, comprehensible and incomprehensible, that by one and the same person, perfect man and perfect God, the whole humanity, fallen through sin, might be created anew.”

-“What He has not assumed He has not cleansed”

#### Assorted Quotes

-“remaining what He was He became what He was not” –Anonymous

-(in reference to the guilt of our sin) -“no one can pay this satisfaction except God and no one ought to pay it except man. Therefore it is necessary that a God-Man should pay it.”  
–Tertullian (**tur-TULL-ee-an**)

-“in [the case of the incarnation] more than any other, once could say, as it is written, ‘So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate’ (Matthew 19:6)” –Origen (OR-i-jen)

-“...as God He raised the dead, healed by a word, and also changed water into wine. These were not the acts of a human being. But as a human being, He felt thirst and tiredness and He suffered pain. These experiences are not appropriate to deity...these events...all occurred in such a way that they were joined together; and the Lord, who marvelously performed those acts by His grace, was One. He spat in human fashion but His spittle had divine power, for by it he restored sight. When he willed to make Himself known as God, He used His human tongue to signify this...He cured by His mere will. Yet it was by extending His human hand [that He did so].” –Athanasius (ATH-uh-NAY-shus)

-“How can they be saved unless it was God who worked out their salvation on the earth? And how shall man pass into God unless God has first passed into man?” –Irenaeus (EYE-ruh-NAY-uss)

-“Though He was [immaterial], He formed for Himself a body like ours. He appeared as one of the sheep, yet He remained the Shepherd. He was esteemed a servant, yet He did not renounce being a Son. He was carried about in the womb of Mary, yet He was clothed in the nature of His Father. He walked on the earth yet He filled heaven. He appeared as an infant, yet He did not discard His eternal nature. He was invested with a body, but it did not limit His divinity. He was esteemed poor, yet He was not divested of His riches. He needed nourishment because He was man, yet He did not cease to nourish the entire world because He is God. He put on the likeness of a servant, yet it did not impair the likeness of His Father. He was everything by His unchangeable nature. He was standing before Pilate, and at the same time He was sitting with His Father. He was nailed to a tree, yet He was the Lord of all things.” –Melito (mah-LEET-oh) of Sardis  
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## SONGS OF THE CHURCH

Jesus Lord at Thy birth. Jesus Lord at Thy birth

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Veiled in flesh the Godhead see  
Hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as man with men to dwell  
Jesus our Emmanuel

Mild He lays His glory by  
Born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth  
Born to give them second birth  
Hark the herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King

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Christ is God incarnated,  
Born according to God's plan  
To bring divinity, into humanity,  
By mingling with man.

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Who indeed has seen the Babe Who is more ancient  
than His bearer? The Ancient One entered  
and became young in her. He emerged an infant  
and grew by her milk. He entered and became small in her;  
He emerged and grew through her—a great wonder!

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In mute astonishment and awe,  
The angels learn God's plan  
To send His Uncreated Son  
Down to the Earth—as Man!

From Light Eternal shines the Light,  
And Satan's night is ended;  
Its brilliance breaks upon the world  
In day uncomprehended.

Immortal God, yet mortal man,  
With men He makes His dwelling,  
And we behold His glory here,  
In grace beyond all telling

His grace and truth, His abundant love,  
His grand, gigantic meekness  
Appear to us in human form,  
In omnipotent weakness.

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GLORY be to God on high,  
And peace on earth descend!  
God comes down, he bows the sky,  
And shows himself our friend:

God the invisible appears!  
God, the blest, the great I AM,  
Sojourns in this valley of tears,  
And Jesus is his name.

Emptied of his majesty,  
Of his dazzling glories shorn,  
Being's source begins to be,  
And God himself is born!

See the eternal Son of God  
A mortal Son of man;  
Dwelling in an earthly clod,  
Whom heaven cannot contain!

Stand amazed, ye heavens, at this!  
See the Lord of earth and skies;  
Humbled to the dust he is,  
And in a manger lies.

We, the sons of men, rejoice,  
The Prince of peace proclaim;  
With heaven's host lift up our voice,  
And shout Immanuel's name:

Knees and hearts to him we bow;  
Of our flesh and of our bone,  
Jesus is our brother now,  
And God is all our own.

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The terrors of law and of God with me can have nothing to do;  
My Saviour's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view

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In you meet human and divine,  
the highest, holiest union known.  
We falsely call our powers our own  
until our wills with yours combine.

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Christians, sing the incarnation  
Of th'eternal Son of God,  
Who, to save us, took our nature,  
Soul and body, flesh and blood;  
God, He saw man's cruel bondage,  
Who in death's dark dungeon lay;  
Man, He came to fight man's battle,  
And for man He won the day.  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
To the incarnate Son of God,  
Who for man as Man hath conquered  
In our own true flesh and blood.

King of kings and Lord of angels,  
He put off His glory-crown,  
Had a stable-cave for palace,  
And a manger for His throne;  
Helpless lay, to whom creation  
All its life and being owed,  
And the lowly Hebrew maiden  
Was the mother of her God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
To th'incarnate Son of God,  
Who concealed His dazzling Godhead  
'Neath the veil of flesh and blood.

Then, by man refused and hated,  
God for man vouchsafed to die,  
Love divine its depth revealing  
On the heights of Calvary;  
Through His dying the dominion



From the tyrant death was torn,  
When its Victim rose its Victor  
On the resurrection morn.  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
To th'incarnate Son of God,  
Who through His eternal Spirit  
Offers His own flesh and blood.

Then, adored in highest Heaven,  
We shall see the virgin's Son,  
All creation bowed before Him,  
Man upon th'eternal throne:  
Where, like sound of many waters  
In one ever rising flood,  
Myriad voices hymn His triumph,  
Victim, Priest, incarnate God.  
Worthy He all praise and blessing  
Who, by dying, death o'ercame;  
Glory be to God forever!  
Alleluia to the Lamb!

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Christ the Word! Thine incarnation  
Links my nature to Thine own;  
By Thy sore humiliation,  
I am lifted to Thy throne;  
By Thy suffering Thou hast fired me  
With a zeal to sacrifice,  
And to noble life inspired me:  
Hence my grateful songs arise.

By Thy hand at the creation,  
Thou didst form me from the ground,  
And, to mark my kingly station,  
With Thine image I was crowned;  
And that hand, when pierced and bleeding,  
Raised me from corruption's mire;  
And, though all this love unheeding,  
Decked me with Divine attire.

Thou who gav'st my soul its being,  
Breathing in me life Divine,

Didst, by Thine all-wise decreeing,  
Unto death Thy life resign;  
And from death my soul defending,  
Thou didst sojourn with the dead,  
That Thou might'st, my fetters rending,  
Raise me up, Thou glorious Head!

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The life, which God's Incarnate Word  
Lived here below with men,  
Three blest evangelists record  
With Heav'n inspirèd pen.

John soars on high, beyond the three,  
To God the Father's throne;  
And shows in what deep mystery  
The Word with God is One.

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