

Divine Intent

*God's Self-Expression Realized as True Man for Redemption,
Glorification, and Reign*

A SEQUENTIAL ECONOMIC, LEGAL, AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

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SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS ARE FROM THE KING JAMES VERSION UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

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Article Overview

This paper begins before the ordinary dispute over whether God did become man in Jesus Christ. Its first question is modal rather than historical: **Could God, if He willed, manifest or incarnate Himself in flesh as true man?** The question is not whether the divine essence can cease to be divine, nor whether infinity can be converted into finitude. It is whether the one infinite God can will His own life, Word, Wisdom, purpose, and personal self-expression to be realized according to a genuine finite human existence while He remains transcendent as God.

If that act is possible, the second question follows: **If God decided to do such a thing for the purpose of redemption, what would that decision necessarily require, and why?** The depth of the manifestation must correspond to the purpose of the manifestation. A temporary appearance may be sufficient to convey a message or display power. It is not sufficient to fulfill human obligation, answer Adamic disobedience, stand within Israel's covenant, serve as kinsman-redeemer, offer a legally valid human sacrifice, act as High Priest and mediator, bear truthful witness, suffer, die, be vindicated, and arise as the firstfruits of redeemed humanity.

The third question therefore concerns economic and legal necessity: **What must the Messiah be and do in order to redeem Israel and the world lawfully, covenantally, sacrificially, priestly, morally, and representatively?** Those requirements determine the properties that must belong to the man. The Messiah must possess true embodiment, rational self-consciousness, a human will, temporal development, experiential knowledge, faith, prayer, obedience, moral agency, emotional and physical vulnerability, legal identity, testimonial standing, solidarity with His fellow man, and a real relationship to God.

The inquiry also demonstrates why glorification is not an optional reward but a necessary stage of redemption. The man who fulfills the legal and sacrificial work must remain the same man in resurrection, administer salvation as living High Priest and mediator, restore human dominion,

reign over every power and authority, and become the first realized form of glorified humanity. Christ's enthronement is therefore the enthronement of divine Wisdom as Redeemer and King within true human existence.

Finally, the paper distinguishes God as the ultimate source of salvation from the human quality of the means God willed. "God saved," "God was in Christ," and even qualified statements such as "the Father died" are governed by the incarnational order: the Father's intent, Word, and presence are realized in the man, while prayer, faith, suffering, death, resurrection, and reign occur according to the genuine human mode. Once that psychology is established, the consistent direction of Jesus' prayer and worship to the Father creates a decisive question for any theory of a distinct divine Son: why does the man never pray to the divine Son or call Him "my God"?

Before turning to the scriptural demonstration, the paper also asks what language should be expected if the one God redeems humanity through His own manifestation. Scripture need not collapse the true man into the Father's transcendent mode by using an unqualified numerical formula. It should identify God as the redemptive source, His Word, image, name, glory, and fullness as His own self-expression, and the Son as the true filial human existence in which that expression obeys, suffers, dies, rises, and is glorified. In that redemptive source-grammar, "God" is not an unidentified fourth term standing behind the Father; the acting God is the Father whose purpose is realized in Christ.

The paper further defines the metaphysical hinge between incarnation and mere representation. Life does not by itself entail omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, or any other unlimited divine property; those describe the infinite manner of God's own life, not the bare reality of life as such. God is life in and of Himself, and every finite existence is a real ordered identity sustained within His life-giving actuality. Ordinary creatures are ordered as others in relation to God: humans, animals, and trees possess distinct finite identities and operations without receiving a detached portion of divine life. Christ is unique because what is begotten in Mary is "from the Holy Spirit," and God's own Word, self-knowledge, character, name, and redemptive will are personally realized in that true human life. The divine life remains infinite in its own mode while the incarnational life is genuinely ordered as finite human consciousness, will, body, relation, and experience. Jesus' life is therefore immediately His own as the human subject and incarnationally God's own because it is not merely another creaturely order sustained by God, but God's personal self-expression realized as man.

The paper also defines how identity functions in that claim. Strict numerical identity means being one and the same individual. Qualitative identity concerns shared or corresponding properties. Generic identity concerns belonging to the same kind or nature. Identity through time concerns the persistence of one subject through real change. Relative Identity proposals speak of two references as the same F but not the same G, while constitution accounts speak of a strong sameness that falls short of absolute identity. Each category must be stated clearly because none of them, merely by being named, explains the incarnation. Jesus is genuinely human and remains numerically the same human subject through birth, death, resurrection, and reign. His finite mind, will, body, and acts of consciousness are not numerically identical with the Father's unrestricted divine mode. Yet the divine identity expressed in Him is not another divine individual: it is the

identity of the one God, the Father. What joins divine source to human realization is God's own self-expressive and constitutive intent. God does not merely cause a man to exist and later assign Him divine meaning. He determines from the beginning that His Word, image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose will be realized as this true human life. The Father is therefore the ultimate divine ground, while Jesus is the immediate human subject who personally lives the incarnate economy.

The paper further distinguishes divine omniscience from incarnational realization. God knows Himself, the entire incarnational economy, and every human suffering exhaustively; the incarnation supplies no missing information to God. Yet exhaustive knowledge does not make created time, historical actuality, or divine love, grief, anger, compassion, delight, and judgment unreal. Events become actual at their appointed moments in created history, while their complete reality, moral meaning, and personal significance never move into or out of God's knowledge or become emotionally remote from Him as they do for finite creatures. The incarnation's uniqueness is therefore redemptive rather than epistemic: God personally realizes His own self-expression as the true human life capable of fulfilling human obedience, sacrifice, priesthood, death, resurrection, and reign.

The passion consequently possesses a unique personal depth. Jesus is not merely another creature made in God's general image. He is the true Son and the perfected human realization of God's own Word, image, glory, character, and saving intent. In the crucified Christ, God beholds both a genuine Son standing before Him in filial faith and obedience and His own self-expression made visible in that Son. The human face and body are truly marred, wounded, and killed; the divine essence is not mutilated or extinguished. Yet the suffering cannot be treated as external to God's saving identity, because the injured humanity is the incarnational existence God has willed and owned as His own image in flesh. Resurrection and glorification are therefore God's vindication of both the faithful Son and the manifested image that humanity dishonored.

Only after those necessities are established does the paper ask whether Scripture predicates those qualities of Jesus. It examines His conception and birth, growth in wisdom and stature, learning of obedience, prayers and supplications, strong crying and tears, faith and trust in God, submission of His will, temptation, pain, death, witness, vindication, resurrection, exaltation, continuing confession of "my God," mediatorial reign, and final delivery of the kingdom to God the Father. It also asks how Jesus consciously knew Himself: as the promised Messiah and true human Son, as the one in whom the Father's Word, image, presence, and saving intent were realized, and as the finite human subject whose knowledge of that identity was received through growth, Scripture, the Spirit, and revelation rather than possessed as the intrinsic omniscience of a second divine mind.

The governing thesis is that God willing His own life as true human existence does not mean God controls, manipulates, or operates an external man. It means the divine ontology is perfected as something it is not by nature: man. God remains infinite as God, yet His own self-expression is genuinely realized as finite, embodied, temporal, relational, passible, and mortal human existence. The result is not an either-or but both: Son of God and Son of Man; God by source, origin, self-

expression, and redemptive intent, and man by the complete quality and actuality of the existence lived.

The paper also distinguishes the essential qualities that constitute humanity and personal subjecthood from the relations of independence and dependence. Independence is not part of the definition of a person, and dependence is not a defect that makes personal agency unreal. Creaturely dependence identifies the source and grounding of a human existence; rational consciousness, first-person identity, mind, will, relation, moral ownership, and intentional action identify its personal quality. This distinction allows Jesus to be wholly dependent upon God in origin, knowledge, mission, resurrection, and glory while remaining the genuine human “I” whose faith, obedience, testimony, suffering, and self-offering are truly His own.

How the Argument Proceeds

This paper is intentionally sequential. It does not begin by importing a complete later metaphysical system into every biblical statement. It allows each question to establish its own proposition and then demonstrate why the next question necessarily follows.

The sequence is:

1. Could God manifest or incarnate Himself as true man if He willed?
2. What would it mean for God to will His own life as human life?
3. How can a created human subject possess a life that is genuinely His own and yet be God’s own incarnational life, and what kind of identity is involved if the humanity is not the divine essence?
4. Why would such willing not amount to control or manipulation of an external man?
5. If the purpose were redemption, what legal and economic requirements would follow?
6. What qualities would the Messiah need in order to fulfill those requirements?
7. Why do independence and dependence not define personhood, and what positive human qualities establish Jesus as a genuine human “I” without making Him an independently grounded source beside God?
8. How must Jesus know Himself if His human mind is genuinely finite while His identity and mission are God’s own self-expression and redemptive intent realized as man?
9. If God redeems man through His own manifestation, what forms of identity, source, image, expression, sonship, and death-language should Scripture use?
10. What personal depth follows when the crucified man is both God’s true Son and the perfected human image of God’s own self-expression, so that God beholds His Son and His own manifested image under violence?
11. If God already knows Himself and every human suffering exhaustively, how can temporal events and divine emotion remain fully real, and why is incarnation still necessary?
12. Does Scripture attribute those qualities to Jesus?
13. What follows concerning His death, vindication, glorification, continuing humanity, and mediatorial kingdom?
14. Why is the glorified man necessary to subject powers and authorities and enthrone divine Wisdom within the created order?
15. How do “God saved,” “God was in Christ,” and “the Father died” operate through the quality of the incarnational means?
16. What does Jesus’ necessary human psychology reveal from the fact that He prays to the Father and never to a distinct divine Son?
17. How does the completed economy return all glory to God the Father as source and ground, until God is all in all?

The paper therefore moves from possibility to necessity, from necessity to property, from property to scriptural demonstration, and from scriptural demonstration to redemptive fulfillment.

Part I — The Possibility of God Manifested as True Man

1. The First Question: Can God Do This If He Wills?

The first question is not yet, “Did God become man?” That is a later question of revelation, history, and scriptural identification. The logically prior question is:

Could God, if He willed, manifest or incarnate Himself in flesh as true man?

The question concerns divine possibility. It asks what may coherently fall within the power of the infinite God. It does not assume in advance that God has chosen to perform the act, and it does not yet ask which historical man, if any, is the realization of that act.

The question must be kept exact. It is not asking whether God can cease to be God. It is not asking whether the eternal divine essence can be changed into created matter. It is not asking whether infinity can be mathematically reduced to finitude while remaining infinity in the same respect. Those formulations would create contradictions and then falsely identify those contradictions with incarnation.

The actual question is whether God can remain all that He eternally is while willing His own life and self-expression to be genuinely realized according to another order of existence: true humanity.

God already acts beyond Himself without ceasing to be Himself. He creates without becoming creation according to His eternal ontology. He sustains the world without being spatially contained by it. He reveals Himself through word, vision, glory, prophetic speech, and historical action without exhausting His infinite being in any one effect. Therefore, the bare fact that an act has a finite effect does not imply that the infinite actor is reduced to the dimensions of the effect.

Incarnation poses a deeper question than creation or ordinary revelation because it concerns not merely an external effect but God’s personal self-expression as a concrete human life. Yet the depth of the proposed act does not make it incoherent merely because it is unique. The burden rests upon anyone who denies the possibility to show that a contradiction necessarily follows from the idea of God personally willing His own expression to exist according to genuine human conditions.

If God is free, intelligent, personal, and omnipotent, there is no obvious contradiction in saying that He can will a created human existence whose ontological source and personal meaning are grounded immediately in His own Word, Wisdom, and redemptive purpose. The human existence would remain created and finite according to humanity. God would remain uncreated and infinite according to divinity. The claim of incarnation would be that the human existence is not foreign to God’s personal act but is the historical, embodied realization of His own self-expression.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

It is coherent to ask whether God can personally realize His own life and self-expression in a genuine human existence without ceasing to be God.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Once the possibility is admitted, the nature of the act must be clarified. We must distinguish incarnation from contradiction, from mere appearance, from external indwelling, and from the divine control of an unrelated man.

2. Omnipotence Does Not Mean Contradiction

Divine omnipotence is often invoked carelessly. Some imagine that if God is omnipotent, every verbal combination must describe a possible act. Others respond that incarnation is impossible because “God cannot become what He is not.” Both approaches fail to distinguish contradiction from self-expression under a new mode of existence.

God cannot be and not be God in the same respect. God cannot cease to possess divine life while remaining the living God. God cannot become created according to the eternal divine essence, because uncreatedness belongs to what God is. These are not limits imposed upon God by something stronger than God. They are expressions of the consistency of divine identity.

But it does not follow that God cannot bring forth a created existence that is personally His incarnational realization. The alternatives are not limited to either conversion of essence or complete externality.

Consider the distinction:

- **Conversion claim:** The divine essence changes into a human essence and ceases to be divine.
- **Incarnational realization claim:** God remains divine while His personal Word and life are realized as a true human existence.

The first is contradictory. The second is not contradictory merely by definition.

The human existence would not make the divine essence finite. Rather, finitude would be a true property of the humanity God has willed. The human mind would not turn divine omniscience into ignorance. Rather, finite and developmental knowledge would belong to the genuine human mind. Human mortality would not extinguish divine life. Rather, death would occur in the mortal life God has personally assumed and made His own in the incarnation.

This distinction allows every predicate to remain truthful according to its mode. God remains infinite in divinity and is finite in the human existence He wills. God remains impassible in divine ontology and suffers in the passible human existence. God remains immortal in divine life and dies in the mortal human life. These are not contradictions unless the qualifying modes are erased and the predicates are asserted of the same nature in the same respect.

The possibility of incarnation therefore rests on a coherent both-and:

God remains what He eternally is, and God personally realizes His self-expression as what He is not by eternal nature: man.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Incarnation need not mean the conversion or destruction of divine ontology. It may coherently mean the personal realization of God’s self-expression in a created human ontology.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If incarnation is not conversion, we must determine how it differs from a mere appearance, a theophany, an indwelling, or the use of a human instrument.

3. Manifestation, Theophany, Indwelling, and Incarnation Are Not Identical

God may reveal Himself without becoming man. Scripture presents visible glory, fire, cloud, voice, dream, angelic mediation, prophetic inspiration, and other forms of divine manifestation. These reveal God truly, but they do not all establish a genuine human existence.

A theophany may look human without being conceived, born, developed, morally tested, or mortal. A vision may communicate divine truth without possessing its own continuous human psychology. A prophet may speak God's word while remaining an independently existing human servant rather than God's own incarnational self-expression. An indwelt person may be filled by God without his human existence becoming the personal realization of God's Word.

The distinctions may be stated as follows:

- **Appearance:** God becomes perceptible under a form suited to the observer.
- **Theophany:** God visibly manifests His presence in creation.
- **Prophetic agency:** God authorizes and speaks through a human servant.
- **Indwelling:** God is actively present within a human life.
- **Incarnation:** God's own personal self-expression is realized as a true human existence.

The last is deeper than the others. Incarnation entails that the human life is not merely a place God visits, a tool God uses, or an agent God commissions. The human existence itself is the intended historical form of God's personal self-expression.

This distinction is decisive because only true incarnation makes the human predicates God's own incarnational predicates without reducing the human existence to a detached instrument. If God merely uses a man, then that man's obedience remains the obedience of an external servant. If God merely appears in human form, then no true human life has been assumed. If God merely indwells a man, then the relation may be profound but it is still a relation between God and a human existence independently constituted as another subject.

Incarnation claims more: God wills His own life to be realized as that human life.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

True incarnation is not exhausted by appearance, agency, or indwelling. It requires a genuine human existence that is personally grounded in God's own act of self-expression.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If the human existence is God's own incarnational realization, we must explain what it means to say that the divine ontology is "perfected as man" without implying that God was defective as God.

4. The Divine Ontology Perfected as Something It Is Not: Man

The statement that the divine ontology is perfected as man must be retained in its intended force.

God is eternally perfect as God. Nothing can be added to the divine essence to make God more divine, more good, more wise, or more actual. The incarnation does not repair a defect in God.

Nevertheless, God is not man according to eternal divine ontology. God is not naturally conceived, born, embodied, finite, developmental, passible, mortal, socially located, or subject to human law. If God wills genuinely to become manifest as man, then His intention must be brought to completion in an order of existence that is not His eternal divine order.

In that sense:

The divine ontology is perfected as something it is not by nature: man.

“Perfected” here means brought to the intended terminus, completed according to purpose, and concretely realized. The perfection is teleological and incarnational. It is not an improvement of God’s divine essence.

An intention may be perfect as intention and still seek realization as effect. An architect may possess a complete design, yet the design is perfected as a building when it is actually constructed. The construction does not improve the architect’s intellect; it realizes the intention in another order. The analogy is limited, but the distinction is useful. God’s Word and Wisdom are perfect in God, yet God’s intent to exist as man reaches incarnational perfection when His self-expression is actually realized as a concrete human life.

The analogy extends only to the completion of an intention in another order. It does not explain the personal identity relation of incarnation. A building remains an external artifact corresponding to an architect’s design. Christ is not an artifact made after a divine blueprint; He is the human realization of God’s own immanent Word and personal self-disclosure. The following distinction therefore must be made explicit.

This means God becomes, in the economy, what God is not in eternal ontology. He becomes man without divinity becoming humanity. He acquires no defect in divine being. Rather, He assumes and personally owns a created mode of existence possessing the qualities proper to man.

The humanity must therefore be genuinely finite. If the so-called human mind is omniscient by its own natural operation, it is not a human mind. If the human will cannot experience natural aversion, deliberation, submission, and obedience, it is not functioning as human will. If the body cannot suffer and die, it is not mortal flesh. The perfection of God as man requires the perfection of the humanity as humanity, not its absorption into divinity.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

God’s incarnational purpose may be described as the divine ontology perfected as man: not divine deficiency corrected, but divine intention completed in a genuine mode of existence that God is not by eternal nature.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If the humanity is the intended perfection of God’s incarnational act, then its genuine operations cannot be treated as rivals to God’s presence. We must next explain why God willing that humanity is not the same as God coercing or manipulating it.

4A. Life, Order, and God's Life Personally Realized in True Humanity

A further question now becomes unavoidable: what makes the life of this genuine human subject God's own incarnational life rather than merely the life of God's most perfect creature? Divine causation, dependence, holiness, and resemblance are not sufficient by themselves. Every creature is caused and sustained by God, and a flawless creature could represent God without being God manifested as man. The incarnational relation therefore requires a more exact account of life itself, the ordering of finite identities within God's life-giving actuality, and the unique sense in which God's life is personally realized in Christ rather than merely sustaining another creature.

LIFE AS DIVINE ACTUALITY AND ORDERED IDENTITY

Life is the actuality of living existence. God does not merely possess life as one attribute among others; God is living actuality in and of Himself, the underived reality from whom every finite life exists. Yet life as such does not demand omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, infinity, or any other unlimited property. Those qualities belong to the unrestricted divine mode of God's life. A human life is life ordered according to human capacities: embodiment, sensation, thought, memory, desire, will, affection, self-reference, relation, development, and purposive action.

No created thing possesses life outside God, as though there were a second reservoir of actuality from which it could live. All created existence is a finite order sustained within the reality of God's life-giving presence, power, and wisdom. God's life is not divided, detached, diminished, lost, or relocated when a creature lives. Rather, His life sustains a real ordered identity that exists in relation to Him. The creature is not a portion of the divine essence, yet neither is its actuality independent of the life by which God continuously gives and sustains it.

This establishes a general truth but not yet incarnation. Ordinary creatures are other-ordered identities within God's sustaining life: a tree is ordered as a tree, an animal as an animal, and a human being as a distinct rational subject standing in relation to God. Each is real, individuated, and other than God in creaturely identity, even though none exists outside His life-giving actuality. Christ is unique because His human life is not merely one more other-ordered existence, even the highest or most flawless one. In Him, God's own life and self-expression are personally ordered toward and realized as true human existence.

"FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT" AND THE CONSTITUTIVE ORIGIN OF THE SON

"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 1:20)

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

Matthew 1:20 states concerning Mary, "that which is begotten in her is from the Holy Spirit" (τὸ ... ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου). The preposition ἐκ identifies source or origin. Luke 1:35 gives the corresponding causal grammar: the Holy Spirit comes upon Mary, the power of the Most High overshadows her, and therefore the holy one born is called Son of God. The human life does not

first arise as an independently constituted person who is later inhabited, adopted, or joined to God. Its beginning is itself the incarnational act.

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit is transformed into biological material or that divine essence becomes a human soul. Mary supplies genuine human derivation, and the conceived life is genuinely created and human. The Spirit is the immediate divine source and constituting power by which this particular human existence is brought forth. “From the Holy Spirit” therefore identifies more than ordinary creaturely dependence: it identifies the unique origin of the Son’s life as the intended human realization of God’s own self-expression.

The force of ἐκ should neither be exaggerated nor reduced. By itself, the preposition does not state the entire metaphysics of incarnation. Within the cumulative grammar of Word made flesh, image of the invisible God, exact imprint, divine fullness, indwelling Father, and Spirit-caused conception, however, it supplies the origin relation that prevents Christ from being reduced to an externally selected representative.

GOD’S PERSONAL LIFE ORDERED AS TRUE HUMANITY

The incarnational order must not be reduced to an external blueprint for a creature who merely resembles God. Its content is God’s own immanent self-knowledge, Word, wisdom, character, name, glory, will, and redemptive intention. God knows Himself exhaustively and personally orders that self-expression toward true human actuality. Christ is therefore not merely another ordered being that reflects God from the outside. He is the personal realization of God’s own life and self-pattern in humanity: a genuine human existence whose identity and meaning arise from God’s own Word and Spirit.

A prophet exists as an other-ordered human subject and afterward receives a word from God. A holy creature may reflect God’s goodness according to the finite order assigned to it. Jesus does not first exist as someone else and then receive the role of expressing God. He exists from conception as the Word made flesh. The Word does not merely inform an already constituted subject; God’s own Word and Spirit personally give this human life its incarnational identity as Son, image, and manifested saving presence.

This is why imprint and image language carries more than resemblance. Representation describes the finite human form through which the invisible God becomes visible. Incarnational identity identifies whose personal life, Word, character, name, glory, presence, and saving will are realized in that form. Jesus is distinct from the Father according to created humanity and filial subject-relation, yet He is not merely another creaturely order pointing toward an absent God. The divine life personally manifested in Him is the Father’s own. Representation and incarnational identity therefore belong together under different respects.

LIFE PERSONALLY REALIZED WITHOUT TRANSFERRED OMNI-PROPERTIES

No theory of compressed or partially disabled divinity is required. Life does not itself entail omni-properties. Omniscience and unlimited power belong to God’s infinite divine mode of life; they are not properties that every realization of life must display. In the incarnation, God’s life is personally realized in a genuinely human order, and that order operates according to human limitations. The human subject knows finitely, develops temporally, receives revelation, remembers, reasons, trusts, deliberates, and learns through experience because His consciousness is truly human.

The same rule governs the whole existence. The body remains local, passible, and mortal. The mind remains finite and developmental. The will remains capable of natural aversion, submission, and obedience. The affective life remains vulnerable to love, grief, fear, compassion, anguish, and joy. These finite properties do not make the life less truly God's incarnational life, because life and mode must not be confused. God's life remains infinite in its divine mode while being personally expressed in a human life ordered according to human properties.

The humanity is therefore not less personally God's own because it lacks divine omni-properties. Life is not lost, removed from God, or made unreal when it is ordered as finite human existence. The limitations belong to the true human order in which God personally realizes His self-expression. If omniscience, omnipotence, or impassibility were required as operations of the human faculties, God would not have realized true humanity but merely displayed divine life through a human appearance.

HOW THE SAME LIFE IS JESUS' OWN AND GOD'S OWN

The life is immediately Jesus' own because Jesus is the concrete human subject who recognizes Himself as "I," owns His body, mind, will, experience, mission, Father, and God as "my," and originates His human acts through genuinely human faculties. His obedience is not God moving a passive instrument; His faith, prayer, suffering, and death are truly His. The human order gives the life a real first-person identity in relation to God.

The same life is God's own in the incarnational sense. This does not mean that Jesus' human mind is the Father's infinite mind or that His body is divine essence. It means that the human life exists from its first moment as the life through which God personally expresses Himself. The Spirit is its immediate divine source, the Word gives it its personal meaning, the Father is the God made known in it, and God's saving will is fulfilled through it. None of these are later additions to an already independent man.

This is the difference between Christ and even the most perfect creature. A perfect creature could obey God flawlessly and show us what God is like while still remaining someone God made and then sent. Jesus is not first constituted as someone else and afterward assigned to reveal God. His very coming-to-be is the incarnation: what is conceived is from the Holy Spirit, and the human subject exists as the Word made flesh.

Jesus' life is therefore truly His own and truly God's own, though not in the same respect. It is Jesus' own because He is the one who thinks, wills, obeys, suffers, and dies. It is God's own because the life is not external to God's self-expression; it is the human existence in which God has chosen personally to make His Word, image, name, character, and saving purpose present.

WHERE THE ACCOUNT REACHES BEDROCK

At this point the account reaches its bedrock claim. The paper is not trying to reduce incarnation to an ordinary kind of creation, inspiration, indwelling, or representation. Those categories all begin with a creature who already exists as someone other than God's personal self-expression. Incarnation begins differently: God wills His own life and Word to be realized as this human subject.

This claim cannot be derived from a more familiar creaturely relation without losing what incarnation means. The question is therefore whether the category is coherent and whether Scripture gives it real content. The category is not empty. It is specified by the Spirit as source, the

Word as God's personal expression, the Father as the one revealed and acting, Jesus as the genuine human subject, and redemption as the purpose carried through His life.

Put simply, God does not merely make a man who resembles Him and then use that man. He personally gives His own self-expression a real human life. The humanity remains created and truly human; the life is nevertheless God's own incarnational life because this man exists as the realized form of God's Word and saving self-disclosure.

THE CONTROLLING DISTINCTION

All creatures live because God gives and sustains their ordered existence, yet they remain creatures other than God. Christ is unique: what is begotten in Mary is from the Holy Spirit, and God's own Word, image, character, name, and saving will are personally realized in this human life. The divine mode remains infinite and the human mode remains finite. Jesus' acts are truly His as man, yet the life itself is God's own incarnational life because God is not merely sustaining another creature; He is personally expressing Himself as this man.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Christ's human life is therefore God's own incarnational life without making the humanity identical to God's unlimited divine mode. Jesus lives that life as a real human subject, yet its origin, identity, and purpose are personally grounded in God's Spirit and Word. This is the bedrock constitutive claim of the paper. It is fundamental, but not empty or arbitrary: its content is supplied by Spirit-origin, the Word made flesh, image and imprint language, the Father's indwelling presence, genuine human subjectivity, and the redemptive purpose fulfilled through the Son.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If God's own life is personally ordered as this true human existence, one question must be answered before agency is considered: in what sense is Jesus identified with God if His created humanity is not the divine essence? The next section defines that identity and explains why divine intent, rather than causation alone, makes this man God's own incarnational self-expression.

4B. Intent, Identity, and God's Self-Expression Realized as Man

The central identity question cannot be avoided. If Jesus is God's own manifestation, what exactly is being identified? If His human mind, body, will, consciousness, and history are not the Father's unrestricted divine ontology, does that make Him merely another creature? If He truly reveals the identity of God, must He be another eternal divine person? These questions cannot be answered by repeating the word identity. The comparisons must first be separated.

THE QUESTION MUST BE DIVIDED BEFORE IT CAN BE ANSWERED

One identity statement can hide several different questions. A coherent account must say what is numerically one, what is genuinely distinct, what grounds the unity, who owns each act, and what kind of relation exists between the Father and the Son.

At least six questions are involved. First, is the divine reality present in Christ the identity of the Father or the identity of another divine subject? Second, is Jesus the same human subject from conception through resurrection and reign? Third, is the human consciousness numerically the same act of consciousness as God's unlimited knowledge? Fourth, who immediately thinks, trusts,

obeys, suffers, and says “I” in the human life? Fifth, what grounds the union between divine source and human existence? Sixth, what makes the Father and Son genuine terms of relation rather than one subject merely described in two ways?

A theory can answer one of these questions correctly while leaving the others untouched. Saying “one person,” “same God,” “same divine identity,” or “one subject” may establish a rule for counting, but it does not automatically explain consciousness, agency, truth, relation, or the ownership of human acts. Identity language must therefore be controlled rather than allowed to settle every issue by itself.

STRICT NUMERICAL IDENTITY: ONE AND THE SAME INDIVIDUAL

Strict numerical identity is the strongest ordinary identity relation. If A is numerically identical with B, A and B are not two individuals. They are one individual referred to in two ways.

Saul of Tarsus and the apostle Paul are numerically the same man. The child Jesus, the crucified Jesus, and the risen Jesus are numerically the same human subject through different stages of one history. Numerical identity does not mean mere similarity, close union, common origin, or shared purpose. It means that the two references identify one and the same individual.

This is why the phrases “numerical sameness” and “numerical identity” ordinarily mean the same thing. If someone speaks of numerical sameness without identity, the word sameness must be redefined. It can no longer mean strict numerical sameness. Likewise, numerical identity without any sameness is incoherent unless sameness has been narrowed to mean complete qualitative similarity.

LEIBNIZ’S LAW AND THE NEED TO STATE THE RESPECT

If two references are strictly identical, whatever is true of the one is true of the other in the same respect, at the same time, and according to the same mode of predication.

This principle is often called Leibniz’s Law. It does not mean that every sentence using two names must sound the same or that a subject cannot change through time. It means that one individual cannot possess and lack the same property at the same time and in the same respect. A man may be seated at noon and standing at one o’clock because the time differs. The same man may be weak according to his body and strong according to his resolve because the respect differs. The qualifications must be real and stated; they cannot be invented only after a contradiction appears.

Applied to Christ, the law forces precision. The Father is not conceived in Mary, does not grow in wisdom, does not receive human revelation, does not trust God, does not die, and is not raised from death according to His unrestricted divine mode. Jesus does all of these according to His true human existence. Therefore, the Father’s divine mode and Jesus’ created human mode cannot be treated as one unqualified numerical ontology or one numerically identical act of consciousness.

This does not disprove incarnation. It disproves a careless identity formula. The incarnation must explain how the Father’s own identity is truly expressed in a human existence without converting the finite mode into the infinite mode or making the human acts direct acts of the divine consciousness.

QUALITATIVE IDENTITY AND GENERIC IDENTITY

Qualitative identity concerns likeness of properties. Generic identity concerns membership in the same kind. Neither one by itself establishes numerical identity.

Two coins may be alike in weight and design while remaining two coins. Peter and John are both human and therefore generically the same in nature, but they are not numerically the same man. Shared qualities and shared nature can explain resemblance or common classification. They do not answer how many concrete subjects exist.

Jesus is generically human because He truly possesses human nature. His body, mind, will, emotion, development, relationships, mortality, and glorification belong to the human order. He also qualitatively represents God in the exact sense intended by the incarnation: God's character, holiness, wisdom, saving purpose, authority, presence, and name are faithfully expressed in Him. But qualitative representation does not turn the finite human mind into the infinite divine mind, and generic humanity does not make Jesus merely one unrelated man among others.

IDENTITY THROUGH TIME: THE SAME SUBJECT UNDER REAL CHANGE

A subject can remain numerically the same while acquiring new states, relations, experiences, and conditions through time.

The infant, the adult, and the glorified man need not possess all the same qualities at every stage in order to remain the same individual. Jesus grows, learns, suffers, dies, and is transformed in resurrection. These are real changes in the history of one human subject. They do not produce a succession of different men.

This diachronic identity is essential to redemption. The one born under law must be the one who obeys. The one who obeys must be the one who offers His life. The one who dies must be the one whom God raises. The one raised must be the one who receives authority and reigns. Without that continuity, the obedient man, the sacrifice, the risen priest, and the reigning Lord would not be one legal and redemptive subject.

RELATIVE IDENTITY: "THE SAME F BUT NOT THE SAME G"

Relative Identity tries to qualify identity by a category or sortal. Two references may be called the same F while not being the same G. The formula can mark a proposed counting rule, but the rule still needs a metaphysical ground.

A sortal is a term that tells us what kind of thing is being counted, such as man, person, body, statue, or God. Relative Identity theories use this structure: x and y are the same F but not the same G. In Trinitarian discussion, the common formula is that the Father and Son are the same God but not the same person.

The formula is not self-explanatory. It immediately raises the question: what does God name in the statement? If God means one shared nature, shared nature does not by itself make several subjects numerically one subject. Peter and Paul share humanity without becoming one man. If God means one concrete divine subject, then the Father and Son are one subject and the alleged divine personal distinction must be explained without borrowing the agency of two subjects. If God means the Father's own divine identity expressed in the Son, the claim approaches the present account, but it still must distinguish divine source from the created human subject.

Relative Identity can therefore state a desired result without yet explaining it. “Same God but different persons” tells us how the theory wants to count. It does not tell us what makes the sameness true, what makes the difference true, how many minds and wills exist, who originates intent, or who immediately owns the acts attributed to each person.

The danger is a counting-rule switch. Unity is counted by one essence or one divine reality, while distinction is counted by names, relations, or persons. A coherent theory must explain why the weaker relation is strong enough to produce distinct personal subjects when needed, yet not strong enough to produce several gods when divine unity is challenged.

SAMENESS WITHOUT STRICT IDENTITY AND CONSTITUTION ACCOUNTS

Some theories speak of a strong sameness that is not absolute numerical identity, often by appealing to constitution. This may distinguish two descriptions or roles without multiplying all underlying matter, but it still does not explain consciousness and agency by itself.

A familiar example is a statue and the lump of bronze that constitutes it. They may occupy the same place and share matter while differing in persistence conditions and description. The statue could cease to exist when melted even though the bronze remains. Philosophers disagree over whether this is genuine sameness without identity, constitution without identity, or merely two ways of speaking about one concrete object.

Whatever judgment is made in that debate, the example cannot simply be transferred to Christ. A statue does not possess a second consciousness, will, legal identity, prayer life, or relation to God. Constitution language may help describe dependence or concrete realization, but it does not tell us who thinks, who obeys, who suffers, or who says “my God.”

The useful insight is narrower: a reality may be wholly constituted from another source without being numerically identical to that source in every respect. The mistake is to infer that constitution alone supplies a complete account of personal identity. In Christology the constitution must include a real human subject, human consciousness, human agency, and a genuine relation toward God.

IDENTITY LABELS DO NOT REPLACE METAPHYSICAL EXPLANATION

Calling a relation “identity,” “sameness,” “one person,” or “real distinction” does not show what the relation contributes. The model must identify its truthmaker and its consequences.

The truthmaker is the reality that makes a statement true. What makes “Jesus is the same man after resurrection” true is the continuity of the human subject whom God raises. What makes “God is in Christ” true cannot be merely the word in. The account must identify the Father’s intent, Word, presence, action, and the human reality in which these terminate.

This produces a simple test. When an identity claim is made, ask: What exactly is one? What exactly is distinct? Where does the difference exist? Does the difference add another mind, will, intention, or act? Who immediately owns the predicate? What real relation grounds the language? If the theory cannot answer, the identity term is functioning as a label rather than an explanation.

WHAT IS NUMERICALLY ONE IN THE INCARNATION

The divine identity present and expressed in Christ is not the identity of a second divine subject. It is the identity of the one God, the Father.

The Father is the one originating divine source. His Word is not another divine ego with another originating intellect, will, or purpose. The Spirit is not an additional source of divine intent. Therefore, the divine life, character, wisdom, name, authority, presence, and redemptive purpose expressed in Christ belong to the one God whose identity is the Father's.

This does not mean that every constituent of the incarnate life is numerically the Father's divine essence. Jesus' body is not the divine essence. His created human mind is not the Father's unlimited intellect. His human act of choosing is not numerically the eternal divine act of willing. His experience of pain is not a change inside impassible divine ontology. His death is not the cessation of divine life.

The numerical unity concerns the divine source and identity being expressed. It does not erase the created reality in which that expression is personally realized.

WHAT IS NUMERICALLY CONTINUOUS IN THE MAN JESUS

Jesus is one numerically continuous human subject through the whole incarnate economy.

The one conceived is the one born. The child who grows is the man who teaches. The man who trusts and obeys is the man who offers Himself. The one crucified is the one raised. The one raised is the one exalted and enthroned. His history belongs to one human "I," not to a series of human states loosely attached to a divine speaker.

This continuity gives His acts legal and moral ownership. The prayer is His prayer. The faith is His faith. The obedience is His obedience. The blood is His blood. The death is His death. The vindication and received glory belong to the same man. A nature considered in abstraction cannot own this history. A concrete human subject does.

IDENTITY OF GROUND IS NOT IDENTITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The fact that one reality ultimately grounds another does not make their acts numerically identical. Source, bearer, power, act, experience, and immediate subject must be distinguished.

God grounds every human mind without performing each human act of thought as the human thinker. God gives and sustains the power to will without making every creaturely choice a numerically identical divine choice. Dependence therefore does not collapse the dependent act into the grounding act.

The point is stronger in the incarnation because the human life is God's own self-expression, but the category remains controlled. The Father is the ultimate source and ground. Jesus is the immediate human knower and actor. The human mind receives, processes, remembers, judges, and learns according to human conditions. The human will desires, chooses, submits, and perseveres according to human conditions.

If the divine and human acts of consciousness were numerically identical, the same act would be both uncreated and created, unlimited and limited, eternally complete and developmentally receptive. That is impossible in the same respect. The divine and human consciousnesses therefore cannot be one numerically identical conscious act merely because the human life is grounded in God.

THE HUMAN “I” MUST HAVE A HUMAN OWNER

A genuine human consciousness is not an ownerless field of experience. Someone humanly knows, remembers, trusts, obeys, fears, suffers, and speaks.

If the Father is the immediate psychological “I” of the human consciousness, then the Father becomes the one who learns, receives revelation, trusts God, submits His will, and calls another “my God.” The human psychology then becomes a finite stream of the Father’s divine subjectivity.

If the human mind and will possess no genuine human owner, the theory gives Christ human faculties without a human someone. The intellect thinks, the will chooses, and the body suffers, but no human subject owns the acts. That preserves a verbal person count by emptying the humanity of its first-person center.

The coherent alternative is that Jesus is the immediate human subject of His human life. This does not make Him an independently sourced human person later joined to God. It means that God’s incarnational act truly constitutes a rational human someone. Personal reality and independent sourcehood are not the same property.

ULTIMATE DIVINE GROUND AND IMMEDIATE HUMAN SUBJECT

The central distinction is not between a real person and an impersonal nature. It is between the ultimate divine ground and the immediate human subject.

The Father is the ultimate ground of the incarnation, mission, revelation, authority, resurrection, exaltation, and redemptive purpose. Jesus is the immediate subject who grows, learns, prays, trusts, obeys, suffers, testifies, dies, rises, and receives glory.

The Father does not perform the man’s human thinking, trusting, and obeying instead of Him. Rather, the Father wills and sustains a genuine human subject whose acts are truly human and truly His own. God’s constitutive action establishes the agent. It does not replace the agent.

This distinction blocks two opposite errors. It blocks the external-man theory in which God merely adopts or uses an independently constituted person. It also blocks the flesh-suit theory in which a divine consciousness uses human faculties while no human “I” personally lives the life.

A GENUINE RELATION REQUIRES TWO REAL TERMS

A difference between unincarnate and incarnate existence may be a real modal difference, but mode difference alone does not automatically produce the Father-Son relation described in Scripture.

One subject can exist privately and publicly, inwardly and outwardly, or under different descriptions without thereby becoming two personal terms in covenantal relation. Therefore, saying “transcendent God” and “incarnate God” names a difference but does not yet explain prayer, command, obedience, love, witness, sending, receiving, raising, or glorifying.

The biblical relation has an asymmetric order. The Father sends; the Son is sent. The Father gives command and teaching; the man receives and obeys. The Father hears; Jesus prays. The Father raises and glorifies; the man is raised and receives glory. Jesus calls the Father “my God.” These relations require a divine term and a genuine human term.

The two terms do not have to be two divine subjects. The Father is the transcendent divine source. Jesus is the human Son personally constituted as the realization of the Father's Word. Their relation is therefore genuine without multiplying divine minds, wills, or originating sources.

INCARNATIONAL IDENTITY: INTENTIONAL AND CONSTITUTIVE GROUNDING

The unity of the incarnation is not a flat equation of divine and human ontology. It is God's intentional and constitutive realization of His own self-expression as this true human life.

God grounds and sustains every creature. Causation alone therefore cannot distinguish incarnation from creation. The decisive question is not only who causes the human life to exist, but what God wills this life to be in relation to Himself.

God wills a prophet as another human subject who receives His word. He wills creation as an order distinct from Himself. In the incarnation, He wills His own Word, image, wisdom, character, name, presence, glory, and saving purpose to be realized as a true human life. The intention is not merely that a man exist and later be used. It is that God's own self-expression exist as this man.

The Father's intent, His Word, and the human realization must remain distinct but inseparable in explanation. The Father intends and determines the redemptive end. His Word supplies the determinate content of His self-expression. The Spirit brings forth and operates the life. Jesus is the concrete human actuality in whom that content is personally lived.

This is intentional grounding because the identity and purpose of the human existence arise within God's incarnational act. It is constitutive grounding because God does not attach Himself to an already independent man. He constitutes the human subject from the beginning as His own incarnational self-expression.

The result is stronger than resemblance, indwelling, adoption, representation, or external instrumentality. Yet it does not require the humanity to become the divine essence or the human consciousness to become numerically identical with God's consciousness.

WHY THE SCRIPTURAL DESCRIPTIONS FIT THIS IDENTITY STRUCTURE

The divine and human descriptions of Christ identify different but inseparable aspects of one incarnational economy.

- The Word made flesh identifies God's own self-expression realized as true human existence.
- The image of the invisible God identifies the Father made visible and knowable through the human Son.
- The exact representation identifies complete faithfulness to the divine source, character, presence, and purpose without transferring every unlimited divine property into the human faculties.
- God in Christ identifies the Father's presence, action, and saving purpose as personally realized in the man rather than externally associated with an unrelated agent.
- The man Christ Jesus identifies the genuine human subject who mediates, believes, obeys, suffers, dies, is raised, and reigns.

The divine descriptions answer whose Word, image, presence, identity, and saving purpose are manifested. The human descriptions answer what kind of existence lives the economy and who immediately owns its human acts. Neither side may erase the other.

A DEBATE-READY IDENTITY TEST

Before accepting any identity formula, require the theory to answer the same sequence of questions.

- What kind of identity is claimed: strict numerical identity, qualitative likeness, generic sameness, identity through time, Relative Identity, constitution, representation, or grounding?
- What exactly is numerically one: divine essence, divine subject, source, mind, will, operation, human subject, consciousness, or act?
- What exactly is distinct, and where does the difference exist?
- Who is the immediate owner of each statement, desire, prayer, act of faith, act of obedience, suffering, and relation?
- Does the distinction produce another mind, will, intention, or operation, or only another description or relation?
- What real ground makes the Father and Son genuine terms of relation without creating two divine subjects?

A model that cannot answer these questions has not yet explained the incarnation. It has only announced how it wishes the realities to be counted.

THE CONTROLLING IDENTITY RULE

The divine identity expressed in Jesus is the identity of the one God, the Father. Jesus is one numerically continuous human subject who personally lives the incarnate economy. His created mind, will, body, consciousness, and human acts are not numerically identical with the Father's unrestricted divine mode. The unity is grounded in the Father's intentional and constitutive realization of His own Word, image, presence, and saving purpose as this true human life. The Father is the ultimate divine ground; Jesus is the immediate human subject.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Incarnational identity is neither an unqualified numerical equation between infinite deity and finite humanity nor a loose relation between God and an external man. It is the constitutive identity by which the one God's own self-expression is realized as a genuine human subject. This preserves one divine source, real human agency, numerical continuity of the man, distinct divine and human acts of consciousness, and a genuine Father-Son relation.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Because God's intent constitutes a genuine human subject rather than an instrument, the man's mind, will, faith, obedience, and suffering must be truly His own. The next section explains why divine constitution establishes human agency instead of coercing or replacing it.

5. God Willing His Own Human Existence Is Not Control or Manipulation

A central error is to imagine the divine will and the human life as two competing efficient causes operating on the same level. On this picture, the more God determines the incarnation, the less real the human agency becomes. If God is the source, the man must be a puppet; if the man acts genuinely, he must be independent of God.

That is another false either-or.

God's will is constitutive of the human existence. It is not an external force exerted upon a preexisting man. God does not first encounter an unrelated human subject and then force him to speak, pray, trust, obey, or die. God wills His own life and self-expression to be realized as the human existence itself.

Constitution and coercion are categorically different.

To constitute a rational agent is to will that an agent with real rational powers exists. To coerce an agent is to override the agent's rational powers after the agent exists. The first grounds agency; the second negates or restricts agency.

Thus:

- God wills the human intellect to exist; therefore the intellect truly thinks.
- God wills the human will to exist; therefore the will truly wills.
- God wills a life capable of faith; therefore the man truly trusts.
- God wills a life under command; therefore the man truly obeys.
- God wills passible flesh; therefore the man truly suffers.
- God wills mortal existence; therefore the man truly dies.

The human acts are not less real because God is the source of the existence. They are real precisely because God wills a real humanity rather than a theatrical appearance.

This distinction is especially important for redemption. Obedience cannot be legally or morally credited to the man if the man never originates the obedient act according to his human will. Prayer cannot reveal dependence if it is merely words placed into a mouth by an overriding consciousness. Faith cannot be human faith if no finite human subject entrusts himself to God. Love cannot fulfill human righteousness if it is only divine affection passing through human organs.

God's sovereign intention therefore does not eliminate the immediate human subject. It brings him forth.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

God's will grounds the existence and mission of the man; it does not replace or manipulate the man's genuine human operations. Constitutive willing is the condition of authentic human agency, not its denial.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Once divine grounding and human operation are distinguished without separation, the false choice between "God" and "man" can be rejected. We must next articulate the both-and of Son of God and Son of Man.

6. Not Either God or Man, but Both Son of God and Son of Man

The incarnation cannot be forced into the absolute choice that Jesus is either God or man in such a way that one identity eliminates the other.

If He is called God in a manner that empties His humanity of rational and moral operation, the incarnation collapses into an appearance or instrument. If He is called man in a manner that detaches Him from God's own self-expression and redemptive act, the incarnation collapses into an independently existing servant merely chosen by God.

The incarnational claim is both:

- **Son of God** according to divine source, conception, self-expression, purpose, authorization, and presence.
- **Son of Man** according to actual human constitution, identity, experience, representation, suffering, death, and glorification.

These are not two halves joined to form one complete being. Nor are they two interchangeable labels for the same unqualified mode. They identify the two inseparable truths of the incarnational reality.

As Son of God, His human existence is not an accidental man later adopted into divine favor. His origin and identity are grounded immediately in God's own act. The holy thing conceived is called Son of God because of the divine act by which He is brought forth (Luke 1:35). He is God's Word and Wisdom personally realized in history.

As Son of Man, He is not merely divine presence hidden inside a body. He is a man who grows, thinks, wills, learns, prays, believes, loves, suffers, dies, rises, and reigns. His humanity is the real quality of the existence through which the divine purpose is accomplished.

The perfection of the incarnation is not achieved by removing the distinction. It is achieved by refusing separation while preserving the truth of each mode.

God is not less present because the man truly thinks. The man is not less human because his existence is God's own self-expression. Divine source and human actuality belong together.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The coherent incarnational possibility is a both-and: God's own self-expression as Son of God genuinely realized as Son of Man, with divine source and complete human actuality neither confused nor separated.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Possibility alone does not determine how deeply God would choose to realize Himself as man. The intended purpose must determine the required depth. The next part therefore asks: if God chose incarnation for redemption, what would that purpose necessitate?

Part II — If God Chose Incarnation for Redemption, What Would It Necessitate?

7. Purpose Determines the Required Depth of Manifestation

The fact that God could manifest Himself as true man does not by itself explain why He would do so or how complete the manifestation must be. The purpose of the act determines the depth of the act.

If God wished only to communicate information, prophetic speech could accomplish the purpose. If He wished only to make His presence visible, a theophany could accomplish the purpose. If He wished only to demonstrate power, signs and wonders could accomplish the purpose. If He wished only to appoint a human governor, an anointed king could accomplish the purpose.

But redemption as Scripture presents it involves more than information, visibility, power, or government. It addresses an order of failure located within human history and human obligation. Humanity has sinned. Adam disobeyed. Israel transgressed covenant. Flesh and blood are subjected to corruption and death. The law identifies guilt. The priestly order requires representation and offering. The messianic promises require a son of David, servant, prophet, priestly king, righteous sufferer, and covenant representative. The nations require reconciliation and judgment. Creation itself awaits liberation from corruption.

A shallow manifestation cannot fulfill a deep redemptive purpose.

If God intends to answer human failure from within human existence, He must manifest Himself to the depth required by the failure and the remedy. He must not merely appear alongside humanity; He must assume the condition. He must not merely command obedience from above; the obedience must be fulfilled within human life. He must not merely declare suffering understood; the suffering must be undergone. He must not merely defeat death externally; death must be entered and overcome in the life of the representative man.

Therefore, the question is not simply, “How much humanity could God display?” It is:

What depth of true human existence is required by God’s chosen redemptive end?

The answer will be determined by the legal, covenantal, sacrificial, priestly, representative, moral, and eschatological functions of the Messiah.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The mode and depth of incarnation must correspond to the intended redemptive purpose. A manifestation insufficient for the legal and covenantal task would not be the manifestation God intended.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

To determine the required depth, redemption must be understood not merely as an exercise of raw power but as the fulfillment of an ordered moral and covenantal economy.

8. Redemption Is Not Merely the Exercise of Divine Power

God could annihilate an enemy by power. He could end a historical conflict by decree. He could create another world or another race. But biblical redemption is not described as God ignoring the moral and covenantal order He established. It is described as God acting faithfully within His own righteousness, promises, covenants, and revealed purposes.

The problem of sin is not merely that a hostile power exists. Sin is transgression, rebellion, guilt, corruption, alienation, and death. The remedy must address all of these dimensions.

A merely external act of power might remove a consequence without fulfilling the righteousness embedded in the covenantal order. If God simply declared human obedience unnecessary, the significance of righteousness, commandment, covenant, and faithful representation would be emptied. If God simply treated mortality as irrelevant, the promised defeat of death through resurrection would lose its meaning. If He simply bypassed the priestly and sacrificial patterns He established, those patterns would no longer reveal His wisdom but would become arbitrary preliminaries discarded at the moment of fulfillment.

The redemptive economy instead displays consistency between God's purpose and God's means. God does not save by denying the truth of human obligation. He saves by fulfilling it. He does not answer Adamic disobedience with an unrelated decree. He answers it with the obedience of one man (Romans 5:19). He does not address Israel's covenant failure by abandoning Israel's promises. He brings forth the Messiah within Israel, under law, in the line of Abraham and David. He does not abolish priestly representation by refusing representation. He establishes the merciful and faithful High Priest made like His brothers (Hebrews 2:17). He does not treat death as unreal. He enters death and raises the man from the dead.

Divine power remains the source of every stage, but power acts through ordered wisdom. The legal and covenantal form of redemption is not a restriction imposed on God by an external court. It is the form God freely establishes and faithfully completes according to His own character and promise.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Biblical redemption is the wise and faithful fulfillment of the moral, covenantal, representative, priestly, sacrificial, and mortal conditions of the human problem, not the arbitrary cancellation of those conditions by raw power.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If redemption fulfills rather than ignores the human order, the redeemer must stand within that order. We must therefore identify the fundamental legal principle: the one who represents must truly belong to those represented.

9. The Representative Must Be What He Represents

Representation requires a real relation between the representative and the represented. An angel may serve human beings, deliver a message, or execute judgment, but an angel is not thereby the representative man. God may authorize any creature for a task, but authorization alone does not make the agent conspecific with those whose obligations are being fulfilled.

The Messiah's redemptive offices require Him to represent humanity before God and to represent God toward humanity. The first side of that mediation cannot be satisfied merely by divine presence. It requires genuine membership in the human order.

The principle is straightforward:

A representative who fulfills the obligation of a class must belong to the class whose obligation He fulfills.

If the obligation is human obedience, the obedience must be human. If the guilt addressed belongs to flesh and blood, the redeemer must share flesh and blood. If the priest is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, he must stand among men. If the death overcome is human death, the victorious life must be a human life capable of dying and rising.

This is why Hebrews emphasizes participation in flesh and blood, likeness to the brothers, temptation, suffering, priesthood, and death. These are not secondary illustrations added after the legal work is complete. They constitute the solidarity by which the work belongs to the human order.

A divine being merely acting through a human shell would not fulfill this requirement. The action would remain divine action using a human instrument. The instrument might bleed, but the representative obedience would not arise from a genuine human rational and volitional life. Likewise, an unrelated human person later adopted or merely indwelt by God would possess humanity but would not necessarily be God's own incarnational self-expression.

The intended Messiah must therefore unite divine source with true human membership.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Because the Messiah represents humanity, His humanity must be ontologically, psychologically, morally, and legally real. He must be a genuine human member, not a visible instrument or appearance.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Humanity in Scripture is not an abstract category detached from history. The Messiah must stand not only within humanity generally but within the particular covenantal history of Israel through which salvation comes to the world.

10. The Messiah Must Stand Within Israel's Covenantal History

The redemptive purpose moves through Israel. The promises to Abraham, the law given through Moses, the priesthood, sacrifices, kingship, prophetic hope, Davidic covenant, exile, restoration, and expectation of the kingdom all form the historical and legal field in which "Messiah" has meaning.

A redeemer of the world who bypasses Israel would not fulfill the scriptural economy. The nations are blessed through Abraham's seed. The king is David's son. The servant bears the mission of Israel in faithfulness. The new covenant is promised to the house of Israel and the house of Judah and then extends blessing outward. The Messiah is therefore not merely "a human being." He must possess the historical identity necessary to fulfill the promises and obligations assigned to Israel's representative.

This requires:

- birth within the covenant people;
- genealogy and historical identity;
- standing under the law;
- relation to Abraham and David;
- participation in Israel's worship and Scripture;
- fulfillment of prophetic vocation;
- covenantal faithfulness where Israel failed;
- and royal qualification to receive the promised kingdom.

The phrase “born under the law” is legally significant (Galatians 4:4). It identifies the Son's human life as situated within an existing order of obligation. He does not obey law as a detached spectator. He lives within the covenantal history where obedience, righteousness, sacrifice, priesthood, and messianic expectation have defined content.

The world's redemption therefore requires a Messiah who can be Israel's Messiah in truth. The universal does not abolish the particular. The particular is the divinely chosen path to the universal.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a genuine historical and legal identity within Israel, because the redemption of the world fulfills rather than bypasses the covenantal promises and obligations given through Israel.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Standing within the covenant means standing under obligation. The Messiah must therefore possess the rational and moral capacity to understand, own, and fulfill the law and mission assigned to Him.

11. Legal Obligation Requires a Rational and Volitional Human Agent

Law addresses agents. A command is not directed to an abstract nature as such. It is directed to someone capable of understanding what is required, recognizing the authority of the lawgiver, intending a response, and performing or refusing the commanded act.

For the Messiah to be born under law and fulfill righteousness, He must possess:

- a rational human intellect capable of understanding command and purpose;
- a human will capable of responding to that understanding;
- first-person identity capable of owning the act;
- moral awareness capable of distinguishing obedience from disobedience;
- and continuity of identity through which a life of faithfulness may be evaluated.

Behavior is not sufficient. A stone may move in exact correspondence with an external force, but it does not obey. An animal may be conditioned into a pattern, but covenantal obedience requires rational recognition and willing fidelity. Likewise, if Jesus' human faculties merely execute outputs imposed by an omnipotent controller, the behavior may conform to law while lacking the human agency that gives obedience its moral and representative meaning.

The Messiah must be able to say:

- I know what my God requires.

- I desire according to my human condition.
- I submit my will to His will.
- I act because I love Him.
- I remain faithful under suffering.
- I fulfill the work given to me.

This is why first-person identity becomes legally indispensable. “I,” “me,” and “my” are not grammatical ornaments. They identify the legal subject whose will, words, testimony, life, and obedience are at issue.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Covenantal fulfillment requires a concrete rational human agent whose understanding, will, and first-person identity make the obedience morally and legally His own.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If the Messiah must own His acts, His human existence must be non-coerced. We must therefore distinguish divine grounding from manipulation in the specific context of redemptive obedience.

12. Redemptive Obedience Cannot Be Coerced or Simulated

Obedience has moral content only when it is the faithful act of the one under command. The mere production of commanded behavior by an external power is not obedience in the full legal and covenantal sense.

If a ruler physically moves a subject’s hand to sign a declaration, the signature is not the subject’s free testimony. If a speaker’s mouth is controlled to pronounce an oath, the words are not the speaker’s accountable witness. If a will is overridden so that refusal is not a real property of the agent, the resulting behavior cannot be praised as the agent’s submission in the ordinary moral sense.

This does not mean the Messiah must be metaphysically independent of God. No creature is independent of God. Nor does it mean God cannot sustain, empower, reveal, strengthen, or providentially order His mission. It means the human will must genuinely originate the human response according to the created capacity God has willed.

The difference is between:

- **God causing the human agent to exist with real powers, and**
- **God using those powers as passive mechanisms while the human agent contributes no real origination.**

The first is incarnation with authentic humanity. The second is manipulation.

This distinction protects the meaning of “He became obedient unto death” (Philippians 2:8) and “He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8). The obedience is redemptively effective because it is truly lived by the man.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The Messiah’s obedience must be uncoerced human obedience: grounded, sustained, and purposed by God, yet genuinely originated through the man’s own rational human will.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

A complete redemptive economy requires more than obedience in general. It requires a series of specific legal offices and acts. The next part develops each requirement individually.

Part III — The Legal, Covenantal, Sacrificial, and Economic Requirements of the Messiah

13. The Messiah Must Possess a Definite Legal Identity

Before the Messiah can fulfill any office, He must be a definite legal subject. Legal actions attach to a “who.” A sacrifice may be described according to what is offered, but the offering becomes a voluntary sacrificial act only when someone owns and gives it. A testimony becomes legally meaningful only when a witness understands and owns the words. Obedience becomes attributable only when a subject recognizes obligation and acts accordingly.

The Messiah must therefore possess a stable identity through time. The child, the adult teacher, the suffering servant, the crucified man, and the risen Lord must be the same identifiable human subject. Without continuity, one could not say that the one who learned is the one who obeyed, that the one who obeyed is the one who died, or that the one who died is the one God raised and vindicated.

Legal identity includes at least the following:

- self-awareness as the subject of one’s own acts;
- recognition of what belongs to oneself as “my”;
- memory connecting earlier and later experience;
- responsibility for speech and conduct;
- capacity to enter or fulfill an assigned office;
- and public identifiability before God and men.

This is why the sayings “my will,” “my life,” “my blood,” “my God,” and “my Father” carry more than devotional force. They reveal the structure of the Messiah’s legal identity. The one who says “my life” is capable of giving the life that is His. The one who says “my will” is the one whose submission may be morally evaluated. The one who says “my God” identifies the divine authority before whom He stands.

The Messiah cannot be only a “what” — human nature in abstraction. He must be the concrete man whose actions constitute the redemptive history.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

Every later office — representative, servant, witness, sacrifice, priest, mediator, king, and judge — requires a continuous, rational, and legally accountable human identity.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

A legally identifiable Messiah must also possess the kinship necessary to act for the people He represents.

14. The Messiah Must Be a Kinsman and True Brother

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” (Hebrews 2:11)

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Hebrews 2:14–15)

Biblical redemption repeatedly employs the principle of kinship. The kinsman-redeemer acts because he belongs to the family whose loss, bondage, inheritance, or vulnerability is at issue. The exact legal provisions vary across Israel’s law, but the underlying principle is stable: redemption is not performed by an unrelated spectator who lacks standing.

Hebrews applies this logic to the Messiah by emphasizing shared flesh and blood, brotherhood, likeness, suffering, and priestly solidarity (Hebrews 2:11–18). Because the children share flesh and blood, He likewise participates in the same. He is not ashamed to call them brothers. He is made like His brothers in every respect relevant to His priestly mission.

True kinship requires more than visual similarity. It requires participation in the actual human condition:

- embodied life;
- birth and development;
- dependence;
- social relation;
- temptation;
- suffering;
- mortality;
- and the capacity to die.

A being who merely wears flesh but does not live through a human mind and will does not possess complete kinship. The body would be human, but the governing subjectivity would remain outside the human order. Conversely, a merely human figure unrelated to God’s own incarnational act would possess kinship but not the divine grounding and self-expression central to the proposed incarnation.

The Messiah must be both truly one of us and truly the realization of God’s saving act.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The redeemer must share the human condition in reality, because legal and priestly solidarity cannot be supplied by appearance or external control.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Human kinship alone does not answer the historical form of the promise. The Messiah must also be the faithful representative of Israel and the heir of the covenantal promises.

15. The Messiah Must Be the Faithful Israelite and Covenant Servant

Israel’s history creates a legal and prophetic expectation of a faithful servant who embodies the vocation of the people and succeeds where they fail. The Messiah must not merely be ethnically located within Israel. He must fulfill Israel’s calling in obedience to God.

This requires Him to live within the world of Israel's Scripture, worship, law, hope, and covenant. He must hear the law as addressed to Him. He must love God with whole-hearted fidelity. He must enact righteousness among the people. He must honor the covenantal purpose rather than exploit messianic authority for self-exaltation.

The role includes:

- identification with Abraham's seed;
- Davidic qualification for kingship;
- prophetic faithfulness in speaking God's word;
- servant obedience under suffering;
- and covenant loyalty extending blessing to the nations.

The Messiah's faithfulness cannot be a divine performance placed above Israel's human vocation. It must be the human fulfillment of that vocation. Otherwise Israel's failure has not been answered within Israel.

This is why His knowledge of Scripture, His obedience, His prayers, His worship, and His resistance to temptation matter. He does not merely cite Israel's texts as divine author. He lives through them as the faithful man who receives and obeys God's revelation.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must be a genuine covenant member whose life fulfills Israel's vocation from within, so that salvation for the world arises through the faithful seed promised in Israel's history.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Faithful covenant membership requires being under law and fulfilling righteousness in actual human conduct.

16. The Messiah Must Be Born Under Law and Fulfill Righteousness

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4-5)

To redeem those under law, the Messiah is born under law (Galatians 4:4-5). This is not merely a chronological fact. It establishes legal location.

Being under law means that the human life stands within an order of command, obligation, blessing, judgment, worship, and covenantal fidelity. The Messiah must fulfill righteousness not by possessing divine holiness in abstraction, but by living human obedience within the order assigned to Him.

He must therefore be capable of:

- understanding commandment;
- discerning good and evil;
- recognizing God as lawgiver;
- willing obedience;
- rejecting temptation;
- acting justly toward others;

- and persevering through suffering.

The baptismal statement that it is fitting to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) reflects this representative orientation. The Messiah does not exempt Himself from the human path of obedience. He enters it and completes it.

His fulfillment of law cannot be reduced to mechanical conformity. The law addresses heart, love, faithfulness, truth, mercy, and justice. Therefore His internal human life is legally relevant. He must love God as man, trust God as man, and love His neighbor as man.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a real human moral life capable of fulfilling righteousness under law, because external conformity without human understanding and willing is not the covenantal obedience required.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

The significance of this obedience becomes clearest in the Adam-Christ contrast. The Messiah must answer the disobedience of the first man through the obedience of a second representative man.

17. The Messiah Must Act as the New Adam and Representative Head

“Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18–19)

Paul’s comparison between Adam and Christ is fundamentally representative. Through one man’s disobedience many are constituted sinners; through the obedience of one many are constituted righteous (Romans 5:12–19). The contrast requires correspondence at the point of agency.

Adam’s disobedience is human disobedience. He understands command, encounters desire, chooses against God, and brings death into the human order. The answering obedience must therefore be human obedience. A purely divine act using a human body would not stand as the corresponding act of a new human head.

The Messiah as new Adam must:

- inhabit genuine human existence;
- confront temptation within that existence;
- exercise a human will;
- choose fidelity;
- remain obedient unto death;
- and emerge as the beginning of a renewed humanity.

This representative logic also explains why resurrection is not an optional epilogue. The new Adam must not only die; He must become the living head of the new creation. His glorified humanity establishes the form and future of those united to Him.

The Adam-Christ parallel therefore demands continuity between obedience, death, resurrection, and headship. The same man who obeys becomes the firstfruits of the restored human order.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah's obedience must be genuinely human and representative, because only the obedient man can answer the disobedient man and become head of renewed humanity.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Representative obedience must include faith toward God, especially under conditions where sight, suffering, and circumstance press against the promise.

18. The Messiah Must Exercise Genuine Human Faith and Trust

“And again, I will put my trust in him.” (Hebrews 2:13)

“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke 23:46)

Faith is not merely possession of correct theological information. It is the rational and volitional entrusting of oneself to God. It includes confidence in God's character, fidelity to God's promise, reliance upon God's power, and perseverance when immediate circumstances do not supply visible confirmation.

The Messiah's faith must be human faith. It must arise within finite, embodied, temporal existence.

He experiences what men experience:

- the pressure of hunger;
- the pain of rejection;
- hostile words;
- false accusation;
- the desertion of companions;
- bodily weakness;
- anticipation of suffering;
- and the approach of death.

These conditions are not illusions. They form the environment in which trust is exercised.

Faith may stand against what the body feels, what the eyes see, what the ears hear from hostile men, and what the immediate situation appears to promise. This does not make faith irrational. The rational ground of faith is God. But the experiential field of faith includes circumstances that test whether the man will orient Himself by God's word or by fear, pressure, and self-preservation.

Hebrews places “I will put my trust in Him” within its Christological presentation (Hebrews 2:13). Jesus entrusts His spirit to the Father in death (Luke 23:46). Hebrews 5:7 presents Him praying to the One able to save Him from death. These are acts of dependence.

An intrinsically omniscient human consciousness would not possess faith in the same finite epistemic mode. Faith is not ignorance alone, but human faith includes dependence upon

revelation, promise, and the unseen future. The Messiah's faith must therefore be real rather than dramatic representation.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The faithful Messiah must entrust Himself to God from within finite human experience, because human unbelief is answered by human fidelity, not by the appearance of trust from a consciousness incapable of dependence.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Faith becomes redemptively concrete in obedience. The Messiah must not only trust inwardly; He must submit and act through suffering.

19. The Messiah Must Learn and Fulfill Obedience Through Suffering

Hebrews 5:8 states that though He was a Son, He learned obedience through the things He suffered. The text does not imply prior sin. It distinguishes moral innocence from experiential completion.

One may understand the meaning of obedience before encountering the full cost of obedience. Yet obedience unto death becomes historically actual only when the command is followed under the pressure of suffering and death.

The Messiah must therefore move through real human stages:

- knowledge of God's will;
- anticipation of the cost;
- natural human aversion to pain and death;
- prayer and supplication;
- submission of His will;
- endurance of suffering;
- and completion of the commanded work.

This is learning by enactment. The man comes to know obedience not merely as a concept but as a lived reality completed in suffering.

The requirement rules out a staged humanity. If the divine consciousness already possesses the entire human experience timelessly and cannot acquire anything through suffering, then the language of learning must be reduced to outward appearance. But Hebrews grounds priestly qualification in what He suffers. The suffering contributes genuinely to the history of the man.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must undergo real experiential formation through suffering, because His obedience and priestly qualification are accomplished historically rather than merely displayed.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

A representative whose obedience benefits others must remain personally righteous. Therefore His testing must result in sinlessness.

20. The Messiah Must Be Tested Yet Without Sin

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

Sinlessness is necessary for the Messiah’s representative, sacrificial, priestly, and judicial roles. A guilty representative cannot answer guilt by offering his own unrighteous life. A corrupt priest cannot be the final faithful mediator. A false witness cannot establish truth. A rebellious king cannot administer the righteous kingdom.

Yet sinlessness must not be purchased by eliminating genuine testing.

Temptation does not require indwelling sin. It requires the presentation of a course contrary to obedience under conditions where natural desires, fears, needs, or ambitions create real pressure. Hunger is not sin. Desire for life is not sin. Aversion to pain is not sin. Desire for recognition is not inherently sin. These human capacities become the field in which fidelity is tested.

The Messiah must therefore possess:

- bodily appetites;
- emotional vulnerability;
- awareness of possible actions;
- understanding of God’s will;
- and a human will that remains ordered toward God.

His sinlessness is not the inactivity of a nature incapable of human response. It is the victorious fidelity of the man who is tempted yet does not sin (Hebrews 4:15).

This gives His righteousness legal content. He is not simply declared sinless by definition. He lives without sin in the actual environment of testing.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess genuine human susceptibility to testing while remaining morally faithful, because sinlessness must be historically demonstrated in the same human order He represents.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

A sinless representative is qualified to offer a life not already forfeited through personal guilt. The argument therefore moves to sacrifice and atonement.

21. The Messiah Must Possess an Offerable Human Life

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.” (John 10:17–18)

Sacrifice requires a life capable of being offered. The Messiah cannot offer “humanity” in abstraction. He must possess a concrete embodied life that He owns and voluntarily gives.

The legal and moral elements include:

- a body capable of suffering;
- blood capable of being shed;

- life capable of being surrendered;
- innocence qualifying the offering;
- conscious intention;
- and voluntary self-giving.

When Jesus speaks of laying down “my life,” the possessive is decisive. The life is His human life. He is not merely surrendering an external body entrusted to Him while His real personal existence remains untouched. The embodied life is the life He lives and the life He offers.

Atonement language varies across Scripture — sacrifice, Passover, covenant blood, sin-bearing, ransom, reconciliation, cleansing, and representative death. These images should not be collapsed into a single crude mechanism. Yet they converge in requiring the actual human life of the Messiah to enter death for others.

The legal value is inseparable from the identity of the offerer. The faithful representative gives Himself. The sacrifice is not valuable merely because biological material is destroyed. It is the obedient self-offering of the righteous man in fulfillment of God’s purpose.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess and voluntarily offer a real human life, because sacrificial atonement requires embodied, innocent, intentional, and mortal self-giving.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

The final redemptive sacrifice is not merely something done to the Messiah. He also acts priestly in offering Himself. We must therefore establish the requirements of High Priesthood.

22. The Messiah Must Qualify as Merciful and Faithful High Priest

“For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” (Hebrews 5:1)

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17–18)

A priest stands before God for the people. Hebrews explicitly connects priesthood with human solidarity: a high priest is taken from among men and appointed in matters pertaining to God (Hebrews 5:1). The Son’s priesthood requires that He be made like His brothers and that He suffer under temptation (Hebrews 2:17–18; 4:15).

The priestly qualifications include:

- membership in the human order;
- knowledge of human weakness through experience;
- compassion;
- faithfulness toward God;
- obedience;
- prayer and supplication;
- reverence;

- sacrificial self-offering;
- and continuing life to intercede.

Divine omniscience alone does not satisfy the experiential argument of Hebrews. God knows all suffering as omniscient Creator, but Hebrews grounds the Son's merciful assistance in the fact that He Himself suffered when tempted. The mode of knowledge matters. The priest knows the condition from within human experience.

This does not add information to God's divine omniscience as though God were previously ignorant. It establishes the human experiential qualification of the priest. The man knows suffering as suffered, obedience as learned, prayer as offered, and death as faced.

The High Priest must also be faithful. Compassion without obedience cannot complete the mission. He represents the people before God because He shares their condition, and He represents God's righteousness toward the people because He remains faithful.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah's priesthood requires complete human solidarity and experiential formation, because the merciful and faithful High Priest must know, suffer, pray, obey, offer, and intercede as man.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Priesthood is one form of mediation, but the Messiah's mediatorial role is broader. He must stand consciously in relation to both God and humanity.

23. The Messiah Must Be a Genuine Mediator

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

A mediator is not merely a channel through which one party acts upon another. A mediator possesses standing in relation to both sides and acts to establish, restore, or administer the relation between them.

The Messiah must relate toward God through:

- prayer;
- faith;
- reverence;
- hearing;
- reception;
- obedience;
- submission;
- and worship.

He must relate toward humanity through:

- kinship;
- representation;
- compassion;
- teaching;

- service;
- sacrifice;
- intercession;
- and judgment.

This double relation requires a rational human standpoint. He must know Himself as the one sent by God to men and as the man who stands for men before God.

The language “the man Christ Jesus” in 1 Timothy 2:5 is therefore not incidental. Humanity is constitutive of the mediatorial office. The mediator remains the man even in the context of His exalted ministry.

If Jesus’ prayers, obedience, and intercession are merely the external dialogue of divine persons with no genuine human center, the human side of mediation is weakened. If He is merely an unrelated human agent, the incarnation and divine self-expression are weakened. The proposed incarnational economy preserves both: God’s own self-expression as the genuine man who mediates.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess an enduring human relational identity toward God and humanity, because mediation requires a true human representative personally grounded in God’s saving act.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

The mediator also reveals and testifies. His mission requires legally meaningful witness concerning God, Himself, and the kingdom.

24. The Messiah Must Be a Rational and Truthful Witness

“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God.” (John 8:40)

“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” (John 18:37)

Witness is a legal category. A witness does more than produce information. He testifies from a standpoint, owns the testimony, and is accountable for its truth.

A competent witness requires:

- personal identity;
- perception or received knowledge;
- memory;
- rational understanding;
- linguistic capacity;
- truthful intention;
- and legal responsibility.

Jesus repeatedly speaks in the first person as witness: He has heard, seen, known, spoken, and testified. He identifies Himself as a man who has told the truth heard from God (John 8:40). He declares that He was born to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37).

This testimony must arise from a genuine human cognitive and moral life. If the words are merely direct divine speech bypassing human knowledge, then the man is not a witness; he is a vocal instrument. But the scriptural economy presents Jesus as one who receives, understands, and speaks.

The Father also bears witness concerning Him. This creates a forensic structure:

- Jesus bears witness regarding His mission and identity.
- The Father confirms the witness through word, work, Spirit, resurrection, and exaltation.
- Human hearers are summoned to receive or reject the testimony.

The Son's witness and the Father's witness cannot be reduced to empty duplication. Jesus must rationally own His testimony as the man commissioned by God.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess human testimonial competence and legal responsibility, because His revelation and messianic claim are presented as testimony to be heard, judged, confirmed, and believed.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

A witness may be rejected by human courts. The Messiah's faithful testimony and obedience therefore require divine vindication.

25. The Messiah Must Be Capable of Suffering Injustice and Remaining Faithful

The messianic mission unfolds in a hostile environment. The faithful witness is contradicted. The righteous servant is rejected. The king is opposed. The priestly victim is condemned by the very order He comes to fulfill and transform.

To bear injustice redemptively, the Messiah must possess a human consciousness capable of experiencing:

- accusation;
- shame;
- betrayal;
- abandonment;
- fear;
- grief;
- physical pain;
- and the apparent triumph of evil.

The injustice must matter to Him. If an impassible consciousness merely observes a body's pain from an unaffected distance, the human suffering is not fully owned by the man. The Messiah's sorrow, tears, distress, and cries reveal that His whole human life is involved.

At the same time, He must not answer injustice with sin. He must remain truthful under false accusation, loving under hatred, obedient under violence, and faithful under abandonment.

This faithful endurance displays righteousness and prepares the legal contrast between human condemnation and divine vindication.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must genuinely suffer injustice without becoming unjust, because redemptive faithfulness is proven under the conditions that expose the truth of His character and mission.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

The ultimate injustice leads to death. If death is to be defeated from within the human condition, the Messiah must genuinely die.

26. The Messiah Must Be Mortal and Truly Die

Death cannot be defeated through the mere appearance of death. The Messiah must enter the condition that holds humanity.

Human death involves the cessation of bodily life. The body becomes dead because the life that animated it is no longer ordered to it in the ordinary living unity. Whatever further questions arise concerning the state of the dead, the death itself must be real.

The Messiah must therefore possess:

- a body capable of being wounded;
- blood capable of being shed;
- a nervous and emotional life capable of agony;
- a human life capable of separation from the body;
- and personal identity continuous across death and resurrection.

His divinity does not die according to divine ontology. Yet the death is properly attributable to God because the mortal human life is God's own incarnational existence. "God died" means neither that divine life ceased nor that an unrelated man's death was externally credited to God. It means God genuinely underwent death in the human existence He personally made His own.

The immediate subject of dying is the man. The ultimate ground of the incarnational life is God. This allows the death to be fully human and fully God's redemptive act without confusing the modes.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must truly die as man, because sacrifice, solidarity, and victory over death require entry into actual human mortality rather than symbolic appearance.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

If the faithful Messiah truly dies, God must answer the human verdict and the power of death through resurrection and public vindication.

27. The Messiah Must Be Raised and Vindicated by God

Resurrection is not merely biological restoration. It is God's judicial and eschatological declaration concerning the man whom human authorities condemned.

The public sequence is:

- He bears witness.
- He fulfills righteousness.
- He is rejected and condemned.

- He remains obedient unto death.
- God raises Him.
- God exalts Him.

The resurrection vindicates His identity, testimony, righteousness, and mission. It demonstrates that the human court's verdict does not stand as God's verdict. The rejected stone becomes the cornerstone. The crucified Jesus is made Lord and Christ.

To say that He is vindicated does not imply that He was personally sinful and later forgiven. It means that His righteousness is publicly confirmed and His claim established.

Resurrection also vindicates the entire incarnational method. The man who trusted God is not abandoned to death. The human faith exercised against visible circumstances is answered by God's act. The obedience learned through suffering reaches its promised end.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must be raised and publicly vindicated, because redemption requires the reversal of death, the confirmation of His righteous witness, and the establishment of His messianic identity.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Vindication leads to exaltation. The man who completed the mission must receive authority to administer the achieved redemption and lead the new creation.

28. The Messiah Must Be Exalted and Given Authority

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matthew 28:18)

The Messiah's authority after resurrection is given authority. “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18) simultaneously declares universal supremacy and continuing relation to the giver.

The man is exalted because He obeyed. Philippians 2 places “therefore” between obedience unto death and God's highly exalting Him. The exaltation is not a return that makes the human obedience irrelevant. It is the divine answer to the completed human mission.

The authority includes:

- lordship;
- judgment;
- kingship;
- intercession;
- government of the church;
- subjection of enemies;
- administration of resurrection life;
- and completion of the kingdom.

The one receiving authority must remain the same identifiable man who fulfilled the mission. Otherwise the reward would not belong to the obedient subject.

This is why apostolic preaching repeatedly identifies “this Jesus” and “the man” as the one raised, appointed, and exalted. The glory is given to the immediate human subject. The ultimate source of the glory is God who raises and exalts Him.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The faithful man must receive mediatorial authority, because the completed redemption must be administered through the same Messiah who obeyed, died, and was vindicated.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

The Messiah’s exaltation is not merely individual reward. He must become the firstfruits and form of redeemed humanity.

29. The Messiah Must Be the Firstfruits and Prototype of Glorified Humanity

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.” (1 Corinthians 15:20–21)

The goal of redemption is not only forgiveness but transformed human life. The risen Messiah must therefore stand as the beginning, guarantee, and pattern of what the redeemed shall become.

Scripture calls Him:

- firstfruits of those who sleep;
- firstborn from the dead;
- the one to whose image the redeemed are conformed;
- and the one whose glorious body supplies the pattern of their transformation.

“Prototype” is useful if properly understood. He is not merely an example that others imitate externally. He is the first realized instance of the eschatological humanity God intends to bring forth in those united to Him.

His glorification must therefore preserve His humanity. If resurrection dissolves Him into undifferentiated deity, He cannot remain the firstborn among many brothers or the pattern of glorified embodiment. The same human identity that suffered must be transformed, exalted, and enthroned.

His ongoing confession of “my God,” His mediatorship, priesthood, received authority, and final subjection in 1 Corinthians 15 all testify that glorification perfects rather than abolishes the human relation to God.

NECESSITY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must remain glorified man, because He is the firstfruits and living head of the renewed human order, not merely a temporary human appearance discarded after atonement.

WHY THE NEXT REQUIREMENT FOLLOWS

Having established the offices and legal necessities, the paper can now specify the concrete bodily, rational, psychological, relational, and environmental properties the man must possess in order to fulfill them.

Part IV — The Necessary Properties and Qualities of the Man

30. True Embodiment

The first necessary property is a real human body. This may appear obvious, but embodiment must be affirmed in more than vocabulary. A human body is not merely an external shape. It is a living organism with needs, sensations, vulnerability, development, and mortality.

A true human body entails:

- conception and gestation;
- birth;
- physical growth;
- dependence upon nourishment;
- hunger and thirst;
- fatigue and sleep;
- sensory perception;
- susceptibility to injury;
- pain;
- blood;
- and death.

If any of these properties are merely apparent, the humanity is diminished at the bodily level. If the body is a garment occupied by a nonhuman personal subject who remains experientially untouched by bodily life, embodiment is made instrumental rather than constitutive of the lived identity.

The Messiah must know hunger as His hunger, pain as His pain, and death as the death He faces. The body must contribute real conditions to His human consciousness. Hunger creates the setting of temptation. Fatigue creates the need for rest. Pain generates natural aversion. Mortality gives seriousness to prayer and sacrifice.

The body also locates Him socially and historically. He is present in a place, among particular people, in a given culture, at a particular time. He can be touched, seen, heard, arrested, wounded, crucified, buried, and later raised bodily.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

A true Messiah must possess embodied human existence that generates real needs, sensations, vulnerabilities, and mortality rather than serving as a visible shell.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Embodiment alone does not constitute rational humanity. A true man must possess a human principle of thought, understanding, memory, and self-awareness.

31. A Rational Human Mind

A genuine man possesses a rational mind proper to human existence. The mind is not an abstract item included in a list of parts. It performs human acts of knowing.

A human rational mind must be capable of:

- receiving sensory information;
- learning language;
- forming concepts;
- asking questions;
- understanding instruction;
- interpreting Scripture;
- remembering experience;
- judging situations;
- recognizing moral obligation;
- planning action;
- and communicating thought.

If Jesus has a human mind but every cognition is immediately supplied by an omniscient divine consciousness, the human mind does not function as a human mind. It becomes an interface or passive screen. Genuine humanity requires that His created intellect acquire, organize, interpret, and apply knowledge according to human capacity.

This does not deny revelation. Human minds may receive revelation. Prophetic revelation does not eliminate the mind; it gives the mind knowledge it could not acquire by ordinary means. The recipient must still understand, rationally appropriate, and express what is revealed.

The distinction between source and mode is therefore crucial. God may be the source of transcendent knowledge while the man receives and speaks that knowledge through genuine human cognition.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a finite and active human intellect that truly knows, learns, remembers, judges, and receives revelation according to human existence.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

A rational mind is always the mind of a concrete knower. Therefore the man must possess first-person self-awareness and not merely impersonal cognitive functions.

32. First-Person Human Self-Awareness: “I,” “Me,” and “My”

To exist as a rational man is to experience oneself as the subject of one’s life. Human consciousness possesses an indexical structure. A person does not merely register that hunger exists; he knows, “I am hungry.” He does not merely observe that a body is wounded; he knows, “My body is wounded.” He does not merely detect a thought; he knows, “I think.”

The pronouns “I,” “me,” and “my” express this first-person relation to existence.

For Jesus, such statements include:

- I thirst.
- My soul is sorrowful.
- My will.
- My life.
- My teaching.
- My words.
- My God.
- My Father.

These statements require more than grammatical production. They reveal rational appropriation of experience and relation.

The “I” identifies the subject.

“Me” identifies the same subject as acted upon, addressed, seen, rejected, or saved.

“My” identifies what belongs to the subject: body, soul, will, life, words, mission, disciples, God-relation, and Father-relation.

This is necessary for legal identity. The man cannot voluntarily offer “my life” unless He experiences the life as His. He cannot submit “my will” unless the will belongs to His human agency. He cannot confess “my God” unless He rationally understands Himself in relation to God.

First-person identity does not require ontological independence from God. Every created self depends upon God. Dependence in source does not erase self-awareness in existence. Jesus can be wholly grounded in God’s incarnational act and still genuinely know Himself as the man living the human life God has willed.

Subject here means the concrete first-person knower and actor who recognizes Himself as the one living the life, owning the faculties, and standing in relation to God. It does not mean an uncaused, self-originating, or independently grounded source of existence.

Jesus must therefore be a genuine human subject. He does not merely possess a human mind and will as impersonal instruments. He knows Himself as ‘I,’ recognizes Himself as ‘me’ when addressed or acted upon, and identifies His body, soul, will, words, mission, Father, and God as ‘my.’ This self-recognition is the subjective condition of prayer, obedience, testimony, sacrifice, and legal responsibility.

The contrast contained in ‘my God,’ ‘my Father,’ and ‘not my will, but Yours’ is subject-related contrast. A self identifies itself and recognizes another as the One to whom it is related. Denying that subjective center would leave human predicates without a human owner and human relations without a human relatum.

This does not introduce a second divine subject behind or alongside the man. The Father is the divine source and God of the man; Jesus is the immediate human subject brought forth as the Father’s own incarnational self-expression. His subjecthood is real in the human mode and wholly dependent in source, origin, mission, resurrection, and glory.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a true first-person human standpoint by which He owns His body, mind, will, life, acts, relationships, and testimony.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Once the human “I” is established, a category mistake must be removed: does genuine personal reality require independent subsistence or self-grounded existence? The next section distinguishes the essential qualities of humanity and personhood from the relations of independence and dependence.

32A. Personhood Does Not Require Independence: Essential Human Qualities, Source-Dependence, and the Human “I”

The reality of Jesus’ human first-person identity raises a predictable objection: if His human existence is wholly grounded in God’s incarnational act rather than existing as an independently constituted center beside God, can it still be genuinely personal? The objection confuses two different questions. Personhood concerns the positive quality and operation of a concrete rational existence. Independence and dependence concern how that existence is grounded, caused, sustained, related, and authorized.

ESSENTIAL CONSTITUTION AND GROUNDING RELATION ANSWER DIFFERENT QUESTIONS

An essential or constitutive property answers what a thing is. A grounding relation answers from whom, by what cause, or under what authority it exists and acts. These questions must not be collapsed.

- Humanity is constituted by embodied rational life, a human mind and will, affective and sensory capacities, temporal development, social relation, moral agency, mortality, and the capacity for glorification.
- Personal subjecthood is identified by first-person consciousness, rational ownership of faculties and acts, intentional agency, relation to others, moral accountability, and the ability to say “I,” “me,” and “my” truthfully.
- Independence and dependence identify the subject’s relation to source, cause, sustenance, revelation, mission, authority, and end. They do not by themselves identify whether the subject is human, personal, rational, or morally responsible.

For that reason, independence is not an essential constituent of personhood, and dependence is not an essential constituent of humanity. Creaturely dependence necessarily accompanies every human being because every human being is created and sustained by God, but dependence is not what makes the being human or personal. Nonpersonal creatures are also dependent. The personal reality must be established by the actual quality of the existence.

SCRIPTURE PREDICATES DEPENDENCE WITHOUT ERASING THE ACTING SUBJECT

“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” (John 5:30)

“I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” (John 8:42)

Jesus denies independent sourcehood while simultaneously identifying Himself as the one who hears, judges, seeks, comes, speaks, obeys, and is sent. The denial of independence does not negate the “I”; it defines the “I” as relationally and economically dependent upon God.

The verbs remain genuinely predicated of Jesus. He hears and judges; He seeks the Father's will; He comes out from God; He obeys the sending. Dependence identifies where the mission, knowledge, authority, and saving purpose originate. It does not turn the man into an impersonal effect or passive mechanism.

ASEITY BELONGS TO DIVINE EXISTENCE, NOT TO THE DEFINITION OF PERSON

Absolute independence or aseity means that God does not receive existence from another. Aseity belongs to the divine mode of being. It cannot be built into the definition of personhood, because then no created human being could be a person. A human person does not originate himself, sustain himself, generate his own nature, or exist apart from God's continuous actuality.

Likewise, created subsistence does not mean self-origination. To subsist concretely is to exist as the actual bearer of a nature and its operations; it is not to possess underived being. Jesus' human existence is concrete, continuous, rational, and personally active even though its origin, identity, mission, resurrection, and glory are wholly grounded in God.

THE QUALITY OF EXISTENCE VALIDATES THE HUMAN PERSON

The decisive evidence of personal reality is therefore positive rather than negative. The question is not whether Jesus exists independently of God. The questions are whether He possesses and exercises the qualities that make a human life personally real:

- Does He possess a finite human mind that learns, remembers, receives revelation, interprets Scripture, and forms judgments?
- Does He possess a human will that experiences natural desire, intends an end, chooses means, submits, and obeys?
- Does He know Himself as "I," recognize Himself as "me," and own His life, will, words, mission, Father, and God as "my"?
- Does He trust, pray, love, testify, suffer, offer Himself, and remain morally accountable for the acts He performs?

Scripture answers each question affirmatively. These are the validating qualities of Jesus' human personal existence. A bare claim of independence could not establish them, and a relation of dependence cannot remove them.

SOURCE-DEPENDENCE AND IMMEDIATE HUMAN ACT-ORIGINATION

A further distinction is necessary. Jesus does not originate His own existence, the Father's redemptive intention, the revelation He receives, the command He obeys, the authority later given to Him, His resurrection, or His exaltation. Yet He immediately originates His human responses through His human faculties. He understands the command, forms the intention to obey, trusts God, speaks the received truth, submits His will, offers His life, and endures suffering.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8–9)

The Father is the ultimate source of the existence, mission, revelation, sustaining power, resurrection, and saving economy. Jesus is the immediate personal source of the corresponding human acts within that economy. This is not autonomous agency; it is dependent but authentic

agency. Without that immediate human origination, obedience, faith, testimony, and voluntary sacrifice would lose their human and legal meaning.

ONE BEARER OR HYPOSTASIS DOES NOT SETTLE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL QUESTION

Even if one uses the language of one bearer or one hypostasis for the incarnate reality, that label does not by itself prove that every first-person predicate arises from one undifferentiated psychological consciousness. “Who bears the nature?” and “what mind knows, what will chooses, and what self owns the act?” are related but nonidentical questions. A metaphysical label cannot substitute for an account of the actual psychological seat of knowledge, will, prayer, faith, and obedience.

The divine “I” and the human “I” possess irreducibly different ontological values. The divine “I” is underived, omniscient, unlimited, and the originating source of revelation and salvation. The human “I” is created, finite, embodied, developmental, revelationally receptive, obedient, passible, mortal, and capable of glorification. These cannot be numerically the same psychological consciousness in the same respect without mixing the properties of the divine and human modes.

Incarnational unity therefore does not require the Father’s infinite consciousness to become the human consciousness or to use human faculties as its instruments. The Father remains the transcendent divine “I” and source. Jesus is the genuine human “I” brought forth as the Father’s own Word, image, and saving intent realized as man. Their relation is not the relation of two divine minds, nor the collapse of the human mind into the divine mind; it is divine source and self-expression reaching true human personal actuality.

DEPENDENT PERSONAL REALITY IS NOT A SECOND INDEPENDENT PERSON

The phrase “human person” is often rejected because it is assumed to mean an independently constituted human hypostasis later joined to a divine person. But that is only one loaded use of the word person. If person names a concrete rational self who knows, wills, relates, and owns acts, Jesus is personally real as man. If it means a separately sourced human center whose identity exists outside God’s incarnational act, the paper denies it.

The proper distinction is therefore not personal versus impersonal, but independently constituted versus constitutively grounded. Jesus is not an external man added to God, yet neither is He a set of human faculties without a human owner. He is the dependent but genuine human subject in whom God’s own self-expression has become a complete human life.

THE CONTROLLING RULE

Independence and dependence do not constitute personhood. They identify how an existent subject is grounded and related to its source. Personhood is established by the positive quality of a concrete rational existence: first-person consciousness, intellect, will, intentional agency, moral ownership, accountability, and relation. Jesus is wholly dependent upon God in origin, revelation, mission, resurrection, authority, and glory, yet He is genuinely personal as man because He knows, wills, trusts, obeys, testifies, suffers, and offers Himself through complete human faculties.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

Jesus' dependence upon God does not diminish His human personhood. It excludes independent sourcehood beside God while preserving the complete human "I" required for faith, obedience, testimony, sacrifice, mediation, and vindication.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

A genuinely personal human subject does not possess mature self-understanding all at once. His rational identity unfolds through growth, experience, Scripture, relationship, and revelation. Therefore the Messiah must possess developmental and experiential identity.

33. Developmental and Experiential Identity

Human identity unfolds through a history. An infant is a genuine human self before possessing mature conceptual self-understanding, yet the self comes to recognize its name, family, environment, capacities, responsibilities, and vocation through development.

If Jesus is true man from conception, His human identity must develop according to the stages of human existence.

This includes:

- growth from infancy to childhood and adulthood;
- learning language and cultural patterns;
- developing bodily coordination and practical skill;
- increasing in wisdom;
- deepening understanding of Scripture;
- forming memory through experience;
- recognizing relationships;
- and coming to mature comprehension of mission and suffering.

Luke 2:52 is therefore central: Jesus increases in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Each dimension describes genuine development.

- Stature concerns bodily growth.
- Wisdom concerns cognitive and practical development.
- Favor with man concerns social relation.
- Favor with God concerns lived covenantal relation.

The growth cannot be reduced to the progressive public display of knowledge already possessed by the human mind. "Increase in wisdom" naturally identifies a real acquisition and maturation of human understanding.

A perfect childhood does not require mature adult knowledge. Perfection is proportioned to the stage and nature of existence. The sinless child can be perfectly faithful as child while still growing into the knowledge and tested obedience of the mature Messiah.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a continuous but developing human identity formed through bodily maturation, experience, relationship, Scripture, and revelation.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Development requires real epistemic structure: some knowledge is acquired, some received, some remembered, and some not yet possessed. The Messiah's modes of knowing must therefore be distinguished.

34. Acquired, Experiential, Scriptural, and Revelational Knowledge

Human knowledge arises through multiple modes.

ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

A human being learns through observation, instruction, practice, language, and reasoning. Jesus' ordinary human knowledge would include the language, customs, trades, geography, social patterns, and scriptural education appropriate to His life.

EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

Some realities are known differently by being undergone. One may understand the definition of pain without knowing pain as suffered. One may understand obedience conceptually without having fulfilled obedience under threat of death. Hebrews' argument depends upon this difference.

SCRIPTURAL KNOWLEDGE

The Messiah understands His identity and mission within Israel's Scriptures. He interprets His vocation through texts concerning servant, prophet, king, suffering, covenant, and kingdom. Scriptural self-understanding is not a lesser form of identity. It is the divinely appointed means by which the human Messiah rationally knows and enacts His mission.

REVELATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

God may disclose knowledge directly by the Spirit. Jesus can receive knowledge concerning persons, events, mission, divine words, and transcendent realities. Such revelation does not transform the human mind into an intrinsically omniscient mind. It establishes dependence upon God as revealer.

These modes must not be collapsed into an eternal autobiographical memory belonging to the human consciousness. If every transcendent statement is treated as the recall of a preexistent human "I," real human epistemic development becomes difficult to preserve.

The better distinction is:

Human mode of knowing; divine source of revelation.

The man's finite mind receives and expresses what the Father gives, while remaining genuinely human.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess differentiated human modes of knowledge — acquired, experiential, scriptural, and revelational — rather than a human consciousness that is omniscient by intrinsic possession.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Before knowledge moves into will, the content and structure of Jesus' own self-knowledge must be stated. A true human subject must not only know facts; He must know who He is, whose He is, what mission He has received, and how He stands toward His God.

34A. How Jesus Knew Himself: Human Self-Consciousness, Revealed Identity, and Divine Intent

The article has established that Jesus is a genuine human subject with a finite, developmental, and revelationally dependent mind. That conclusion creates a necessary psychological question: How did this man understand Himself, and as what did He understand Himself? It is not enough to affirm a human mind while leaving the content of His self-consciousness undefined. The Messiah must rationally know the identity, relation, and mission that He consciously owns as “I,” “me,” and “my.”

IDENTITY IS CONSTITUTIVE FROM CONCEPTION; SELF-UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPS IN HISTORY

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:52)

“I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.” (John 8:28)

Jesus does not become the Son, Messiah, or incarnational self-expression of God by gradually imagining Himself into those roles. His identity is constituted from conception by the Spirit and by God's intent. Yet His human understanding of that identity develops in a genuinely human way. Scripture does not narrate every stage of that development, but it explicitly states that He increases in wisdom and that the Father teaches Him.

The distinction is therefore between identity and reflexive comprehension of identity. The identity is given by God; the human mind comes to know, interpret, own, and enact that identity through growth, Scripture, the Spirit, providential events, the Father's testimony, and direct revelation. A finite mind can receive perfectly true knowledge of a unique divine vocation without becoming the infinite mind that gives the revelation.

HE KNOWS HIMSELF AS THE PROMISED MESSIAH, SON OF GOD, AND SON OF MAN

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me ... to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ... This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:18–19, 21)

“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ ... Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.” (John 4:25–26)

“Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” (Mark 14:61–62)

Jesus interprets Himself through Israel's Scriptures and knowingly identifies Himself with the promised Messiah, the anointed servant, the Son of God, and the Son of Man. He does not merely discover that God has assigned Him a useful task. He understands that the prophetic purpose of God reaches its appointed human fulfillment in His own life.

This self-understanding remains filial and relational. He knows Himself as the One sent by God, anointed by God, taught by God, entrusted with God's work, destined to suffer, and appointed to receive the kingdom. Messiahship is therefore not an independent divine identity beside the Father. It is the consciously owned human vocation in which the Father's redemptive intent is fulfilled.

THE "I AM" SAYINGS NAME HIS ECONOMIC AND REVELATORY IDENTITY

"I am the bread of life." (John 6:35) "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) "I am the door." (John 10:9)

"I am the good shepherd." (John 10:11) "I am the resurrection, and the life." (John 11:25)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." (John 15:1)

These sayings are genuine first-person self-identifications, but they are not assertions that Jesus' human body or mind is literally bread, sunlight, a wooden door, a botanical vine, or the abstract divine essence. They name what God's saving purpose has made Him within the economy.

He knows Himself as the embodied bread through whom God gives life, the light through whom the Father is known, the door through whom access is granted, the shepherd through whom God gathers and protects, the resurrection and life through whom the dead are raised, the way through whom men come to the Father, the truth in whom God's revelation is faithfully expressed, and the vine in whom the covenant people bear fruit. Each title identifies the concrete redemptive value of the man as God's appointed and personally realized means.

The titles therefore reveal more than a delegated job and less than a second self-originating deity. They reveal Jesus' conscious knowledge that God's own life-giving, revelatory, pastoral, restorative, and covenantal intent has been placed in Him and is being realized through His true human existence.

HE ATTESTS PERFECT ONENESS WITH THE FATHER AS EXPRESSION, PRESENCE, AND OPERATION

"I and my Father are one." (John 10:30)

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ... the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:9–10)

"The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (John 5:19)

Jesus knows Himself as the perfect human disclosure of the Father. His oneness with the Father is not merely moral agreement between two external agents, but neither is it the numerical identity of His finite human consciousness with the Father's unrestricted divine mind. It is oneness of divine source, self-expression, indwelling presence, character, purpose, word, and operation realized through the Son's genuine human agency.

The word conduit can be used only with qualification. A passive conduit neither understands nor owns what passes through it. Jesus is not a pipe through which divine action bypasses human agency. He is the conscious, willing, obedient human subject who receives, understands, embodies,

and performs the Father's word and work. He is therefore better described as the Father's perfect embodied expression, personal locus, and living human means.

POWER, ARM, HAND, AND FACE LANGUAGE MUST BE STATED EXACTLY

"Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)

"Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (John 12:38; citing Isaiah 53:1)

"God ... hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

The article must distinguish Jesus' direct self-attestation from the prophetic and apostolic interpretation of Him. Jesus directly says that seeing Him is seeing the Father and that the Father dwelling in Him performs the works. Scripture's prophetic and apostolic witness then identifies Christ as the power and wisdom of God, the revealed arm of the Lord, and the human face in which God's glory is known.

Jesus does not literally record the sentence "I am the arm of God" or "I am the power of God." The stronger and more accurate claim is that His own self-testimony is fully congruent with those descriptions. He knows Himself as the man in whom God's power operates, God's saving arm is revealed, God's wisdom is embodied, and God's face is made knowable. The hand or arm does not become a rival source beside the One whose hand or arm it is; it is the source acting and revealing Himself through His own means.

HE KNOWS HIMSELF AS TRUE MAN BEFORE HIS GOD, NOT AS A SECOND OMNISCIENT DIVINE MIND

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man ... neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13:32)

"I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John 20:17)

Jesus' unique knowledge of His identity does not convert His human consciousness into divine omniscience. He can know that He is the Son, Messiah, image, embodied Word, and appointed source of life within the economy while still learning, receiving teaching, lacking unrevealed information, praying, trusting, submitting His will, and calling the Father "my God."

Accordingly, the article should not say without qualification that Jesus knew Himself simply "as God." That wording can collapse the very human psychology the incarnation requires. The more exact statement is that Jesus knew Himself as the true man whose existence was from God, whose identity embodied God's own Word and saving intent, whose life perfectly revealed the Father, and whose human mind and will remained distinct from the Father's infinite mind and will in mode, capacity, and relation.

Nor should this be weakened into mere ignorance of divine identity. Jesus knows that the Father is uniquely present and revealed in Him. He knows that His words, works, life, death, resurrection, and reign carry God's own saving purpose. What He does not identify as His own is independent divine origination: His teaching is not from Himself, His coming is not from Himself, His works arise from the indwelling Father, His authority is given, and His resurrection and glory come from His God.

PRE-WORLD PURPOSE DOES NOT REQUIRE PRE-WORLD HUMAN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” (John 17:5)

This prayer must be interpreted consistently with the finite and revelationally dependent human psychology already established. It need not mean that Jesus’ human “I” is recalling a personally experienced divine life before creation. Within the incarnational economy, the man may knowingly claim the glory that belonged to Him in the Father’s pre-world purpose, Word, and redemptive intent and ask that it now be historically realized through resurrection and exaltation.

The distinction is between pre-world divine intention and pre-world human autobiography. The Father eternally knows and purposes His own self-expression as the glorified Messiah. Jesus comes to know Himself as the true human fulfillment of that purpose. His human self-understanding may therefore reach back to what was held in God before the world without turning His finite consciousness into the underived divine consciousness that originated the purpose.

This reading preserves both sides of the article’s argument: the glory is genuinely His because He is the intended human realization of God’s Word and saving purpose, and the knowledge is genuinely human because the man receives, understands, and prays concerning what the Father has revealed. The verse should not be made a shortcut that erases the distinction between the divine “I” who purposes and the human “I” who fulfills and receives glory.

THE CONTROLLING PSYCHOLOGICAL RULE

Jesus knows Himself as the true human Son whose identity is constituted by God’s Spirit and Word, whose mission is the prophetic realization of the Father’s redemptive intent, and whose words, works, death, resurrection, and reign make the Father known. He does not know Himself as a second omniscient divine subject alongside the Father. He knows the Father as His God and Himself as the sent Messiah, Son of Man, embodied Word, image, mediator, sacrifice, and living human expression through whom God gives life to the world.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a genuinely human and revelationally formed self-understanding. Jesus consciously knows who He is and what God intends through Him, yet He knows that identity through finite human cognition ordered to Scripture, Spirit, revelation, and the Father rather than through an intrinsic second divine omniscience.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Once the man consciously knows His identity, relation, and mission, that knowledge must be owned in volition. The argument therefore moves from self-understanding to the human will by which He intends, chooses, submits, and fulfills the work given to Him.

35. A Genuine Human Will

A human will is the rational appetite by which a person desires perceived goods, chooses means, intends ends, and acts according to judgment. To affirm a human will while denying human willing is empty.

The Messiah's human will must be capable of:

- natural desire for life;
- aversion to pain and death;
- desire for food and rest;
- love toward God and neighbor;
- intention to fulfill His mission;
- choice under temptation;
- and submission to God's will.

Gethsemane reveals rather than threatens the reality of incarnation. "Not my will, but yours be done" does not require sinful rebellion in Jesus. It displays the distinction between natural human desire and obedient moral commitment.

A healthy human nature does not seek pain for its own sake. It naturally preserves life. The request that the cup pass expresses the truth of human aversion. The submission that follows expresses the ordering of that desire under fidelity to God.

If the human will is incapable of this real movement, the obedience is no longer the obedience of man. If the divine will simply produces the human sentence of submission, the human will is an unused faculty.

The will must be dependent but not coerced. God gives the existence, mission, command, revelation, power, and sustaining grace; the man truly responds.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess and exercise a real human will whose natural desires and moral choices remain perfectly ordered to God through free submission.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

The will's faithful orientation toward God is expressed not only as obedience but as faith and trust.

36. Human Faith and Trust Directed Toward God

Faith belongs to the rational and relational life of the man. It is not an abstract quality residing in "human nature." Someone trusts.

For the Messiah, faith includes:

- recognition of God as faithful;
- dependence upon God's revelation;
- confidence in God's promise;
- prayer to the One able to save;
- perseverance when visible conditions oppose hope;
- and entrusting His life and spirit to God.

His faith must be proportioned to His finite human experience. He does not merely display confidence for the education of others. He lives by trust in the Father.

This is especially clear where His senses and circumstances present pressure:

- His body feels hunger.
- His soul experiences sorrow.
- His companions flee.
- His enemies mock.
- human judgment condemns.
- death approaches.

Faith contrasts these immediate conditions with the truth and promise of God. The contrast is not between faith and reason but between divine faithfulness apprehended by reason and the hostile or incomplete appearance of circumstances.

The man therefore originates trust toward God out of His own human existence. God's indwelling presence is not a substitute for the trust; it is the ground and revelational source within which the human response becomes perfect.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must exercise genuine human faith: a finite, rational, persevering trust directed toward God amid conditions of suffering, uncertainty, and death.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Faith seeks and addresses God through prayer. Therefore the human Messiah must possess a genuine prayer life.

37. Prayer, Supplication, Reverence, and Worship

Prayer is among the clearest demonstrations of human relation to God. It includes cognition, desire, language, faith, humility, and will.

A genuine prayer requires:

- a praying subject;
- recognition of the One addressed;
- understanding of need or thanksgiving;
- intention to communicate;
- and trust that God hears.

Jesus' prayers cannot be dismissed as pedagogical performances without damaging the integrity of His humanity. Scripture presents Him praying in solitude, through the night, before major acts, for His disciples, in anguish, and at death.

Hebrews 5:7 intensifies the point: He offers prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He is heard because of His reverence.

Every element is relational:

- He is the one who offers.
- God is the One to whom He offers.
- He recognizes God's saving power.
- He expresses need.
- He displays reverence.
- God hears Him.

This is not divine self-dialogue in the crude sense of one consciousness speaking theatrically to itself. It is the real man, God's own incarnational self-expression, living the human relation toward God that true sonship and perfect humanity require.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must genuinely pray, supplicate, revere, thank, and worship God as man, because His redemptive identity includes real dependence and filial relation.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Prayer in Hebrews is joined to crying and tears. The Messiah must therefore possess a complete emotional and affective human life.

38. Human Emotion, Affection, and Affective Vulnerability

Human rationality does not eliminate emotion. A complete human life includes affective responses to perceived goods, evils, relationships, losses, hopes, and dangers.

The Messiah must be capable of:

- love;
- compassion;
- joy;
- grief;
- anger at evil;
- sorrow;
- distress;
- amazement or marvel;
- tears;
- and natural fear or aversion concerning suffering and death.

These emotions must be His emotions, not merely bodily signs generated for observers.

Emotion supplies moral significance in several ways. Compassion moves Him toward the suffering. Love grounds self-giving. Grief reveals the weight of death and unbelief. Righteous anger reveals moral perception. Sorrow and distress reveal the cost of obedience.

Affect must be ordered, not abolished. Sinless humanity is not emotionless humanity. Christ's emotional life is perfect because it responds truthfully and proportionately to reality while remaining ordered by love and obedience.

His tears are therefore not evidence against divine presence. They are evidence that the divine self-expression has been perfected as true man.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a genuine and morally ordered human emotional life, because compassion, love, suffering, prayer, and obedience involve the whole human person.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Embodied emotion and natural desire create the lived field in which temptation and suffering occur. These must be examined as properties of true humanity.

39. Genuine Temptation Without a Sinful Nature

Temptation must be real, but it must be defined carefully. To be tempted does not necessarily mean to possess an internal principle of sin identical to fallen corruption. Scripture affirms that Jesus is tempted yet without sin.

Temptation may arise when a genuine human good is proposed in a disordered way or sought contrary to God's will.

Examples include:

- satisfying hunger by abandoning the appointed path of dependence;
- obtaining rule without the path of obedience and suffering;
- demanding visible proof of divine protection;
- avoiding the cross at the cost of mission;
- retaliating against enemies;
- or preserving life through unfaithfulness.

For temptation to be meaningful, the Messiah must understand the proposed act, feel the pressure of the relevant human need or desire, and remain capable of intentionally rejecting the disobedient path.

This does not require that He be morally undecided in the sense of possessing sinful inclination. It requires that the temptation genuinely address His human capacities and that His faithfulness be the act of His human will.

The body does not possess a separate will fighting the mind. Rather, the human subject experiences bodily appetites, emotional pressures, social threats, and environmental conditions that His rational will orders under God.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must be genuinely tempted through the pressures and possibilities belonging to embodied human life, while His rational will remains sinlessly faithful to God.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Temptation and obedience are lived within a concrete environment. The Messiah's relation to the world around Him must therefore be real and formative.

40. Relation to Physical, Social, and Historical Environment

Human existence is environmentally situated. A man lives in a place, language, culture, family, political order, religious community, and material world. These are not detachable decorations; they shape experience and supply the occasions for knowledge, relation, suffering, and action.

The Messiah must possess real relation to:

- family;
- town and nation;
- work;
- food and climate;
- social expectations;

- religious authorities;
- political power;
- friendship and betrayal;
- public approval and rejection;
- and the physical conditions of pain and death.

His environment contributes to His experiential identity. He knows what it is to be misunderstood by family, rejected in His hometown, opposed by leaders, followed by crowds, betrayed by a disciple, abandoned by companions, tried by authorities, and mocked by soldiers.

The man interprets and responds to these conditions. He does not merely receive events as data observed by a divine consciousness. He lives them through finite human perception and emotion.

His faith is exercised against what He sees and hears. His love is directed toward actual persons. His obedience is enacted under actual social and political pressure. His suffering is caused through the concrete actions of others.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must live within and respond to a real human environment, because development, temptation, witness, love, suffering, and obedience require historical and social conditions.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

A man situated among other men must possess genuine relationships toward them, not merely functional contact.

41. Relationship to Fellow Man

The Messiah's humanity includes interpersonal life. He is not a solitary rational mechanism existing only in vertical relation to God.

He must be capable of:

- filial and family relation;
- friendship;
- brotherhood;
- compassion;
- service;
- teaching;
- correction;
- forgiveness;
- grief at loss;
- love toward enemies;
- and representative solidarity.

These relationships require awareness of other persons as persons. Jesus listens, asks, responds, interprets motives, receives hospitality, forms bonds, mourns death, experiences betrayal, and serves His disciples.

Human love must originate through His own human agency. It is not enough for divine love to use Him as an instrument. The command to love God and neighbor is fulfilled by the man who genuinely loves.

His relation to fellow man also supplies the basis of representation. He calls the sanctified His brothers. He identifies with the least. He acts for others, gives His life for others, and intercedes for others.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess authentic human relationships of love, compassion, service, solidarity, and representation toward His fellow man.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

His human relations are ultimately ordered by His relation to God. As Son, His self-understanding must be filial: He rationally knows Himself in relation to His Father and God.

42. A Real Human Relationship to God: Son to Father and Man to His God

True human existence necessarily includes a relation to God, whether that relation is faithful or rebellious. The perfect man must live the faithful relation.

Because Scripture identifies the Messiah as Son, the relation takes a filial form. The man knows Himself as Son in relation to the Father.

This relation includes:

- “my Father” and “my God”;
- hearing and receiving;
- prayer and thanksgiving;
- love and obedience;
- trust and dependence;
- mission and sending;
- command and fulfillment;
- glorification and reception;
- and post-resurrection mediatorial relation.

The Father-Son relation in the economy is therefore not an empty naming convention. It is lived through the properties of the man.

The Son must rationalize His own “I,” “me,” and “my” statements toward God as men do. He understands Himself as the one who prays, the one who receives command, the one whose will is submitted, the one whose life is entrusted, and the one whose God hears and raises Him.

The fact that His existence is God’s own self-expression does not erase this relation. It creates the depth of it. God wills His own life as human life, and true human life necessarily stands in relation to God. Therefore God’s incarnational self-expression possesses human qualities in relation to God Himself as transcendent source.

This is not two independent beings. The man is wholly dependent in source, origin, purpose, revelation, power, resurrection, and glory. Yet within the human existence, the relation is real.

THE RELATION REQUIRES A GENUINELY HUMAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SUBJECT

The confession “my God” cannot be reduced to divine consciousness producing human words. It requires a human self who knows himself as the one standing toward God. The mind that says “my God,” the will that says “not my will, but Yours,” and the faith that entrusts itself to the One able to save must be genuinely human in mode and ownership.

Dependence does not make that subject unreal. On the contrary, the filial relation presupposes a real relatum: a concrete human “I” who receives life, revelation, command, resurrection, and glory from God. The Father’s divine “I” remains the source and object of the relation; Jesus’ human “I” lives the relation in faith, obedience, prayer, and worship.

This distinction prevents a mixing of psychological cores. The Father’s infinite mind is not the finite mind that learns and prays, and the human mind is not an independently divine mind beside the Father. God’s self-expression is united to the human subject through incarnational source and intent, not through numerical identity of divine and human consciousness.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a genuine filial and human God-relation in which He consciously knows, loves, trusts, prays to, obeys, and calls the Father “my God.”

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

This first-person God-relation creates moral and legal accountability. The man must be capable of being evaluated, vindicated, and received as witness.

43. Juridical Identity: Capacity to Be Judged and Vindicated

A rational human “I” has juridical significance. The man who owns His acts can be judged regarding those acts.

Judgment presupposes:

- identity;
- knowledge;
- responsibility;
- intention;
- action;
- and a standard.

Jesus’ life can be evaluated because it is genuinely His. He may be declared truthful, faithful, obedient, righteous, and without sin. Human authorities may condemn Him; God may vindicate Him.

The word “justified” when applied to Christ need not imply forgiveness from personal sin. It can mean vindicated, demonstrated righteous, or publicly approved. Resurrection becomes the decisive divine judgment reversing human condemnation.

The legal structure is essential to atonement and representation. The obedient man is approved. His sacrifice is accepted. His testimony is confirmed. His exaltation is the judicial answer to His humiliation.

If His human acts are not truly His, judgment and vindication lose their object. God would be approving behavior He Himself directly operated through an instrument rather than vindicating the faithful human agent.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a human juridical identity whose acts can be evaluated and whose righteousness, testimony, and mission can be publicly vindicated by God.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

Juridical identity also grounds His status as witness. The man must own the testimony that is judged true.

44. Testimonial Identity and the Ownership of Words

A truthful witness must understand and own his speech. The Messiah must not merely vocalize the Father's words without human comprehension. He must receive, know, and testify.

His testimonial identity includes:

- "I speak what I have heard."
- "I testify."
- "I know."
- "I have seen."
- "I have told you the truth."
- "For this purpose I was born."

The words may originate ultimately from God as revelational source, yet they become the man's testimony through rational reception and faithful expression.

This resolves the false choice between divine and human speech. The Father may speak through the Son without making the Son's human speech unreal. Divine source and human testimony are ordered rather than competitive.

The witness also distinguishes his testimony from the Father's confirming witness. This distinction is legally meaningful only if Jesus has a real standpoint from which to testify.

PROPERTY ESTABLISHED

The Messiah must possess a rational human testimonial identity by which revealed truth becomes His consciously owned and legally accountable witness.

WHY THE NEXT PROPERTY FOLLOWS

All of these properties converge in Hebrews 5:7–10. That passage should therefore be examined in full as the concentrated scriptural portrait of the necessary man.

44A. What Should Scripture Say If God Redeems Man Through His Own Manifestation?

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” (Colossians 1:15)

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” (Hebrews 1:3)

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” (2 Corinthians 5:19)

The preceding argument has established what the Messiah must be if God intends to redeem humanity from within the human order. Before examining the biblical texts, one further question must be asked: if the one God truly chose to redeem man through His own manifestation, what forms of language should Scripture be expected to use?

This is not merely a question about whether Scripture contains the exact sentence “Jesus is the Father.” It is a question about whether Scripture identifies God as the source and owner of redemption, identifies Christ as God’s own self-expression rather than an unrelated man, and identifies the Son as the true human existence in which the redemptive acts become actual.

THE CONTROLLING PURPOSE IS GOD REDEEMING MAN

The center of the incarnation is not the production of a bare identity formula. The center is God’s purpose to redeem humanity. If God wished only to communicate information, prophetic speech would suffice. If He wished only to make Himself visible, a theophany would suffice. But if He wills to answer human disobedience through human obedience, fulfill covenant within Israel, offer a true human life, establish a merciful and faithful High Priest, enter death, raise the representative man, and restore human dominion, then His manifestation must reach the full quality of true human existence.

God therefore does not merely become recognizable in a man. His Word, wisdom, will, love, righteousness, name, glory, and saving intent reach their intended historical terminus in a life that is actually conceived, born, embodied, rational, filial, obedient, passible, mortal, raised, and glorified. The quality of the realized existence is essential to the redemptive act.

WHAT SCRIPTURE SHOULD PRESERVE AT ONCE

If this economy is true, Scripture should preserve all of the following without collapsing one into another:

- God as the ultimate source, owner, reconciler, giver, raiser, glorifier, and final end of salvation;
- the Word, image, wisdom, name, glory, presence, and fullness as God’s own expressive means rather than the identity of an unrelated second source;
- the Son of God as the concrete filial existence brought forth from God and belonging uniquely to His purpose;
- the Son of Man as the true human subject who believes, obeys, testifies, suffers, offers Himself, dies, rises, and reigns;
- and the return of all accomplished glory to God the Father as the source from whom the economy proceeds and to whom it is ordered.

No single unqualified statement can replace this complete grammar. “God” identifies the divine source. Word, image, and manifestation identify divine self-expression. Son identifies the true relational and human mode in which that expression exists. Man identifies the complete quality of the life actually lived. Father identifies the personal divine source toward whom the man’s faith, obedience, prayer, and worship are directed.

WHY “SCRIPTURE DOES NOT SAY JESUS IS THE FATHER” IS ONLY A PARTIAL TRUTH

The claim that Scripture does not say “Jesus is the Father” is true only in the narrow sense that Scripture does not normally state that Jesus’ finite human body, human mind, or human mode is numerically identical to the Father considered as transcendent and unmanifest Spirit. A coherent incarnation would not require such a statement, because the purpose is not to erase the humanity or collapse every mode into a one-to-one identity.

The claim becomes false when it is used to deny the Father’s revelation in Christ. Scripture identifies Jesus as God’s Word made flesh, God manifested in flesh, the image of the invisible God, the exact representation of God’s reality, the one in whom the fullness dwells bodily, the one in whom God reconciles the world to Himself, and the man in whom the Father dwells, speaks, and works. It also states that seeing Christ is seeing the Father. These are not evasive substitutes for identity. They are the mode-accurate language of incarnation.

Jesus is therefore the Father revealed according to divine source, self-expression, presence, character, name, glory, and operation. He is not the Father considered as an unqualified equation between finite humanity and transcendent divine ontology. The respect or mode of the predication determines whether the statement is true.

This identity-language must be read through the distinctions established in §§4A–4B. Jesus is distinct from the Father according to His created humanity, filial subjectivity, and genuine relation to God. Yet the divine life, Word, character, presence, and saving identity personally manifested in Him are the Father’s own. “Jesus is the Father” therefore identifies the one revealed and acting in Christ; it does not erase the Son as a real human subject or make His finite humanity numerically identical with the Father’s unrestricted divine mode.

In plain terms, the Father is not the Son’s human mind or body. The Father is the God whose own life and self-expression are made present in that true human life.

The objection fails when it demands a formula that would negate the very economy Scripture is describing. Incarnation is not about reducing the Father and the man to an undifferentiated one-to-one identity. It is about the one God personally realizing His own self-expression as a true man.

THE LANGUAGE SCRIPTURE SHOULD ACTUALLY USE

If God’s own self-expression becomes true man, Scripture should use language of source and expression: God and His Word, the invisible God and His image, the source and His exact representation, the Father and the Son brought forth from Him, the indwelling God and the man in whom He acts, the divine fullness and its bodily dwelling, the giver of glory and the man who receives and manifests it.

Such language preserves both identity and economy. It prevents Christ from becoming an external human instrument, because He is God’s own Word, image, presence, and saving intent

embodied. It also prevents the human existence from being swallowed by divine ontology, because the Son truly grows, learns, prays, trusts, obeys, suffers, dies, rises, and receives authority from God.

WHY THIS EXCEEDS PERFECT CREATURELY REPRESENTATION

The claim is not merely that Jesus represents God more accurately than every other creature. All creation is an ordered expression of divine wisdom, and a perfectly obedient other-ordered creature could display God's goodness without becoming God manifested in flesh. Christ exceeds that category because His human life is from the Holy Spirit and is the personal realization of God's own Word, self-knowledge, image, character, and redemptive will rather than merely another finite identity sustained by God. He does not first possess an identity external to that expression and then take on a representative office.

Representation names the finite human form in which God is made visible; incarnational identity names the personal life, source, referent, presence, and redemptive ownership realized in that form. The humanity remains created and the Son remains a true subject toward God, yet He is not merely an other-ordered representative. The God whose life, character, name, and saving intention are personally manifested is the Father Himself. The language of image and exact imprint therefore preserves distinction of mode without reducing Christ to God's finest external artifact.

"GOD" IN THE REDEPTIVE ECONOMY IDENTIFIES THE FATHER AS SOURCE

Within the controlling New Testament source-grammar, "God" is not an unidentified fourth term standing behind Father, Son, and Spirit. The God who purposes, chooses, sends, gives, commands, reconciles, raises, exalts, subjects all things, receives the kingdom, and receives final glory is the Father.

Ephesians 1 makes this explicit. The controlling subject is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This God blesses, chooses, predestines, purposes, gives grace, makes known His will, gathers all things in Christ, gives the Spirit, raises Christ, seats Him, subjects all things beneath Him, and gives Him as head over all things. Christ is the embodied and exalted locus in whom the purpose is accomplished; the Spirit is the operative seal and pledge; God the Father is the originative actor.

Therefore, an opponent cannot separate "God manifested," "God was in Christ," or "God reconciled the world to Himself" from the Father merely because the noun Father is not repeated in every clause. In this economy, limiting the argument to the exact word Father while treating God as someone else or as a vague common term destroys the normal identification of the divine actor already supplied by the context.

WHY SCRIPTURE SAYS THE SON OF GOD DIED

The point of death cannot revolve merely around God being recognized or present. The quality of the existence in which death occurs must be real. Death requires a mortal embodied life, a human mind and will, an offerable life, and a subject capable of obedience, suffering, and the cessation of bodily life.

For that reason Scripture says the Son died. "Son" identifies the true filial and human mode of existence brought forth in the incarnation. "Of God" identifies source, ownership, conception, self-expression, presence, mission, and redemptive meaning. The Son of God is not a second independent source standing beside God. He is the concrete existence in which God's own Word and saving intent have been realized as man.

Thus the death of the Son is not a retreat from God's own self-giving. It is the necessary naming of the mortal reality through which God gives Himself. The man immediately suffers and dies; God is the source and owner of the incarnational life; the Father's Word, image, wisdom, glory, and saving purpose reach the sacrificial terminus for which the human existence was willed.

The statement "the Son died" therefore protects both sides of redemption. It prevents the false claim that transcendent divine life ceased to exist, and it prevents the equally false claim that an unrelated man died while God remained externally removed from the cost. God redeems man through His own self-expression realized as the true Son and true man who dies.

THE EXPECTED SCRIPTURAL CONCLUSION

If Scripture presents the Father as the acting God and redemptive source; presents Christ as His Word, image, exact representation, glory, fullness, name, presence, and manifested saving intent; and presents the Son as the true human subject who obeys, dies, rises, and is glorified, then Scripture has supplied exactly the language a true incarnation requires. The absence of an unqualified numerical sentence does not negate the incarnation. God's self-expressive intent explains why the identity is truly His, while the human descriptions explain the created mode in which that identity is realized.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

If God redeems humanity through His own manifestation, Scripture should identify the Father as the divine source, Christ as God's own Word and image embodied, and the Son as the true filial human existence in which obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, and glory become real. "Jesus is the Father" is true according to revelation, expression, presence, and operation, but not as an unqualified collapse of the man into the Father's transcendent mode.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The argument has now established not only the properties the Messiah must possess but also the forms of predication that should appear if God fulfills redemption through His own manifestation. The scriptural demonstration may therefore test whether Jesus actually bears those properties and whether Scripture uses the expected source-expression-incarnation grammar.

Part V — Scriptural Demonstration of the Necessary Properties in Jesus

45. Hebrews 5:7–10 as the Controlling Portrait of the Man

Hebrews 5:7–10 gathers in one passage nearly every quality the preceding argument has shown to be necessary:

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.” (Hebrews 5:7–10)

The text should not be treated as a collection of devotional details. It describes the actual constitution and redemptive history of the Son as man.

45.1 “IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH” — TEMPORAL AND EMBODIED EXISTENCE

The phrase locates Him within a succession of days. He lives temporally. His human history unfolds. There is an earlier and later in His experience. He passes through conditions rather than possessing the entire history as one timeless act.

“Flesh” identifies the vulnerable human order. It includes bodily weakness, susceptibility to pain, mortality, and the historical condition in which obedience must be completed.

The phrase also prevents the suffering from being assigned to divinity in an unqualified way. The mode is specified: the suffering belongs to the days of His flesh.

Yet the one living those days is not an unrelated man. It is the Son. Thus the passage holds together incarnational identity and human mode.

45.2 “HE OFFERED” — ORIGINATING PERSONAL AGENCY

The verb attributes action to Him. He is not merely the site where prayers occur. He offers them.

Offering involves:

- awareness of need;
- recognition of God;
- intention to address God;
- voluntary direction of thought and desire;
- and personal ownership of the prayer.

This is an act of a rational subject. An abstract nature does not offer. A body does not supplicate by itself. The man does.

45.3 “PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATIONS” — DEPENDENCE AND PETITION

Prayer expresses relation. Supplication intensifies the relation by expressing need and request.

Jesus rationally understands:

- His own situation;
- the danger of death;
- God's ability;
- the possibility of deliverance;
- and His dependence upon God's response.

This cannot be reduced to a theatrical lesson for observers because Hebrews grounds His hearing and priestly formation in the act itself. The prayers belong to His own path of obedience.

45.4 "WITH STRONG CRYING AND TEARS" — COMPLETE AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT

The prayer is not detached cognition. His body and emotions are engaged.

Crying and tears reveal:

- distress;
- sorrow;
- the weight of death;
- natural human aversion;
- and the seriousness of the petition.

The emotional intensity is not sinful instability. It is the truthful human response to the horror He faces. A humanity incapable of such affect would be less than ours.

45.5 "UNTO HIM WHO WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM FROM DEATH" — RATIONAL DISTINCTION AND FAITH

The sentence presents two relational poles:

- Jesus, the one facing death and praying;
- God, the One able to save Him.

Jesus understands Himself as "me" in relation to "Him." This is precisely the rational first-person structure required of true humanity.

The relation is one of faith. He does not save Himself from death as an independent human source of resurrection. He entrusts Himself to the God who raises the dead.

The passage therefore requires genuine dependence rather than merely the appearance of dependence.

45.6 "HE WAS HEARD" — REAL DIVINE-HUMAN RELATION

Being heard presupposes that the prayer is received as prayer. God answers the faithful man.

The answer does not necessarily mean escape from dying. He is saved out of death through resurrection. His prayer is heard in the form determined by God's redemptive purpose.

This deepens the faith structure. He submits to death while trusting the One able to bring Him through it.

45.7 "BECAUSE OF HIS REVERENCE" — MORAL QUALITY OF THE MAN

The hearing is associated with His reverence or godly fear. Reverence belongs to His human moral and religious life.

It includes:

- recognition of God's holiness and authority;

- humble dependence;
- fidelity;
- and submission.

The man is heard in relation to the quality of His own faithful response. This gives the prayer legal and covenantal significance.

45.8 “THOUGH HE WERE A SON” — SONSHIP DOES NOT ABOLISH HUMANITY

The conjunction is crucial. Sonship does not make learning obedience unnecessary. It does not eliminate prayer, tears, fear, suffering, or dependence.

The Son’s identity is lived through these human properties.

He is not a Son only because He bears a metaphysical label. He lives as Son toward the Father. His sonship is expressed in trust, reception, obedience, and reverence.

45.9 “HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE” — REAL EXPERIENTIAL ACQUISITION

Learning is attributed to the Son. The text does not say merely that He displayed what obedience looks like. He learned it.

This learning is not movement from rebellion to righteousness. It is movement from untested capacity to accomplished human obedience.

He comes to know obedience by doing it under progressively severe conditions. The knowledge is experiential and historical.

If His human mind possessed every experiential reality intrinsically from conception, the ordinary meaning of learning would be emptied. Hebrews instead presents learning as part of His qualification.

45.10 “BY THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED” — SUFFERING AS FORMATIVE AND REDEMPITIVE

The suffering is causally related to the learning. It supplies the conditions in which obedience becomes complete.

Suffering therefore contributes something real:

- it tests faith;
- calls forth prayer;
- engages emotion;
- presses natural desire;
- and provides the field of submission.

The priest is perfected through the path He actually undergoes.

45.11 “BEING MADE PERFECT” — VOCATIONAL AND PRIESTLY COMPLETION

The perfection is not a movement from sin to moral innocence. It is the completion of the human course required of the Messiah: suffering, tested obedience, sacrificial self-offering, death, resurrection, and entrance into the enduring priestly office. The man is brought to the appointed terminus of the redemptive vocation.

45.12 “HE BECAME THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION” — SOURCEHOOD WITHIN THE ECONOMY

The verb “became” is decisive. The Son becomes the author or source of eternal salvation after being perfected through suffering and obedience. The text therefore does not describe underived divine sourcehood. It describes the effective saving sourcehood of the perfected man within the economy God established.

Christ becomes the source of salvation to those who obey Him because He is the accepted sacrifice, risen mediator, living High Priest, appointed Lord, and administrator of the covenant. He is the concrete point through whom salvation is obtained. This is real sourcehood, but it is mediatorial and office-relative: the Father originates, sends, appoints, raises, and exalts; the Son fulfills and administers the salvation brought about through Him.

45.13 “CALLED OF GOD AN HIGH PRIEST” — APPOINTMENT FROM THE DIVINE SOURCE

The sequence ends with divine appointment. Jesus does not appoint Himself High Priest or originate the saving office from Himself. He is called by God after completing the obedient human path. The designation confirms that God remains the author of the economy while the perfected Son becomes its living priestly source for those who obey Him.

CONCLUSION OF HEBREWS 5:7-10

The passage attributes to Jesus:

- embodied temporality;
- personal agency;
- prayer;
- need;
- emotional distress;
- tears;
- mortality;
- rational distinction from God;
- faith;
- reverence;
- sonship;
- learning;
- obedience;
- suffering;
- and divine hearing.

This is not a thin humanity. It is a complete human existence ordered toward God and completed through suffering.

- vocational and priestly completion;
- becoming the source of eternal salvation within the economy;
- and appointment by God as High Priest.

WHY THE NEXT SCRIPTURAL SECTION FOLLOWS

Hebrews 5 gives the concentrated portrait. The broader scriptural witness must now be traced through birth, growth, knowledge, temptation, relation, witness, death, and resurrection.

46. Conception, Birth, and Sonship

“For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 1:20)

“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke 1:35)

The Messiah’s human life begins through conception and birth. This is necessary because redemption requires genuine entry into the human order rather than descent in an already mature human form.

Luke 1:35 ties sonship to the divine act of conception: the Holy Spirit comes upon Mary, the power of the Highest overshadows her, and therefore the holy one born is called Son of God.

The “therefore” matters. The title is not detached from the incarnational event. Sonship is realized in the human existence brought forth by God’s Spirit.

THE FORCE OF “FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT”

Matthew 1:20 states that what has been begotten in Mary “is from the Holy Spirit” (ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου). The preposition ἐκ marks source or origin. The text does not describe a preexisting human person who receives divine indwelling after conception; it locates the beginning of this human life within the Spirit’s constituting act.

The Spirit is not converted into human substance, and the human consciousness does not inherit divine omniscience. Mary’s maternity secures genuine humanity; the Spirit’s action secures the unique divine source and incarnational order of the life conceived. The one born is therefore fully human in constitution while personally ordered from His beginning as Son of God and embodiment of God’s own Word and purpose.

This source-language is one element in a cumulative identification. Joined to Word made flesh, image, exact imprint, fullness, and the indwelling Father, it explains why the human subject is not merely a perfect creature later commissioned to reveal God.

This establishes both sides:

- divine source and initiative;
- genuine human conception and birth.

He is not an independently existing man later adopted. Nor is He an eternal human individual transferred into a womb. The human life comes into existence through the divine act.

As Son of Man, He belongs to humanity. As Son of God, His existence is uniquely grounded in God and expresses God’s purpose.

The conception also demonstrates that divine willing is constitutive, not coercive. God does not seize a mature man and control him. God brings forth the human existence from its beginning.

THE COMING ITSELF IS NOT FROM HIMSELF

John 8:42 extends the source-pattern beyond teaching, words, and works to Jesus’ coming itself. The contrast is economic: He came ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ — out from God as source — and not ἀπ’ ἐμαυτοῦ —

from Himself as the independent origin of the mission. The final clause identifies the Father as sender and Jesus as the sent subject.

The immediate context has already identified God as the Father: “If God were your Father.” The grammatical contrast is therefore God/Father as source and the Son’s human “I” as the one who comes, receives, and is sent. Read incarnationally, the verse coheres with the human Son’s beginning “from the Holy Spirit” and does not independently prove an eternal divine Son. Read as a statement of eternal personal origin, it makes the Father the God out of whom the Son derives and therefore does not establish equal personal origination.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus’ sonship and humanity begin in a divinely caused conception that produces a real human life rather than an external instrument.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

A genuinely conceived child must develop. Scripture therefore must be examined for real growth and acquisition.

47. Growth in Wisdom, Stature, and Favor

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.” (Luke 2:40)

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:52)

Luke 2:40 and 2:52 explicitly predicate growth of Jesus. He grows, becomes strong, is filled with wisdom, and increases in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man.

The text spans the major dimensions of human development:

BODILY DEVELOPMENT

Stature increases. The body matures from infancy through childhood to adulthood.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Wisdom increases. This cannot naturally mean only that observers become increasingly aware of a fixed omniscience. The subject increases in wisdom.

RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOWARD GOD

He increases in favor with God. This describes a lived covenantal history. The relation is not static abstraction.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

He increases in favor with man. He grows within family and community.

The temple episode also displays developing messianic consciousness. He recognizes a unique necessity concerning His Father’s affairs, yet returns and remains subject to His parents. The human relation to God and ordinary human obedience coexist.

The text confirms that Jesus’ perfection is developmental. He is perfect according to each stage without possessing every mature human accomplishment at infancy.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Scripture predicates genuine bodily, cognitive, relational, and social growth of Jesus, confirming a developing human identity.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Growth in wisdom must be interpreted alongside texts of moral discernment, learning, and finite knowledge.

48. Moral Discernment and the Learning of Good and Evil

Isaiah 7:15–16 describes the child in relation to a stage of knowing to refuse evil and choose good. Whatever debates attend the immediate historical context and messianic application, the language presents developmental moral cognition.

A human child does not begin with the mature acquired judgment of adulthood. Moral understanding develops through instruction, experience, and rational maturation.

Applied to the Messiah, this does not imply that He first commits evil. It means He comes to mature human knowledge of moral distinction and consistently chooses the good.

The distinction is important:

- moral development is not moral corruption;
- acquisition of discernment is not prior sin;
- perfect childhood does not require adult cognition.

The Messiah's sinlessness is therefore compatible with genuine growth. Indeed, it is more fully displayed when each stage of development remains faithfully ordered to God.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

The biblical portrait permits and requires genuine human development in moral discernment without attributing sin to Jesus.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Developmental knowledge must also account for explicit limitation, especially the Son's not knowing the day and hour.

49. Finite Knowledge and Mark 13:32

“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.” (Mark 13:32)

Jesus states that no one knows the day or hour — not the angels, nor the Son, but the Father.

Knowing and not knowing are acts or states of a knower. A nature considered abstractly does not know; a concrete cognitive subject knows through the powers of a nature.

The statement therefore discloses a real epistemic limit in the Son's human existence.

Attempts to say that He knows as God but does not know as man must still answer whose first-person statement “nor the Son” is. If the acting subject is intrinsically omniscient and

simultaneously possesses the information, the confession of not knowing risks becoming equivocal or merely dramatic.

The present framework allows the statement its full force:

- the Father is the infinite source of knowledge;
- the man possesses finite human knowledge;
- transcendent knowledge may be given by revelation;
- and what is not given may genuinely remain unknown to the human consciousness.

This does not deny God's presence in Christ. It protects the truth of the humanity God has willed.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus possesses real finite human knowledge and can truthfully confess not knowing what the Father alone knows.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Finite knowledge and revelational dependence explain why Jesus repeatedly says His teaching, command, and words are received from the Father.

50. Received Teaching, Words, Command, and Works

"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." (John 7:16)

"I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." (John 8:28)

"If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." (John 8:42)

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν.

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (John 12:49)

"The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:10)

"The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John 14:24)

Jesus repeatedly presents His teaching and speech as received:

- His teaching is not His own but belongs to the One who sent Him (John 7:16).
- He speaks what the Father taught Him (John 8:28).
- He does not speak from Himself; the Father gives command concerning what to say (John 12:49–50).
- The word heard is not His but the Father's (John 14:24).
- The Father dwelling in Him performs the works (John 14:10).

These statements disclose an economy of source and expression.

The Father is the revelational source. Jesus is the human recipient and speaker. The words become genuinely His testimony because He understands and faithfully speaks what He receives.

The same pattern governs His knowledge of Himself. Jesus does not speak from an eternal autobiographical memory belonging to a second divine consciousness. He understands Himself through the Father's teaching, the Scriptures, the Spirit, the works entrusted to Him, and the mission He consciously owns. His self-knowledge is therefore received without being unreal: He truly knows Himself as Son, Messiah, Son of Man, image, embodied Word, and the human means of God's saving intent.

This is not coercive dictation. The Son loves the Father and acts so the world may know that love (John 14:31). Reception and obedience are personal.

The texts also explain how transcendent divine truth may be spoken through a finite human mind. The authority lies in the divine source; the expression occurs through the human mode.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus' knowledge and speech are revelationally dependent upon the Father, confirming human reception without diminishing divine authority.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The received command and finite human will converge in Gethsemane, where the cost of obedience is explicitly confronted.

51. Gethsemane: Natural Human Will and Free Submission

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22:41–42)

Gethsemane is one of the clearest demonstrations of the Messiah's human will.

Jesus experiences sorrow and distress. He recognizes the coming suffering. He asks that the cup pass if possible. He then submits: not my will, but Yours.

The scene contains:

- cognitive awareness of danger;
- affective distress;
- natural desire to avoid suffering;
- prayer;
- distinction between His will and God's will;
- and free submission.

No sin is required. Natural desire for life is good. The obedience lies in ordering that desire under the Father's purpose.

If "my will" is only a phrase produced by the divine will, the contrast is not genuine. The text requires a human will capable of being submitted.

At the same time, the wills are not hostile rivals. The human will reaches moral perfection precisely in freely consenting to God.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Gethsemane reveals a real human will, natural aversion to suffering, genuine prayer, and uncoerced submission to the Father.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The temptation narratives show the same human fidelity earlier in the ministry, under bodily and messianic pressure.

52. Temptation in the Wilderness and Throughout His Life

The wilderness temptation follows fasting and hunger. The bodily condition is directly relevant. The proposal to make bread addresses a genuine human need.

The temptations also address messianic vocation:

- use power independently of the path of trust;
- force visible divine confirmation;
- obtain rule through compromise rather than suffering obedience.

Jesus responds through Scripture. This is the action of the faithful Israelite and human Messiah. He receives Israel's word, interprets His situation through it, and chooses obedience.

Hebrews broadens the claim: He is tempted in every relevant respect as we are, yet without sin. Because He suffered when tempted, He is able to help those being tempted.

Again, experiential knowledge is central. He knows temptation as encountered and overcome.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus' bodily needs, messianic calling, scriptural knowledge, and human will are genuinely engaged in temptation, and He remains faithful without sin.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

His faithfulness is not limited to isolated temptations. It extends into relationships with people, compassion, service, rejection, and witness.

53. Love, Compassion, Service, and Relation to Fellow Man

The Gospels attribute genuine human relationships and affections to Jesus.

He loves particular people. He is moved with compassion. He grieves hardness of heart. He weeps at the grave of Lazarus. He serves His disciples. He calls them friends. He experiences betrayal.

These are not generic divine attributes projected through a body. They are lived through the human history of Jesus.

His love fulfills human righteousness. He loves God and neighbor in the concrete circumstances of His mission.

His compassion also underlies priestly solidarity. He does not relate to suffering only by omniscient awareness; He encounters suffering from within a vulnerable human life.

His service reveals the form of messianic kingship: the Son of Man comes not to be served but to serve and give His life.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus possesses authentic human love, compassion, friendship, grief, service, and representative solidarity toward His fellow man.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The man who serves also bears witness. His words and identity are tested in a legal conflict with His opponents.

54. Jesus as Human Witness

“It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” (John 8:17–18)

“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God.” (John 8:40)

“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” (John 18:37)

Jesus explicitly identifies Himself as “a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God” (John 8:40). The statement combines all central elements:

- He is a man.
- He hears from God.
- He understands truth.
- He speaks it.
- He owns the testimony.

In John 18:37 He declares that He was born and came into the world to bear witness to the truth. Birth and mission are joined.

In John 8:17–18 He appeals to the legal principle of two witnesses: He bears witness concerning Himself, and the Father who sent Him bears witness concerning Him.

The legal structure requires His witness to be genuinely His. The Father confirms rather than replaces His testimony.

His works, words, Scripture, the Baptist, the Spirit, and ultimately resurrection function as divine attestation.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus stands as a rational and legally accountable human witness whose testimony is received from God, owned by Him, and confirmed by the Father.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The witness is rejected, condemned, and crucified. The reality of His human pain and death must therefore be demonstrated.

55. Pain, Abandonment, and Death

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46)

“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.” (John 19:28)

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke 23:46)

The passion narratives present the full cost of embodiment.

Jesus is beaten, mocked, wounded, crucified, and killed. He thirsts. He experiences sorrow. He cries, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He entrusts His spirit to the Father.

These statements display:

- bodily pain;
- first-person distress;
- scriptural consciousness;
- relation to God;
- faith amid abandonment;
- and mortal death.

The cry of forsakenness should not be reduced to mere quotation without lived content. Quoting Scripture does not cancel experience. The psalm supplies the inspired language through which the righteous sufferer expresses His actual condition.

Likewise, “I thirst” is not an incidental bodily detail. It shows that the embodied life remains the immediate locus of suffering to the end.

“Into Your hands I commit my spirit” is the final act of faith. The man gives Himself into the care of His God.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

Jesus genuinely experiences bodily pain, relational anguish, faithful dependence, and death as the human subject of the incarnational life.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Before turning to resurrection, the unique personal depth of this death must be stated. The crucified man is not only a righteous human sufferer; He is God’s true Son and God’s own image and self-expression perfected as true human existence.

55A. God Beholds His Son and His Own Image in the Crucified Christ

The passion has a depth that cannot be explained by the generic relation between Creator and creature alone. God knows, sustains, and values every sufferer, but Jesus is not merely one more human life standing before God. He is the true Son whose whole human existence is directed toward the Father, and He is the unique human realization of God’s own Word, image, wisdom, glory, character, and saving intent.

JESUS AS THE PERFECTION OF GOD AS MAN

To call Jesus the perfection of God must retain the teleological qualification already established. God is eternally perfect as God and acquires no improvement of divine essence. “Perfected as man” means that God’s intention to realize His own self-expression in true humanity reaches its complete created terminus in Jesus. The Word is not merely announced; it is made flesh. The invisible God is not merely described; He is imaged. Divine wisdom, holiness, love, righteousness, mercy, and saving purpose are brought to their intended human actuality in the life of the Son.

This perfection intensifies the personal and moral significance of the passion. The one being struck is not an unrelated instrument standing outside God’s identity and purpose. The humanity being wounded is the human existence God personally willed as the visible realization of His own self-expression. The greater claim is not that divine essence becomes fleshly tissue, but that the fleshly life under violence belongs uniquely to God’s own incarnational act.

WHY THE WOUNDED LIFE IS GOD’S OWN INCARNATIONAL LIFE

The uniqueness does not rest upon the transfer of divine omni-properties into Jesus’ body or consciousness. Life does not require such properties in every order in which it is realized. The human subject is begotten from the Holy Spirit, and God’s own Word, character, image, and saving will are personally realized in His human life. His finite consciousness remains genuinely human, but the life is not merely another creaturely order external to God’s personal self-expression.

For that reason the passion is immediately the suffering of Jesus and incarnationally God’s own self-gift. God does not suffer as a second hidden body or mind behind the Son, and the unlimited divine mode is not physically wounded. Yet the life under violence is not merely an other-ordered creature’s life that God values from outside; it is the true human life in which God has personally realized His own self-disclosure within the human condition.

GOD BEHOLDS A TRUE SON

Jesus stands before God as a genuine human Son. He loves the Father, trusts the Father, receives command from the Father, obeys the Father, honors the Father, offers Himself to the Father, and commits His spirit to the Father. The filial relation is not a theatrical conversation within an undifferentiated consciousness. It is the lived relation of the true man to His God and Father.

God therefore beholds His beloved and faithful Son being mocked, beaten, disfigured, falsely condemned, and crucified. He sees the one who has perfectly honored Him treated as a blasphemer, the obedient one treated as a criminal, and the righteous Son placed under public shame and death. The injury is inflicted upon a real Son whose human life, faith, obedience, and love are personally precious to God.

GOD BEHOLDS HIS OWN IMAGE AND SELF-EXPRESSION

At the same time, the Son is not an independently constituted human person existing outside God’s own act and later joined to divine presence. He is the Word made flesh, the image of the invisible God, the radiance of divine glory, the exact representation of God’s reality, and the man in whom the Father’s name, works, character, presence, and saving will are manifested.

In this qualified but decisive sense, God sees Himself in the incarnate Son. He does not see the transcendent divine essence converted into a finite duplicate. He beholds His own Word, wisdom, holiness, love, righteousness, glory, and redemptive intent perfectly expressed in the true human

image He has brought forth. The Son stands toward God as a true filial human subject, while the same Son comes from God as His own visible self-expression. The Father and Son are therefore genuinely related subjects within the economy, but they are not two divine subjects, two divine minds, or two independently constituted subjects composing Christ. The Father is the transcendent divine source and beholder; Jesus is the genuine human subject brought forth as His own incarnational self-expression. Their relation is real because the human Son can recognize Himself, recognize God, and consciously own His filial relation to God.

Those who mar Christ's face therefore mar the human face through which the invisible God has chosen to make Himself known. Those who mock Christ mock the embodied manifestation of God's wisdom and saving name. Those who reject Him reject more than a messenger; they reject God's own self-disclosure. Those who crucify the Lord of glory crucify the man in whom divine glory has been personally embodied.

THE IMAGE IS MARRED WITHOUT THE DIVINE ESSENCE BEING MUTILATED

The mode of the injury must remain exact. The divine essence is not bruised, lacerated, disfigured, divided, or extinguished. The wounds occur in the passible human body; the anguish occurs in the finite human consciousness; death occurs in the mortal human life. God does not cease to be infinite Spirit or the source of life.

Yet the opposite error must also be rejected. The wounded humanity is not external to God's personal self-expression. The Father is not a second sufferer hidden behind the Son, but neither is the Son an unrelated victim suffering beside an untouched divine actor. God beholds the suffering as the suffering of His true Son and of the human image He personally owns as the realization of His own Word and saving purpose.

This also accords with God's exhaustive knowledge and affective constancy. The crucifixion does not cause God to discover the worth of the Son, begin loving Him, or newly acquire grief over the violence. The complete reality of the Son, the image, the sin, the suffering, and the death is fully and personally before God without discovery or temporal fading. The event becomes historically actual at the cross, while God's love for the Son, opposition to the evil, grief over the sin, and valuation of His own image are fully real and perfectly proportioned to the event without emotional instability.

THE CROSS REVEALS BOTH HUMAN VIOLENCE AND DIVINE SELF-GIVING

The crucifixion therefore reveals the depth of human violence. Humanity does not merely reject a prophet, abuse a servant, or kill an appointed representative. It dishonors the true Son and mars the image in which God has made Himself personally visible. The violence directed toward Jesus is violence against the concrete human realization of God's own goodness, truth, mercy, righteousness, and saving presence.

The same event reveals the depth of divine self-giving. God does not outsource the redemptive cost to an independently grounded third party. He gives the Son whose existence is from Him, belongs to Him, expresses Him, and fulfills His purpose. The Son freely offers the truly human life that is God's own incarnational self-expression. Thus the cross remains genuinely the sacrifice of a man before God and genuinely God's own redemptive self-gift through the human life He has made His own.

RESURRECTION AND GLORIFICATION ARE GOD'S NECESSARY ANSWER

The image that is marred is not abandoned, and the Son who is dishonored is not left under the verdict of His executioners. Resurrection is God's public vindication of the same Son and the same embodied image. The one whose face was struck is raised; the body that bore the wounds is made incorruptible; the faithful Son is declared righteous; and the glory concealed beneath humiliation is openly manifested.

Glorification therefore does more than reward an individual after suffering. God enthrones the man in whom His Word and wisdom have reached complete human fulfillment. The marred image becomes the glorified image; the rejected Son becomes the reigning Lord; and the crucified man becomes the enduring face through whom the invisible God is known within the redeemed order. The Father glorifies His Son, and in glorifying the Son He vindicates and displays the success of His own incarnational purpose.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

In the crucified Jesus, God beholds both a true and beloved Son standing before Him and His own Word, image, glory, character, and saving intent realized in that Son. The human image is genuinely marred and the Son genuinely suffers and dies, while the divine essence remains uninjured and immortal. Because this humanity is God's own incarnational self-expression rather than an unrelated life, the passion possesses the unique personal depth of God's Son and God's manifested image being dishonored together in the one man.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Because the faithful Son and manifested image are not abandoned to shame and death, God's resurrection of this same man must be understood as vindication, restoration, and the beginning of His open glorification.

56. Resurrection as Vindication of the Man

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." (Acts 2:32)

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36)

"He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:31)

Apostolic preaching repeatedly distinguishes God as the One who raises and Jesus as the one raised.

God raises Him from the dead. God makes this Jesus Lord and Christ. God appoints a day to judge the world through the man whom He has appointed, giving assurance by raising Him from the dead.

The identity is continuous:

- the man who was crucified is raised;
- the witness rejected by men is confirmed by God;
- the obedient servant is exalted;
- the mortal body is transformed;
- and the Messiah becomes firstborn from the dead.

The resurrection is therefore legal, relational, and ontological. It vindicates His righteousness, answers His faith, defeats death, and inaugurates glorified humanity.

SCRIPTURAL POINT ESTABLISHED

God's resurrection of Jesus publicly vindicates the same human subject who prayed, obeyed, testified, suffered, and died.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The risen Jesus continues to speak as man in relation to His Father and God. His post-resurrection identity must therefore be examined.

Part VI — The Glorified Man, Mediatorial Reign, and the Two Ends of the Incarnation

57. Why Glorification Is Necessary to Redemption

The glorification of the Messiah is not an optional honor added after redemption has already been completed in every relevant sense. It is itself a necessary stage of the redemptive economy. If the Messiah merely obeyed, suffered, died, and then ceased to exist as man, the purpose for which He entered humanity would remain incomplete. Redemption requires not only the removal of guilt through faithful sacrifice but the positive arrival of humanity at the life, authority, communion, and incorruptibility for which God created it.

The problem addressed by redemption is therefore larger than the fact of individual transgression. Humanity is alienated from God, subjected to death, deprived of righteous dominion, disordered under hostile powers, and unable to bring the created order to its intended end. A dead Messiah could testify to the cost of sin, but He could not administer the achieved reconciliation, intercede as living High Priest, judge the world in righteousness, subject hostile powers, raise the dead, transform the redeemed, or deliver a completed kingdom to God. The redemptive work requires a living and glorified man.

GLORIFICATION IS THE JUDICIAL ANSWER TO THE MESSIAH'S OBEDIENCE

The man Jesus stands under law, fulfills righteousness, bears truthful witness, remains faithful through suffering, and offers His life. Those acts create a juridical question: What is God's judgment concerning this man and His messianic claim? Resurrection answers by reversing the verdict of human courts. Glorification goes further by publicly installing the vindicated man in the office for which His obedience qualified Him. The same one who was humbled is exalted; the one who obeyed is given the name; the one who suffered is crowned with glory and honor; the one rejected as false is appointed Lord and Christ.

This judicial structure is necessary because righteousness must not only be performed but approved, and the approved representative must be placed in the position from which the benefits of His obedience are administered. Without glorification, vindication would remain incomplete and the relation between faithful obedience and messianic authority would never reach its appointed conclusion.

GLORIFICATION IS THE ONTOLOGICAL ANSWER TO MORTALITY

The Messiah enters the mortal condition of those He redeems. If death merely ended His human existence, then death would remain victorious over the very man through whom God intended to defeat it. Resurrection is therefore not the disposal of humanity after sacrifice. It is the transformation of the same human life from mortality to immortality, from weakness to power, and from dishonor to glory. The human condition is not escaped; it is perfected.

The economy requires a man in whom death has been overcome from within human existence. Only then can He be firstfruits rather than a temporary instrument. The firstfruits must possess the

same order of life that the later harvest will receive. The glorified body of Christ is therefore not incidental evidence that He survived. It is the first realized form of redeemed humanity.

GLORIFICATION IS THE ADMINISTRATIVE ANSWER TO ACCOMPLISHED REDEMPTION

Atonement must be applied, covenant blessings must be administered, enemies must be subdued, the Spirit must be poured out, the people of God must be gathered, and creation must be brought under righteous rule. These are not tasks performed by a humanity that has vanished. They belong to the risen Messiah as the living administrator of God's completed saving work.

His exaltation gives Him the economic standing to act as High Priest, mediator, judge, king, head of the body, and Lord of the coming age. The authority is given by God, yet it is genuinely borne by the man who fulfilled the required obedience. Glorification is therefore necessary not because God lacks power, but because God has chosen to administer salvation through the human Messiah whose righteousness has been established and whose life has passed through death into incorruption.

GLORIFICATION IS THE TELEOLOGICAL ANSWER TO THE PURPOSE OF INCARNATION

The incarnation is directed toward an end. God does not will His life as man merely to experience birth and death. He wills humanity to reach its intended completion in communion with God. The glorified Christ is that completion first realized. His glorification demonstrates what the incarnational purpose was moving toward from the beginning: not the temporary use of a body, but the permanent establishment of a perfected human life as the visible center of the redeemed order.

For this reason, the logic of incarnation moves necessarily through conception, growth, obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, glorification, reign, and consummation. To stop at death would sever the means from the intended end. To stop at resurrection without enthronement would leave the representative man alive but not installed. To stop at enthronement without the transformation of the redeemed would make His glory private rather than corporate. The entire sequence is necessary.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Glorification is a constitutive stage of redemption: it vindicates the obedient man, perfects His humanity beyond mortality, installs Him to administer the achieved salvation, and establishes Him as the first realized form of the humanity God intends to bring into glory.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If glorification is necessary, then the identity of the one glorified must be continuous with the man who obeyed and died. The paper must therefore establish that the man does not cease to exist when the redemptive sacrifice is completed.

58. The Risen Man Does Not Cease to Exist

The man Jesus cannot be treated as a temporary economic instrument whose usefulness ends at death. Such a model would make the incarnation a disposable means: humanity would be assumed for suffering, abandoned after the price was paid, and replaced by an exclusively divine mode of existence. Scripture instead presents resurrection as the raising of the same Jesus, the same body transformed, the same first-person identity continuing, and the same filial relation persisting.

NUMERICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

Resurrection language preserves identity across death. The one whom men crucified is the one God raised. The body placed in the tomb is the body no longer there. The risen Christ bears the marks of crucifixion, identifies Himself to His disciples, eats before them, invites touch, remembers prior relationships, and continues the mission begun before death. Transformation does not create a replacement individual. It glorifies the same man.

This continuity is legally necessary. If another subject were exalted, the obedient man would not receive vindication. If the human identity were absorbed into divinity, the one who learned obedience would not be the one rewarded for obedience. If the humanity ceased, the new Adam would disappear precisely when His representative headship was to begin its universal administration.

CONTINUING HUMAN OFFICES REQUIRE CONTINUING HUMANITY

The post-resurrection offices assigned to Christ are human and messianic. God judges the world through the man whom He appointed. The mediator between God and men remains the man Christ Jesus. The High Priest lives to intercede. The Son of Man receives dominion. The Lamb stands as slain. The descendant of David reigns. Each title presupposes continuity with the historical man.

The priesthood especially makes the point. A priest represents humanity before God. If the humanity ceased after resurrection, the priestly office would either cease or become a divine self-relation without human representation. But Hebrews grounds the continuing priesthood in indestructible life. The Messiah's glorified humanity is therefore the condition of His enduring priestly ministry.

THE CONTINUING CONFESSION OF "MY GOD"

The risen Jesus says, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." The speaker is not an earthly man whose relational identity is about to be discarded. The confession belongs to the risen Christ. Revelation likewise presents the exalted Christ repeatedly speaking of "my God." The language demonstrates that glorification does not abolish His human God-relation. It perfects and enthrones the man who possesses it.

A glorified man does not cease to be a man because mortality has been removed. Mortality is not the essence of humanity. Sin is not the essence of humanity. Ignorance, weakness, and corruptibility are not required for humanity to remain humanity. The risen Christ retains body, rational identity, relation, memory, will, and vocation while possessing incorruptible life.

THE MAN IS NECESSARY TO THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

The redeemed are not conformed to a vanished humanity. They are conformed to the image of the risen Son. Their bodies are transformed according to His glorious body. He is firstborn among many brothers and firstfruits of those who sleep. These claims require that the glorified Christ remain the human pattern, not merely the divine cause, of their destiny.

The continuing man also preserves the personal history of redemption. The wounds, obedience, prayers, tears, suffering, and faith of Jesus are not left behind as the story of a temporary nature. They belong eternally to the identity of the Lamb and King. The enthroned Christ is the one who was crucified, and His glorified state forever bears the accomplished meaning of that history.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The humanity of Christ is permanent. Resurrection and glorification transform the man but do not terminate Him. The same Jesus who lived, prayed, obeyed, suffered, and died continues as glorified man, priest, mediator, judge, king, firstfruits, and head of redeemed humanity.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Because the risen man continues, His post-resurrection activity must be understood as a continuing human economy rather than a return to an exclusively pre-incarnate mode. The next section therefore examines the economic functions that require the glorified man.

59. The Continuing Economy of the Glorified Man

The redemptive economy does not end when Jesus leaves the tomb. It changes phase. Before death, the Messiah fulfills obedience, bears witness, suffers, and offers Himself. After resurrection, the same man administers what His obedience and sacrifice achieved. The earthly ministry is therefore preparatory to the heavenly and royal ministry of the glorified Christ.

THE GLORIFIED MAN AS LIVING HIGH PRIEST

A dead priest cannot intercede. A discontinued humanity cannot represent men. The risen Christ lives in the power of an indestructible life and therefore possesses an untransferable priesthood. His glorification is what allows the human priest who passed through suffering to remain before God on behalf of those whose condition He knows experientially.

The sympathy of the High Priest is not erased by glorification. His experience is retained as the completed history of the man. He does not need to remain weak in order to remember weakness, nor mortal in order to understand mortality. The glorified man carries perfected experiential qualification into His enduring ministry.

THE GLORIFIED MAN AS MEDIATOR

Mediation remains necessary until the redemptive purpose is brought to completion. Humanity must be gathered, reconciled, transformed, raised, and presented to God. The mediator therefore continues to stand in relation to both God and humanity. He has a God, receives authority, and represents men; yet He is also God's own image, Word, and saving presence realized in the man.

This is why the continuing economic distinction is not an embarrassment to be erased. The glorified Christ's relation to the Father is the form in which His mediatorial identity remains real. The one God accomplishes reconciliation through the one man whom He has glorified and appointed.

THE GLORIFIED MAN AS JUDGE

Judgment is entrusted to the man. This is legally appropriate because the judge is the one who lived within the human condition, was tested, suffered injustice, bore true witness, and was vindicated. His judgment does not arise from ignorance of human existence. The enthroned man judges the world according to the righteousness He Himself fulfilled.

The appointment of a man as judge also answers the corruption of human rule. Humanity's dominion failed through sin. God does not solve that failure by permanently bypassing humanity. He establishes righteous human dominion in the glorified Messiah.

THE GLORIFIED MAN AS KING AND ADMINISTRATOR OF THE AGE

All authority in heaven and earth is given to Jesus. The authority includes governance of the church, outpouring of the Spirit, mission to the nations, defeat of enemies, resurrection of the dead, and final delivery of the kingdom. These acts form a coherent mediatorial reign.

The language of gift is essential. The man does not possess independent sovereignty over against God. God gives the throne, name, kingdom, and authority. Yet gift does not make the authority unreal. The Messiah truly reigns, and God's rule is manifested through His reign.

THE GLORIFIED MAN AS HEAD OF NEW CREATION

The new creation requires a human head. As Adam stood at the beginning of the old human order, Christ stands at the beginning of the renewed order. His resurrection and glorification establish the life that flows to those joined to Him. The economy is therefore corporate: what occurs first in the representative man becomes the pattern and source of what occurs in His people.

The continued existence of the glorified man prevents salvation from collapsing into mere forgiveness. Redemption includes incorporation into a new humanity, conformity to Christ's image, participation in resurrection life, and life under righteous human dominion. These goods are administered through the living head.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The glorified humanity of Christ is economically necessary for His continuing offices as High Priest, mediator, judge, king, and head of new creation. The post-resurrection economy is not God acting after the man has disappeared; it is God governing and completing redemption through the risen man.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The Messiah's reign is described in relation to thrones, dominions, rulers, authorities, and every hostile power. To understand why the glorified man must be enthroned over them, the created and redemptive significance of these orders must be examined.

60. Created Orders, Powers, and Authorities as Expressions of Divine Wisdom

Scriptural language concerning thrones, dominions, rulers, authorities, principalities, and powers should not be treated as a random list of supernatural beings or political forces. These terms disclose an ordered creation. Authority, mediation, government, rank, and administration belong to the wisdom by which God structures relations within creation. The existence of ordered powers is therefore not intrinsically evil. Disorder enters when created authorities refuse their proper relation to God, exalt themselves, oppress, accuse, corrupt, or direct creation away from its intended end.

ORDER BELONGS TO WISDOM

Wisdom is not merely the possession of information. Divine wisdom orders means toward ends. It assigns place, relation, office, authority, and purpose. A created order of powers and authorities is therefore one expression of God's wisdom: creation is not an undifferentiated mass but a structured reality in which life, rule, service, representation, and accountability operate in ordered relations.

Human dominion belongs within this structure. Humanity is created to bear God's image and exercise delegated rule over the works of His hands. This dominion is not autonomous sovereignty. It is creaturely authority grounded in God, ordered under God, and directed toward the flourishing and final purpose of creation.

SIN CORRUPTS BUT DOES NOT ERASE THE CATEGORY OF AUTHORITY

When humanity rebels, the problem is not that authority exists. The problem is that authority becomes disordered. Human rulers serve death, spiritual powers accuse and deceive, institutions embody injustice, and creation is subjected to corruption. The created structures become theaters of rebellion rather than transparent expressions of divine wisdom.

Redemption must therefore do more than rescue isolated individuals from inward guilt. It must judge, disarm, reorder, and finally abolish every authority that resists God's purpose. The messianic task includes the restoration of order itself.

THE WORLD TO COME IS SUBJECTED TO MAN

Hebrews 2 places the coming world under the logic of Psalm 8: God's purpose is that man be crowned with glory and honor and that all things be placed under his feet. The present disorder appears to contradict that vocation, because humanity is mortal and creation is not yet visibly subjected. Jesus is presented as the one in whom the intended human dominion is first realized. He is made lower, suffers death, is crowned, and becomes the pioneer who brings many sons to glory.

This means that the subjection of powers to Christ is not merely the triumph of divine omnipotence over lesser beings. It is also the restoration and perfection of humanity's created vocation. God's wisdom answers failed human dominion by enthroning the faithful man.

POWERS ARE EVALUATED BY THEIR RELATION TO GOD'S END

An authority is righteous when it serves the order and end God gives it. It becomes hostile when it claims self-grounding or obstructs reconciliation, justice, life, and worship. The Messiah's reign therefore reveals the true measure of every power. Each authority must be brought into relation to God's purpose as embodied in Christ or be abolished as resistant to that purpose.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Created orders of authority are expressions of divine wisdom because they structure creation toward appointed ends. Sin disorders these powers; redemption must therefore restore proper order, disarm hostile authorities, and establish righteous human dominion under God.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If the powers belong to an order that must be restored and subjected through humanity, then the enthronement of the glorified Christ is the concrete enthronement of divine Wisdom as the righteous human king over every authority.

61. Christ as the Enthronement of Wisdom over Every Power

The glorified Christ is not only a man rewarded after suffering. He is God's Wisdom brought to its redemptive and royal completion in human existence. The Wisdom by which God purposes order is embodied in the Messiah, tested in obedience, vindicated through resurrection, and enthroned over the very powers that must be reconciled, subordinated, or abolished.

WISDOM PASSES FROM INTENTION TO INCARNATE RULE

Before incarnation, redemption exists as divine purpose, promise, Word, and wisdom. In Christ, that purpose becomes a lived human history. Wisdom is conceived, grows, speaks, obeys, suffers, gives itself, and passes through death. In resurrection, the wisdom proven in the path of obedient humanity is vindicated. In enthronement, that wisdom becomes the governing form of the redemptive age.

The throne therefore does not belong to an abstract plan. It belongs to the man in whom the plan has been fulfilled. The reign of Christ is the reign of God's completed redemptive wisdom through the obedient and glorified human image.

THE MAN IS ENTHRONED ABOVE POWERS BECAUSE HE FULFILLED WHAT THEY FAILED TO SERVE

Powers and authorities exist to serve God's order. When they become rebellious, accusatory, oppressive, or death-dealing, they contradict their purpose. Jesus fulfills perfect allegiance to God under the full pressure of those disordered systems. Religious authority condemns Him, political authority crucifies Him, spiritual hostility tests Him, and death receives Him. Yet He does not surrender faith, truth, love, or obedience.

God's exaltation of Christ therefore constitutes judgment upon every competing authority. The man rejected by the powers is placed above them. Their verdict is reversed; their pretension is exposed; their right to rule independently is denied. The cross discloses their disorder, and the resurrection establishes the righteous ruler they opposed.

HIS ENTHRONEMENT IS BOTH DIVINE RULE AND HUMAN DOMINION

The reign is God's because its source, purpose, power, and final glory belong to God. It is human because the recipient of the throne is the man who obeyed. These are not rival descriptions. God reigns through the Messiah, and the Messiah exercises the dominion proper to the glorified Son of Man.

This both-and is necessary. If the authority were only divine power acting without the man, humanity's created vocation would remain unfulfilled. If the authority belonged to an independent human sovereign, God's sourcehood and self-expression would be displaced. The enthroned Christ is God's own Wisdom and image reigning as true man.

EVERY POWER MUST BE RELATED TO THE ENTHRONED CHRIST

The messianic throne becomes the redemptive center by which all other authorities are measured. Some are reconciled and reordered under His lordship. Hostile powers are disarmed. Persistently rebellious rule is abolished. Death, the final enemy, is destroyed. Nothing may remain as an independent source of order beside God.

The purpose of universal subjection is not the eternal multiplication of rival sovereignties. It is the restoration of all rule to the one divine source through the appointed human king. The reign of Christ gathers the disordered creation into the order of God's wisdom.

THE THRONE LEADS TO THE FATHER AS ALL IN ALL

Because Christ's authority is the economic realization of God's wisdom, His reign has a determinate goal. He reigns until every enemy is subdued and the kingdom can be delivered to the Father. The handing over does not cancel His enthronement as the enduring face and image of God. It reveals

that His rule never existed as an independent end. Wisdom's enthronement brings creation back to its source.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Christ's exaltation is the enthronement of divine Wisdom as the obedient, vindicated, and glorified man. Through Him God restores human dominion, judges disordered powers, administers the redemptive age, and orders every authority toward the final confession of God as all in all.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The enthroned man accomplishes God's saving intent without becoming an independent savior beside God. This requires a precise rule for saying that God saves through the quality of the human means He has willed.

62. "God Saved": Predication Through the Quality of the Chosen Means

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Ephesians 1:3–5)

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:9–11)

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him ... according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places ... and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." (Ephesians 1:17, 19–22)

To say "God saved" identifies the ultimate source, owner, initiator, and accomplisher of salvation. Yet the statement does not erase the means through which God chose to save. The quality of the divine act is disclosed by the quality of the means God intentionally realizes. If God saves through a prophet, the act is prophetic mediation. If God saves through an angelic agent, the act is angelic agency. If God saves by willing His own Word and life as true man, then the saving act is incarnational and possesses the human, legal, sacrificial, and priestly qualities of that means.

ULTIMATE SOURCE AND CONCRETE MEANS MUST BOTH BE NAMED

God purposes redemption, brings forth the Messiah, anoints Him, dwells in Him, works through Him, raises Him, and gives Him authority. For this reason, salvation is wholly God's. But God's ownership of the economy does not make the human means irrelevant. The man believes, obeys, suffers, offers Himself, dies, rises, and reigns. These are not optional descriptions of a divine act that could have been performed in exactly the same way without humanity. They identify the actual form God chose for His saving action.

The statement “God saved” therefore refers not only to the distant cause of salvation but to God’s intent as concretely realized. The means is part of the act’s identity. God saves as the One whose Word and Wisdom are realized in the true man who fulfills the obligations of redemption.

CHRIST BECOMES SOURCE WITHIN THE ECONOMY

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest.” (Hebrews 5:8–10)

Hebrews does not identify the Son as the underived originator of salvation. He becomes its author or source after completing the human course of suffering and obedience, and He becomes that source as the High Priest appointed by God. His sourcehood is therefore real but economic: salvation is encountered, administered, and received through the perfected man.

The Father remains the source of the saving intention, sending, command, priestly appointment, resurrection, exaltation, and final end. The Son is the source within the economy because God has made Him the obedient sacrifice, risen mediator, living priest, and appointed Lord through whom eternal salvation reaches those who obey Him. Christ is therefore the source in the economy without being the independent source of the economy.

“GOD” IS THE FATHER AS THE REDEPTIVE SOURCE

In this source-grammar, “God” cannot be treated as an undefined divine term standing apart from the Father. The God who originates the saving purpose, sends and gives the Son, reconciles the world to Himself, raises and exalts Christ, subjects all things under Him, and receives the completed kingdom is God the Father.

Ephesians 1 displays the pattern in concentrated form: the God and Father of Jesus Christ chooses, purposes, gives grace, reveals His will, raises Christ, seats Him, and gives Him as head over all things. The phrase “God saved” therefore walks the act back to the Father as the originative divine subject while retaining Christ as the embodied means in whom the act is accomplished.

A TRUE MAN WITH A TRUE GOD

The saving economy requires both a true man and the true God. The man cannot ground redemption in himself. He receives life, mission, revelation, authority, resurrection, and glory from God. God is his God. At the same time, God does not fulfill the human obligations merely by divine decree. The Messiah must stand within humanity, under law, in faith, obedience, suffering, and mortality.

Thus the economy is not “God instead of man” or “man instead of God.” God saves by bringing forth and owning the human means through which the required acts become real. The true man’s relation to the true God is not a defect in the saving claim. It is what makes the human side of redemption genuine.

THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF GOD GROUND THE HUMAN MEANS

The humanity is not self-originating. It exists because God intends His own self-expression to be realized as man. That intention grounds the unity of the saving work. The man does not become a second independent source of salvation. His human acts are the historical, psychological, moral, and legal realization of God’s redemptive purpose.

This grounding preserves divine glory without erasing human agency. God receives ultimate glory because the mission originates in His wisdom and power. The man receives genuine glory because He actually fulfills the mission. The two attributions are ordered rather than competitive.

THE MEANS DETERMINES THE LEGAL FORM OF SALVATION

Because God chooses true humanity as the means, salvation takes a legally human form. Obedience is rendered under human obligation. Blood belongs to human embodied life. Sacrifice is voluntarily offered by a rational human agent. Priesthood is exercised by one made like His brothers. Witness is borne from a human standpoint. Death is undergone in mortality. Resurrection vindicates the man. Reign restores human dominion.

To remove these properties while retaining the phrase “God saved” would change the economy. It would reduce the incarnation to divine causation behind an appearance. The scriptural saving act is richer: God saves through the reality He personally wills as His image and expression in flesh.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

“God saved” names God as ultimate source and owner of redemption, while the concrete quality of that salvation is determined by the means God willed: His own Word and life realized as a true man who fulfills the human, covenantal, sacrificial, priestly, and royal requirements of salvation.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

The phrase “God was in Christ” provides the scriptural grammar for this union of divine source and human means. It must therefore be examined as a statement of intent, presence, expression, and image rather than control of an external agent.

63. “God Was in Christ”: Divine Intent Realized as Expression and Image

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” (2 Corinthians 5:18–19)

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself” identifies both the divine source of reconciliation and the incarnational sphere in which the reconciling act is realized. God is not absent while an unrelated man performs redemption. Nor does God’s presence eliminate the man. God is in Christ, and Christ is the concrete human reality in whom God’s saving intent becomes visible, active, sacrificial, and victorious.

“IN CHRIST” IS NEITHER EXTERNAL USE NOR COLLAPSE

External use would mean that God remains outside the man and merely employs him as an instrument. Collapse would mean that the man’s mind, will, faith, prayer, and suffering are only forms of direct divine operation. The scriptural economy requires neither. God’s indwelling and self-expression ground the human existence, while the human existence genuinely performs the acts appropriate to it.

The Father dwelling in Christ speaks and works through Him, but the man rationally receives the words, understands the mission, bears the testimony, and performs the works in obedience. Divine presence is the source of perfect human action, not the replacement of the human actor.

For this reason, “conduit” is inadequate if it implies passivity. Jesus is not an empty channel through which God bypasses a human mind and will. He is the conscious human expression who knows what He bears, owns the mission as His, and freely performs the Father’s work. The oneness is perfect precisely because divine source and human response are united without the human subject being erased.

CHRIST AS EXPRESSION

An expression makes the source known without becoming a second independent source. God’s Word and Wisdom are His own self-expression. When that expression is realized as man, the life of Jesus becomes the historical and visible articulation of God’s character, will, and saving purpose.

The expression is not merely verbal. It includes the entire human life: compassion reveals divine mercy; obedience reveals divine righteousness; truthfulness reveals divine faithfulness; sacrificial love reveals divine love; resurrection reveals divine life; enthronement reveals divine wisdom and rule.

CHRIST AS IMAGE AND FACE

An image is the visible presentation of what is otherwise unseen. Christ is the image of the invisible God because the Father is known through the man’s face, words, works, character, death, resurrection, and glory. The image is not a mask covering a truer reality behind it. The incarnate man is the intended visible realization of divine self-disclosure.

This is why seeing Christ may be described as seeing the Father. The statement does not erase the man’s prayer to the Father or His confession of “my God.” It means that the Father’s own presence and character are perfectly expressed in the man who lives that relation.

WHY THE IMAGE IS EXACT

The image is exact because Jesus fully realizes the qualities God intended His human self-expression to manifest. Exactness concerns faithfulness to the divine source and purpose; it does not make the human mode identical with the divine mode.

In Christ, divine mercy is lived as human compassion, divine righteousness as human obedience, divine truth as human testimony, divine love as human self-giving, and divine wisdom as the faithful human path through suffering, resurrection, and reign. These are not loose similarities added after the fact. They are the specific qualities God intended His Word and image to embody in a true man.

Jesus is therefore not merely an accurate portrait standing outside God. He is the human actuality of what God determined His own self-expression to be in the redemptive economy. The Father remains the unseen divine source; the Son is the visible and relational human realization of that source’s Word, character, and saving will.

GOD BEHOLDS HIS SON AND HIS OWN IMAGE ACCORDING TO DISTINCT RESPECTS

The incarnational image-language gives a precise meaning to the statement that God sees both a Son and Himself in Jesus. God beholds a true human Son who lives toward Him in faith, love, obedience, prayer, and offering. In that same Son, God beholds His own Word, character, wisdom, glory, name, and saving purpose made visible. “Himself” names self-expression and revelation, not an unqualified numerical collapse of the Father’s transcendent mode into the man’s finite mode.

The Son is therefore genuinely before the Father and genuinely from the Father. As Son, He is the human subject who relates to God. As image, He is the human realization through whom God is known. These relations distinguish source, expression, and filial humanity without separating the man from God's own incarnational identity.

WHY THE ABSENCE OF AN UNQUALIFIED IDENTITY FORMULA DOES NOT NEGATE THE REVELATION

To say that Scripture does not normally use the bare sentence "Jesus is the Father" proves less than the objection assumes. The incarnation is not an unqualified numerical identity between the man's finite mode and the Father's transcendent mode. Scripture should therefore identify the relation through manifestation, Word, image, exact representation, indwelling, name, glory, fullness, and operation.

According to those respects, Jesus is the Father revealed: the Father's own self-expression, presence, character, will, and saving identity made visible in true humanity. According to His actual human constitution and relation to God, Jesus is the Son who prays, obeys, suffers, dies, and receives glory. The economic qualification preserves the revelation; it does not weaken it.

RECONCILIATION MOVES FROM GOD THROUGH CHRIST BACK TO GOD

The wording "reconciling the world to Himself" preserves the direction of the economy. God is the One to whom the world is reconciled. Christ is the incarnational means and mediator through whom reconciliation is accomplished. Because Christ is God's own expression, the mediation is not an external commercial arrangement between God and an unrelated third party. Because Christ is true man, the mediation is not God merely reconciling Himself to Himself without genuine human participation.

The movement is from the Father as source, through the man who is His expression and image, back to God as the reconciled end. This same movement reaches its consummation when the Son delivers the completed kingdom to the Father.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

"God was in Christ" means that God's own saving intent, presence, Word, and wisdom are realized in the true man who serves as expression, image, mediator, sacrifice, and king. Divine indwelling grounds the human acts without manipulating or replacing the human psychology through which they are fulfilled.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

If God owns the incarnational existence as His self-expression, human predicates may be attributed to God and even to the Father as source. The mode of that attribution must now be defined so that "the Father died" is neither denied absolutely nor confused with death in the divine ontology.

64. "The Father Died": Attribution Through Incarnational Intent and Means

The statement "the Father died" must be handled through the same distinction between ultimate source and immediate mode. If "the Father" names the one God who purposes, expresses, indwells, and owns the incarnational life, then the death of Christ is not an event external to the Father's saving act. It is the death of the human existence in which the Father's own Word, wisdom, image,

and intent are realized. Yet the Father does not die according to transcendent divine ontology, for divine life does not cease.

THE FATHER AS SOURCE OF THE INCARNATIONAL INTENT

The incarnation originates in the Father's will. The Father sends, gives, prepares, anoints, dwells, works, commands, hears, raises, and glorifies. The human life is therefore the realization of the Father's own redemptive purpose. When that life reaches death, the Father's intent has reached the sacrificial point for which it was willed.

This allows derivative but real attribution. The Father's saving action includes the death because the Father did not merely observe an unrelated man die. He willed His own expression as the man whose life was offered.

THE MEANS QUALIFIES THE PREDICATION

To say "the Father died" cannot mean that the Father as infinite Spirit lost life, that divine consciousness ceased, or that the source of all being became nonexistent. The predication is qualified by its incarnational means. The Father dies by means of His intent realized as true mortal man. The man is the immediate subject of the pain, bloodshed, separation of body and spirit, and cessation of bodily life. The Father is the ultimate ground and owner of the life in which death occurs.

Thus the statement is true according to incarnation and false according to unqualified divine ontology. The qualification is not a retreat from the claim. It states precisely how the claim is true.

WHY "GOD DIED" AND "THE FATHER DIED" REQUIRE EXPLANATION

"God died" is often accepted because the one who died is identified with God. But if the one God is the Father as source and the incarnation is the Father's self-expression, then one cannot forbid every attribution to the Father while freely attributing the same act to an undefined "God." The real issue is not whether the noun is God or Father. The issue is the mode of predication.

Any responsible formulation must preserve two truths: the death genuinely belongs to God's own incarnational economy, and death is experienced only according to the human existence. The Father is not a second sufferer behind the man, nor is the man an unrelated sufferer beside the Father. The death is experienced in the Son of Man and attributed upward to the source whose expression He is.

WHY SCRIPTURE PREDICATES THE DEATH TO THE SON

Scripture's statement that the Son died is not evidence that the Father remained external to the redemptive act. Sonship names the actual incarnational mode capable of birth, obedience, suffering, sacrifice, and death. The phrase "Son of God" identifies a true human and filial existence whose source, ownership, purpose, and personal meaning are immediately grounded in God's own self-expression.

The point of the incarnation is not merely that God becomes recognizable. The intended quality of existence must be realized. Therefore the mortal terminus is named as the Son: God's own Word and image have become the true man whose life may be offered. Death is directly predicated to that human reality and attributed to the Father only through the qualified economy of source, expression, and incarnational ownership.

THE CRUCIFIED SON IS THE FATHER'S OWN IMAGE UNDER VIOLENCE

The qualified attribution to the Father gains its personal depth from the identity of the Son. The Father does not merely see a creature whom He happens to love. He sees the true Son who perfectly lives toward Him and, in that Son, His own Word and image brought to complete human actuality. The face that is marred and the life that is taken are the human face and life through which the Father has chosen to reveal His own character and saving intent.

This does not make the Father the immediate bodily or psychological sufferer. It explains why the death is not external to Him. The Son suffers as man before the Father, while the same Son is the Father's own self-expression in flesh. Thus God beholds His beloved Son and His own manifested image in the one crucified man, and the Father's saving self-gift reaches death through the life He has personally willed as His own expression.

INTENT REALIZED IS NOT MERE INTENTION AT A DISTANCE

The phrase "intent realized" must not be reduced to God merely intending that someone else die. The intent is constitutive. God wills His own Word and life as the human existence that reaches death. Therefore the relation between source and event is deeper than ordinary causation. The man's death is the concrete fulfillment of God's own self-giving purpose.

At the same time, constitutive intent does not make the Father the immediate psychological subject of fear, pain, abandonment, or death. Those predicates belong to the human mind, body, and life. The distinction prevents both external adoption and collapse of human experience into divine ontology.

THE PROPER FORMULA

The Father died by means of His own incarnational intent realized in the true man Christ Jesus: the man immediately suffered and died; the Father, as source, indwelling presence, and owner of the incarnational self-expression, truly accomplished His saving self-gift through that death without divine life ceasing to be divine life.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Human death may be attributed to the Father only according to the incarnational means: His will and self-expression are realized in the mortal Son, while the actual experience and event of death remain proper to the true human existence.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

This rule of predication depends upon a fully real human psychology. If the man is the immediate subject of prayer, faith, obedience, suffering, and death, then the direction of His consciousness toward God becomes decisive. The final new section examines why that psychology is directed to the Father and never to a distinct divine Son.

65. Necessary Human Psychology and Why Jesus Does Not Pray to a Divine Son

"O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank thee." (Matthew 11:25)

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matthew 26:39)

“Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:1–3)

Once the necessary psychology of the Messiah is established, it cannot be treated as a neutral container into which any metaphysical scheme may be inserted without consequence. A true human mind does not merely generate sentences. It rationally identifies self, recognizes God, interprets command, experiences desire, directs trust, forms intention, and owns prayer. The objects toward which Jesus directs these acts therefore reveal the actual structure of His lived human relation to the divine.

That psychology includes a positive self-understanding as well as a direction of worship. Jesus knows Himself as the promised Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, bread of life, light, shepherd, resurrection and life, way to the Father, and the man in whom seeing Him is seeing the Father. Yet this same self-understanding places Him before the Father as the One who teaches, sends, hears, raises, and glorifies Him. His revelatory identity and His human God-relation therefore belong together rather than canceling one another.

THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN RELIGION

Every genuine human relation to God contains an internal and an external dimension. Internally, the man possesses self-awareness, belief, desire, reverence, trust, intention, and will. These acts occur within the rational and affective life of the human subject. Externally, those acts terminate upon God as the One known, addressed, obeyed, worshiped, and trusted.

These dimensions may be described as ad intra and ad extra relative to the man. The ad intra reality is the internal human psychology: “I desire,” “I believe,” “I fear,” “I trust,” “I will.” The ad extra reality is the direction of those acts: “I pray to You,” “I obey Your will,” “I entrust myself to Him,” “You are my God.” A real human mind requires both. Internal states without an actual divine object would not constitute prayer, faith, or worship. An external relation without internal human ownership would be performance rather than personal religion.

JESUS DIRECTS THE FULL HUMAN RELATION TO THE FATHER

In Scripture, Jesus’ human religious life is consistently directed toward the Father. He calls the Father “my God.” He prays to the Father, gives thanks to the Father, receives commandment from the Father, loves the Father, trusts the One able to save Him, submits His will to the Father’s will, commits His spirit to the Father, is heard by God, is raised by God, and receives glory and authority from God.

This is not a single ceremonial pattern that may be dismissed as role language. It encompasses the whole psychology of the man: cognition, affection, volition, faith, worship, mission, suffering, death, resurrection, and exaltation. The Father is the divine object and source to whom the man’s complete religious existence is ordered.

THE QUESTION CREATED BY A DISTINCT DIVINE SON

If a distinct eternal divine Son is personally God alongside the Father and is a proper object of human worship, trust, prayer, and obedience, the necessary psychology of the man raises a direct question: Why does the man Jesus never pray to the divine Son? Why does He never say that the

divine Son is His God? Why does His human faith never terminate upon a divine Son distinct from Himself? Why is the divine Son never identified as the heavenly personal source who teaches, commands, hears, raises, or glorifies the man?

The question cannot be avoided by saying merely that Jesus is the divine Son and therefore would be praying to Himself. That answer creates the very psychological problem the doctrine must explain. If the “I” of Jesus is simply the eternal divine Son using human faculties, then the man’s distinct first-person human identity is weakened or absorbed into the divine subject. Prayer becomes the eternal Son’s relation to the Father enacted through humanity rather than the genuine relation of a human “I” toward his God.

But if the human mind possesses the real first-person identity already established — if the man rationalizes “I,” “me,” and “my” according to His human existence — then the man must recognize every person who is truly His God as such. A distinct divine Son, considered as divine and distinct from the man’s human consciousness, should stand within the possible object-range of human worship and prayer. Scripture supplies no such relation.

THE ASYMMETRY IS COMPREHENSIVE

The absence is not limited to explicit prayer formulas. The entire economic pattern is asymmetrical. The Father sends; Jesus is sent. The Father gives command; Jesus obeys. The Father teaches; Jesus receives. The Father bears witness; Jesus testifies. The Father hears; Jesus prays. The Father raises; Jesus is raised. The Father glorifies; Jesus receives glory. The Father subjects all things; the Son reigns and finally subjects Himself to God.

No corresponding economy appears in which a divine Son stands above the man Jesus as His God, giver, sender, teacher, hearer, raiser, or glorifier. The necessary human predicates are consistently directed to the Father.

ONE BEARER DOES NOT ERASE THE HUMAN PSYCHOLOGICAL “I”

An appeal to one hypostasis, one bearer, or one acting person cannot by itself answer the psychological argument. Such language may identify the metaphysical unity of the incarnate reality, but prayer, faith, learning, ignorance, submission, and worship still require an account of the mind and self through which they occur. The bearer of predicates and the psychological seat of a predicate must not be treated as identical questions without demonstration.

If the eternal divine consciousness is made the sole first-person center of every act, the human mind becomes a faculty owned and operated by a nonhuman psychological “I.” The words “my God” and “not my will” would then express the eternal Son’s relation through a human instrument rather than a true man’s relation to His God. But if the man possesses the complete first-person identity required by the texts, then his human “I” is real even though it is wholly dependent upon God for existence and mission.

The article therefore distinguishes unity of incarnational source and identity from identity of psychological consciousness. The Father’s divine “I” originates, teaches, sends, hears, raises, and glorifies. Jesus’ human “I” receives, learns, prays, trusts, obeys, suffers, dies, and is glorified. These are not two divine persons; they are the divine source and the genuine human subject of one incarnational economy.

THE SIMPLER INCARNATIONAL ACCOUNT

The scriptural pattern is coherent if the Father is the one true God and source, and His Word and Wisdom are realized as the true man who is Son of God and Son of Man. The man prays to the Father because the Father is His God. He does not pray to a divine Son because the Son is not a second divine person standing over the man. Sonship is the incarnational identity of God's self-expression realized in human existence.

This account preserves every necessary fact. God is truly present in Christ. The man possesses genuine psychology. The Father remains the divine source and object of worship. The Son is true man by existence and Son of God by source, conception, expression, mission, and relation. Prayer is neither theatrical self-dialogue nor communication between two gods. It is the true human Son living the perfect relation of man toward His God and Father.

THIS IS NOT AN ARGUMENT FROM SILENCE ALONE

The argument does not rest merely upon the absence of one possible sentence. It rests upon the positive and comprehensive distribution of predicates. Scripture repeatedly identifies the Father as the One to whom the man's prayer, trust, obedience, and confession are directed. Once the human psychology is acknowledged as necessary and real, that distribution carries metaphysical weight. A theory that introduces another divine personal object of the man's worship must explain why the entire lived economy excludes that object.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The necessary psychology of the man Jesus includes internally owned faith, will, reverence, and prayer directed externally toward His God. Scripture consistently identifies the Father as that God and never presents the man praying to, trusting, obeying, or calling a distinct divine Son "my God." This pattern supports the Father as divine source and the Son as God's own self-expression realized as true man.

WHY THE NEXT SECTION FOLLOWS

Because resurrection does not erase the human subject or His God-relation, the next question is whether the risen and glorified Christ continues to speak and act as the Son whose Father and God remain the source of His life, authority, glory, and kingdom.

66. The Risen Christ Still Has a Father and a God

Resurrection does not erase the human identity through which redemption was accomplished. After rising, Jesus says:

"I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17).

The statement is made by the risen Jesus. It cannot be confined to a pre-resurrection condition that has already ended.

The pronouns remain first-person and relational:

- I ascend.
- My Father.
- My God.

He distinguishes His unique filial relation while associating the disciples with the same Father and God. His resurrection has not turned His human relation to God into an obsolete fiction.

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (Revelation 3:12)

Revelation 3:12 intensifies the point. The exalted Christ repeatedly says “my God” in relation to the temple, name, city, and His own new name. Whatever symbolic and eschatological dimensions belong to the passage, the continued God-relation is explicit.

This ongoing relation supports several conclusions:

- His humanity persists.
- His first-person identity persists.
- His mediatorial role persists.
- His received authority persists as relation to the giver.
- His sonship remains economically meaningful.

The glorified man is not diminished because He has a God. That relation is constitutive of His mediatorial and representative glory.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The exalted Christ remains true man in filial and mediatorial relation to the Father as His God.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

His continuing relation to God clarifies the nature of the authority given to Him and the glory bestowed upon Him.

67. Given Authority and the Glory of the Man

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matthew 28:18)

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:8–11)

“All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me” presents exalted human lordship in its fullest economic form.

The authority is universal in scope, yet received in source.

The same structure appears in Philippians 2:

- He humbles Himself.
- He becomes obedient unto death.
- Therefore God highly exalts Him.
- God gives Him the name above every name.
- Universal confession of Jesus Christ as Lord results in the glory of God the Father.

The obedience belongs immediately to the man. The exaltation is bestowed by God. The confession of the man's lordship glorifies the divine source whose wisdom has been realized in Him.

This prevents two opposite errors.

First, the man's glory must not be dissolved into the Father's transcendence. The man truly receives the name, authority, throne, kingdom, and honor. The one who obeyed is the one exalted.

Second, the man's glory must not become independent deity standing beside the Father. The authority is given, the exaltation is from God, and the final purpose is the glory of God the Father.

The economic distinction is therefore not inferiority in moral worth but order of source and fulfillment.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The man Jesus is the immediate recipient and bearer of messianic glory, while the Father remains the ultimate source and final glory of the entire economy.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

This ordered double attribution requires a precise distinction between God's act as source and the man's act as lived realization.

68. The Two Ends: Ultimate Source and Immediate Subject

The incarnation may be understood through two inseparable ends or directions.

THE TOP-DOWN END: DIVINE SOURCE, DECREE, AND SELF-EXPRESSION

God purposes redemption.

God expresses His Word and Wisdom.

God brings forth the Son.

God anoints, teaches, empowers, sends, hears, raises, vindicates, and exalts.

The Father is therefore the ultimate source and ground of the economy.

THE BOTTOM-UP END: HUMAN EXISTENCE, OBEDIENCE, AND GLORIFICATION

The man is conceived and born.

The man grows, learns, prays, trusts, loves, obeys, suffers, testifies, dies, and is raised.

The man receives authority, mediates, reigns, and becomes firstfruits.

Jesus is therefore the immediate subject of the redemptive acts and predicates.

These ends must not be confused.

If the Father is made the immediate psychological subject of Jesus' learning, ignorance, temptation, submission, or death, the humanity becomes an instrument and divine immutability is threatened.

If Jesus is detached from the Father as an independently grounded man, the incarnation becomes adoption or external cooperation.

The proper order is:

God grounds; the man lives. God purposes; the man fulfills. God raises; the man is glorified.

This is not two competing agents working in parallel. It is one incarnational economy with divine source and human actuality.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The Father is the ultimate source of the incarnational economy, and the man Jesus is the immediate subject of the acts that fulfill redemption.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

This distinction supplies the rule for attributing human predicates to God without making the divine essence mutable or mortal.

69. “God Died”: Attribution Without Confusion

Christian speech rightly attributes the incarnational acts to God. Yet the mode of the acts must remain clear.

It is proper to say:

- God was born.
- God shed blood.
- God suffered.
- God died.

These statements are true because the human life is not an unrelated life externally used by God. It is God’s own incarnational self-expression.

But the statements do not mean:

- divine essence was conceived;
- divine omniscience learned;
- divine impassibility felt pain;
- divine immortality ceased to live.

The predicates terminate in the human mode.

The rule is:

Experienced in the man; attributable to God as the ground and owner of the incarnational existence.

Thus, God dying means God is realized as Son of God and Son of Man, possessing true human life and mortality as His own incarnational perfection. The man immediately undergoes death. God is the ultimate subject who has made that mortal life His personal self-expression.

WHY “SON OF GOD” IS THE PROPER TERMINATING DESCRIPTION

“Son of God” does not move the death away from God; it identifies the mode in which God’s redemptive self-expression can truly die. “Of God” names divine source, ownership, conception, presence, and purpose. “Son” names the real filial human existence that lives toward God, fulfills obedience, offers its life, and enters mortality.

The death is therefore God's own redemptive self-gift without being the extinction of divine life. Scripture names the Son because the incarnation has succeeded in producing the complete human quality necessary for death, not because God has delegated the cost to someone external to His own manifestation.

The personal weight of the predication comes from the identity of the wounded man. The human life that suffers is both the true Son offered to God and the embodied image through which God has made Himself known. Therefore "God suffered" and "God died" do not describe an external association between God and another's pain. They attribute the passion to God because His own self-expression has genuinely reached the passible and mortal human mode.

At the same time, the marring belongs to the image as humanly embodied, not to the divine essence as divine. God sees His Son wounded and sees His own manifested image dishonored in that Son, without a second divine sufferer existing behind the man or divine life becoming corruptible.

This preserves the force of "God's blood" and similar language without claiming that divinity as divinity has blood.

It also explains why all redemptive predicates are given to Jesus. The man is not a disposable instrument hidden behind divine agency. He is the concrete incarnational reality.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Human predicates may be fully attributed to God because God owns the incarnational existence, while their actual mode of experience remains genuinely human.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

The same rule applies to glory: the man receives and bears it, while God is glorified as source and accomplisher.

70. The Glory Given to Christ Returns Glory to the Father

The exaltation of Jesus does not divide glory between rival divine centers. It manifests the success of the Father's redemptive will.

God's wisdom is displayed in bringing forth a man who fulfills every requirement:

- true kinship;
- covenant fidelity;
- faith;
- obedience;
- sinlessness;
- sacrifice;
- priesthood;
- witness;
- death;
- and resurrection.

When God glorifies this man, He glorifies His own completed purpose. The Father's Word and Wisdom have not returned void. The self-expression has accomplished the mission for which it went forth.

Glorification is also the Father's answer to the dishonoring of His Son and the marring of His manifested image. The same face that was struck becomes the face in which divine glory shines openly; the same body that bore wounds becomes incorruptible; and the same Son condemned by men is publicly vindicated and enthroned by God. The Father does not discard the injured humanity after using it for sacrifice. He raises and glorifies it as the permanent human form of His completed self-expression.

The man receives real glory because He genuinely performed the human work. The Father receives ultimate glory because the entire economy originates in and fulfills His will.

Therefore, "Jesus Christ is Lord" and "to the glory of God the Father" are not competing conclusions. They are the two ends of the same economic achievement.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Christ's exaltation is both the genuine glorification of the obedient man and the supreme manifestation of the Father's saving wisdom and will.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

The glorified man's reign must now be understood as the administration of the redemptive age and the formation of the new humanity.

71. The Enthroned Man as Face, Image, and Wisdom of God

The invisible God is made known through the face of Jesus Christ. This does not require erasing the man's relation to God. Precisely as true man, He becomes the visible historical form in which God's character, wisdom, purpose, authority, and saving presence are known.

Christ is the face of the Father because:

- the Father's words are spoken through Him;
- the Father's works are manifested through Him;
- the Father's love is embodied through Him;
- the Father's righteousness is fulfilled in Him;
- the Father's victory is administered by Him;
- and the Father's glory shines through His glorified humanity.

He is not merely a photograph-like representation standing outside God. Nor is His humanity a mask concealing the "real" divine subject behind it. The man is the intended incarnational expression.

Wisdom is now embodied, marred, crucified, vindicated, risen, and enthroned. The image dishonored under human violence is openly glorified by God. God's redemptive plan has passed from purpose to concrete human fulfillment, and the Son who bore the wounds remains the enduring human face of that fulfillment.

The throne of the Messiah therefore belongs to the redemptive age and extends into the eternal kingdom as the visible personal manifestation of God with humanity.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The glorified man is the enduring face and image of the Father: divine Wisdom perfected as human existence and enthroned as the center of the redeemed order.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

As the first glorified man and head of new creation, Christ's reign must lead humanity toward the completed kingdom rather than terminate upon Himself.

72. Christ as Firstfruits and the Destiny of the Redeemed

Christ's glorification opens the path for the redeemed. He is not only the one who survives death; He is the firstfruits of resurrection and the firstborn from the dead.

The sequence is corporate:

- the representative man obeys;
- the representative man dies;
- God raises and glorifies Him;
- those united to Him are conformed to His image;
- their mortal bodies are transformed according to His glorious body;
- and humanity reaches its intended communion with God.

His glorification is thus the first realized type or form of what the redeemed shall be. "Type" here must not mean a mere symbol. It means the first concrete realization of the eschatological human condition.

The redeemed do not become the divine essence. They become glorified human beings in communion with God, patterned after the risen Christ.

This is why His continued humanity is indispensable. He cannot be the pattern of glorified men if His humanity is absorbed or discarded.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The risen Christ is the first realized form and guarantee of glorified humanity, leading the redeemed into the destiny accomplished first in Him.

WHY THE NEXT PROPOSITION FOLLOWS

The mediatorial reign has a goal. Scripture describes its completion in the handing of the kingdom to God the Father.

73. The Kingdom Handed to the Father and God All in All

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Corinthians 15:24–28)

First Corinthians 15:24–28 presents the final economic order.

Christ reigns until every enemy is placed under His feet. The last enemy destroyed is death. When all things are subjected, the Son Himself is subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

The passage confirms the entire structure developed in this paper.

AUTHORITY IS GIVEN

The Father subjects all things to the Messiah. The reign is real and comprehensive, but its source is God.

THE MESSIAH FULFILLS THE MISSION

He subdues hostile rule, destroys death, raises the redeemed, and brings the kingdom to completion.

THE KINGDOM RETURNS FULFILLED

The Son hands the kingdom to God the Father. This is not failure or disappearance. It is accomplished purpose. The Word does not return void.

THE SON REMAINS ORDERED TO GOD

The glorified Son is subjected to God. This confirms continuing human and mediatorial relation rather than an eternal rival sovereignty.

GOD BECOMES ALL IN ALL

The Father, as source and ground, reaches the final purpose: creation fully reconciled and ordered to divine life.

The handing over is therefore the final movement of the two ends:

From God, through the incarnate Son, back to God as completed kingdom.

The Christ does not become irrelevant. He remains the face, Lamb, image, and personal tabernacle through whom God is known and communion is enjoyed. But the economic reign reaches its goal in the universal acknowledgment of the one God as all in all.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The mediatorial kingdom culminates in the Son's completed submission and delivery of the kingdom to the Father, displaying the Father's ultimate sourcehood and the successful fulfillment of the incarnational mission.

Part VII — Objections and Necessary Clarifications

74. Objection: “This Makes Jesus Two Persons”

The argument does not deny that Jesus is a subject. It denies that He is an independently constituted human subject later joined to a distinct divine Son-subject. The human existence begins as God’s own incarnational self-expression.

The distinction is between:

- God as transcendent source and ground;
- and the man as the concrete human reality of that expression.

The man possesses real first-person human subjectivity because true human existence requires it. He recognizes Himself as ‘I,’ owns His body, mind, will, words, and life as ‘my,’ and understands Himself in contrast and relation to God. Yet He is not independent in source, origin, purpose, continued life, revelation, resurrection, or glory.

Calling the man the immediate subject of human acts does not create a second divine subject. It identifies the actual human knower and agent whose existence is grounded in God and whose first-person consciousness owns the human acts.

Subject and independently subsisting person must not be treated as automatic synonyms. If ‘person’ means a concrete rational human self who knows and acts, Jesus is personally real as man. If it means a separately sourced human hypostasis existing outside God’s incarnational act and then joined to God, the paper denies it. The alternative — denying any human first-person agency — does not preserve unity. It produces a human nature with no human who, whose acts are actually those of a nonhuman consciousness.

The objection therefore equivocates between personal reality and independent sourcehood. Independence is not an essential property of personhood; otherwise no created human could be a person. Dependence is not a disqualifying property of personhood; otherwise every creaturely mind and will would be impersonal. The relevant question is whether the existence possesses the positive qualities of a rational human self. Jesus does.

Nor does “one person” automatically prove one psychological consciousness. If person is being used as a metaphysical term for the bearer of the incarnate reality, further argument is still required to show whose mind knows, whose will submits, and whose “I” owns the human predicates. The scriptural evidence assigns the human predicates to the man Jesus as a genuine human subject while grounding His entire identity in the Father’s incarnational act.

74A. Objection: “Is Jesus Numerically Identical with God or Merely Human?”

This objection is often pressed from opposite directions. A Unitarian may argue that if Jesus is not numerically identical with God’s divine ontology, He is only a creature. A Trinitarian may argue that if Jesus truly expresses God while remaining distinct from the Father, He must be another eternal divine person. A Relative Identity proposal may say that Father and Son are the same God but not the

same person. Each response contains an assumption that must be tested rather than merely repeated.

FIRST ASK WHAT KIND OF IDENTITY IS BEING CLAIMED

The word identity cannot carry the argument until its meaning is fixed.

Strict numerical identity means one and the same individual. Qualitative identity means shared or corresponding properties. Generic identity means membership in the same kind. Identity through time means persistence of one subject through real change. Relative Identity means the same F but not the same G. Constitution accounts propose a strong dependence or sameness that falls short of strict identity. These relations do different work and cannot be exchanged without explanation.

Therefore, “numerical sameness without identity” is not a stable formula unless numerical sameness has been given a nonstandard meaning. If it means strict numerical sameness, it is numerical identity. If it means same nature, same source, same constitution, or same God under a sortal, the qualifier must be stated and defended.

THE WHOLE INCARNATE SON IS NOT A FLAT NUMERICAL EQUATION WITH THE FATHER

The Father’s unrestricted divine mode and Jesus’ complete finite human existence are not one unqualified numerical ontology.

The Father is not conceived, born, developmentally taught, tempted, mortal, killed, raised, or glorified according to His divine mode. Jesus is conceived, born, grows, learns, suffers, dies, is raised, and receives glory according to His human existence. The difference is not verbal. It is grounded in created human reality.

Accordingly, Jesus’ body is not numerically the divine essence. His human mind is not numerically the Father’s unlimited intellect. His human will is not numerically the divine will acting under a human label. His act of trusting God is not numerically God’s self-knowledge. His death is not the cessation of divine life.

This qualification does not make Jesus merely external to God. It prevents contradiction and preserves the true humanity that redemption requires.

THE DIVINE IDENTITY EXPRESSED IN CHRIST IS THE FATHER’S OWN

No second divine subject is added to the incarnation.

The divine source, life, Word, wisdom, character, name, presence, authority, and saving intent manifested in Christ belong to the one God, the Father. The Word does not introduce another originating divine mind and will. Therefore, the divine identity expressed through Christ is not someone other than the Father.

This is the proper sense in which Christ reveals God’s own identity. The identity being revealed is one. The human mode in which it is revealed is created, finite, and genuinely distinct from the unrestricted divine mode.

JESUS REMAINS NUMERICALLY THE SAME HUMAN SUBJECT

The human unity of Christ is not merely qualitative or representative. It is the numerical continuity of one human “I.”

The one conceived is the one who grows. The one who trusts and obeys is the one who dies. The one who dies is the one whom God raises. The one raised is the one who reigns. His human life possesses one continuous legal, moral, experiential, and testimonial identity.

This continuity is necessary because redemption is not accomplished by disconnected faculties or stages. The same man must own the obedience, offer the life, enter death, receive vindication, and administer the completed salvation.

ONE ULTIMATE GROUND DOES NOT MEAN ONE NUMERICALLY IDENTICAL CONSCIOUS ACT

Grounding and psychological identity are different questions.

The Father may be the ultimate ground of the human existence without being the immediate human thinker. God gives and sustains human powers without making every creaturely act a numerically identical divine act. In the incarnation, the dependence is uniquely personal and constitutive, but it remains dependence rather than an erasure of the human subject.

The divine act of knowing is uncreated, unlimited, and eternally complete. Jesus' human knowing is created, embodied, developmental, receptive, and historically situated. These cannot be one numerically identical conscious act in the same respect.

The correct distinction is therefore between the Father as ultimate divine ground and Jesus as immediate human subject. The Father grounds, sends, reveals, empowers, raises, and glorifies. The man thinks, receives, trusts, obeys, suffers, dies, rises, and receives authority.

A REAL HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS REQUIRES A HUMAN OWNER

Human faculties do not believe and obey in abstraction. A human someone owns the acts.

If the Father is the immediate psychological "I" of Jesus, then the Father is the one who grows, learns, trusts God, submits His will, and calls another "my God." That collapses the human "I" into a finite mode of divine subjectivity.

If the human consciousness has no human owner, the theory gives Christ a human mind and will without a human someone. The resulting humanity becomes an instrument used by a nonhuman consciousness.

Jesus must therefore be acknowledged as the immediate human subject. This does not make Him an independent human person existing before or apart from God's incarnational act. Personal reality does not require independent sourcehood.

THE FATHER-SON RELATION IS MORE THAN A DIFFERENCE OF MODE

Unincarnate and incarnate existence identify a difference, but they do not by themselves explain the genuine relation.

One subject may exist under different conditions or descriptions without becoming two covenantal terms. The scriptural relation includes sending and being sent, commanding and obeying, revealing and receiving, hearing and praying, raising and being raised, glorifying and receiving glory. Jesus also calls the Father "my God."

These relations are grounded when the Father is the transcendent divine source and Jesus is the genuine human Son. They do not require two divine minds or wills. They require one divine ground and one real human subject constituted as God's own incarnational self-expression.

WHY RELATIVE IDENTITY DOES NOT COMPLETE THE EXPLANATION

“The same God but not the same person” may state a desired result, but it does not yet say what God and person name or what grounds the sameness and difference.

If same God means shared divine nature, the theory has not shown why several subjects are one God rather than several possessors of the same kind of nature. If same God means one concrete divine subject, the personal distinction must be explained without treating the persons as separate psychological agents. If same God means the Father’s identity expressed in the Son, the theory is moving toward a source-and-realization account and must distinguish divine source from human subject.

The phrase therefore cannot replace the metaphysics. The defender must still count minds, wills, intentions, acts, sources, and subjects. A rule for speaking is not yet a ground of being.

THE POSITIVE ANSWER: INCARNATIONAL IDENTITY

Jesus is neither another divine individual nor an unrelated human instrument. He is the true human realization of the Father’s own Word and saving intent.

The Father does not first produce an independently identified man and later assign divine meaning to Him. From His first moment, Jesus exists as the human realization of God’s self-expression. His identity, mission, and relation to God arise within that constitutive act.

The humanity is therefore not numerically identical with the divine essence, but it is not merely causal, representative, or adoptive. God’s own Word, image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose are personally realized as this man.

This account preserves the distinctions that a flat identity formula erases and the unity that an external-agent theory cannot supply.

THE ANSWER IN ONE CONTROLLED STATEMENT

Jesus is not numerically identical with the Father’s unrestricted divine ontology according to His complete created humanity. He is numerically the same human subject through the whole incarnate economy. The divine identity expressed in Him is the Father’s own, not the identity of a second divine subject. The unity is God’s intentional and constitutive realization of His own Word as this genuine human life. The Father is the ultimate divine ground; Jesus is the immediate human subject.

QUESTIONS THE OPPOSING MODEL MUST ANSWER

- What exact kind of identity is being claimed?
- What does God name in the formula: nature, essence, concrete subject, source, or identity expressed?
- Are the divine and human acts of consciousness numerically one act or genuinely distinct acts?
- Who immediately owns Jesus’ human faith, prayer, obedience, suffering, and statement “my God”?
- What makes Father and Son genuine relata rather than one subject speaking reflexively under two descriptions?
- How does the model preserve one divine source without leaving the humanity ownerless or reducing it to an instrument?

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

The incarnation is not explained by choosing between flat numerical identity and mere creaturehood. The coherent structure is one divine identity and source, one numerically continuous human subject, distinct divine and human modes of consciousness, and a constitutive relation in which the Father's own Word and saving intent are realized as the man Jesus Christ.

75. Objection: "If God Wills the Man, the Man Cannot Be Free"

This confuses creation with coercion.

God's willing that a rational agent exist is not the same as forcing an already existing agent against his will. God constitutes the human capacities; He does not thereby make them unreal.

The Messiah's freedom is not independence from God. It is the uncoerced operation of His human will according to its created nature and redemptive purpose.

His freedom reaches perfection not in the possibility of successful rebellion but in His willing fidelity under real pressure.

76. Objection: "God Cannot Be Perfected"

God cannot be improved as God. The statement does not claim divine improvement.

The divine ontology is perfected as man in the sense that God's intention to exist according to human qualities reaches complete realization.

God is not naturally man. Therefore, the incarnational end is a new economic actuality: God truly expressed in a created mode He does not possess by eternal nature.

Perfection means completion according to end, not correction of defect.

77. Objection: "If the Man Learns, God Is Ignorant"

The conclusion follows only if divine and human modes are confused.

God remains omniscient according to divine ontology. The human mind is finite and developmental according to human ontology.

Because the human mind is God's incarnational expression, its learning may be attributed to God incarnate without making divine omniscience acquire information.

The man learns. God owns the incarnational life in which the learning occurs.

77A. Objection: "If God Already Knows Human Suffering Exhaustively, Why Incarnation?"

The objection assumes that incarnation would be necessary only if God lacked information about human life and needed to acquire experience. That is not the argument. God does not become man in order to discover what pain, temptation, weakness, obedience, or death are.

GOD KNOWS HIMSELF AND THE INCARNATION EXHAUSTIVELY

God knows Himself without remainder. He knows His own Word, wisdom, will, purpose, and every consequence of the incarnational act. He knows the whole economy before its historical realization: conception, growth, temptation, prayer, obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, glorification, priesthood, mediation, reign, and consummation.

Nothing in the life of Christ surprises God or adds a previously absent fact to the divine intellect. The historical realization is new in the created order, but it is not new information in God.

GOD KNOWS EVERY HUMAN SUFFERING BETTER THAN THE SUFFERER KNOWS IT

Human awareness is finite, successive, fragmented, and often confused. A sufferer may know the pain as immediately felt while lacking complete knowledge of its bodily causes, psychological effects, moral setting, relation to other lives, total duration, and final significance. God knows the entire reality at once.

He knows every physical sensation, fear, grief, humiliation, temptation, deprivation, injustice, and death exhaustively. He knows the private meaning each event carries for the person who undergoes it, the hidden conditions the person cannot identify, and the complete place of the suffering within providence and judgment. Divine compassion does not begin with divine ignorance.

EXHAUSTIVE KNOWLEDGE DOES NOT ERASE TEMPORAL ACTUALITY

A false either-or says that either an event genuinely unfolds in time and therefore becomes newly real to God, or God knows the event exhaustively and therefore its temporal occurrence is only an appearance. Neither conclusion follows. God's complete knowledge does not substitute for the created event, and the created event does not add a new fact to God. The order is both exhaustively known by God and genuinely realized in its appointed sequence.

The crucifixion does not occur before the incarnation, and the resurrection does not occur before the death. Promise, fulfillment, suffering, death, resurrection, glorification, and consummation retain their true historical order. God's knowledge of the whole does not flatten these relations or make each stage equally actual at every moment of created history. It means that God knows every stage exactly as it is: future to the creature before it occurs, present when it occurs, past after it occurs, and permanently located within the one complete history He sustains.

Historical realization therefore contributes a real created actuality without contributing epistemic increase to God. What God eternally knows as the event that will occur becomes the event that actually occurs within creation. The event is new in the temporal order because it has reached its appointed historical actuality; it is not new to God as though He had lacked knowledge, concern, purpose, or response before that moment.

TIME CHANGES THE CREATURE'S RELATION TO AN EVENT, NOT GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OR VALUATION

Finite creatures pass through successive relations to an event. First it is anticipated, then immediately experienced, then remembered. Our awareness may increase or fade. Emotional force may intensify, weaken, become distorted, or be displaced by later events. Temporal distance changes how the event is present to us.

God does not pass through those stages of discovery, immediacy, recollection, and fading. He does not first expect the event, then acquire it as a new present fact, and later retain only a

diminishing memory. The event's temporal location changes relative to creatures, but its complete truth, moral weight, personal significance, and relation to God do not move toward Him or recede from Him.

A sin occurs at a determinate moment in created history; it is not being committed at every moment. Yet once committed, its reality never falls into obscurity before God. It remains fully before Him as the same historical act, with the same moral character, the same injuries, the same intended and unintended effects, and the same need for judgment or forgiveness. "Ever before God" does not mean the act is endlessly repeated. It means that temporal distance does not make it less known, less real, less evil, or less personally significant to Him.

Forgiveness therefore does not require God to forget that the sin occurred, revise His judgment that it was evil, or allow its moral reality to fade. Forgiveness changes the sinner's judicial and covenantal relation to God through the redemptive means God has established. It does not erase the historical truth of the act or make God's opposition to its evil less real.

DIVINE EMOTION IS REAL WITHOUT SUCCESSIVE EMOTIONAL CHANGE

God's exhaustive knowledge does not make His love, grief, anger, compassion, delight, and judgment unreal. It removes ignorance, surprise, involuntary instability, and the need to revise an earlier response. Emotion in God is not an uncontrolled psychological fluctuation produced by information He has just received. It is His perfect personal and moral valuation of persons, acts, suffering, righteousness, and evil.

God does not move from emotional neutrality into grief when sin reaches its created moment, nor does His grief become a weaker memory after the event moves into the creature's past. He does not begin to love only when the beloved enters history, and His love does not become obsolete when that life is complete. He does not first become compassionate when suffering is presently felt by the creature. His love, grief, anger, compassion, and delight are fully real because the realities toward which they are directed are fully and personally known to Him without temporal loss or emotional decay.

The first moment in which we experience an event is therefore not the first moment in which it becomes personally or morally real to God. It is the created moment in which an event already exhaustively known, valued, and purposed by God becomes actual within our history. God's response is no less real than our first immediate reaction; it is more complete because it is neither partial nor dependent upon discovery. Time changes the event's relation to us. It does not make God's response more real at one stage, less real at another, or different because the event has moved from our future into our past.

The word "reaction" may be used only with this qualification. God truly responds to the creature and to the act according to what each is. But His response is not a newly produced mood or a transition from ignorance to awareness. It is His unchangingly real personal, moral, and affective relation to the complete temporal reality He knows and sustains.

EXHAUSTIVE KNOWLEDGE IS NOT IDENTICAL TO REALIZED MODE OF EXISTENCE

Nevertheless, perfect knowledge of a created condition is not the same category as personally realizing a created mode of existence. God knows hunger exhaustively without divine ontology requiring a stomach. He knows bodily pain without the divine nature possessing nerves. He knows

mortality without eternal divine life becoming mortal. He knows human obligation without being naturally born under human law.

The incarnation therefore does not improve God's knowledge. It brings forth a new economic and created actuality: God's own self-expression truly exists as man. The Word and saving intent known eternally by God reach their intended terminus in an embodied, temporal, rational, passible, and mortal human life.

THE MAN EXPERIENCES HUMANLY; GOD DOES NOT LEARN, YET GOD TRULY RELATES

The man Jesus genuinely experiences hunger, weariness, fear, grief, temptation, pain, abandonment, obedience, and death through a finite human consciousness and body. Those experiences are not theatrical, and they are not direct changes within divine ontology. Their historical succession is real for the human subject: He anticipates suffering, enters it, endures it, dies, and is raised.

The distinction must remain exact: the man learns; God does not become informed. The man suffers through a passible human body and consciousness; divine life is not involuntarily injured or diminished. The man dies; divine life does not cease. Yet none of this makes God emotionally absent, merely observational, or externally related to the economy. God fully and unchangingly knows, loves, values, grieves, opposes, judges, and shows compassion toward the persons and events involved. He owns the incarnational existence because it is the personal realization of His own Word, image, and saving purpose rather than the life of an unrelated human instrument.

INCARNATION DOES NOT MAKE DIVINE COMPASSION REAL; IT MAKES REDEMPTION HUMANLY ACTUAL

The tears, grief, compassion, obedience, and suffering of Christ do not awaken emotions that were previously absent from God. God's love for humanity, hatred of evil, grief over sin, compassion for sufferers, and purpose to redeem are not made authentic by His receiving new experience. They are already perfectly real in God.

What the incarnation accomplishes is different. It gives those eternally real divine purposes and valuations their intended embodied and redemptive form within human history. God's compassion is realized as the compassion of a true man. God's opposition to sin is realized through human righteousness and obedience. God's saving love is realized through an offerable human life. God's purpose to defeat death is realized through a mortal man who dies and is raised.

The cross therefore does not cause God to begin loving, grieving, opposing sin, or willing redemption. It is the appointed historical act in which God's unchanging redemptive intent is fulfilled through His own human self-expression. The divine response does not become newly real; the human obedience, suffering, sacrifice, and death become actually and irreversibly real within the created order.

GOD'S UNCHANGING RESPONSE INCLUDES THE FULL PERSONAL WEIGHT OF HIS SON AND IMAGE

The cross does not become important to God only when it enters the creaturely present. The Son's worth, the perfection of the incarnational image, the evil of the violence, and the redemptive meaning of the self-gift are wholly and personally known by God. His love for the Son, grief over the sin, opposition to the injustice, and valuation of His own manifested image do not begin at Golgotha or become emotionally remote after the event passes into created history.

Accordingly, saying that God beholds His Son and Himself in the crucified Christ does not imply a new divine discovery or an emotional escalation caused by time. It identifies the complete object of God's eternally real personal valuation. At the appointed historical moment, the true Son actually suffers and God's own human image is actually marred; but their full significance is never less present to God before, during, or after that temporal realization.

THE PURPOSE IS REDEMPTIVE FULFILLMENT, NOT DIVINE EDUCATION

God's exhaustive knowledge of human obedience does not itself fulfill human obedience. His knowledge of covenant does not place a man under law. His knowledge of sacrifice does not provide an offerable human life. His knowledge of pain does not establish a suffering human High Priest. His knowledge of death does not constitute a human victory over death. His knowledge of dominion does not enthrone a faithful man over the created order.

The incarnation is necessary because the redemption God chose must be fulfilled within humanity. Human obligation must be answered by human obedience; flesh and blood must be shared; a rational human life must be offered; death must be entered by a mortal representative; and the same man must be raised and glorified as the firstfruits of redeemed humanity.

THE UNIQUE INCARNATIONAL REALITY

God is present with every sufferer, sustains every life, and knows every experience. But ordinary divine presence does not make each sufferer God's incarnational self-expression. The incarnation is unique because this human existence is immediately grounded in God's own Word, wisdom, name, image, glory, and redemptive intent.

God does not merely observe, accompany, empower, or indwell an independently constituted man. He wills His own self-expression to be realized as this man. The humanity remains created and genuinely human, yet its source, personal meaning, mission, and divine ownership arise directly from God's own saving act.

This is why Christ's experiential history has redemptive significance without supplying knowledge or previously absent emotion to God. The man becomes a merciful and faithful High Priest through the actual history of likeness, testing, suffering, obedience, death, and glorification. God knows that history exhaustively and His love, compassion, grief over sin, opposition to evil, and redemptive purpose are fully real without increase or decay. The man truly lives the history in sequence, and God redeems humanity through the life He has personally made His own expression.

PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED

Incarnation does not remedy ignorance or supply previously absent emotion in God. God knows Himself, the complete incarnation, every human suffering, and every temporal event exhaustively. That knowledge does not erase created sequence, and divine constancy does not make love, grief, anger, compassion, delight, or judgment unreal. Each event becomes actual at its appointed place in history, while its complete reality and moral significance remain fully before God without discovery, fading, or revision. Incarnation uniquely realizes God's own self-expression as the true human existence required to fulfill obedience, sacrifice, priesthood, death, resurrection, and reign. It is redemptive and historical realization, not divine information-gathering or emotional awakening.

78. Objection: “Faith Is Impossible If Jesus Is God”

The statement becomes confused when “Jesus is God” is left unqualified.

If it means the human consciousness is intrinsically omniscient and self-sufficient, genuine human faith becomes difficult to explain.

If it means God’s own self-expression is realized as a finite man, then the man may truly exercise faith toward God while the incarnational reality remains God’s own.

The both-and must be maintained: divine source and finite human faith.

79. Objection: “Prayer Means God Is Talking to Himself”

Prayer is not the transcendent divine mind staging a conversation with itself. It is the man Jesus living the genuine human relation toward God.

Because this man is God’s own self-expression, prayer reveals the depth of incarnation rather than disproving it. God has willed His life as an existence that, according to humanity, must pray, trust, obey, and say “my God.”

The relation is not between two gods. It is between God as transcendent source and God’s incarnational human Son as dependent man.

80. Objection: “Calling Jesus a Man Reduces His Deity”

Calling Jesus a true man does not reduce the incarnation. It protects what God chose to become.

The humanity is not a limitation placed upon God’s eternal essence. It is the intended created mode of God’s self-expression.

To deny the complete operation of the humanity in order to honor deity would deny the very act by which God reveals His greatness: the infinite perfected as finite man without ceasing to be infinite.

81. Objection: “The Human Acts Belong Only to a Nature”

Natures specify capacities and kinds of operation. Subjects perform acts through those capacities.

Human nature does not pray in abstraction. Someone prays through a human mind and will. Human nature does not say “my God.” The human subject does.

Therefore, affirming human acts while denying a genuine human first-person center produces a category error. The acts require an actor, and first-person predicates require a self who recognizes and owns them.

Jesus is that human subject. ‘I’ identifies Him as the knower and actor; ‘me’ identifies the same subject as addressed, seen, rejected, harmed, raised, or glorified; and ‘my’ identifies what He consciously owns — His body, soul, will, life, words, mission, Father, and God.

This subject-related contrast is indispensable. To say ‘my God’ is to recognize oneself as the subject who stands toward God. To say ‘not my will, but Yours’ is to recognize and own a human will

while consciously submitting it to God's will. A nature considered in abstraction neither recognizes itself nor identifies another as its God.

The human subject is not thereby an independently grounded personal source. His existence, identity, mission, continued life, and glory arise from God's own incarnational act. Dependence of origin does not erase subjectivity; it explains why this human subject is God's own self-expression rather than an external man whom God merely uses.

Nor does this require a second divine consciousness concealed behind the human 'I.' The immediate incarnate subject who learns, prays, obeys, suffers, and dies is the man Jesus. His divine identity is predicated through source, Word, image, presence, ownership, and manifestation — not through another divine psychological subject replacing the human actor.

A nature supplies capacities, but neither dependence nor independence turns those capacities into owned acts. The validation of an act as faith, obedience, testimony, or sacrifice lies in the quality of the concrete existence that performs it: a rational self understands, intends, chooses, and accepts responsibility. Thus the article does not infer personhood from independence. It demonstrates personal reality from the complete human operations Scripture attributes to Jesus.

82. Objection: "The Resurrection Ends the Human Relation to God"

The risen Christ explicitly says "my Father" and "my God." The exalted Christ in Revelation repeatedly says "my God." He remains mediator and High Priest. His authority is given. God remains His head in the messianic order.

Resurrection transforms human existence; it does not abolish it.

83. Objection: "The Kingdom's Delivery Means Christ Ceases to Matter"

Completion is not cancellation.

The Messiah's mediatorial reign reaches its intended goal. Death is destroyed, the redeemed are glorified, and the kingdom is ordered fully to God.

Christ remains the face, image, Lamb, and personal manifestation through whom God dwells with humanity. The economic office is fulfilled, not proven unreal.

Part VIII — Final Sequential Demonstration

84. The Full Chain of Necessity

The argument may now be stated in complete sequence.

FIRST: INCARNATIONAL POSSIBILITY

God can remain infinite as God while willing His own Word, Wisdom, life, and self-expression to be realized as true finite man. This does not require conversion of divine essence into human essence.

SECOND: INCARNATIONAL PERFECTION AND IDENTITY

God's intention must reach a real human terminus, and the identity of that terminus must be defined by what God intends to realize. Jesus is not merely caused by God. He is the true human realization of God's own Word, image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose. The divine identity expressed is the Father's; the concrete ontology realized is human.

The divine ontology is perfected as something it is not by eternal nature: man. The perfection is the completion of divine intent in a genuine created mode of existence.

THIRD: NON-COERCIVE REALIZATION

God's will constitutes the human existence; it does not control an external man. Therefore the human faculties must genuinely perform human acts.

FOURTH: BOTH SON OF GOD AND SON OF MAN

The incarnate one is Son of God by source, conception, self-expression, and purpose, and Son of Man by actual human constitution, experience, representation, and destiny.

FIFTH: PURPOSE DETERMINES DEPTH

Because God's purpose is redemption rather than mere appearance, the humanity must possess the depth necessary to fulfill human legal and covenantal obligation.

SIXTH: LEGAL AND ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS

The Messiah must be kinsman, Israel's faithful representative, born under law, new Adam, faithful believer, obedient servant, sinless man, voluntary sacrifice, High Priest, mediator, witness, mortal sufferer, vindicated man, exalted Lord, and firstfruits of humanity.

SEVENTH: NECESSARY HUMAN PROPERTIES

Those offices require embodiment, rational mind, first-person self-awareness, development, differentiated knowledge, human will, faith, prayer, emotion, temptation, environmental experience, social relation, filial God-relation, legal identity, and testimonial competence.

EIGHTH: PERSONHOOD AND SOURCE-DEPENDENCE

Independence and dependence do not define personhood. Jesus is wholly dependent upon God in origin, revelation, mission, resurrection, authority, and glory, yet He is personally real as man because He possesses a rational human mind, will, first-person self-awareness, intentional agency, moral ownership, and genuine relations. Dependence excludes an independently grounded source beside God; it does not erase the human "I."

NINTH: REVEALED HUMAN SELF-UNDERSTANDING

The true human subject must consciously know the identity and mission He owns. Jesus comes to understand Himself through growth, Scripture, Spirit, revelation, and the Father's teaching as Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, bread, light, shepherd, resurrection and life, way, truth, vine, image, and embodied saving expression. This knowledge is real without making His human mind intrinsically omniscient.

TENTH: SCRIPTURAL PREDICATION

Scripture attributes these properties to Jesus: conception, birth, growth in wisdom and stature, moral discernment, finite knowledge, received teaching, human will, prayer, supplication, tears, reverence, faith, temptation, love, witness, pain, death, resurrection, and continuing confession of "my God."

ELEVENTH: REDEMPTIVE FULFILLMENT

The man fulfills the legal and covenantal requirements. His obedience is authentically human, His sacrifice voluntarily offered, His witness truthful, and His death real.

TWELFTH: PREDICATION THROUGH THE INCARNATIONAL MEANS

God is the ultimate source and owner of salvation, but the quality of the saving act is determined by the true human means He willed. "God was in Christ" identifies divine intent and presence realized in the man; "the Father died" is true only through that incarnational means, while death remains proper to the human existence. Scripture therefore properly says that the Son of God died: "of God" identifies the divine source and ownership, while "Son" identifies the true filial human mode in which God's own self-expression reaches obedience, sacrifice, and death. In the governing redemptive grammar, the acting "God" is the Father, not an unidentified term standing apart from Him.

The personal depth of that predication follows from the identity of the crucified man. God beholds a true Son who stands before Him in filial faith and obedience, and He beholds His own Word, image, glory, character, and saving intent realized in that Son. Thus the Son is genuinely wounded and killed as man, and God's own manifested image is genuinely dishonored in Him, without the divine essence being mutilated or divine life ceasing.

Resurrection and glorification answer that dishonor. God vindicates the faithful Son, raises the marred image incorruptible, and enthrones the same man as the enduring face and wisdom of God within the redeemed order.

THIRTEENTH: THE DIRECTION OF THE MAN'S PSYCHOLOGY

The man's internal faith, will, reverence, and prayer terminate externally upon the Father as His God. Scripture never presents Him praying to or calling a distinct divine Son "my God," confirming the Father as divine source and the Son as the incarnational human self-expression of God.

FOURTEENTH: DIVINE VINDICATION AND GLORIFICATION

God raises and exalts the same man. Glorification is necessary to vindicate His obedience, perfect humanity beyond mortality, continue His priestly and mediatorial offices, and make Him the firstfruits and head of new creation.

FIFTEENTH: THE TWO ENDS

The Father remains the ultimate source and ground. The man Jesus remains the immediate subject of the redemptive acts and recipient of glory.

SIXTEENTH: GLORIFIED REIGN, SUBJECTION OF POWERS, AND CONSUMMATION

The enthroned Christ embodies divine Wisdom as the glorified human king, subjects every throne, dominion, ruler, authority, and enemy, restores humanity's created dominion, and hands the completed kingdom to God the Father, so that God is all in all.

85. Final Conclusion

The incarnation cannot be understood adequately by asking only whether divine predicates may be applied to Jesus. The logically prior and redemptively decisive issue is what God intended to realize when He willed Himself as true human existence.

If God merely wished to appear, true human psychology would be unnecessary. If He merely wished to speak, a prophet would be sufficient. If He merely wished to display power, a theophany would suffice. But if God willed to redeem humanity legally, covenantally, sacrificially, priestly, morally, and eschatologically, He had to bring forth the true man capable of fulfilling those ends.

God's will does not manipulate that man. God's will is the source of the man's existence. Because God wills true humanity, the mind genuinely thinks, the will genuinely submits, the faith genuinely trusts, the body genuinely suffers, and the life genuinely dies.

The man rationally knows Himself through "I," "me," and "my." He knows His body, will, life, words, mission, Father, and God as His. That first-person identity gives Him legal standing to obey, testify, offer Himself, be judged, be vindicated, and represent others.

He also knows the content of that identity. Through Scripture and revelation He identifies Himself as the promised Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, bread of life, light of the world, door, shepherd, resurrection and life, way, truth, true vine, and the one in whom the Father is seen and operative. These are economic and revelatory self-identifications: they name what God's intent is accomplishing in and through the man. They do not turn His finite consciousness into the Father's omniscient mind or give His human faculties intrinsic omni-properties.

This means Jesus is a genuine self-identified human subject. Subjectivity is not an embarrassment to be explained away but the necessary reality by which the man consciously considers Himself, distinguishes Himself from God, and owns His relation to God. Yet His subjecthood is not independently sourced: He is the human subject brought forth as the fleshly realization of God's own Word, not an external person later joined to God or a second divine center hidden behind the man.

That subject is not merely God's most perfect creature. All created existence is ordered and sustained within God's life-giving actuality, but ordinary creatures are other-ordered identities in relation to Him. Christ's human life begins uniquely from the Holy Spirit, and God's own immanent Word, self-knowledge, image, character, name, and redemptive will are personally realized in Him. Life does not demand omni-properties; therefore the human consciousness can remain fully finite without the incarnational life becoming less personally God's own.

This is the article's controlling identity claim. Jesus is what the Father intended to bring forth in the incarnation: His own Word, self-image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose realized as true man. The Father's intent determines the identity, the Word supplies its content, and

Jesus is its concrete human realization. This identity is therefore stronger than resemblance or divine use, while the human ontology remains genuinely created and distinct from God's transcendent mode.

Jesus' life is therefore His own and God's own under different respects. It is His own immediately because He is the human subject who knows, wills, obeys, suffers, and dies. It is God's own incarnation because God's life is personally ordered and expressed in this human existence through His Spirit and Word rather than merely sustaining another creaturely identity. This is what distinguishes incarnation from the creation, inspiration, adoption, or commissioning of a flawless representative.

He is both Son of God and Son of Man. The titles are not alternatives. Son of God identifies divine source, conception, self-expression, and purpose. Son of Man identifies true human existence, solidarity, obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, and reign.

For this reason, the objection that Scripture does not use the bare sentence "Jesus is the Father" cannot decide the question. Scripture uses the language a true incarnation requires: the Father as the acting God and source, the Word made flesh, God manifested, the image of the invisible God, the exact representation of His reality, the Father dwelling and working in Christ, and the Son as the true human existence in which God's redemptive self-expression obeys and dies. The mode-qualifications explain the identity rather than negating it.

Hebrews 5:7–10 presents the decisive portrait. In the days of His flesh, the Son offers prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death. He is heard because of His reverence. Though He is Son, He learns obedience through what He suffers; having been perfected, He becomes the author or source of eternal salvation to those who obey Him and is called by God as High Priest. Every element required by the argument is present: embodiment, temporality, agency, prayer, need, emotion, faith, relation, reverence, sonship, learning, obedience, suffering, vocational completion, mediatorial sourcehood, and divine appointment.

The death of Christ is therefore God's own redemptive death in the human existence He has made His own. Divine life does not cease, but God truly dies as incarnate man. The resurrection is God's vindication of that man. The exaltation gives the obedient man all authority. His glorification becomes the first realized form of what the redeemed shall be.

Because Jesus is the perfection of God's incarnational intention as man, His passion possesses a significance greater than the suffering of an externally appointed representative. God beholds in Jesus both a true Son who perfectly loves, trusts, obeys, and offers Himself to His Father and God's own Word, image, glory, holiness, love, and saving purpose perfectly expressed in human life. God therefore sees His Son and, according to manifestation and self-expression, sees Himself in the incarnate Son.

This formulation does not identify the finite human body or consciousness numerically with the Father's transcendent divine mode. The face is humanly marred, the body humanly wounded, the consciousness humanly anguished, and the life humanly killed. Divine essence is not struck or extinguished. Nevertheless, the injured humanity is not foreign to God: it is the humanity God has willed and owned as His own incarnational image. Humanity therefore dishonors both the faithful Son and the manifested image of the God who sent Him.

The resurrection is God's necessary answer to that double dishonor. The Son condemned by men is vindicated by His God; the image marred under violence is raised incorruptible; the glory hidden beneath humiliation is revealed; and the same crucified man is enthroned as the permanent human face of divine Wisdom and the head of redeemed humanity.

None of this supplies knowledge or previously absent emotion that God lacked. God knows Himself, the entire incarnational economy, every human suffering, and every temporal event more exhaustively than any creature. The passage of an event from our future, to our present, to our past does not make it move into or out of God's awareness, nor does His love, grief, anger, compassion, delight, or judgment become more real, less real, or emotionally remote with temporal distance. Yet created sequence remains genuine: the man truly grows, anticipates, suffers, obeys, dies, rises, and is glorified. The incarnation is unique because God's unchanging knowledge, valuation, and redemptive intent are brought to historical fulfillment as His own personal self-expression in true humanity. The man genuinely undergoes the human history; God neither learns nor merely watches from outside it.

The risen Christ continues to say "my Father" and "my God." His glorification perfects rather than abolishes His humanity. He reigns as mediator, priest, judge, and Lord until every enemy, including death, is destroyed.

Finally, the Son hands the completed kingdom to God the Father. The entire economy returns to its source fulfilled. God receives all glory because the incarnation, obedience, sacrifice, resurrection, glorification, and kingdom are the realization of His own will and Wisdom. The Son whom humanity dishonored and the image it marred are not discarded: Christ remains the visible face of the Father, Wisdom incarnated, crucified, vindicated, and enthroned, the true man through whom God dwells with redeemed humanity.

Glorification is therefore not a detachable epilogue to atonement. The man must continue because the same human subject who fulfilled obedience must be vindicated, transformed, enthroned, and installed to administer redemption. He remains the living High Priest, mediator, judge, king, and head of the new humanity. His glorious body is the first realized form of what the redeemed shall become.

His enthronement also answers the disorder of the created powers. Thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities belong to the structured wisdom of creation, but sin turns authority away from its proper end. God restores the order by enthroning His Wisdom in the faithful man. Christ reigns above every power, disarms what is hostile, abolishes every rival rule, destroys death, and returns the completed kingdom to the Father.

The statement that God saved must therefore retain the quality of the means God willed. God did not save by bypassing humanity. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. The Father's Word, wisdom, presence, and intent are realized in the true man whose faith, obedience, sacrifice, death, resurrection, and reign are genuinely human. To say that the Father died is true only through this incarnational means: the man immediately dies, while the Father as source and owner accomplishes His own saving self-gift without divine life ceasing.

Finally, the necessary psychology of the man carries its own theological force. Jesus possesses internal human faith, will, reverence, desire, and prayer, and He directs these externally toward the

Father as “my God.” He never prays to a distinct divine Son, receives command from one, or names one as His God. The positive distribution of these predicates supports the Father as the divine source and object of the man’s worship, while the Son is God’s self-expression realized as true human existence.

The same distinction resolves the question of personal dependence. Jesus does not need to be independently grounded in order to be a genuine human person or subject. Independence and dependence describe the relation of an existence to its source; they do not constitute rational consciousness, will, faith, or moral ownership. The human “I” is validated by the complete quality of the existence Scripture presents: He learns, knows, wills, prays, trusts, obeys, testifies, suffers, offers Himself, dies, and is vindicated.

Nor can the unity of the incarnation be secured by identifying the divine and human psychological centers without qualification. The divine “I” is the underived, omniscient source; the human “I” is the finite, developmental, obedient subject. God’s incarnational intent unites divine source, Word, image, and saving identity with true human actuality without mixing the mind of God and the mind of man. Jesus is not an independent divine source beside the Father, but neither is His humanity an impersonal nature operated by a divine consciousness.

This also clarifies Jesus’ self-understanding. He knows Himself through Scripture, Spirit, revelation, and the Father’s teaching as the promised Messiah and true Son in whom God’s pre-world redemptive intent, Word, image, power, wisdom, and glory are realized. Even statements reaching back before creation need not be treated as autobiographical memory belonging to an eternal human consciousness. The Father purposes; the man comes to know and fulfill the purpose; God glorifies the same man through whom His own self-expression has entered history.

The controlling statement is therefore:

The hinge may be stated compactly: God grounds every creature, but incarnation is distinguished by what God intends to realize. In Christ, the Father intends His own Word, image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose to exist as true human life. The divine identity expressed is the identity of the one God; the concrete ontology realized is genuinely human; and Jesus is the immediate subject who lives that human existence in faith, obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, and reign.

God could will His own self-expression as true human existence. Redemption therefore required a real man with every human quality necessary for the messianic mission. Scripture identifies Jesus as the Word made flesh, God’s image and exact representation, and the man in whom God reconciles the world. He is God’s incarnational intent realized as the true Son, crucified, risen, and enthroned.

Appendix A — Core Definitions

Incarnation

God's own Word and self-expression brought to concrete realization as a true human existence, not merely appearing in human form or indwelling an independently constituted man.

Strict numerical identity

Being one and the same individual. If A is numerically identical with B, A and B are not two individuals. The two expressions refer to one concrete reality.

Leibniz's Law

The principle that numerically identical things cannot differ in their properties in the same respect, at the same time, and according to the same mode of predication. Real differences of time, nature, relation, or mode must be stated rather than assumed.

Qualitative identity

Possessing the same or closely corresponding properties. Qualitative sameness explains likeness but does not by itself establish that two references name one individual.

Generic identity

Belonging to the same kind or nature. Peter and John are both human while remaining numerically distinct men.

Diachronic identity

The numerical persistence of one subject through time and real change. Jesus remains the same human subject through conception, growth, obedience, death, resurrection, glorification, and reign.

Sortal

A term under which things are identified and counted, such as man, person, body, statue, or God. A sortal tells us what kind of thing is being claimed to be the same or different.

Relative Identity

A theory according to which two references may be the same F while not being the same G, such as the same God but not the same person. The formula states a category-relative counting rule but still requires an account of what grounds the sameness and the difference.

Sameness without strict identity

A proposed relation stronger than resemblance but weaker than absolute numerical identity, often explained through constitution. The phrase is not self-explanatory and must identify the ground, persistence conditions, and consequences of the claimed sameness.

Constitution

A dependence relation in which one concrete reality is constituted by another without necessarily being strictly numerically identical to it under every account. Constitution may explain realization or dependence, but it does not by itself explain consciousness, agency, legal identity, or personal relation.

Identity of consciousness

Numerical sameness of a conscious act or first-person field of awareness. Divine and human consciousness in the incarnation cannot be one numerically identical conscious act in the same respect because one is uncreated and unlimited while the other is created, embodied, temporal, and developmental.

Identity label

An identity expression that announces how a theory wishes realities to be counted without explaining what makes the claim true, what is distinct, who owns the acts, or what agency follows.

Incarnational identity

The constitutive identity by which Jesus Christ is the true human realization of the Father's own Word and self-expressive intent. The divine identity expressed is the identity of the one God, the Father. The created human ontology and consciousness are genuine and are not numerically identical with the Father's unrestricted divine mode.

Ultimate ground and immediate subject

The distinction between the Father as the divine source of incarnation, mission, revelation, power, resurrection, authority, and redemptive purpose, and Jesus as the concrete human "who" who grows, learns, prays, trusts, obeys, suffers, dies, rises, and receives glory.

Intentional grounding

God's constitutive willing of a reality according to a specified identity and purpose. God grounds every creature, but in incarnation He does more than will another creature to exist: He wills His own Word, image, wisdom, character, presence, and saving purpose to be realized as this true human life.

Content of incarnational intent

What God determines His incarnation to realize. The Father intends; His Word supplies the determinate content of His self-expression; and Jesus is that content brought to concrete human actuality as the exact image capable of redemption, death, resurrection, and reign.

Exact representation

The complete and faithful human realization of the qualities God intends to reveal through the incarnation. Exactness identifies faithfulness to the divine source, character, presence, and purpose; it does not require the human mind, will, or body to possess every unlimited property of divine ontology.

Life

The actuality of living existence. God is life in and of Himself. Omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and infinity describe the unrestricted divine mode of God's life, not requirements of life as such. Finite life is a real ordered identity sustained within God's life-giving actuality and operating according to the capacities of its created nature.

Other-ordered created life

A real finite identity sustained within God's life-giving actuality and ordered as another in relation to Him. Humans, animals, trees, and all other creatures possess their own bounded nature and operations without existing independently of God, becoming detached portions of divine life, or being God's personal self-expression.

Personal incarnational ordering

God's own Word, self-knowledge, wisdom, character, name, glory, Spirit, and redemptive will personally ordered toward true human actuality rather than functioning merely as an external model for another creature.

Personal imprint in humanity

The true human realization of God's personal incarnational ordering. It does not require that the human mind, will, or body display divine omni-properties. It means that God's own life and self-expression are personally realized in a finite human order possessing genuine mind, will, body, affective life, and first-person subjectivity.

God's own incarnational life

The genuine human life immediately lived by Jesus in which God's own life is personally realized through His Spirit and Word. It differs from other-ordered created life because God is not merely sustaining another identity from which He remains personally external. The human mode remains finite and relational toward God, while the life's personal source, identity, presence, and redemptive end are God's own. The human order is not identical to the unrestricted divine mode.

"From the Holy Spirit" (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου)

The conception-source language of Matthew 1:20. The preposition ἐκ identifies the divine origin of what is begotten in Mary without implying that the Spirit is transformed into biological material or that the human mind possesses divine attributes.

Divine ontology perfected as man

The completion of God's incarnational intention in a created mode of existence God does not possess by eternal nature. It does not mean improvement of God's divine perfection.

Ultimate source or ground

God the Father as the origin of the redemptive decree, incarnation, revelation, power, resurrection, exaltation, and final purpose.

Immediate subject

The man Jesus as the concrete first-person human knower and actor who immediately owns the human predicates of the incarnate economy: growth, learning, prayer, faith, obedience, suffering, testimony, death, resurrection, and received glory.

Human subject

The concrete first-person human knower and actor who recognizes Himself as “I,” owns His body, mind, will, life, words, relations, and history as “my,” and consciously stands toward God as His Father and God. Genuine human subjectivity does not require independent sourcehood.

Essential property

A positive constituent that belongs to what a thing is or to the mode by which it operates. For human personhood, relevant properties include rational consciousness, first-person identity, intellect, will, intentional agency, moral ownership, and relation. Independence and dependence are not essential constituents of personhood.

Grounding relation

The relation by which an existent receives source, cause, sustenance, identity, mission, authority, or end. A grounding relation explains how a subject exists and is ordered; it does not by itself determine whether the subject is personal.

Creaturely dependence

The necessary reception and continuation of created existence from God. It accompanies every human being because every human is created, but it does not constitute humanity or personhood, since personal and nonpersonal creatures alike are dependent.

Aseity

God’s underived mode of existence: God does not receive being from another. Aseity belongs to divine existence, not to the bare definition of personhood.

Psychological seat

The concrete mind and first-person center through which knowledge, will, faith, prayer, desire, and ownership of acts occur. Naming one bearer or hypostasis does not by itself identify or explain the psychological seat of every predicate.

Divine “I” and human “I”

The distinction between the Father as the underived, omniscient, originating divine subject and Jesus as the finite, developmental, obedient human subject. Their ontological values and modes of consciousness are not numerically interchangeable, though God’s own Word, image, and saving intent are realized in the human “I.”

Independent personal source

A subject whose identity, origin, and subsistence are constituted apart from God’s incarnational act. The paper denies that Jesus is such an external or separately sourced human person; it does not deny His genuine human subjectivity or personal reality as man.

Subject and person

Subject names the concrete self who knows, acts, and owns first-person predicates. ‘Person’ may name that rational personal reality, but it must not be made synonymous without argument with independent sourcehood or a separately subsisting hypostasis. Jesus is personally real and genuinely subjective as man while wholly grounded in God’s own incarnational self-expression.

Constitutive willing

God's willing that a real rational human existence come into being. It grounds the agent and does not amount to coercion of an external agent.

Coercion

The overriding or manipulation of an agent's own rational and volitional operation so that the resulting act is not properly the agent's.

Economic order

The ordered historical movement of God's saving purpose: sending, receiving, obedience, sacrifice, resurrection, exaltation, reign, and consummation.

Legal identity

The continuous rational identity by which a human subject owns acts, words, will, life, testimony, obligation, and standing before judgment.

Experiential knowledge

Knowledge acquired or deepened through undergoing a condition, such as suffering, temptation, and obedience.

Revelational knowledge

Knowledge given by God to a finite human mind, preserving both divine source and human reception.

Revealed human self-understanding

The finite and developing human knowledge by which Jesus consciously understands His identity, relation, and mission through Scripture, Spirit, the Father's teaching, and revelation. He knows Himself as Messiah, Son, image, embodied Word, and saving human expression without His human consciousness becoming an intrinsically omniscient divine mind.

Glorification

The necessary transformation and enthronement of the same man who obeyed and died, by which He is vindicated, perfected beyond mortality, installed as living priest, mediator, judge, and king, and established as the first realized form of redeemed humanity.

Predication through the incarnational means

The rule that an act may be attributed to God or the Father as ultimate source, owner, and accomplisher while the concrete quality and immediate experience of the act belong to the human existence God willed as His self-expression.

Redemptive source-grammar

The scriptural pattern in which God the Father is the originaive divine actor who purposes, sends, gives, reconciles, raises, exalts, and receives final glory; the Word and image express Him, the Spirit operates His presence, and the Son/man fulfills the economy in true human existence.

Incarnational realization without epistemic increase

The distinction between God's exhaustive knowledge of Himself, the incarnation, every human experience, and the new created actuality in which His own self-expression truly exists as man. The incarnation adds no information or previously absent emotion to God; it fulfills His unchanging redemptive purpose within genuine temporal humanity.

Temporal actuality without epistemic novelty

The principle that an event may become genuinely actual at its appointed moment in created history without becoming a newly known fact in God. God's exhaustive knowledge preserves rather than erases the event's true sequence, location, and historical reality.

Affective constancy

God's fully real and unchanging personal and moral valuation of persons and events. Divine love, grief, anger, compassion, delight, and judgment do not depend upon surprise, newly acquired information, emotional instability, or temporal fading; they remain perfectly proportioned to the complete realities God knows.

Twofold incarnational recognition

The Father's recognition in Jesus of two inseparable realities according to distinct respects: a true human Son who lives toward God in filial faith and obedience, and God's own Word, image, glory, character, and saving intent realized in that Son. It does not mean that the finite humanity is numerically identical to the Father's transcendent mode.

Marring of the manifested image

The real wounding, disfigurement, humiliation, and death of the human existence through which God has personally made Himself visible. The injury belongs immediately to the passible humanity and does not mutilate the divine essence, yet it is not external to God's incarnational identity because that humanity is His own self-expression in flesh.

Direction of human religious psychology

The relation between internally owned human acts — faith, will, reverence, prayer, and worship — and the external divine object toward whom those acts are directed. In Jesus, this complete relation terminates upon the Father as His God.

Enthronement of Wisdom

The exaltation of the glorified man as the embodied realization of God's redemptive wisdom, through whom every power is judged, subjected, reordered, or abolished and humanity's intended dominion is fulfilled.

Firstfruits

The risen Christ as the first realized instance, guarantee, and pattern of the glorified humanity to come.

Appendix B — Scripture Index by Necessary Property

Conception, birth, and sonship

Luke 1:31–35; Luke 2:7; Galatians 4:4. Matthew 1:18–20; especially Matthew 1:20 (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

Growth and development

Luke 2:40; Luke 2:46–52; Isaiah 7:15–16.

Human self-awareness, dependent personhood, and agency

Luke 2:52; John 5:19, 30; John 8:28, 40, 42; John 10:17–18; John 14:10, 24; Hebrews 2:13; 5:7–10.

Human mind and finite knowledge

Luke 2:52; Mark 13:32; John 8:28; John 12:49–50.

Human will and submission

Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42.

Faith and trust

Hebrews 2:13; Hebrews 5:7; Luke 23:46.

Prayer, supplication, and reverence

Luke 6:12; John 17; Hebrews 5:7–10.

Emotion and suffering

Mark 3:5; Mark 14:33–34; John 11:35; John 12:27; Hebrews 2:18.

Temptation and sinlessness

Matthew 4:1–11; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 2:18.

Human testimony

John 8:17–18; John 8:40; John 18:37.

Kinsman and brotherhood

Hebrews 2:11–18.

High Priesthood

Hebrews 2:17–18; Hebrews 4:14–16; Hebrews 5:1–9; Hebrews 7:24–25.

Mediation

1 Timothy 2:5.

Obedience and new Adam

Romans 5:12–19; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 5:8.

Sacrifice and death

John 10:17–18; Hebrews 2:14; Philippians 2:8.

Resurrection and vindication

Acts 2:24, 32, 36; Acts 17:31; Romans 1:4; Romans 10:9.

Exaltation and received authority

Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:9–11; Ephesians 1:20–23.

Continuing human God-relation

John 20:17; Revelation 3:12; 1 Corinthians 11:3.

Firstfruits and new humanity

Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; Colossians 1:18; Philippians 3:21.

Glorification and continuing humanity

Luke 24:39–43; John 20:17, 27; Acts 2:32–36; Romans 8:29; Philippians 3:21; Hebrews 7:16, 24–25; Revelation 3:12

Powers, authorities, and enthroned Wisdom

Psalm 8:4–6; 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:24–28; Ephesians 1:20–23; Colossians 1:16–18; 2:15; Hebrews 2:5–10

God in Christ and predication through means

John 14:9–11; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 5:19; Colossians 1:15, 19–20; 1 Timothy 3:16

God the Father as redemptive source

John 3:16–17; 5:19–30; 14:10–11; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 15:24–28; 2 Corinthians 5:18–19; Ephesians 1:3–23; Philippians 2:9–11; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Word, image, exact representation, and embodied fullness

John 1:1–18; 14:9–11; 2 Corinthians 4:4–6; Colossians 1:15, 19; 2:9; Hebrews 1:1–3; 1 Timothy 3:16.

Beloved Son, manifested image, crucifixion, and vindication

Isaiah 52:13–15; 53:3–12; Matthew 3:17; 17:5; 26:67–68; 27:27–50; John 1:14, 18; 14:9–11; 19:1–37; Acts 2:23–24, 36; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 4:4–6; Philippians 2:8–11; Colossians 1:15, 19–20; Hebrews 1:3.

Direction of Jesus' prayer and worship

Matthew 11:25–26; 26:39, 42; Mark 15:34; Luke 6:12; 10:21; 22:42; 23:46; John 11:41–42; 17:1–26; 20:17; Hebrews 2:13; 5:7–10; Revelation 3:12

Kingdom delivered to the Father

1 Corinthians 15:24–28.