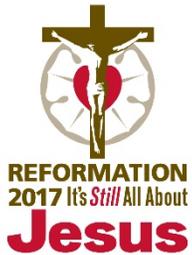


The God Who Is Man

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“I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.” (SC 2)

We believe it. We teach it. We confess it. At times, we doubt it. At times, we can easily become focused on the troubles, hardships, and suffering of this life and ask, “Why doesn’t God care?” “Where is God in all of this?” “Why does God seem so distant?” We may even conclude that God just doesn’t understand. Yet, “I believe that Jesus Christ, ... and also true man....”

Jesus truly is God and He is also truly Man. Jesus “was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, died and was buried” (AC 3). He is truly human. “The properties of the human nature are to be a bodily creature, to be flesh and blood, to be finite and physically limited, to suffer, to die, to ascend and descend, to move from one place to another, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat and the like” (FC, Ep 8.8).

All that sounds fancy, but what does it mean? It means that Jesus as true Man actually experienced everything I experience in this life and world. He thirsts (Jn 19:28). He weeps (Jn 11:35.) He has no place to lay His head (Mt 8:20). He is hungry (Mk 11:12). He has flesh (Jn 1:14). The list could go on and on. We confess that Jesus is truly human.

It also means that God does care. It means that God is not distant. He came down to earth. He became flesh for me (John 1:1-18). Jesus is fully Man—fully human. Some people believe that He is only man. They think of Jesus as a good moral teacher and nothing else. Yes, Jesus is truly Man. But as we stated above He is also truly God. He is both! God does understand. He understands me and my pain, sorrow, struggles and hardships. God knows everything I go through in this life. Only He can because He is God and He is Man.

Jesus is truly God and truly Man. Because Jesus is both, He is able to “reconcile the Father to us and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of mankind” (AC 3.3). Thanks be to God!

Further Reading AC 3; Ap 3; SA 2, 1; SC 2:3-5; LC 2:25-33; Ep 8; SD 8

Abbreviations

AC = Unaltered Augsburg Confession
Ap = Apology of the Augsburg Confession
SC = Small Catechism
LC = Large Catechism
SA = Smalcald Articles (exclusive of the Tractate)
Tr = Tractate on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
Ep = The Formula of Concord, Epitome
SD = The Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration
Cat = Catalogue of Testimonies

NOTE: Articles and sections/paragraphs in the *Book of Concord* are denoted in Arabic numerals, separated by a period. Please note that the first number in citations of SC and LC points to the Chief Part; any numbers following the period point to the specific section/paragraph. Thus SC 1.8 does not point to the 8th Commandment, but to the explanation of the 4th.