

Question: Can you admit to being that poor?

Question: Who else is poor and consumes your care and compassion?

Question: How can you help him, her, or they to see this impoverished condition.

**II. If we want to identify with the poverty of Christmas we must appreciate the unconditional love of the Savior**

Read Colossians 1:15-18

Question: Just who is this Jesus of Nazareth?

Question: What kind of comparisons can you imagine that might help explain or describe just how high, exalted, lofty, majestic, grand, immense, and all-together perfect God truly is (sorry for the grammatical faux paux)?

Read Philippians 2:6-8 and 2 Corinthians 8:9

Question: Just what did God do for you? How far into the depths of poverty did he reach?

Application:

- Rather than attempt to fully grasp this enormous truth, how can we instead spend some time in worship giving thanks and praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for choosing this path on our behalf?
- During the next several weeks how might we show our desire to worship him to others?



While there are not enough words in all the languages of men or angels to adequately describe and explain the doctrine of the incarnation, we will make an attempt to at least capture a bit of the awe and wonder surrounding this most fantastic event—God becoming a man. So, rather than embarking on a systematic theology of the incarnation, let's define the term and then see it through the lens of poverty.

First, some definitions:

incarnation, n: (1) the state of having assumed human form (not a phantom form, but actual humanity; (2) the state of having been solely spiritual and now being both spiritual and flesh; (3) the biblical doctrine that the second person of the trinity assumed human form in the person of Jesus Christ and is completely both God and man

poverty, n: (1) the state or condition of having little or no goods or means of support; (2) the lack of necessary or desirable ingredients or qualities—whether material, social, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual, i.e. *he who has neither friend or foe is socially impoverished*

Second, the condition we call poverty can help us answer some very important questions about the incarnation.

1. Why did God become a man?

Answer: because man, through sin, had become poor; in fact, every man, woman and child, apart from the Savior, possess nothing that can be used to beg, barter, or buy a place with God in an eternal heaven.

2. (At least in part), what happened to God when he became a man?

Answer: while not giving up his deity, he walked away from his turf, he laid aside his privilege, he became poor so we could become rich.

Let's see how this plays out.

**I. If we want to identify with the poverty of Christmas we must appreciate the condition of humanity**

Read: Romans 3:9-18 and Isaiah 64:1-7

Question: What is the meta-idea in both of these passages?

Read: John 3:17-20

Question: Apart from the Savior, what is every person's condition?

Read Romans 1:18-23, Romans 3:23, and Romans 5:12

Question: While John 3:17-19 tells us that condemnation is every person's condition apart from God on account of his or her unbelief, what do we learn is the cause for our condemnation in Romans 1, 3, and 5?

Romans 1:18-23

Romans 3:23

Romans 5:12

Application:

- Would someone like to tell us about the person in his or her life who does not suffer this poverty of righteousness?

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- Right. We didn't think so. In fact, let's look at this through another filter—the 10 Commandments. While the 10 Commandments are not our means to salvation or an exhaustive list of what should or should not be done, they do provide us a measuring rod for demonstrating the sinfulness of all mankind. Next to each commandment place a check in the appropriate box to the right as you answer the question, "Have I ever violated this commandment?" However, before doing so, read the words of our Lord Jesus first in Matthew 5:21-30. What does this tell us about the commandments?

Commandment	Yes	No
have no god but God		
make and/or worship no idol		
do not take God's name in vain		
keep the Sabbath		
honor your Mom and Dad		
do not murder		
do not commit adultery		
do not steal		
do not bear false witness		
do not covet		

So now, the honest person must admit to something. What is it?

(Working backward) I am a coveting, lying, \_\_\_\_\_,  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, who does not always \_\_\_\_\_  
 my mother and father, fails to always keep the \_\_\_\_\_, sometimes  
 (maybe often) takes the Lord's name in \_\_\_\_\_, makes \_\_\_\_\_  
 out of all sorts of things, and, as a result, fails to always keep \_\_\_\_\_  
 alone as the one, true Lord of my life.