

**INTRO**

- If you could have one super-human power for the day, what would it be and why?
- Talk about one of the most meaningful experiences in your life.

**READ**

*"I believe in Jesus...who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary."*

Matt 1:18, 22-23; John 1:1-2,14

**REFLECT & RESPOND**

The above scriptures speak to the Incarnation—God the Son, 2nd Person of the Trinity, becomes human "taking on flesh" in the person of Jesus.

*Qu: When you hear Jesus is fully God and fully man, how can that be difficult for us to reconcile?*

How are we to think of Jesus as the God-Man? Read Phil 2:5-11. In this passage, Paul says Jesus 'emptied himself' in the incarnation. This has often been misunderstood as Jesus giving up his divinity whilst on earth. Rather, as Augustine says, "Christ added to himself what he was not, he did not lose what he was." Jesus laid aside his right to his divinity and willingly subjected himself to human limitations.

*Qu: if Jesus never gave up his divinity, how are we to think about his humanity?*

Jesus is like us in our humanity and experience in every way, except Jesus remains sinless (he was conceived by the Holy Spirit).

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCARNATION****1. Jesus makes God *accessible* to us**

Because God comes to us in human form, He is more accessible to our human senses.

**2. Jesus *sympathizes* with us**

Read Heb 4:14-16

**3. Jesus *validates* our human experience and the material world**

Consider how ordinary and relatively obscure the majority of Jesus life was. We often think the spiritual is in the spectacular only, but God is to be found in our everyday lives.

*Qu: As you think about Jesus growing up in a family, going to school, working a job etc. how does that impact you?*

**4. Jesus *models* the nature of true humanity**

For God to show up in human form was a big deal to those who believed true spirituality separates itself from the material, created world. The incarnation is a reminder that our humanity and the material world is not the problem—sin as a result of the Fall is. Therefore, Jesus becomes our example in human conduct and character.

*Qu: Out of the 4 implications, which one is most meaningful to you right now and why?*

The Incarnation is also a model for us of how God interacts with his world. Sometimes our idea of holiness is a withdrawal from culture and sinners. But God shows us a different way; he steps into culture and compassionately moves towards sinners without condoning sinfulness.

*Qu: how can you learn from Jesus' example of how to interact and relate to the culture you're in and the people you meet who aren't believers?*

*Qu: what is one practical step you can take this week to pattern your life more like Jesus?*

**PRAY**

- Pray for one another to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to live as Jesus did, and for the grace to follow through on your practical step.