

- a. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary
 - i. Virgin Birth-historical or symbolic?
 - ii. Arguments against it
 - 1. It has never happened anywhere else
 - 2. It is a misunderstanding of Isaiah 7:14
 - 3. The genealogies trace Jesus' line to David through Joseph.
 - 4. Many stories of ancient heroes contain virgin birth stories
 - 5. Only Matthew and Luke mention it; shouldn't it have been more central in the early church if true?
 - iii. Arguments for it
 - 1. Matthew and Luke state it, why would they?
 - 2. When Paul mentions the birth of Jesus he does not use the normal verb for human birth
 - 3. Neither Jews nor Christians considered Joseph to be Jesus' biological father. Either Jesus was illegitimate or born of a virgin.
 - 4. The messiah was to be a descendent of David. No one expected a virgin birth; why make this up?
 - iv. Meaning of the Virgin Birth in Christianity
 - 1. Points to the mystery of the union of God and humanity in Jesus.
 - 2. Conceived by the Holy Spirit born of the virgin Mary affirms that God is making a new beginning in Jesus. God is coming down to save His creation.
 - 3. Jesus was born of a human being, therefore he is truly human.
 - 4. Mary accepts the gift of Jesus from God; this functions as a sign that our salvation is by grace alone.