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EFCA Statement of Faith 4, Jesus Christ

Article 3, The Human Condition, states “We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.”

It is essential to understand and believe that Jesus Christ is God (Rom.9:5) come as a man – incarnate, in the flesh, as John 1:14 reveals – in order to realize salvation is possible. To deny this is to be opposed to Christ (“anti-Christ”) according to 1 John 4:2, and to not accept that He was also man does not allow Him to be able to suffer as we do in order to atone for our sin by His death and resurrection. This fact of His being one Person in two natures, both God and Man, is what makes the Gospel of our salvation possible, for only a perfect sacrifice can pay the price once for all – and only God is perfect, and only a man could die for man's due wages for the Fall's sin passed on to all men (Rom.3:23, 5:14-19).

This Savior Messiah was chosen / anointed by God and promised throughout the Bible to God's people, though how this was all to unfold was veiled at that time (1 Cor.2:7, Col. 1:26-27). From the very beginning God had foretold the Messiah, the Christ would come, from the allusion of the One to crush the serpent's head to the Deliverer, Branch, signet, and more – God allowed some to have hope in this coming One, but many were blind to his plan for redemption.

He was conceived by God's Holy Spirit; unlike Adam who had God's breath breathed into the dust, Jesus was created directly in Mary by God (Isa.7:14) and so came into the world as all Adam's sons do, yet begotten of the Father directly as well. The two persons in one nature or as the SOF says, the one Person in two natures, may be debated for correctness, but the one truth is that the Father and Son are distinct persons, but one God. This mystery is difficult to capture precisely with human words, but the Scriptures do make clear that Jesus the Messiah is God.

He lived without sin throughout His life to show He was the perfect man worthy to not suffer for sin, yet able therefore to pay for the sins of others as the spotless sacrifice which the OT sacrificial system never could. Jesus Christ was crucified, paying the price once for all, forever. To imagine anyone who never sins, who never murders, hates, lusts, covets, steals, and so on goes beyond our imagining because our experience is with fallen men and women who do all sin without exception. This is why no yearly sacrifice of a human priest could ever atone for our sins, and why no man would die for an unrighteous man except a perfect one. So Jesus became the perfect, spotless, blameless sacrifice to cover our sin by His blood.

He then arose bodily from the dead (only God can give life), proving that we can have eternal life in our resurrection of which He was the forerunner. Ah, to be at the tomb when the stone was found rolled away and the burial cloths neatly arranged where Jesus' body lay for three days after dying a painful death on a tree to be the curse and atoning payment for the sin of the world! But this is what God says He did, and there were enough witnesses after he arose to testify to this power over death. Then He ascended into heaven (1 Tim. 3:16), and now sits at the Father's right hand. That God as Christ arose was wonderful enough, but then He ascended before the Apostles to demonstrate He was the Son of God as well as the Son of man. He rules alongside the Father, and intercedes for we who are His.

Now He is our mediating High Priest forever, and is our Advocate to intercede for us before the Father. Since Jesus is both God and Man, He is able to speak on our defense by His atonement, and has the power to forgive and deliver us as only God can. He tells us in Hebrews to come boldly, holding nothing back, to His throne for grace and mercy to help when we need Him as we are tempted or fall into sin. Since the veil of the temple was torn at His death, Jesus now allows us access to the Holy of Holies before the real throne in heaven, not the shadow temple on earth. This leaves me in silent awe and wonder to know Jesus is my mediating High Priest who paid the sacrificial price of His own blood to provide me this access to the Father! This is why the anointed One, the Christ who is Jesus, came to suffer and die and rise again – to bring us back to the standing we had in Eden before we chose our way over trusting faith with obedience to all God set forth for us (Heb. 5:14). Such grace and mercy to provide the ram in the brush so we can live and not shed our own blood to cover our sin as God did for Adam and Eve.