Christology: The Person of Christ

The Doctrines Related to Jesus Christ

I. The Deity of Christ

Having already studied much of the biblical account of Christ’s deity we will now look to the biblical highlights and theological elements.

A. What did Jesus think about Himself?


The synoptic gospels begin with Christ’s humanity and work up from there, “…gradually, a brick at a time. Each brick gives another story about how Jesus exercises authority in a given area” (Bock).

a) Jesus has Authority to Forgive Sins: Healing of the Paralytic, Mark 2:1-13

Jesus first forgives the sins of the Paralytic—something only God can do—then heals the Paralytic to prove He has “authority on earth to forgive sins” (NASB 2:10).

b) Jesus has Authority over Creation, Demons, Disease, and Death

(1) Jesus calms the storm, Luke 8:22-25
(2) Jesus drives out “legion”, Mark 5:2-13; Luke 8:26-33
(3) Jesus heals a woman of her disease, Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48

c) Jesus has Authority over Sacred Calendar and Liturgy: The last Supper, Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-38

The Passover meal commemorates the salvation of Israel from Egypt. “[Jesus] takes it and completely redefines it in relationship to Himself, and He says, ‘Here is salvation.’” (Bock).

d) The “Son of Man” is the “Son of God,” Matthew 26:57-67; Luke 22:66-71

Not only does Jesus admit to being the Son of God, but He claims that He will exist at God’s right hand—again, the Jewish leaders understood the claim to deity that Jesus was making and in it found a way to have Him crucified. This is because He has been announcing the coming Kingdom of God while now claiming to be the Son of God—a legitimate accusation that the Jewish leaders could take to Pilate.

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2. Other Divine Prerogatives of Jesus
   a) In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus claims:
      (1) to have glory
      (2) that He will sit on a glorious throne
      (3) that He will judge the world
   b) Jesus redefined the Sabbath and then claimed to be Lord of it in Mark 2:27-28, “So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

3. Claims of Deity or Equality with the Father
   a) John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.” “The word ‘one’ is neuter, not masculine, confirming that the Father and Son are one in nature and purpose, not one in identity” (Hart 1637).
   b) John 14:9, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”
   c) John 8:58, “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.’”
   d) “While some of Jesus’ statements may seem rather vague to us, there is no doubt as to how his opponents interpreted them” (Erickson 702-703). Immediately after John 8:58 and 10:30 they try to stone Him.
   e) Jesus claimed to be the Son of God (see above, also John 20:28)

B. What do the Apostles say of Jesus?
1. John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
2. John 1:18, “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”
4. Hebrews 1:1-3, “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”
5. Hebrews 1:8, “But of the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.”
6. Colossians 1:15, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”
7. Colossians 2:9, “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,”
8. Titus 2:13, “…looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”
9. 2 Peter 1:1, “To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ”
10. Philippians 2:6, “Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.” “In biblical and classical Greek this term refers to ‘the whole set of characteristics which makes something what it is

C. A Theological Thought on Worship (Grudem 247)

Does Scripture allow for worship of anything or anyone that is not God?

Exodus 34:14, “For you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.” If Jesus is not God how is it that He is worthy of worship?

1. Philippians 2:9-11, “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

2. Revelation 5:12-14

II. The Humanity of Christ

A. The Virgin Birth

Some theologians believe that sin is transmitted via the male, therefore the virgin birth insured that Jesus was born without a sin nature. Whether or not this is true, it is more significant that the virgin birth points to Christ’s divine nature.


   a) Food for thought: Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet Jesus is the Son of the Father and not the Son of the Spirit. How is this so?

2. Galatians 4:4-5, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

3. “The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person” (Grudem 530).

B. Jesus had a True Body of Flesh and Blood

1. Jesus had a childhood like us

   a) Luke 2:7, “And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger.”

   b) Luke 2:40, “The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.”

   (1) How does Jesus increase in wisdom if He is God? Think back to the functional Trinity.

2. Luke 24:39, “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

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3. Because of His Human Nature, Jesus was subject to:
   a) weariness, John 4:6
   b) hunger, Matthew 4:2
   c) thirst, John 19:28
   d) sleep, Matthew 8:24
   f) and most profoundly, death, Luke 23:46

4. Matthew 13:53-58 shows that there was nothing about Jesus’ physical body that implied anything more than an ordinary humanity.

C. To be Human is to have a Soul (More on this when we get to Anthropology)
   1. John 12:27, “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.”
      a) Grudem says of the Greek word for “troubled,” “tarasso, a word that is often used of people when they are anxious or suddenly very surprised by danger” (533).
   2. Matthew 26:38, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.”
   3. “Jesus had a full range of human emotions” (Grudem 533)

D. The Man Jesus had no Sin
   1. Though Jesus received the full attention and effort of Satan Jesus succeeded in refusing to sin where Adam failed.
   2. Hebrews 4:15, “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”
   3. 1 Peter 2:22, “…who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth.”
   4. 2 Corinthians 5:21, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
   5. Hebrews 9:14, “…how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Bibliography


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