

V. The Doctrine of Christ (Christology)

- * Why is it important to study Christology?
 - * Because Jesus Christ is God's revelation to mankind. (Jn. 14:9)
 - * Because Jesus Christ is God's plan of redemption for mankind.
 - * Because Jesus Christ's is coming again!
- * We can't be neutral about Jesus Christ.
- * We must either believe that He is or that He isn't who He claims to be.
 - * Either its all garbage (a fabricated story)
 - * Or he was a lunatic
 - * Or he was a deceiver and liar
 - * Or he was who he claimed to be: the truth.

A. The Nature of Jesus Christ

- * *Since 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, the church has held that Jesus was fully divine and fully human.*
- * *This is very difficult to understand and explain.*
- * *It is like the mystery of the Trinity: we may never really be able to understand/explain it.*
- * *We cannot divide apart and try to separate Jesus. He was fully God and fully human.*

1. The humanity of Christ

a. He was a real, living, human being.

- * Jesus came to earth in the flesh. (Jn. 1:14; I Jn. 4:2)
- * Jesus called himself as a man, as did others (Jn 8:40; Ac 2:22; Ro 5:16)
- * He was born of a peasant Jewish woman of humble origins.
- * He most likely was of typical Jewish (Semite) appearance:
 - * Black hair, dark skin, deep-set brown eyes, sharp nose, and strong facial features.

b. He was subject to life's normal experiences.

- * He was subject to the ordinary laws of human development (Lk 2:40-52).
- * He grew tired, weary, hungry, he died, etc.
- * By trade he was a carpenter, which was an outdoor job requiring strength and skill (masonry, stonework,, timberwork, and woodwork).
- * See Mt 4:2; 8:24; Mk 3:5; Jn 4:6, etc.

c. He possessed the elements of a rational being.

- * Feeling, choosing, thinking, reasoning, emotion, etc.
- * Matt. 26:26,28,38; Luke 23:46; 24:39; Jn. 11:33
- * The Bible depicts him as a man with outstanding personality qualities.
- * He had a strength of character and a solid sense of identity.
- * He was a reliable person on whom others could depend.
- * He is shown as a man of sensitivity and compassion for people.
- * He was a humble man, who felt the hurt of the afflicted and wept with the brokenhearted.

d. He never yielded to temptation.

- * Although Jesus was fully human he never yielded to the temptation to sin
- * Jesus was free from both original sin and actual sin. (Jn 8:46, 14:30; Heb 4:15, 9:14; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:22; I Jn. 3:5)

2. The deity of Christ

* *But while Jesus was fully human, he was also fully divine.*

a. He was ascribed divine names.

(1) Jesus

- * This was the personal name given him by his parents at birth.
- * It is built on a common Hebrew root *Yada* for salvation.
- * It was a common name which is now given in a special way that could be said of no other.
- * Jesus would provide salvation for his people.
- * This was key, because in their mindset only God could forgive sin.
- * Therefore, this is an early hinting at his deity.

(2) Christ

- * This is an official name or title.
- * It is clearly linked with the role and office of Messiah (mashach).
- * It means the anointed one for who we have been waiting.
- * The concept of anointing was associated with Kingship.

(3) Son of Man

- * It is used abundantly by Jesus as a self-designation to refer to himself.
- * It appears that "Son of Man" is a human form, but divine personhood.
- * Many just stop short, and think Jesus simply saying "he is man, human."
- * But Jesus was saying, I am divine. I don't look like it, but I am.
- * This could explain why others don't call him this--It was difficult for them to see his deity.

(4) Son of God

- * As a designation of Jesus' office of Messiah (Matt. 8:29; Mk 5)
- * As a designation of Jesus' essential deity (Matt. 16:16)
- * As an indication of his supernatural birth (Luke 1:35)
- * Shows his Trinitarian relationship with God.

(5) Lord

- * Greek - Kurios; Hebrew Adon/adonai
- * Polite form of address (Mr., Mrs., Bro., Sis.)
Matt. 8:2 the leper said "Lord, if you are willing" could possibly be just a polite form of address.
- * Used to denote Jesus' authority (Matt. 21:3)
- * Most often used as a synonym for God/deity. (Acts 2:36)

b. He received God's public recognition at His Baptism

- * See Mark 1:9-11; John 1:32-33; Matt. 3:10-11; Luke 3:21-22
- * Unique Manifestations were a voice from heaven and a dove appears
- * Jesus' baptism marks the official induction of Jesus into the office of the Messiah/Christ. (On the part of the people)
- * In the baptism we see a clear evidence of God's attestation to Christ's Messiahship. (On the part of God.)

c. He accepted divine worship.

- * Jesus was aware of his uniqueness and accepted worship, not rejected it.
- * He allowed people to call him Lord, at a time when Romans declared people should worship their emperors as "lord."

d. He was described as having divine qualities and functions.

- * He was eternal (Col. 2:9)
- * He created the world (word create only used of God--bring out of nothing)
- * He upholds the whole universe
- * He will raise the dead and he will be judge (Jn. 6:39-40; 5:22)

e. Scripture equates Christ with God on a regular basis.

- * The fullness of God dwelt in him (Col. 1:19).
- * Psalm 2:6-12 (Heb. 1:5 will quote this in ref. to Jesus being God.)
- * Psalm 45:6-7 (Heb. 8:9 quotes this in ref. to his deity.)
- * Isa 9:6 and Micah 5:2
- * Gospel of John (1:1-2; 3:16-18, 35-36; 4:14-15; 5:18-27; 11:41-44)
- * Paul's Writings (Col. 2:9; etc., etc.)
- * Synoptic Gospels - Jesus and others understood him as deity (Matt. 5:17; ;9:6; 11:4-6; 14:33; 25:31-33; Jn. 10:25-30)

3. The necessity of these two natures

- * It was important that Jesus was fully human and divine for our salvation.
- * Sin man is the one that sinned, man must pay the penalty.
- * But the sin was against God, so only God could bring a sacrifice of infinite value and worth.
- * Only God could bear the wrath of God, redemptively.
- * Jesus knew and conquered our temptations, so He could be our mediator.

4. The pre-existence of Christ

- * *This same Christ who came to earth as Jesus of Nazareth, existed before the world was ever created.*

a. The Church has maintained that Jesus is eternal.

- * The Church has consistently affirmed that Jesus Christ is eternal.
- * He has no beginning, no end, and no limitation.
- * This is important, because if he lacks eternity and he cannot be God.
- * If Jesus is not God, the basis for Christianity loses its distinctiveness and is just another religion, placing its hope in another good man."

b. Scriptural support of the eternity of Christ.

- * Micah 5:2
- * Isa. 9:6 Prophet gives indication of an anticipation that the Christ to be born is eternal.
- * John 1:1-2; 8:48-58 Jesus himself claims eternity.
- * Notice, he does not say before Abraham I was born, but that he existed.
- * The people understood his meaning & tried to stone him as blasphemous.
- * The Bible argues strongly that Jesus is eternal.

c. **What was Jesus doing before He came to earth?**

- * He was the divine Logos (Word) of God. He was with God and he was God.
- * Participating in the Divine fellowship/councils (Gen 1:26, Let us make...)
- * He was involved in the creation of the world (Col. 1:15-16)
 - * He was the firstborn of all creation: he was the beginning of everything and the source for the existence of everything.
- * He was involved in the sustaining of creation (Col. 1:17)
- * He was involved in the revelation of God's plan

Optional

- * The OT refers to "the angel of the Lord."
- * Many believe this was a theophany/Christophany appearance of Christ?
- * In some instances the "angel of the Lord" will accept worship, in other cases not. Could it be that those times the angel was Christ?

B. **The Humiliation of Jesus Christ**

- * *Christ's "humiliation" is the process by which he (though divine) came to earth as a baby, eventually to die on the cross.*

1. **The incarnation: God with us**

- * The Bible tells us that God became human and dwelt among us.
 - * "The world became flesh and dwelt among us.
 - * The same word that in 1:1 was with God, was God, created, etc.
- * Jesus gave up his position in heaven to come to earth and die for us.
- * Phil. 2:6-11 says that He emptied himself (Kenosis).
- * This means that he gave up the advantages he enjoyed of being divine.
- * He was "demoted" in that he was willing to forgo his divine benefits for a time.
- * He never ceased being divine, simply enjoy the privileges of being divine.

2. **The miraculous conception and birth of Christ**

- * Two of the four Gospels (Matt. and Luke) record the birth narratives.
- * Both accounts clearly indicate/understand Mary was a virgin.
- * In Luke 1:26, the angel tells Mary that she will give birth to Jesus.
- * Mary asks, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"
- * The angel said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, overshadow you."
- * In the Matthew account, we see that Joseph knows that he is not the father and wants to put Mary away privately.
- * But the angel came and explained to him, and so he went ahead w/the marriage.
- * The virgin birth is very important: for if Jesus has an earthly father, then he is not eternal, but just another sinful human.
- * The significance of the virgin birth is that it demonstrates Christ's complete identification with the human race as well as his uniqueness as the Son of God.

3. **Jesus' victory over sin**

- * He overcomes sin in the temptation in the Wilderness
- * See Matt 4:1-14; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

- * The Holy Spirit leads Jesus there, and is with him the whole time.
- * Elements of the Temptation
 - a. Tempted to turn stones into bread: satisfy physical needs
 - b. Tempted to jump from the pinnacle of temple: satisfy ego needs
 - c. Tempted to bow before Satan and receive kingdoms of world
- * Jesus' answer is always a steadfast "no," resounding with Scriptural strength.
- * It was necessary to allow Jesus to personally triumph over sin by voluntarily opposing it.

4. **The ministry of Jesus**

- * His ministry consisted primarily of teaching and performing miracles.
- * His teaching was based on the OT, showing how He was the fulfillment of the OT Scriptures.
- * His ministry changed lives drastically--one way or the other.
- * People either wholeheartedly accepted him, or wholeheartedly rejected him.
- * Throughout his ministry, Christ demonstrated complete identification with the human race as well as his uniqueness as the Son of God.

5. **The suffering of Jesus**

- * *Jesus suffered during his entire life because...*
 - a. **He was sinless, yet associated with sinners in a sin cursed world.**
 - * Yes, he associated with sinners because he chose to,
 - * but it still must have been difficult for someone who was pure to exist among sin.
 - b. **He learned the cost of obedience through earthly suffering.**
 - * In heaven, there is no cost to obeying God, but here on earth there is.
- * Jesus learned that first hand (See Heb. 5:8).
 - c. **He suffered temptation.**
 - * Again, in the heavenly realm, what can tempt God?
 - * What more does he need?
 - * But here, he was tempted like we are. That was suffering for him.
 - d. **He suffered rejection by His own people.**
 - * His family, his hometown, his Jewish people.
 - * See Jn. 1:11-12

6. **The Death of Jesus**

- * His death marks the fulfillment of his perfect obedience.
- * This obedience to death is the result of his choice (Jn. 10:18).
- * He could have chosen to not go through with it.

a. **The extent of His Death**

- (1) Jesus suffered the full extent of physical death.
 - * separation of body and soul.
- (2) Jesus also knew the suffering of spiritual death.

- * separation from God.
- * This happened when he hung on the cross. "Father, why have you forsaken me?!"
- * In that moment he bears the penalty of separation from the father.
- * This could be the cause of the turmoil he was in the night before in the garden (even more than the physical suffering.)

b. The judicial character of His death

- * Jesus was sentenced to death by the highest Roman judicial system.
- * Their intended message to the Jews: Jesus died a criminal--cursed of God
- * This is why the message of the cross is a scandal.
- * But God, in the resurrection, reverses all of this.

c. The saving character of His death

- * We still study this extensively in our next unit on salvation.

C. The Exaltation of Christ

- * Exaltation refers to when Christ laid aside the affirmities of the flesh and again assumed his majesty.

1. The Resurrection of Christ

a. Christ's Resurrection testified by many

- * The resurrection is the act by which our Lord came alive from the tomb.
- * This is important in that Christianity is unique.
- * No other world religion is based on the resurrection of their leader from the dead.
- * There is a lot of testimony in the Biblical account of the resurrection.
- * The Apostles, Peter and John, testify to it, the women testify to it, the Jewish religious leaders attest to it.
- * Not only is the body missing, but we have a live Jesus appearing to many
 - * the women
 - * the apostles multiple times
 - * the 500+ at the ascension
- * Jesus' resurrected body was of a different nature than ours.
 - * Could still eat, etc., but could walk through walls.
 - * Jesus told Mary, don't touch me, meaning "don't hang on to me." He could be handled, but she shouldn't not cling to him, he would be leaving her again.

b. Attempts to deny the resurrection

- * The world wanted to deny this.
- * When the body was found missing, guards were paid to lie about it, but note, the officials/leaders never denied it.
- * Since that time, people have looked for ways to deny it:
 - * Swoon theory: Jesus just lapsed into unconsciousness (Islam)
 - * stolen body theory: the disciples stole the body to validate Jesus' claims (but who would die for what they knew to be a lie?)
- * Many believed in the resurrection Christ and were totally transformed
- * Lies have a hard time transforming people, but the truth doesn't.

c. Theological significance of the Resurrection

- (1) The resurrection is the self-verification of Jesus' claims.

He said that the temple will be destroyed & he'd rebuild it in 3 days.

- (2) The resurrection furnished the ground for our justification.
- (3) The resurrection brings a new spiritual fellowship.
- (4) It is the guarantee of our future resurrection (I Cor. 15)

2. The Ascension of Christ

- * Jesus had a physical, visible departure into heaven.
- * This was to let the disciples know that he was gone for good.
- * He went to his exalted place of authority: Heaven.
- * Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:50-51; Mark 16:19
- * Theological significance
 - * The Ascension is the passage of Jesus into a new sphere of mediatorial ministry (Heb. 9:24).
 - * He functions for us in the presence of the Father.
 - * Also, when Christ ascended, the Holy Spirit could be sent.

3. The current ministry of Christ

- * *The NT defines Christ's ministry during this period between the ascension and his second coming.*
- * *He is carrying on a kingly ministry of authority and rulership.*
 - a. Christ is achieving cosmic victory by subduing hostile forces in the universe.
 - * Eph. 1:20-21; Phil. 2:10; 1 Pet. 3:22
 - * This work will be completed only at the final resurrection.
 - b. Christ continues to function as mediator between God and humans.
 - * He is our go-between (1 Tim. 2:5-6)
 - * He is interceding for us (Heb. 7:25; 9:24).
 - c. Christ now functions as the "head" of the church, God's eternal community.
- * Christ gives it growth, cohesion, and fullness (Eph 1:22; 4:15; Col. 2:19)

4. The Second Coming of Christ

- * Second coming (Parousia) refers to when Christ will return to this earth.
- * Jesus will return in the same manner he left (physical, visible)
- * In the second coming he will bring rewards to those who have served him.
- * In the second coming Jesus will bring judgment for those who have rejected him, and who not think that they have done well.
- * In the second coming Jesus will be fully and totally recognized as Lord of Lords and King of Kings.
- * He will establish his kingdom.
- * We will discuss this further in our unit on "end times."

