



The Life of Christ

The Word Becomes Flesh

Understanding the
Incarnation





The Problem of the Incarnation

- Deity

- Eternal
- Omniscient
- Omnipresent
- Omnipotent

Humanity

- Mortal
- Finite in Knowledge
- Finite in Space
- Finite in Power

Why is this important?

The Scriptures make it important

Hebrews 4

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Incarnation

Not transforming into a man – incarnation not transformation

Monophysite (one nature) – Apollinarius (d. 390) – Bishop of Laodicea

Logos(soul) put on flesh

Problem – quod non est assumptum non est Sanatum

“What has not been assumed has not been healed”, and if Christ had not been “endowed with a rational mind, how could he have been a man?” - Gregory Nazianzen

Condemned as Heresy at Synod of Rome 377

The Incarnation

Dyophysite

Human Soul with a Divine Soul

Problems

Possession?

Two souls should be two people, two sons, not one

Nestorius – patriarch of Constantinople 428

The Incarnation

Kenotic Christology

19th Century

Κενόω

Phil 2:7 - ...but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Kenotic Christology – how can you give up divinity and still be divine?

Council of Chalcedon 451

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach people to 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 [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without 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, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; (ἐν δύο φύσεσιν ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαίρέτως, ἀχωρίστως – in duabus naturis inconfuse, immutabiliter, indivise, inseparabiliter) the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person (prosopon) and one Subsistence (hypostasis), not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten God (μονογενῆ Θεόν), 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.

The Incarnation

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all[b] the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The Incarnation

Proposed Christology

- 1) One person with two natures – the characteristic is in respect to one nature and not the other.
- 2) The Logos was the rational Soul of Jesus (Reformed Apollinarianism)

The Logos did contain (before the incarnation) the non-physical properties of man

The Incarnation

3) The Sublimation of the Divine

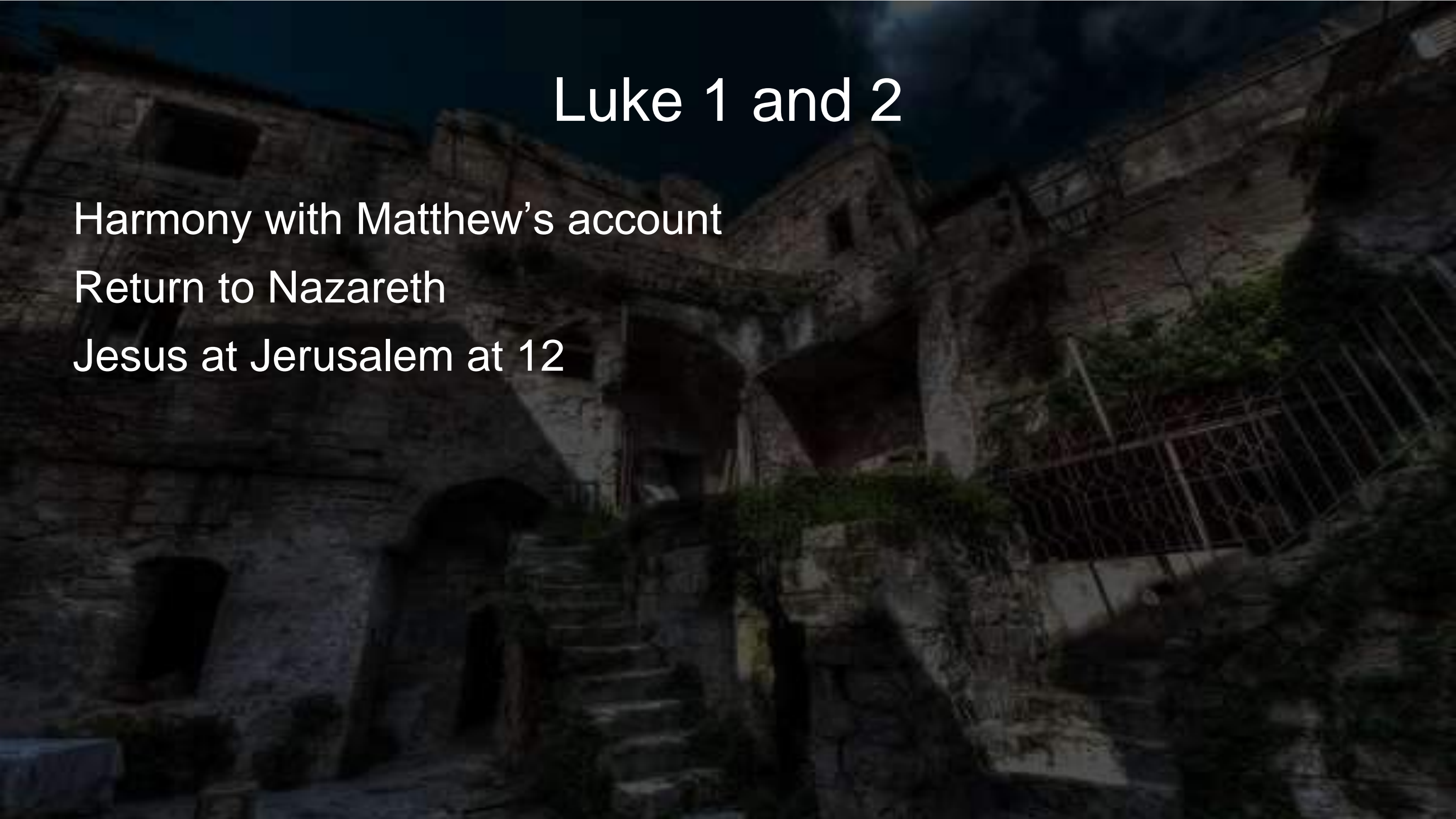
Just as we have a subconscious with thoughts, feelings, abilities and knowledge under the surface of our conscious minds so also Christ had much of His divine nature sublimated while in human form.

Luke 1 and 2

Harmony with Matthew's account

Return to Nazareth

Jesus at Jerusalem at 12



A Note on the Genealogies

Levitical Marriage

Joseph's vs. Mary's Family Tree

Purpose – to show Jesus as
being in the line of David



John the Baptist

Luke 3

Word of God comes to John

Prophecy fulfilled: Isaiah 40:3–5

Dressed in Camels skin

Ate Locust and Wild Honey

All of Judea comes out

Rebukes the Pharisees

and Sadducees (Matt. 3)

Instructions to the people

Denies that he is the Christ



Baptism of Jesus

John objects (Matt. 3)

To Fulfill all righteousness

Event demonstrates the three personalities of the Godhead

John's account in flashback



The Temptation of Christ

Tempted for 40 days

Ate nothing

Only have three recorded

Answers Satan with scripture

Deuteronomy 8:3

Deuteronomy 6:13

Deuteronomy 6:16



The Temptation of Christ

Satan answers with scripture

2 Peter 3:16 ...as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

Heb. 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize (συμπαθέω) with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Temptation of Christ

Matthew – Stones, Temple, Offer

Luke – Tempted 40 days – Stones, Offer, Temple

13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.