

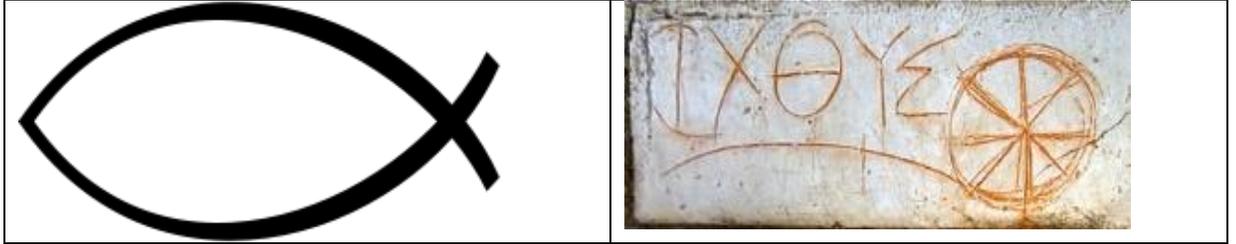
# ICTHUS

## Class 1: The Manager – Incarnation

### I. CLASS INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

#### A. ICHTHUS

1. ΙΧΘΥΣ = Iēsous **Ch**ristos, **Theu** **Y**ios, **Sōtēr** = Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Saviour



2. Meaning? Why Used? See attachment.
3. Relevance For This Course. The mystery of godliness: 1 Tim. 3:16

#### B. Syllabus

1. Primary Text: S. Ferguson and D. Thomas, *ICHTHUS* (Banner of Truth Trust, 2016)
2. Structure:
  - a. September 11: The Manger (Brittain) – Incarnation
  - b. September 18 (Casselli): The River – Baptism
  - c. September 25 (Meyers): The Mountain – Transfiguration
  - d. October 2 (Hall): The Cross – Passion
  - e. October 9 (Fisher): The Tomb – Resurrection
  - f. October 16 (Cirino): The Throne – Ascension
  - g. October 23 (Brittain): The Return - Coming

### II. THEOLOGY OF THE INCARNATION

#### A. Lead Text: John 1:1-18

1. “*In the beginning was the Word (Gr. logos)...*”
  - a. *Logos* in Greek philosophy and usage in John's time.
  - b. Did John merely co-opt a Greek word for ease of understanding by a Greek audience?
  - c. John's deeper claim for the *Logos*. Compare John 1:1-5 to Gen. 1: 1-3 and Ps. 19:1-3.
2. “*...and the Word was with God...*” God's existence in Himself in eternity
3. “*... and the Word was God.*” God's gracious, covenantal dwelling among His people, culminating in the incarnation of Jesus Christ (Emmanuel = “God with us”)

#### B. Objection: the definite/indefinite article debate.

1. Refer to John 1:1 in the Interlinear Bible passage attached. Where are the definite and indefinite articles?
2. What difference does it make?
3. Reasons the Church has chosen “the” over “a”:
  - a. Comparison to rest of passage (cf. John 1:6)

- b. Definite nouns don't always require definite articles (cf. John 1:49)
- c. Consistency with the whole counsel of Scripture (cf. John 14:9; 20:28)  
WCF I.9

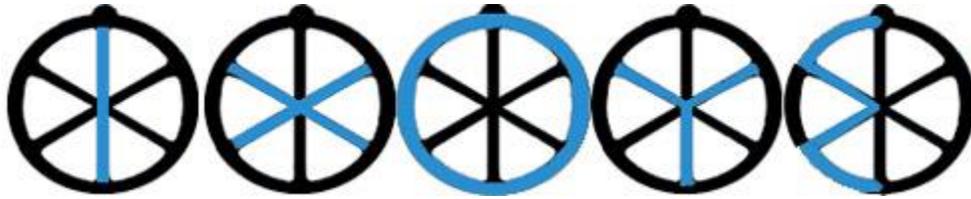
### C. John's Claims About the Incarnation of Jesus Christ

1. Incarnation as a man. The humiliation of the Logos.
  - a. Phil. 2:5-8 ("...humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death...")
  - b. How: the Virgin Birth. The Trinity at work in the Incarnation.
  - c. Why? See Heb. 2:17, Rom. 3:25-26, Heb. 9:14,16 (cf. WCF 8.5 and Heidelberg Catech. 12-15, 18)
  
2. Divinity and humanity; fully god and fully man (See WCF 8.2)
  - a. Two natures/substances ("very God and very man" – Godhead and humanity)  
John 1:1  
  
Nature: "a substance possessed in common – with all its essential qualities" (Berkhof) In a living being, this includes consciousness and (apparently) free will.
  - b. One person, "without conversion, composition, or confusion." cf. John 1:14  
  
Person: "a complete substance endowed with reason, and, consequently, a responsible subject of its own actions." (Berkhof)
    - (1) Without conversion: no change of Godhead into flesh – the Logos didn't cease to be what He was before: the eternal Son of God;
    - (2) Without composition: no division of the persons of God and man; not two separate persons – the Logos furnishes the basis for the personality of Christ (Jesus was not a "split personality"), but adopted a human nature.
    - (3) Without confusion: although the Logos assumed human nature – body and soul –He always remains the eternal Son of God. "The human nature has personal existence in the person of the Logos" (Berkhof). The human nature is "in-personal," not "im-personal."
  
3. Term of existence: (a) as Logos – eternity to eternity; (b) as Incarnate Christ: conception to eternity (will always be Godhead and manhood in one person)
  
4. The purpose of the Incarnation: that the Logos would bear our sins and bring us salvation.
  - a. As life and light (John 1:4-5). Why do we need these?
  - b. Grace upon grace (John 1:16) Why do we need so much grace?

### III. APPLICATIONS: WHAT DOES THE INCARNATION MEAN TO US?

- A. The preeminence of Jesus Christ in Christian faith and life;
- B. Wonder and gratitude for the triune work of salvation and its cost;
- C. Christ's humble servanthood, and ours.

Can you discern the ICHTHUS in the circle?



## ◀ John 1:1 ▶

### John 1 Interlinear

|   |          |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |   |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
|   | 1722 [e] | 746 [e]   | 1510 [e] | 3588 [e] | 3056 [e] | 2532 [e] | 3588 [e] | 3056 [e] | 1510 [e] | 4314 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2316 [e] |   |
|   | En       | archē     | ēn       | ho       | Logos    | kai      | ho       | Logos    | ēn       | pros     | ton      | Theon    |   |
| 1 | Ἐν       | ἀρχῇ      | ἦν       | ὁ        | Λόγος    | , καὶ    | ὁ        | Λόγος    | ἦν       | πρὸς     | τὸν      | Θεόν     | , |
|   | In [the] | beginning | was      | the      | Word     | and      | the      | Word     | was      | with     | -        | God      |   |
|   | Prep     | N-DFS     | V-IIA-3S | Art-NMS  | N-NMS    | Conj     | Art-NMS  | N-NMS    | V-IIA-3S | Prep     | Art-AMS  | N-AMS    |   |

|  |          |          |          |          |          |   |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
|  | 2532 [e] | 2316 [e] | 1510 [e] | 3588 [e] | 3056 [e] |   |
|  | kai      | Theos    | ēn       | ho       | Logos    |   |
|  | καὶ      | Θεὸς     | ἦν       | ὁ        | Λόγος    | . |
|  | and      | God      | was      | the      | Word     |   |
|  | Conj     | N-NMS    | V-IIA-3S | Art-NMS  | N-NMS    |   |

### Westminster Confession of Faith Section 8.2

8.2 The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof; yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

### Discussion Question

You are in a conversation with a friend about the gospel. Your friend says, "I believe Jesus was a prophet of God and a great moral teacher, but, I don't think he actually was God, just a wonderful spokesman for God and a great teacher" How would you respond based on John 1:1-18.