

Short Study No. 1

The Substance of Christ's Manhood

The Substance of Christ's Manhood is Heavenly not Earthy

Galatians 4:8 **Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them *who by nature are no gods.***

I Cor. 15:44 . . . **There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.**

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Introduction

Here are the points I wish to cover on the Substance's of Christ's Manhood. The first is Christ in the *Likeness of Sinful flesh*, then, *Christ in the Likeness of His Brethren*, then *What Christ Said About His Own Emanation*, then *Christ's Teaching About Himself as the Father's Heavenly Manna*, then *Christ's Teaching about His Natural Mother*, and *Christ Being Out of the Seed of David, But Not the Seed of David.*

Listed below are some important points that may help clarify this important subject:

1. Christ in His Substances are two; *in His Deity*, He is God the Eternal Word, *in His Manhood*, He was made like unto His brethren;
2. Christ in His Forms are two, the Form of God and the Form of a Servant;
3. Christ in His Likeness are two, He is in the Likeness of men, He is in the Likeness of sinful flesh.

It is interesting to observe that two is the number of witness. Christ dwells in these three unique duals.

In the early ages of Christianity the homoios or ὁμοιοῦς issue often came up under two headings:

1. The Manhood of Christ;
2. The Deity of Christ.

The first of these, the *Manhood of Christ*, came to a head with the various discussions between those holding that Christ came in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, but *not in sinful flesh*. Many of the dissenters held to this position while many of the Imperialists denied it, and claimed that Christ came in the actual Adamic nature.

Valentinus, and the *Valentinians* held this concept, but did not originate it. The earlier *Docetists* also held this concept, but did not originate it. Many future Imperialist ministers held this concept but were not condemned as heretics because of their powerful positions. Hilary is one example. I want to feature

Valentinus for just a moment and then contrast him with Novation. I do not agree with Valentinus on all his points any more than I agree with Novation.

Valentinus flourished 136-165 CE in Rome and Alexandria. Valentinian communities, by their expansion and long standing, provided a major challenge to 2nd and 3rd century Christian theology.

According to Irenaeus, Valentinus was a native of Egypt who studied philosophy at Alexandria. His disciples claimed that he had been educated by Theodas (or Theudas), a pupil of the apostle Paul. He moved to Rome c. 136 CE, during the time of Pope St. Hyginus, where he established a large school and spread his doctrines in the West. He claimed to have received revelations from the Logos in a vision. Later, aspiring to be elected bishop of Rome "on account of his intellectual force and eloquence", he was passed over, whereupon he seceded from the Church and moved away from Rome c. 140, perhaps to Cyprus. . . .

Valentinus derived his system from Oriental and Greek speculations (including Pythagorean elements), from Christian ideals, and from his own fertile imagination. By employing fanciful exegesis he attached his own mythological speculations to apostolic words, such as *Logos, Only Begotten, Truth, Pleroma, Aeons, and Ecclesia*. *The Valentinian system developed into Eastern and Western forms in greater complexity, although the earlier structure was similar to Pauline mystical theology, with its emphasis on the instrumentality of Christ's death and resurrection in effecting Christian deliverance.* This is taken from the Internet site, *The Development of the Canon of the New Testament, Valentinus*.

Nearly a century later, Novation, who opposed these Valentinian concepts, would rise to prominence in the Roman Church. He and Cornelius were in a tight contest to be chosen as Bishop of Rome. Like Valentinus earlier, Novation lost the selection and succeeded from the Roman Church. Like the Valentinian communities or churches, Novationist churches sprang up overnight through the Roman Empire. Like the later Novationist churches, the earlier Valentinian Churches sprang up throughout the early Eastern and Western Church.

Valentinus received his Christology from an already existing concept in Rome. When Valentinus arrived in Rome and converted to Christianity Theodas or Theudas, one of Paul's pupils was his teacher. Later, during the ensuing debates on this issue at Rome, the point would be made that this concept had a long standing history among the ministers in Rome. Most established church historians deny that claim.

After Novation lost the pastoral election, he succeeded and quickly there were churches of like faith and practice all over the Western Roman Empire. The point is, *did Novation somehow start these churches, or did he find them already established and became a part of them?* The later is true. This is true of Valentinus. When men like Novation and Valentinus withdrew from a church for different reasons, they usually found churches already in existence that held to their views.

From the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, V. 5, I note Novation's statement denouncing this older concept:

Neither, therefore, do we acknowledge that that is a Christ of the heretics who was — as it is said — *in appearance and not in reality*; for of those things which he did, he could have done nothing real, if he himself was a phantasm, and not reality. Nor him who wore nothing of our body in himself, seeing "he received nothing from Mary;" neither did he come to us, since he appeared "as a vision, not in our substance."

Nor do we acknowledge that to be Christ who chose an ethereal or starry flesh, as some heretics have pretended. Nor can we perceive any salvation of ours in him, if in him we do not even recognize the substance of our body; nor, in short, any other who may have worn any other kind of fabulous body of heretical device. (p. 1245)

Apollinarius taught the starry flesh doctrine during the latter part of the next century and the former concept is what Valentinus held. I mention Apollinarius' concept because most historians claim that Apollinarius originated this doctrine. Strange that Novation condemned the starry flesh doctrine nearly 100 years before Apollinarius became prominent.

I have given these several points to show that no one man was responsible for the concepts he held. I do not agree with all these concepts, but there is some truth in these concepts. I do not reject truth because the Papal Church now condemns it as heresy nor the preacher of it as a heretic.

Next, I will try to consider, *Christ in the Likeness of Sinful Flesh.*