

Session 6: The Doctrine of Christ

I. The Person of Christ: Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man in one person, and will be so forever.

A. The Humanity of Christ

1. The virgin birth:

He was born of a virgin, but it was a normal human birth

a. It shows that salvation ultimately must come from the Lord

b. The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person

c. The virgin birth also makes possible Christ's true humanity without inherited sin

2. Human weaknesses and limitations

a. Jesus had a human body (he got thirsty and tired)

b. Jesus had a human mind (he learned things)

c. Jesus had a human soul and human emotions (he

wept)

d. People near Jesus saw Him as only a man (Matthew 13:53-58, John 10:33)

3. Sinlessness * Could Jesus have sinned?

4. Why was Jesus' full humanity necessary?

a. For representative obedience

b. To be a substitute sacrifice

c. To be the one Mediator between God and humanity

d. To fulfill God's original purpose for humanity to rule over creation

e. To be our example and pattern in life

f. To be the pattern for our redeemed bodies

g. To sympathize as High Priest

5. Jesus will be a Man forever

B. The Deity of Christ

1. Direct scriptural claims

a. The word God (Theos) used of Christ (John 1:1, 18; Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8)

b. The word Lord (Kyrios) used of Christ (Matthew 13:27, 21:30, 27:63, John 4:11)

c. **Other strong claims to deity (Matthew 21:12-17; John 8:58)**

2. **Evidence that Jesus possessed attributes of deity: Glory, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, sovereignty, immortality, worthy of worship**
3. **Of what did He empty Himself? Kenosis theory and**

Philippians 2

- C. **Christ is fully God and fully Man**
 1. **Is the doctrine of the incarnation “unintelligible” today?**
 2. **Why was Jesus’ deity necessary?**
- D. **The Incarnation: Deity and Humanity in the One Person of Christ**
 1. **Apollinarianism: Human Body and Divine Nature**
 2. **Nestorianism: Two separate persons in Christ but this is not what Nestorius taught**
 3. **Monophysitism (Eutychianism): Christ was a tritium quid (a third thing) neither God nor man but a God-man, an amalgamation of two things to become a new third thing**
 4. **The Council at Chalcedon**

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial (coessential) with the Father according to the God-head, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has been handed down to us.

“Some have said that the Chalcedonian Definition really did not define for us in any positive way what the person of Christ actually is, but simply told us several things that it is not...*but* the definition actually did a great deal to help us understand the biblical teaching correctly...” (Grudem)

II. The Atonement

A. The Cause of the Atonement: Love and Justice

B. The Necessity of the Atonement: “There was no other way for God to save us than for Christ to die in our place.” (Grudem)

C. The Nature of the Atonement: Christ’s obedience and Christ sufferings

1. Christ’s obedience for us (Romans 3:21-22)

2. Christ’s suffering for us

a. Suffering for His whole life

b. The pain of the cross

i. Physical pain and death

ii. The pain of bearing sin

iii. Abandonment

iv. Bearing the wrath of God

D. Theories of the atonement

1. “Penal Substitution” Theory: God is like a just judge and Christ vicariously stood in our place of judgment (I Peter 3:18)

2. The Ransom Victory Theory: Christ’s death was a ransom paid to free captives (Mark 10:45)

*** A ransom paid to Satan OR A ransom paid to God by**

God

3. The Moral Influence Theory: God showed us His true love through the cross (Romans 5:8)

4. The Example Theory: Christ left us an example to follow, to trust and obey God perfectly and completely (I Peter 2:21)

5. The Governmental Theory: Christ demonstrated the seriousness of sin when God’s laws are broken

6. The Propitiation Theory: God is like a feudal lord that must maintain his honor by properly pouring out his wrath on rebellious peasants who revolt against him. In Christ, the wrath of God is satisfied, thus maintaining His honor. (Romans 3:21-27, Galatians 3:13, I John 2:1-2)

E. Did Christ descend into hell?

(Acts 2:27, Romans 10:6-7, Ephesians 4:4-8, I Peter 3:18-20 and I Peter 4:6)

1. **These verses are complex and do not explicitly teach that Christ went to hell or suffered hell between His death and resurrection**
 2. **These verses do imply that Jesus Christ accomplished something between the cross and the resurrection**
- F. The Extent of the Atonement**
1. **Unlimited atonement**
 2. **Limited atonement**
 3. **Sufficient for all of the sins, applicable only to those who believe**

III. The Resurrection and Ascension

- A. New Testament Evidence (See Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20-21, I Corinthians 15, along with a host of other passages)**
- B. The Nature of Christ's Resurrection: A bodily resurrection, but a unique body, not like the physical bodies we have.**
"When Christ rose from the dead Jesus, He was the 'first fruits' of a new kind of human life, a life in which his body was made perfect, no longer subject to weakness, aging, or death, but able to live eternally." (Grudem)
- C. Both the Father and the Son Participated in the Resurrection (and the Spirit, see Romans 8)**
- D. Significance**
1. **Christ's resurrection ensures our regeneration**
 2. **Christ's resurrection ensures our justification**
 3. **Christ's resurrection ensures that we will receive perfect resurrected bodies as well**
- E. The Ascension**
1. **Christ ascended to a place**
 2. **Christ received glory and honor that had not been His before as the God-Man**
 3. **Christ was seated at God's right hand**
 4. **Christ ascension has doctrinal significance for our lives**
 - a. **Foreshadow of our future with Him**
 - b. **Assurance of our final home with Him**
 - c. **Sharing in Christ's authority now**