

Core Class: Biblical Doctrines: WHO IS JESUS THE CHRIST?

October 10, 2021

In the person of Jesus Christ, God physically entered into our world. An infinite God came to live in a finite world. In Jesus God and man became one person, a person unlike anyone else the world has ever seen or will ever see. **Jesus Christ was, and forever will be, fully God and fully man in one person.** And that one person changed the course of history forever.

JESUS CHRIST: FULLY MAN.

Why did the Son of God have to take on human flesh? Why do you think it was important for Jesus to become human?

The New Testament gives us several reasons why Jesus needed to be fully man if he was going to be the true Messiah. **Jesus needed to be fully man...**

✚ FOR REPRESENTATIVE OBEDIENCE

Jesus obeyed where Adam utterly failed and disobeyed.

- **Rom. 5:18-19**, "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."
- **1 Cor. 15:45-47**, "Thus it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven."

✚ TO BE A SUBSTITUTE SACRIFICE

Jesus had to be made like us in every way to be an acceptable sacrifice for man, since it was man who rebelled against his Creator.

- **Heb. 2:14-17**, "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the **offspring of Abraham**. Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."

✚ TO BE THE ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

We needed Christ to represent us to God and to represent God to us. Only someone both fully divine and truly human can effectually mediate between God and men.

- **1 Tim 2:5**, "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

✚ TO FULFILL GOD'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE FOR MAN TO RULE THE CREATION

- **Heb. 2:8-9**, "putting everything in subjection under his feet. Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone."
- **Luke 19:17-19**, "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'"
- **1 Cor. 6:3**, "Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!"

🇺🇸 TO BE OUR EXAMPLE AND PATTERN IN LIFE

Christ showed us and taught us how we are to live.

- **1 John 2:6**, “whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”
- **1 John 3:2-3**, “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.”
- **2 Cor. 3:18**, “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”
- **1 Pet. 2:21**, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”

🇺🇸 TO BE THE PATTERN FOR OUR REDEEMED BODIES

Jesus’ resurrected glorified body was the first-fruits of those who will follow and be resurrected with Him on that last day.

- **1 Cor. 15:42-49**, “So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.”

🇺🇸 TO SYMPATHIZE AS HIGH PRIEST

Jesus has experienced our struggles and so he can understand what we go through.

- **Heb. 2:18**, “For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”
- **Heb. 4:15-16**, “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. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

JESUS CHRIST: FULLY GOD.

🇺🇸 SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

- First, we have many instances where the words used for God (Theos) and Lord (Kyrios) in the Septuagint are applied directly to Jesus (**John 1:1; Romans 9:5; Luke 2:11**). (NOTE: The Septuagint was the Greek translation of the Old Testament used during Jesus’ time on earth.)
- Second, Paul opens up almost all of his letters saying, “Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” He links God the Father and Jesus together as the source of grace and peace.
- **Col, 2:9** – “In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”
- **Heb. 1:3** – “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.”
- **Isaiah 9:6** – declares that the human child to be born, that is Christ Jesus, “will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God...”

And, of course, we have Jesus’ claims of himself. There is his great statement in...

- **John 8:58**, “Before Abraham was born, I am!” The Jews understood that he was claiming to be God. “I AM WHO I AM” was God’s way of identifying Himself to Moses. They picked up stones to stone Jesus because their unbelieving hearts judged this to be a blasphemous statement. Jesus was equating himself with God!

✚ ATTRIBUTES OF GOD SEEN IN JESUS

Well, it's not just declarations made of Jesus that help us to understand his divinity. We also are given accounts of Jesus' actions that clearly commend him as fully God. We see Jesus'...

- **Omnipotence** – Jesus had authority over all things.
 - He changed the water into wine (John 2:1-11);
 - He fed the 5,000 with 5 loaves and 2 fish (Matthew 14);
 - and He calmed the storm with a word (Matthew 8:26-27).
- **Omniscience** –
 - Jesus knew people's thoughts (Mark 2);
 - He knew who was going to betray him (John 6:64); and
 - He knew people's backgrounds (i.e., the woman at the well in John 4).
 - Even others who spent time with him admitted that he knew everything, as Peter does when being restored after his denial in John 21:17.
- **Immortality** – Although Jesus' human nature can die, his divine nature cannot. Thus, he has the authority to raise his body up. He declared that he had the power to take up his own life and proved it in his resurrection.
 - Hebrews 7:16 says that he has the "power of an indestructible life."
- **Sovereignty** – Jesus is supreme, and this is shown in his ability to forgive sins upon seeing the faith of the paralytic (Mark 2:5-7).
- **Worthy of Worship** – Only God is worthy of worship; yet we see Jesus being worshipped not only as an infant by the Magi but throughout his ministry on earth and in heaven around the throne.

JESUS CHRIST: FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN IN ONE PERSON

Jesus is fully God. Jesus is also fully man. He is fully both God and Man at the same time. The eternal Son of God took to himself a truly human nature. His divine and human natures are forever distinct and retain their own properties even though they are eternally and inseparably united together in one person.

This is perhaps the most amazing miracle of the entire Bible—the eternal Son of God, himself fully God, became fully man and in doing so joined himself to a human nature forever in one person.

- ✚ **Kenosis Theory:** The kenosis theory holds that Christ gave up some of his divine attributes when he became man. Kenosis comes from a Greek word in Philippians 2:7 which means "**to empty.**"
 - **Phil. 2:5-11**, "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 emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 - Where the NIV has that first part of verse 7 translated "made himself nothing," many translations have translated it as the ESV does: "emptied himself." In the late 19th Century some advocated that Jesus must have "emptied himself" by giving up divine attributes. These theologians thought it inconceivable that Jesus could simultaneously be both omniscient God and limited man. But this was not a good solution to the mystery of the incarnation.
 - ✚ First, the text describes what Jesus did in this 'emptying': he didn't do it by giving up any of his attributes but rather by 'taking the form of a servant.'

- ✚ For centuries Christians understood this passage to be referring to Jesus giving up the status and privilege that was his in heaven to come to earth. In an act of humility, he willingly concealed the glory due him as the eternal Son of God and did not assert his divine prerogative.
- ✚ We see his glory revealed, however, in the transfiguration.

The **Kenosis theory gives us a Jesus that is less than fully God** and has accordingly been rejected as unorthodox thinking.

- ✚ We must conclude then that Jesus had a full divine nature and a human nature in one person ... and that his name is rightly called “Emmanuel,” that is “God with us” (Matt. 1:23).

While much of these things remain mysterious to us, Scripture has revealed to us everything we need to know about Jesus to place our trust in him. **So, who is Jesus?** Our whole lives are built and judged on how we answer this one question. Let us close by listening to how Paul answers this question in Colossians.

Speaking of Jesus, he says... **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood of the cross.”** (Col. 1:15-20)