

to presume that he can make peace with God on the ground of any goodness or merit of any kind within himself! For the testimony of experience, as well as of scripture, is that "there is none righteous, no, not one"; that "all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10,23). In view of the fact, therefore, that we, as His covenant people, have such a merciful and faithful High Priest, "let us draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace in the time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON ONE-HUNDRED ONE

60. What is the first great truth involved in the mystery of the Incarnation?
61. What is the second great truth involved in the mystery of the Incarnation?
62. Outline briefly the doctrine of the Humiliation of The Word, as presented in the New Testament writings.
63. What great and comforting truth for us, is involved in this doctrine of the Humiliation and subsequent Exaltation of The Word?

Lesson One-Hundred Two

IMMANUEL: GOD WITH US

Scripture Reading: Matt. 1:18-25, 26:36-46.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him" (I Cor. 8:6).

64. Q. What were the limitations which The Word imposed upon Himself when He became flesh?

A. The Scriptures teach that The Word imposed the following limitations upon Himself when He became flesh:

1. *He limited Himself officially, i.e.,* subordinated Himself to the Will of the Father, and to the Will of the Holy Spirit also. John 14:28—"The Father is greater than I." John 6:38—"I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 5:43—"I am come in my Father's name." John 4:34—"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." Acts 1:2—"after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen." Heb. 9:14—"Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God." "Through the Spirit" in these scriptures, means *by authority or direction* of the Spirit. This voluntary subordination to both the Father and the Spirit, during His sojourn in the flesh, is not at all inconsistent with the fact of His equality, as to His eternal and inherent nature, with the other Persons of the Godhead. You and I, for example, may be engaged in a business venture. We may be equals in every respect. Yet such a condition may arise as to make it necessary for me to voluntarily place myself at your command, and thus subordinate myself to your will, in order to further the interests of the enterprise in which we are mutually engaged. Such a subordination would thus be self-imposed on my part, and would naturally continue only until our purposes in making the arrangement would be achieved. It was in this manner that The Word limited Himself officially. (2) *He limited Himself, in one matter at least, as to knowledge.* Mark 13:32—"Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Here He frankly states that the exact time of His second advent is known only to the Heavenly Father.

It should be understood of course that His lack of omniscience with regard to this one matter did not involve error. His teaching may have been incomplete in this one respect but it was never *false*. He never stated an untruth, nor was He ever accused of false teaching. He was always prepared to answer His opponents on any subject and to do so with finality that brooked no further controversy. It is obvious from the vastness and comprehensiveness of His teaching that whatever limitations of knowledge He may have suffered during His incarnate life were self-imposed. (3) *He also subordinated Himself emotionally, i.e., subjected Himself to mental anguish and spiritual depression, such as that which He experienced in Gethsemane and also on the Cross.* Matt. 26:38,39—"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide ye here, and watch with me. And he went forward a little, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me," etc. Luke 22:44—"And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." Similarly, on the Cross, He cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It should be noted that these petitions bespeak only *utter loneliness and anguish of spirit*. However this mental anguish was not sin in any sense of the term. Sin is disobedience to God, and in no instance did He manifest any disposition to do other than what the Father desired of Him. Even in the awful anguish of that midnight hour in Gethsemane, the burden of His prayer was: "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). (4) Such expressions as His question addressed to the crowd, "Who touched my garments?" (Mark 5:30); or, His question addressed to Martha with respect to the body of Lazarus, "Where have ye laid him?" (John 11:34); or the statement of Mark, in Mark 11:13, "And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when

he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for it was not the season of figs"—these present no difficulties. Jesus frequently addressed questions to His hearers that were calculated to make His miracles stand out in bold relief. We must remember, too, that the Gospel historians were writing for our benefit, and that it was necessary for them (under the guidance of the Spirit) to clothe their accounts in words and phrases adapted to our finite understanding. Their quaint way of saying things, and their ability to compress so much meaning in just a few words, make their writings perennially refreshing. (5) Finally, these self-imposed limitations were all essential to His mission and work in the world. It was absolutely necessary that He identify Himself with our human nature, in order that He might properly qualify Himself for His work of intercession upon which He was to enter following His resurrection from the dead and exaltation to the right hand of the Father. Thus He became a participant in our fleshly nature, in order that He might enable us to become, through the efficacy of His Atonement, partakers of the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4).

65. Q. What were the essential characteristics of the human nature of Jesus Christ?

A. The essential characteristics of the human nature of Jesus Christ may be summarized as follows:

(1) *He possessed the essential elements of human nature, viz., a physical body and a rational spirit.* Matt. 26:26—"this is my body." Matt. 26:28—"this is my blood." Luke 24:39—"a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having." Matt. 26:38—"my soul is exceeding sorrowful." John 11:33—"he groaned in the spirit." Luke 23:46—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Cf. Heb. 2:14, I John 1:1, 4:2, etc. (2) *He exercised the active powers and was moved by the instinctive principles and emotions of our human nature.* For example: *weariness* (John 4:6—"Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well"); *hunger* (Matt. 4:2—"he

afterward hungered"); *thirst* (John 19:28—"I thirst"); *sleep* (Matt. 8:24—"the boat was covered with the waves, but he was asleep"); *anger* (Mark 3:5—"when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart"); *anxiety* (Heb. 5:7—"who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death"); *fear* (Heb. 5:7—"and having been heard for his godly fear"); *groaning* (John 12:27—"now is my soul troubled"; cf. John 11:33—"he groaned in the spirit"); *weeping* (John 11:35—"Jesus wept"); *prayer* (Matt. 14:23—"he went up into the mountain apart to pray"); *love* (Mark 10:21—"Jesus looking upon him loved him"); *compassion* (Matt. 9:36—"when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them"), etc. (3) *He was subject to the ordinary laws of human growth and development, both in body and spirit.* Luke 2:40—"And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom," etc. Luke 2:46—"they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions," etc. This incident occurred when He was twelve years old. Luke 2:52—"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Heb. 5:8—"though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 2:18—"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 4:15—"one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 2:10—"For it became him . . . to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (4) *He suffered and died.* Luke 22:44—"And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." John 19:30—"He bowed his head, and gave up his spirit." John 19:34—"one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and straightway there came out blood and water." This incident is held by Stroud, in his *Physical*

Cause of Our Lord's Death, to be proof that Jesus died of a broken heart. (5) *Yet He was absolutely free from inherited corruption and from actual sin.* "This is shown by His never offering sacrifice, never praying for forgiveness, teaching that all but He needed the new birth, challenging all to convict him of a single sin" (Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 676). Cf. John 3:7, 5:30; Luke 1:35; John 8:46, 14:30, etc. He prayed, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34), but never, "Father, forgive *me*." His anger was no passionate or vindictive or selfish anger, but always the indignation of righteousness against cruelty and hypocrisy. Rom. 8:3—"God, sending his own Son in the *likeness* of sinful flesh," *i.e.*, in flesh, but without the inherited corruption which in other men clings to the mind of the flesh. Heb. 7:26—"holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners," *i.e.*, by the fact of His divine begetting. 2 Cor. 5:21—"Him who knew no sin," etc. Heb. 4:15—"in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 9:14—"Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself *without blemish* unto God." I Pet. 1:19—"precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." I Pet. 2:22—"who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I John 3:5, 7—"in him is no sin . . . he is righteous," etc., etc. In short, "Christ took human nature in such a way that his nature, without sin, bore the consequences of sin."

66. Q. Is it to be presumed that the temptations which Christ suffered while He was in the flesh, were in any manner lessened by His inherent purity?

A. No. On the contrary, it is our conviction that if anything His temptations must have been rendered more poignant by virtue of His purity.

It would seem to me that, instead of acceding to the notion sometimes expressed that His sufferings were merely *semblances* of trial and temptation by virtue of His Deity, it is far more reasonable to suppose that His sufferings and temptations were the rather *enhanced* by the supreme

excellence of His physical constitution and by the moral purity of His inner nature. "Let us beware of contradicting the express teaching of the Scriptures," writes Farrar, "by a supposition that He was not liable to real temptation. Nay, He was liable to temptation all the sorer, because it came like agony to a nature infinitely strong, yet infinitely pure. In proportion as any one has striven all his life to be, like his great Ensample, holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, in that proportion will he realize the intensity of the struggle, the anguish of the antipathy, which pervade a finely-touched spirit when, either by suggestions from within or from without, it has been dragged into even apparent proximity to the possibilities of evil" (*Life of Christ*, pp. 98-99). "Our hard impure flesh," writes Martin Luther, "can hardly comprehend the agonizing sensitiveness of a sinless nature brought into contact with hostile wickedness and hateful antagonism."

67. Q. What, then, is the true doctrine of the Person of Christ?

A. The true doctrine of the Person of Christ is, that He is the God-Man, the Divine-human Redeemer, God With Us.

(1) *That is, that He was as truly God as He was truly man.* "The Scriptures represent Jesus Christ as a single undivided personality in whom these two natures (*i.e.*, the divine and the human) are vitally and inseparably united, so that He is properly, not God and man, but the God-man" (Strong, *ibid.*, p. 684). (2) Dr. James M. Gray: "There are four points to be kept in mind: (a) Christ was truly God; (b) He was truly man; (c) The Godhead and the manhood were united in one Person; (d) the Godhead and the manhood, the deity and the humanity, were distinct and separate, so that there was no mixture or commingling of the two natures in the one person—the divine did not permeate the human, and the human was not swallowed up or absorbed in the divine. . . . The result of the incarnating act, in other words, gives us a person who

is neither divine nor human considered separately, but God-man" (*My Faith In Jesus Christ*, pp. 24-26). (3) Our personal conviction is that the truth with regard to the Person of Christ cannot be adequately stated in human language. Therefore we say with Paul: "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." And with this confession of faith we shall be content.

68. Q. By what designation especially, is the true nature of the Person of Christ indicated, in the Scriptures?

A. The true nature of the Person of Christ is indicated by the name, IMMANUEL.

(1) His *human* nature is indicated by such designations as Son of Man, The Second Man, The Last Adam, The Head of the New Creation, etc. (2) His *divine* nature is indicated by such designations as The Word, The Word of Life, The Living One, The First and The Last, The Son of God, The Son of the Most High, The Only Begotten from the Father, etc. (3) His *Divine-human* nature is indicated by the name, Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God With Us. See Isa. 7:14, Matt. 1:23.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON ONE-HUNDRED TWO

64. What were the limitations which The Word imposed upon Himself when He became flesh?
65. What were the essential characteristics of the human nature of Jesus Christ?
66. Is it to be presumed that the temptations which Christ suffered while He was in the flesh, were in any manner lessened by His inherent purity?
67. What, then, is the true doctrine of the Person of Christ?
68. By what designation especially, is the true nature of the Person of Christ indicated, in the Scriptures?