

## Jesus, God Incarnate: What In The World Did He Do?

Some say that Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. Others say Christmas is the busiest time of the year. I say any time we are busy talking about Christ is a wonderful time! (Do you agree?)

Speaking of the Christ and being busy, Jesus Himself was a very busy man! Directing a staff of twelve while catering to 5,000 guests is no small task. Attending to the sick and needy, one after another, all day long, *while traveling*, is not a job everyone is applying for. On His “days off” He still attended to His twelve disciples —ever notice that His “alone time,” which He only got when He *made* it, was in the late evening or early morning? I have read that, if you add up all that is recorded that Jesus did during the three years of His “public ministry,” He walked over 3,000 miles. And the apostle John wrote, “And there are many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written” (John 21:25). WOW!

But given what Jesus had to accomplish in just over three years, it is not surprising that He was so busy!

Consider four major things Jesus had to do while being God-incarnate:

### **1. Jesus had to prove He was actually from God.**

If any given person claimed to be from out of this world, it is only reasonable that the rest of us would look on this claim with suspicion. Now what if it were actually true and he could prove it —eg. “See, this is my *real* face”? It would take a lot of time and evidence to convince a lot of people —“See, this is my ray-gun. Do you believe me yet? What if I show

you my spaceship? How about I show you my other-world ability?” Etc. Well, given that Jesus was God-Incarnate, He was not from this world... *and He had to prove it!*

John chapter 7 might illustrate the situation more clearly than any other chapter in the gospels; consider just verses 28 and 31 - “The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?” and “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?” See what they were wondering? See what Jesus had been trying to prove!

Some of them understood. A bit over two years into His ministry, His disciples said, “You are *certainly God’s Son*” (Matthew 14:33) and “You are the Christ, *the Son of the living God*” (16:16). Finally, the night before His death they said it again, “...we believe that you came *from God*” (John 16:30), at which point Jesus considered His work completed - “...I glorified You on earth, *having accomplished the work* which You have given Me to do” (17:4; note well verses 8, 21, 23 and 25, in which Jesus repeats “they *truly understood* that I came forth from You,” or something to this effect). At least twelve people believed that *Jesus is God*: Mission accomplished!

### **2. Jesus had to demonstrate God’s standard of behavior.**

Imagine going to a college of medicine to learn how to treat people, only the proper instruction is lost, hidden, covered over, and substituted with counterfeits. No one from this class would know what to do, and the result would be confusion and chaos. Well this is almost exactly what the moral situation was when God-Incarnate presented Himself to the world - moral and ethical chaos: the ancient Egyptians had the “Ma’at,” later the

(continued on back...)

Sumerians had the Code of Ur-Nammu while the Hindus had the Rigveda and the Celts had their [unwritten] laws, then the Babylonians had the Code of Hammurabi, and more recently the Greeks had Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle telling them how to live. Even the Jews —despite actually having God’s revealed standard of living, namely the Law of Moses— failed to understand how God wanted man to behave (consider Matthew 23:15 and Romans 2:17-24). *No one knew how to live properly.*

Into this darkness God-Incarnate came, Jesus, and He shined as a light and “explained” God (John 1:18). For three and a half years (all of His life, really), Jesus always behaved exactly the way God wants all people to behave (John 8:29; 14:31). Then, just before He died, Jesus said “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even *as I have loved you*” (John 13:34). Eureka! And we are indeed without excuse.

### **3. God had to live as one of us so He can better help us.**

“Been there, done that” is an oft heard expression, and the one saying it can be trusted for advice. On the other hand, consider “I have no idea what you are going through”; this doesn’t exactly inspire confidence, no one wants advice from this person.

We could unpack a lot out of Hebrews 2, but one point the author drives home is that God became incarnate *so that He would be better able to help us.* Consider verses 17-18, “He had to be made like His brethren in all things...He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.” Yes, God could have

helped us without becoming incarnate, but because of our weaknesses —namely, though it is not always necessary we prefer advice from someone with experience— we are more likely to accept His advice because He experience what we do, “God understands *exactly* what I am going through....” Thank God God became man!

### **4. Jesus had to die for our sins.**

Think about this, *Before Jesus died there was no way to remove sin.* Scrubbing with lye didn’t remove the stain of sin. “Extra” good works didn’t make up for the guilt of past sin. Sacrificing animals didn’t *actually* cover the guilt of sin (Hebrews 10:4). Only sinless Jesus could actually and sufficiently deal with our sin —the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Isaiah 53 and Hebrews 9-10 provide ample, specific commentary about this aspect of Jesus’ work. Colossians 2:14 succinctly says that He “cancelled the certificate of debt...*having nailed it to the cross.*” Again, thank God for God incarnate!!! And thank God Jesus was so busy.

(“**But what about the Kingdom,**” someone might ask, “Didn’t Jesus come to earth to set up His kingdom?” Actually, while the Christ had to live on the earth in order to set up His kingdom, *God never intended that the Christ set up His kingdom while living on earth.* Consider Hebrews 2:14-15, “*through death* He might render powerless...the devil and might free those...subject to slavery”: His kingdom was not possible *until He had died.*)

In this season, don’t forget to take time to reflect on what Jesus did for us. And if you are not too busy, we’d love to hear from you: see below to contact us about any spiritual discussion!

### ***The Indian River Church of Christ***

We meet in the Shopping Center at 2 South Main Street in Philadelphia NY.

We assemble Sunday mornings at 10 for Bible study and at 11 for worship.

We also assemble Thursday evenings at 7 for Bible study.

Our website is [www.indianriverchurchofchrist.com](http://www.indianriverchurchofchrist.com).

Our phone number is (315) 629-4155