

"You and Your Beliefs"--Christology, part 1

We're addressing the subject of *our beliefs* on Wednesday evenings. It's important to know and be able to defend biblically *what we believe*.

In previous weeks we have addressed the subjects of Theology Proper and Bibliology. This evening we come to what is the most important subject of all subjects. What you believe about this subject will determine where you will spend eternity, not to mention whether you will experience truly abundant life in the present.

**Tonight: The Doctrine of Jesus Christ**

Col 1:18 "...that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

Think about it...

Emory Bancroft (*Elemental Theology*, p 121): "Jesus Christ is the central figure of the world's history. The world cannot forget Him while it remembers history, for history is His story. To leave Him out would be like astronomy without stars, or like botany with the flowers forgotten."

Horace Bushnell: "It would be easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky and to separate and erase one of the primary colors, than to get the character of Jesus out of the world." (Bancroft, 121)

Key: Christianity revolves around a Person, namely Jesus Christ. We cannot separate Christianity from Jesus Christ. What we believe about Jesus Christ is the ultimate issue.

You may have Confucianism w/o Confucius, Buddhism w/o Buddha, Islam w/o Muhammad, Mormonism w/o Joseph Smith, and Christian Science w/o Mary Baker Eddy. But you cannot have Christianity w/o Christ.

Q: What do you believe about Jesus Christ?

It would be impossible to answer that question if we studied it for 2 years, let alone 2 weeks! In fact, the essence of the Christian life is getting to know Jesus Christ. We'll spend eternity marveling at and growing in our knowledge of His Person!

But in a survey fashion, we're going to devote a couple of weeks to answer this question. What essential, non-negotiable truths must we affirm about Christ?

There are 2 main areas...

1. His Person--Who is Jesus Christ?
2. His Works--What has Jesus Christ done?

We'll take the first area this week, and the second next week.

## **The Person of Jesus Christ**

Discuss: Suppose you were housing an exchange student from Japan , and he asked, "Who is Jesus Christ?" What would you say?

Discuss: What does the "average" person think about Jesus today? Think of the typical person you work with, go to school with, live near. What does he think about Jesus?

There are 2 essential truths the Bible affirms about Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus Christ is God--His Deity.
2. Jesus Christ became a Man--His Humanity.

### A. The Deity of Jesus Christ

No doubt it's this statement that divides the masses. Nearly everyone acknowledges that Jesus of Nazareth was a great historical figure, a great MAN. Muslims do. Most Jews do. But listen to this staggering statement. The man who walked the dusty roads of Palestine in the first century was actually God Himself clothed in human flesh! The Bible affirms that Jesus Christ is God.

Where?

Let's look at several passages which directly reveal the Deity of Christ:

#### *1. The Scriptures teach that Jesus is God.*

John 1:1-2 "In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was God..."

John 1:18 "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son...declared Him."

Another Translation: "But God the only Son, who is at the Father's right hand"

John 20:28 "Thomas answered, My Lord and my God!"

Acts 20:28 "...the church of God , which He hath purchased with His own blood."

Rom 9:5 "...Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

Heb 1:8 "But unto the Son, He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever..."

Tit 2:13 "...the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

2 Pet 1:1 "...the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Others:

Isaiah 9:6 "And His name shall be called...Mighty God..."

1 Tim 1:17 "Now unto the King eternal, immortal...the only wise God..."

Q: What did Jesus have to say about His Deity?

A: He claimed equality with God.

## *2. Jesus claimed equality with God.*

John 10:30 "I and my Father are one." (note response of Jews in vv 31, 33)

Mark 14:61-63 "Are you the Christ?... I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting..."

Q: What does it mean to say that Jesus is God?

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, existed eternally in fellowship with God the Father (John 17:5, 24) and God the Holy Spirit. He is equal in essence, yet subordinate in function with God the Father (1 Cor 11:3). All the attributes ascribed to God in the Bible belong to Jesus Christ. He is holy, just, righteous, true, loving, good, gracious, and merciful. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

Note: Phil 2:6ff reveals that Jesus temporarily laid aside the independent exercise of His divine attributes when He became a man.

Discuss: Why is it essential to say that Jesus is God?

\*If Jesus is NOT God, His atonement would be inadequate and deficient. His death would be no different than any other great martyr's death.

Ponder the words of the old hymn by P.P Bliss:

*"Wonderful things in the Bible I see; This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me."*

## B. The Humanity of Jesus Christ

Let's look at the passages supporting His humanity...

### *1. We see Jesus' humanity in Old Testament prophecies.*

Gen 3:15 "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her SEED..."

Gen 22:18 "And in thy SEED shall all the nations of the earth be blessed..."

OT prophecy made it clear that the Messiah would be the seed of a woman, the seed of Abraham. He would be a Man.

2. *We see Jesus' humanity in His genealogies.*

God preserved 2 genealogies of Jesus to trace back His human lineage...

Matt 1:1ff (traced forward from Abe)

Luke 2:23ff (traced it back through David and Abe to Adam)

3. *We see Jesus' humanity in the gospel accounts.*

The Gospels reveal Jesus' human qualities...

Luke 2:40 "And the child grew..."

Luke 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor..."

He was tempted...

Matt 4:1ff

In His life, He experienced hunger, thirst, fatigue, grief, and the pain of cruel human execution. He wept (John 11:35). He expressed righteous indignation (John 2:16).

That raises the question: *How could Jesus be both God and Man?* The answer has to do with *the virgin birth*. See:

Isaiah 7:14

Matt 1:18, 20, 23 "...virgin shall conceive...God with us."

Key: Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God. It is heretical to say that He merely seemed to be a man (Docetism). It is heretical to say that He was only a man (Ebionism). It is heretical also to say that He was a man until His baptism when the Spirit came upon Him (Cerinthianism).

As the God man, Jesus Christ possesses two natures, the divine nature and the human nature, yet He exists as One person. In order for Him to become the substitute for condemned mankind, He must have become MAN. In order for Him to have conquered death and reconciled man, He must be GOD.

Q: Did Jesus keep His humanity after His Resurrection?

Yes--Luke 24:38ff

Q: Will Jesus retain His humanity when He returns?

Yes--Acts 1:11 speaks of a Bodily Return

Discuss: What is the significance of Jesus' humanity for us?

One great implication is that we have a Savior who understands. Heb 4:15-16 declares, "For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched..." (see also Heb 2:18)

Application Questions:

1. How can we grow to know Jesus better?
2. How can we help someone who is confused about the person of Jesus?
3. Why is it essential that we talk to people about the person of Jesus?

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[\[1\]](#) These unedited notes were prepared for use in a Wednesday evening, discussion-oriented Bible study at Wheelersburg Baptist Church in Wheelersburg , Ohio . Although the notes are in draft form, I trust the seed thoughts contained will be used by our gracious God for your edification. –Pastor Brad Brandt