

INCARNATION

FAITH FORUM, 26 FEBRUARY 2025



‘Incarnation’ and ‘Birth’ aren’t the same thing

No Hebrew Bible examples of ‘incarnation’ of a divine being *per se*
though it includes sons of God, messiahs, and divine Wisdom

Mark mentions neither ‘incarnation’ nor ‘birth’

Matthew describes birth without *emphasising* virginity or divine sonship

Luke emphasises virginity *and* divine sonship

John introduces incarnation *proper* and divine sonship and divine identity

Paul doesn’t mention virginity, emphasises divine sonship and maybe
incarnation (yes, he does)

Incarnation Problems

Sabellianism: Father/Son/Spirit as ‘modes’; not full-on *incarnation*

Docetism: a *tendency*, not heresy; *appearance* of divinity, no *incarnation*

Adoptionism: God *adopts* a human and *makes him* divine

Apollinarianism: Human body with divine soul

Arianism: Not God nor human, but *tertium quid*, a mediator, *created*

Socinianism: just some guy, you know?

Nestorianism: two separate natures before conception, then one
compound

Eutychianism: Two separate natures, fused into one (swallowed up)

Apostles’ Creed: *qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine*

Nicene Creed: he came down from heaven and was incarnate...

Athanasius: He became human so that we might be made divine

Gregory: What he did not assume, he did not heal

Chalcedon: Fully divine and fully human, unmixed, in perfect harmony