

Belgic Confession, Article 18, “Of the Incarnation of the Son of God”

Scripture Lesson: John 1:1-18

Lesson Aim	To understand two things: First, that the incarnation of the eternal Son of God meets mankind’s need for the forgiveness of his sin. Second, that the incarnation reveals several particulars of how mankind is forgiven of his sin.
Steps to Learning	Read Belgic Confession, Article 18 and John 1:1-18. Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	What is the incarnation? The incarnation refers to the Son of God becoming fully man with a body and soul. Why did the Son of God have to become man? Because, as John says in John 1:5, people were (and are) darkness. That is, people are sinful. That the Son of God would become man was prophesied in the Old Testament. What are some of these Old Testament prophesies? Genesis 3:15, 49:10; Deuteronomy 18:15; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 132:11; Micah 5:2. According to John 1:14, 18, Jesus is the “only Son” or “only begotten Son.” What does this mean? It does not mean that Jesus was made or created, nor does it refer to a time that he assumed our human nature. “Only begotten” means “begotten from eternity.” This refers to the fact that Christ has always and will always be the one and only unique Son of God. The Belgic says that Jesus Christ was without sin being conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit without the means of man. What does this mean? Because the conception was supernatural, Jesus’ human nature was sanctified and preserved as holy. But also, because Jesus was not included in the covenant of works, he was not imputed with Adam’s sin. The Heidelberg Catechism question and answer 16 asks, “Why must He (Jesus) be a true and sinless man?” “Because the justice of God requires that the same human nature, which has sinned, should make satisfaction for sin. But no man, being himself a sinner, could satisfy for others.”
Bible Reading	1 Samuel 28 – 2 Samuel 3 (covering the great Bible stories)