

Christology – The Study of Jesus Christ

“Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man in one person, and will be so forever”
(Gruden Pg. 529)

I. Humanity of Christ (Evidences of Jesus Humanity)

1. Virgin Birth – Scripture is clear that Jesus was conceived in his mother’s womb by a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. Matt 1:18, Matt 1:20

A. The importance of the Virgin Birth

1. The virgin birth shows that salvation must come from God. Just as God promised in Gen 3:15 *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.* that the “seed” of the woman would destroy the serpent, Jesus born of the woman has defeated Satan.

2. The virgin birth unites the full deity and humanity of Christ. The uniting of the woman’s womb and the Holy Spirit illustrates the co-existent natures of Jesus.

3. Probably most significantly, by having the Holy Spirit as Father instead of a human man breaks Jesus away from the lineage of Adam, thereby allowing Jesus to be born without a sinful nature or “inherited sin.”

Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy - the Son of God.*

Romans 5:12-17 *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*

2. Human Weakness and Limitations – Scripture reveals that Jesus carried many of the same limitations.

A. Jesus had a human body.

1. He was born like we were. (Luke 2:7)
2. He grew and matured like us. (Luke 2:40)
3. He increase in wisdom & favor as we do. (Luke 2:52)
4. He got tired. (John 4:6)
5. He got thirsty (John 19:28)
6. He got hungry (Matt. 4:2)
7. The culmination of the weakness and the reality of Jesus human body was his death on the cross (Luke 23:46)

8. He also rose with a physical body (Luke 24:39)
- B. Jesus had a human mind.
 1. Increased in wisdom. (Luke 2:52)
 2. Learned obedience to his parents (Heb. 5:8)
 3. Jesus also shows his human mind when speaking of his return to earth (Mark 13:32)
 - C. Jesus had a human soul and emotions.
 1. Soul was troubled (John 12:27)
 2. "My soul is troubled" (John 13:21 *After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."*)
 3. Greek word for troubled is "trasio" which means to be anxious or suddenly surprised by danger
 4. He shows a full range of emotions by "marveling" at the faith of the centurion, being sorrowful at the death of Lazarus, "in the days of his flesh Jesus offered prayers.... with loud cries....and he was heard for his godly fear. (Heb 5:7 *In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.*)
 5. He was tempted in every way (Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*)
3. Sinlessness – through the New Testament affirms that Jesus was fully human as we live he was different than us in one essential way, he was sinless and perfect.
 - A. We must realize that perfection was God's design, not flawed, so really Jesus is normal and we are all abnormal.
 - B. John 8:48, Jesus asks a crowd "who convicts me of sin?" and no one answers.
 - C. When Jesus refers to himself as the "light of the world" that's an affirmation of his perfection. (John 8:12)
 1. John 8:29 *And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him."*
 2. John 15:10 *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*
 3. John 18:38 *Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him.*
 4. Romans 8:3 *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the*

likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

5. 2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
6. Hebrews 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Could Jesus have sinned?

This is a very popular question. Some people argue for the impeccability of Jesus meaning he was “not able to sin.” While others assert that if Jesus couldn’t sin then his temptations weren’t real or valid.

In answering this question we must be sure that our inferences didn’t contradict what the scriptures tell us for sure. #1, the Bible clearly teaches that he did not sin. #2 It also tells us that He was tempted in every way as we are (Heb 4:15, Luke 4:2). #3 Scripture also affirms that God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13, *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.* This issue then becomes the fact that Jesus was both fully man and fully God. And unfortunately this is all the explicit evidence we have. Because Jesus humanity was never separated from his divinity he could have not “actually” sinned.

So were his temptations real?

Though Jesus divinity obviously played a huge role in his moral ability there are clear examples of Jesus leaning only on his human strength to resist temptation, thereby continuing to be a real example for us. The best example of this is Jesus refusing to turn stones into bread to feed his hunger. Jesus could have done this easily. His divinity allows him the power to do it, but Jesus refused to lean on his divinity to pass this test. Instead he depended on the Spirit and gathered strength from His father. He actually fully human and obeyed perfectly as every human should. His temptations were real and because he never gave in he felt the full force of everyone. As soon as you give into a temptation it loses its swaying power. By never giving in Jesus experienced more temptation than we will ever experience.

- II. **Diety of Christ – Col 2:9 *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, Evidence that Jesus was God***
 1. **Direct scriptural claims – the Bible directly says he is**
 - A. The New Testament was the Greek word “theos” to refer to Jesus. This word is usually reserved for God the Father as its direct translation means “God.” Ex: John 1:1, 1:18; Rom 9:5, Titus 2:13; Heb 1:8)

- B. Jesus is also referred to with the Greek word “Kyrios” which means Lord. This is the language the Old Testament used to describe the coming Messiah.
 - C. Other strong claims including scripture referring to the eternality of Christ John 8:57 *So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?"*
2. Jesus possessed divine attributes
- A. Jesus demonstrates the following character traits of God:
 - a. Omnipotence: calming the storm (Matt 8:26-27), water into wine (John 2:2-11)
 - b. Eternality: “before Abraham was I am” (John 8:58)
 - c. Omniscience: he knew peoples thoughts (Mark 2:8)
 - d. Sovereignty: speaking for God (Matt 5:22, 28, 32, etc) raising himself from the dead (John 2:19, John 10: 12-18)
 - B. Did Jesus give up any divine attributes while on the earth? (Kenosis theory)
- Phil 2:5-7 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*
- No, this text doesn’t speak of Jesus giving up any power, but rather shows his humility by not seeking status or privilege.

III. The Offices of Christ

The people of God in the Old Testament were structured to be led by 3 distinct offices: prophets, priests, and kings. These 3 leaders had distinct roles in leading people to rightly worship and honor God.

The prophet spoke the Word of God to the people.

The priest offered sacrifices, prayers, and worship to God on behalf of the people.

The king ruled over the people as God’s representative.

A. Christ as Prophet

1. Deut 18:15-18 *"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers - it is to him you shall listen - just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the Lord said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. Moses predicted another prophet would lead the people to freedom. In Acts 3:22-24, we see Peter proclaim that Jesus is this prophet.*
2. He is the “word of God” John 1:1-4 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Heb 1:1-2 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

B. Christ as Priest

1. He was the perfect sacrifice. Heb 9:26 *for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*
2. He continually bring us near to God. Heb 6:19-20 *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,*
3. He continues to pray for us. Rom 8:34 *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died - more than that, who was raised - who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

C. Christ as King

1. Born as the King of Jesus
Matt 2:2 saying, *"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*
2. All authority given to him.
Eph. 1:20-22 *that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,*
Matt 28:18 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

IV. Our roles as Prophet, Priest & King

Having a proper Christology is essential to Christian living. For we are seeking to become more like Christ (2 Cor. 3:18) so rightly viewing Christ is essential. Part of this means we are to act as good missionaries to our culture just like Jesus does for us. This means we are built to take on these roles on a smaller level for the sake of continuing the mission Jesus started.