



# LIFE & MINISTRY OF JESUS

Unit 4 • Identity – Man, Servant, King

## UNIT DESCRIPTION

The four lessons of this unit focus on both the humanity and the deity of Jesus. They illustrate the unity of these two natures in the single person of Jesus Christ. His humanity relates Jesus to the human race and His divinity relates Him to God. Both natures were necessary for the one who would come to earth to die for the sins of mankind.

"'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation,' an apostle would later write.' 'He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.' But the few eyewitnesses on Christmas night saw none of that. They saw an infant struggling to work never-before-used lungs.

"Could it be true, this Bethlehem story of a Creator descending to be born on one small planet? If so, it is a story like no other. Never again need we wonder whether what happens on this dirty little tennis ball of a planet matters to the rest of the universe. Little wonder a choir of angels broke out in spontaneous song, disturbing not only a few shepherds but the entire universe."<sup>1</sup>



# CHILDHOOD – GOD BECOMES MAN

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## Concept

Jesus, being fully God, became fully man.

## Goal

Students will learn that Jesus, being fully God, chose to lay aside the use of His Divine attributes and become a man. They will be encouraged to consider what it meant for Jesus to become a man and the sinless sacrifice for our sins.

## Passage

Luke 2:1-7

Key Verse: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<b>Lesson:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Large laminated "Jesus In His Land" map</li></ul> <b>Extension:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>King-size sheet map of Israel</li><li>Styrofoam cups, 6/class</li></ul>	<b>Activity Station:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8½" x 11" 24# skytone "parchment" paper, 2 sheets (1 blank, 1 w/key verse)/student</li><li>Yarn</li><li>6 stamp ink pads</li><li>Crayons, markers</li><li>Wet-wipes</li></ul> <b>Extension:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Secret code worksheet, 1/student</li><li>Pencils</li></ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information/Teacher Helps

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Hypostatic Union”

DEFINITION: At the Incarnation, two natures (full deity and full humanity) were inseparably united in the one person of Jesus Christ. Whereas the Trinity involves three Persons who share the same nature, the hypostatic union involves one Person who has two natures.

“Kenosis”

DEFINITION: At the Incarnation, Jesus gave up not only the environment of the Godhead and his position as Ruler, but also the use of his divine attributes. (If you fail to say ‘use’, you are using heretical language...) By taking on human nature, he accepted certain limitations upon the functioning of his divine attributes. These limitations were not the result of a loss of divine attributes, but of the addition of human attributes.

IMPORTANCE: Jesus lived just like we do--by dependence on God and by the empowering of the Holy Spirit (John 14:10-17)...”<sup>1</sup>

“Jesus came to earth and became fully man. God Himself entered the human race as a baby who was born in Bethlehem. He did not make just a momentary appearance, but actually became flesh as we are, subjecting Himself to time and space, experiencing human conditions, living as a man who experienced the normal physical and intellectual development of human beings. ... He laid aside His glory, voluntarily restraining His power, accepting all of the physical and spiritual conditions of life on earth—physical and emotional pain, spiritual temptation, hardship, isolation, hostility, ill-treatment, misunderstanding and, finally, death.

Why would God subject Himself to the limitations of humanity? The New Testament gives several reasons for His coming. He came to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). He came that we might have abundant life (John 10:10). He came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). He came to do the will of God (Hebrews 10:7). These are a few direct expressions of purpose. But these statements of purpose do not speak to the why of the specific way He came. Why a human birth and a human life along with His deity? The Bible states that, “as the second Adam and the inaugurator of a new humanity (Rom. 5:12-19), Jesus has to be human. He also had to be human in order to die, and in order to be a true mediator-priest who could represent humanity before God (Heb. 2:17,18). Because Jesus is God, he is able to reveal God to us in the fullest way that we can comprehend (Jn. 1:18; 14:9; Heb. 1:1-3). Because he is God, he was able to pay for an infinite amount of sin and endure God’s infinite wrath against sin in a finite amount of time (Heb. 10:10,12)”<sup>2</sup>

[1] “Christology,” Xenos Christian Fellowship Christian Principles 1994-95: Unit #1, Week #10.

[2] Ibid.

**Activity Stations:**

- **Craft – Scrolls**

- **Instructions:** Give each student 2 pieces of "parchment," one blank and one with the key verse. Tape the two sheets together, end to end, making a page 8 ½" x 22" and so the key verse is along the bottom of the paper. Write their names on the parchment. Illustrate the key verse with thumbprint pictures. When the ink is dry, roll the paper from both ends to the middle to make a scroll. Tie closed with a piece of yarn.

In our last unit we studied Jesus' identity as God. While Jesus was on earth He performed amazing miracles which showed His power over everything in creation: nature, illness, spiritual, physical needs and finally power over death.

In this unit we will learn what it meant for Jesus to come to earth as a man, to be a servant and ultimately King over all creation. And we'll discuss what He gave up to do this for us. Today we will learn that Jesus was fully God and fully man when He came to earth. He gave up the use of His godly characteristics, such as knowing everything and the ability to be everywhere all the time to come to earth to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God had a plan in place. He promised that He would provide a way for sinful people to come back into a relationship with Him. God's plan made it possible for all people to live forever with Him. This meant that His forever, never-ending life could be given to us so we can become His sons and daughters. But it also meant He would have to come to earth and live as a man. The time was now right for God to keep His promise to send that Savior. So Jesus came to earth as a baby to grow up to be a man. One of God's angels said to Joseph, "Mary will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Let's brainstorm for a moment and make a list on the white board of traits that are typical of ALL people. (Possibilities: eat, drink, sleep, breathe, sweat, need other people, laugh, cry, born, die-make sure the list includes birth and death.)

Is there anything on our list that you think Jesus did not experience? (If yes, give reasons.) Jesus became a man; therefore, He experienced all the things we experience.

The Creator God of this universe became a man. He gave up His life in the perfect environment of heaven to come to this fallen earth and experience all the things we experience.

## Introduction Continued

When Jesus came to earth He remained fully God and became fully man. He voluntarily gave up the use of His power and accepted all the limitations of life on earth—physical and emotional pain, spiritual temptation, rejection, cruelty and finally death. Why do you think Jesus had to become a man? (Allow some time for students to consider and answer.) While on earth, Jesus showed God's loving character in a way we would understand. He experienced what it was like to be a man and yet He never sinned. He showed us the possibilities of a life totally dependent on the Father. And since God can't die, the only way Jesus could die for our sins was to become a man.

Does anyone know why it was important for Jesus to be God? Jesus had to be God because only God could take an unlimited amount of punishment in a limited period of time.

## Transition

Today we'll start at the beginning of Jesus' human life.

## Lesson Lg. Group

Let's open the Bible to Luke 2:1-6. Mary and Joseph traveled to Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem to be counted in a census. A census is a complete count of a population of people. (Explain how Mary and Joseph had to stay in a barn because there were no rooms!)

Have you ever thought what it means that God, the Creator of the world, came into this world in a place and time in history? The Almighty God appeared on earth as a helpless baby (describe what babies are like). He had to be fed and changed and He had to learn to talk like any other child. He came to earth just as God said He would and at exactly the time and place that God chose. An angel of the Lord said to Joseph, "Mary will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21.) This is our key verse. When Jesus was born, He did not stop being God. He was no less God than He had been before, but now he was also a man. He was completely God and completely man. And He came to earth to save us from our sins.

Let's look at the map to find the places that Jesus traveled as a child. Right after Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph were warned by an angel to quickly leave Israel and go to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath. Egypt is not on this map, but it is down here south and west of Israel (point to the bottom and left of the map). When Herod died, God told them it was safe to return to Israel. They traveled to Nazareth (show on map) where Jesus grew up. Each year during Passover, Jesus and his family traveled to the temple in Jerusalem (show on map). It's about eighty miles from Nazareth to Jerusalem. That's a long way when you're going by donkey! Then Jesus lived in Capernaum (show on map) when He was an adult.

## Transition

### Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

The people of God tried to identify the Messiah (leader), let's play a game to identify the leader.

#### Game – Undercover Leader

##### Instructions:

1. Players sit in a circle. One player is chosen to be IT and sent from the room. Another player is selected to be the undercover leader.
2. The leader begins a movement, such as head nodding, arm moving, or foot tapping, while the rest of the group follows. Explain to the group that they must be careful not to blow the leader's cover by looking at him or her directly.
3. The person who it is comes back into the room and stands in the center of the circle. All those in the circle perform the movements the leader begins. When the leader changes a movement, everyone follows. The person who is it must observe very carefully in order to discover the leader.
4. When the leader is discovered, two other players become IT and the new undercover leader.

## Transition

### Learning Activity#2 Sm. Groups

Let's get into small groups and we'll learn about where Jesus traveled as He grew up.

Jesus grew up just like you are growing up. What are some of things you had to learn as a young child? What sorts of things are you still learning? (Allow for responses.) Jesus grew up in Nazareth (show on map) Each year He grew bigger and stronger and smarter. The Bible tells us about the trip they took to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old. But that is about all we know about Jesus when He was a boy. Jesus was once 8 and 9 years old just like you are now. The Bible says He continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and God's was with Him all the time. How amazing—He grew up just like you guys are growing up, but He never sinned and never even thought a bad thought. Isn't that incredible?! So have you ever really thought what the key verse means to you? (Re-read key verse)

Listen while I read the story, The Birds and the Blizzard to you. (See story at end of lesson).

Jesus came to earth as a man so He could talk with us, show us God's love and tell us about heaven. But even more awesome is that He came to die on the cross so our sins could be paid for. Just like Jennifer led those birds to a safe place, Jesus wants to lead us to a safe place with Him. (Share gospel).

## Learning Activity# 2 Continued

- Does it matter to you that Jesus came to pay for your sins? Why?
- Have you ever been or would you ever be willing to take the punishment for something one of your friends did? If so, what was it they did and what was the punishment? If not, why not?
- There are many ways we can show people love like Jesus did. One way is to share what we have with other people (discuss ways to do this).

**Mission Prayer:** Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray now and thank Jesus who never sinned for coming to earth to save us from our sins. Let's pray that Jesus will help us to love others like He loves us.

## Review

Review how Jesus came to live as a human like us. Review key verse and re-share the gospel.

## Optional Activity

### Where In Israel

**Instructions:** Use the king-size sheet map and the 6 markers. Ask the questions, then have the students find the locations on the map. Make it multiple choice if too difficult.

### Questions:

In what city was Jesus born? (Bethlehem)

In what city did Jesus grow up? (Nazareth)

In what city did Jesus go to the temple? (Jerusalem)

In what city did Jesus live as an adult? (Capernaum)

In what region are Nazareth & Capernaum? (Galilee)

In what region are Jerusalem & Bethlehem? (Judea).

### Jesus at the Temple

**Instructions:** Using the following Secret Code, write Mary's, Joseph's or Jesus' diary entry the day Jesus was found in the temple among the teachers.



## The Birds and the Blizzard 7

I have a friend named Jennifer. One evening she was waiting for her parents to come home, but there was a snowstorm outside, and they were taking longer than they expected.

Jennifer stood at her living room picture window, looking for them (peering gesture) when Thump! (jump back) something hit the glass right next to her! It really surprised Jennifer. I bet it would surprise you, too, wouldn't it?

You know what it was? It was a bird, flying into the glass window. Jennifer could just barely see it now, out on the snow, not moving.

The poor bird! Jennifer thought, I'd better go out and get it. Maybe it has broken a wing or something. So she grabbed her jacket and boots and as she was putting them on, she heard two more thumps!

She jumped up and went to see. Yep, two more birds lay unmoving on the snow. That wasn't good, was it? So she hurried outside and when she got there, there were even more thumps, more birds flying, banging into the glass.

Why did they do that? Jennifer looked up and saw the cold snow whirling around her and the bright warm light in the picture window. Of course! They saw that and wanted to come and get warm. And they couldn't see the window glass! They didn't know the danger.

What should she do? They were still banging into the glass. She ran up and waved her arms around, calling, "No, no! Go away!" But the birds only scattered and fluttered and kept coming back.

Then she had an idea: she ran into the house and turned off the living room lights. There! They quit banging into the picture window. But now what did she hear? Bangs into the kitchen glass! Why, the birds were trying everywhere there was a warm light! So Jennifer ran all through the house, turning off the lights in each room.

Then she ran outside to see if the birds were all right now. They were wheeling and flying around, all confused, not knowing where to go. The snow was getting worse.

Then she had another idea: she could turn on a light in the barn and open the door so the birds could fly in and be warm. And that's what she did. A few birds saw the light and flew in right away. But when she ran back to the front picture window, the rest of the birds couldn't see the barn's light. It was behind the house. And, some of the birds were still banging into the picture window, because they remembered it had looked warm.

Jennifer was so frustrated she almost stamped her feet and yelled. I wish I could become a bird and speak their language, she thought. I'd tell them where the light and the warm place is.

And then something occurred to her: that's why Jesus came.

God became one of us, to speak our language and to tell us where the light and warmth and safety is.

The storm blew over. Jennifer had helped many of the birds, but the thing she never forgot was how she stood in the snow and suddenly understood why Jesus came to us."