

Christology

The Doctrine of Christ

Christianity differs from other world religions in that Jesus Christ is absolutely central in the Christian religion. If Buddha, Mohammed, or Zoroaster were removed from the religions associated with them, their entire doctrines would remain intact. But if you remove Jesus from Christianity, nothing in the way of its doctrine remains.

Hypostatic Union

Central to the understanding of Jesus is the doctrine called "hypostatic union". Hypostatic union is a theological term used in describing the unique personality makeup of Jesus. He was truly man and truly God. But in reality, the previous statement is an inadequate way to describe Him. Let's look at some of the approaches to describing His person that are inadequate and untrue.

1. Jesus' person contained both deity and humanity. This is only partially true.
2. Jesus was one-half God and one-half man. What is wrong with this description of His personality?
3. Jesus was mostly God and a little bit man. Write your thoughts and what you know about Scripture in response to this statement.
4. Jesus was a man as we are men. He was no different from us, except that He attained a high level of morality and mission.
5. Jesus was God and really not a man at all. What is wrong with this statement?

Each of these statements contains error and does not truly represent the Person of Jesus accurately. Before we look at Scripture which accurately portrays Him, we will make a statement which has been the position of Christian theologians through the centuries as they speak of His nature and personality.

Jesus can accurately be described as being "as much God as if He'd never been man, and as much man as if He'd never been God, and yet both in vital union, the God-man."

The Humanity of Jesus Christ (how do these following verses pertain to Jesus' humanity?)

Matthew 1:18

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 1:14

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

(How does this verse teach the pre-existence of Jesus?)

1st Timothy 2:5

For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity — the man Christ Jesus.

1 John 1:1

We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life.

(More scriptures to look into)

Luke 2:40, 46, 52,

Matthew 4:2

John 19:28

Hebrews 1:3

The Deity of Jesus Christ

By deity, we mean that Jesus was truly God. I like the term “fully” God.

John 1:1-3

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He existed in the beginning with God. 3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

Hebrews 1:8

But to the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. You rule with a scepter of justice.”

John 20:28

“My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed.

Romans 9:5

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. And he is God, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

(More scriptures to look into)

John 8:58, Titus 2:13, Revelation 22:13, Revelation 1:8, John 5:23, 24

His Attributes Were the Attributes of the Father

Remember the definition of an attribute from the study on the doctrine of God. See if you can find from the following verses the attributes of deity that are ascribed to the Lord Jesus.

John 1:4

The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Matthew 28:18

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.”

- What difference do these truths make in your life?

His Works Were Those of God

- See if you can identify things Jesus did, or will do that are the works of God alone.

John 1:3

God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

Colossians 1:16-18

16 for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see — such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. 17 He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. 18 Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.

Compare

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Mark 2:5-10

5 Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “My child, your sins are forgiven.” 6 But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves, 7 “What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!” 8 Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so he asked them, “Why do you question this in your hearts? 9 Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or ‘Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk?’ 10 So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.”

Psalm 51:4

Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just.

What significance is there for us today in the reality that Jesus Christ is God?

The Kenosis:

Philippians 2:4-8

4 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

The meaning of the word "kenosis" is "to empty". Christ emptied Himself of something when He became a man. In the light of this study, and in consideration of John 5:19 and Hebrews 9:14, of what did He empty Himself?

John 5:19

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

Hebrews 9:14

Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

The Death of Jesus

I. The Purpose of His Death

A. There are many prevalent unscriptural views of the death of Christ. Some of them are as follows:

1. Jesus died a martyr.
2. Jesus died as an example to show us how to die.
3. Jesus died to show us the love of God for us.
4. The death of Jesus was an accident.

B. Some of these may have appeal to people today, but none of them express the true meaning and purpose of the death of Jesus. His death was for the following purposes.

1. He died as a propitiation for our sins,

Romans 3:25

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

2. The purpose of His death

2nd Corinthians 5:21

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

3. Christ's death is referred to as a...

1st Timothy 2:6

Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

4. Yet another reason for His death is seen in

Romans 5:10

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

II. For Whom Did He Die?

A. What do these verses do with the idea of a limited atonement?

John 1:29

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

1st Timothy 2:6.

He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time.

B. What does Hebrews 2:9 teach us about the inclusive aspects of His sacrifice?

Hebrews 2:9

What we do see is Jesus, who was given a position “a little lower than the angels”; and because he suffered death for us, he is now “crowned with glory and honor.” Yes, by God’s grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone.

C. What kind of men did Christ die for in particular? and 1 Timothy 1:15.

Romans 5:6-10

6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. 8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. 9 And since we have been made right in God’s sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation.

D. The effects of His death will be realized by?

1st Timothy 4:10

This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

E. One last effect of the death of Christ is found in

Romans 8:19-23

19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. 22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

John 14:2

There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

Hebrews 9:24

For Christ did not enter into a holy place made with human hands, which was only a copy of the true one in heaven. He entered into heaven itself to appear now before God on our behalf.

III. Christ's resurrection assures us of:

Hebrews 4:14-16

14 So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. 15 This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. 16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

2nd Corinthians 5:1-8

1 For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. 2 We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. 3 For we will put on heavenly

bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. 4 While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. 5 God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit. 6 So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. 7 For we live by believing and not by seeing. 8 Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.

Romans 4:25

He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

The resurrection of Jesus is a fact, historically, and it is an absolute necessity if our hope is to be a valid hope. He rose from the dead in a body just as He had died, Luke 24:39. This is denied by Jehovah's Witnesses and others. We must ever keep the truth of the resurrection before us as an historical reality.