

Modernism and the Deity of Christ

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Modernism, a system of philosophy that denies the deity of Christ in its broad sense, has been at work in every major denomination to undermine faith in Christ as the Son of God and the inspiration of the Bible. This system denies the miracles of the Bible, the resurrection of Christ, the creation of man by God, and his eternal destiny as taught in the word of God. In the more limited sense modernism includes any doctrine that does not originate in the word of God.

Modernism has charged that the apostles of Christ deliberately twisted and perverted the prophecies of the Old Testament to provide their proof that Christ was the promised Messiah and the Son of God. Modernists have made every attack possible on the different phases of the life of Christ in an effort to completely discredit the infallible proof that he is the Son of God.

The virgin birth of Christ is perhaps the first place the system of modernism attacks the deity of Christ. Whose Son is he? Was he born of a natural father, or was he born of a virgin by a miracle? If of a natural father, all his claims are false and we have no Saviour. But if he really was born of a virgin, he is truly the Son of God and his word is sure (Matt. 22:44-45).

To deny the virgin birth of Christ is to place him among the great teachers of his day, except it must imply that he was immoral and deceptive in all his teaching. It denies that he had a pre-existence with the Father, which he claimed. He was a deceiver if not born of a virgin because he claimed to have been so born. The prophecy of the Old Testament has not been fulfilled, Christ is not the Son of God, and his word is not true if he was not born of a virgin. The word of God declares him to have been born of a virgin. To know the truth is to be free; without it no man can be saved (John 8:32).

In Genesis 3:15 God promised to bless all nations of the seed of woman. This is the only mention of the "seed of the woman." In Isaiah 7:14 a sign was to be given that a son was to be born of a virgin, and Matthew 1:23 quotes this prophecy and applies it to Christ. Now if Christ was born of a natural father, there is no sign and the prophecy has not been fulfilled. Both the prophecy and the fulfillment unite to declare the virgin birth of Christ, and thereby declare him to be the Son of God.

But why is the virgin birth denied? What would the modernist gain by trying to prove that such did not happen? If God created the first man by a miracle, why is it thought to be impossible that Christ should be conceived without a natural father? But that is the very point! Modernists simply will not accept a miracle. The virgin birth is biologically impossible, therefore, it did not happen.

Besides denying the virgin birth of Christ, modernism denies that Christ lived a perfect, sinless life. Some of them say that such a life of Christ was fabricated by some idealists of the second century who adored a Jew by the name of Jesus Christ, and this developed into the present doctrines of what is called "Christianity." They do claim that he was a good moral teacher (and then deny it in denying the virgin birth), and a good humanitarian of his day.

These good traits of Christ are not admitted by all modernists. Some declare that he adopted the "immoral ideas" (?) of the Old Testament and actually stood in the way of mental and moral progress of his time. Some of these have said that he actually lived an immoral life with Mary and Martha in their own house. They claim that he was striving for world power, but was stopped when the Jews and Romans found out his true person and put him to death. Some claim that his conduct in defying some of the Jewish laws grew out of the fact that he knew that his father was really a Roman soldier and that he was born out of wedlock.

Such denials and charges are the most vulgar blasphemy that mortal man can utter. It is sickening to every believer in the word of God. I can have absolutely no respect for any man who entertains such ideas. He does not deserve to breathe God's fresh air, or to live in the presence of God's creatures who were made in His own likeness.

You may now think: "Why should we be concerned with such ridiculous information? No religious person would ever think of such nonsense." Oh, but that is just the point! Many religious people have accepted many of these ideas. Modernism has invaded and infiltrated most of the denominations of the day. The denominational church schools are producing many thousands of these "pastors" each year who do not believe in the deity of Christ nor the verbal inspiration of the word of God. There are many of them in the liberal wing of the Christian Church, and some of these ideas are beginning to take root in the minds of the ultra-liberals among some churches of Christ. It begins with a disregard for the word of the Lord, then a denial of the verbal inspiration of the New Testament, and finally the denial of the deity of Christ himself.

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Preacher of the Word (Vol. 1, February 11, 1996, #7)
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