Title: A comparative study of the Christology of Edward Irving, Ellet Joseph Waggoner and Alonzo Trevier Jones

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Abstract:

There is a divergence of the views as to what kind of human nature Christ assumed during the incarnation. Two main camps regarding this subject have been in bitter tension. One camp believes that during the incarnation, Christ assumed a pre-fall sinless human nature. The other camp holds the position that Christ assumed the post-fall sinful nature. The antecedents of this debate are very much rooted in the following figures.

Edward Irving, a Scottish preacher claimed that during the incarnation, Christ assumed the sinful human nature. E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, early Adventist writers, held similar views. This study attempts to compare their Christologies. The main question that this study addresses is, what are the similarities and dissimilarities between their christological views? Furthermore is there any textual evidence which proves that Irving was read by both Waggoner and Jones? Finding the similarities and dissimilarities between their ideas will prove helpful to understand whether Christ during the incarnation assumed the pre-fall sinless nature or the post-fall sinful nature.

This study uses the historical and theological method of investigation. From the results of comparing their respective Christologies, similarities and dissimilarities were noted.
In the course of this research, it became apparent that their christological views are strikingly similar, particularly on the subject of Christ’s fallen human nature. They all asserted that Christ, during the incarnation, assumed sinful flesh. They were in consonance that since Christ came to redeem fallen humanity He has to take humanity’s fallen substance. However, they were in agreement that even though Christ’s flesh was sinful, He was sinless in character for He never committed actual acts of sin.

Irving’s, Waggoner’s and Jones’ christological views manifest a very close resemblance. But in spite of this similarity a definitive answer as to whether Irving influenced Waggoner and Jones could not be directly established.