

New Testament Theology

(NT2)

Lecture 2, January 16, 2013

Christology & Incarnation

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New Testament Theology (NT2)

1. Introduction to New Testament Theology
2. Christology & Incarnation
3. Trinity (adding Doctrines of Father & Holy Spirit)
4. Ecclesiology (The Church)
5. Christian Anthropology (Being Human before God)
6. Soteriology (Sin & Salvation)
7. Eschatology (Last Things)
8. Conclusion and Final Exam

What is “Christology?”

- **Christology:** the study of the person, nature and work of Jesus Christ, especially as reflected in the New Testament.

Christology is particularly concerned with the relationship of the nature and person of Jesus with God the Father; and with details of Jesus' ministry, acts and teaching, to arrive at a clearer understanding of who he is, and how he is able to provide our salvation.

OR, “How is it that Jesus was both human and divine, and how is that important for our salvation?”

Divinity and Humanity in Jesus

➤ Jesus was God Incarnate

➤ Mark 1:1; John 1:1,14; Gal. 4:4; 1 John 1:1-3

➤ Jesus miraculously was born of a virgin

➤ Matthew 1:22-23; Luke 1:34-35

➤ Jesus was Divine Creator

➤ John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 2:1

➤ Jesus is Lord

➤ Romans 10: 9; Phil. 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3

Divinity and Humanity in Jesus

➤ Jesus showed human emotion

- Love – John 13:1
- Compassion – Matthew 9:36
- Anger – John 2:15-16
- Grief – John 11:35

➤ Jesus had human physical characteristics

- Tiredness – John 4:6
- Sleep – Luke 8:23
- Hunger – Luke 4:2
- Thirst – John 19:28
- Pain & Death – John 19:34

Titles for Jesus Christ

- *Christ/Messiah (Anointed One)* established Jesus as fulfillment of the Jewish expectation for God's promised king and redeemer. (Matthew 16:15f)
- *Kyrios* was a the most common title for Jesus in the Early Church, and it inherently contains implications of deity, pre-existence and absolute Lordship. (*Kyrios* was the most common title for Jesus in Paul's writing, and among Gentile Christians.) (Rom. 10:9; 2 Cor. 4:5)
- *Jesus, Friend of Sinners* – Middle Ages.

Titles for Jesus Christ

➤ *Son of God*

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God... *Mark 1:1*

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”
John 11:27

➤ *Son of Man*

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. *Daniel 7:13-14*

Titles for Jesus Christ

➤ *Son of David*

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

Matthew 15:22

...a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Mark 10:46-47

Christological Controversies/Heresies

- Docetism – God could not really become flesh and suffer.
- Ebionism – Jesus was only mortal, not divine.
- Gnosticism – Matter is evil; Jesus only “appeared” human.
- Adoptionism – Jesus born human, “adopted” as divine at baptism.
- Modalism – God is one, but appears in “modes” of Father, Son or Spirit at different times.
- Arianism – Jesus was created; not co-eternal with God.
- Appolinarianism – Jesus only a divine spirit; no humanity.
- Nestorianism – Jesus born only human; 2 natures/2 persons.
- Eutychianism – one mixed nature – not human or divine.
- Monophysitism – Divine nature fully absorbed human.
- Pelagianism – No original sin; Christ not a savior.

Controversies in the Early Church

- Was Jesus really divine? If so, what is His relationship with God the Father?
 - AD 325 - Council of Nicaea & Nicene Creed
 - Against Arius; Established the Doctrine of the Trinity; with Jesus as co-eternal, only-begotten Son of God, 2nd Person of the Trinity.
 - AD 381 – 1st Council of Constantinople
 - Against Appolinarus; Affirmed Nicaea; established that Jesus was fully human, with a human mind and soul.
 - AD 431 – 1st Council of Ephesus
 - Against Nestorius; Established that Jesus had two natures in one person (not two persons), and that Jesus had been fully divine when born. (Mary as *Theotokos*).
 - AD 451 – Council of Chalcedon
 - Against Eutychus; Established that Jesus was fully divine and fully human, 2 natures in one person, not one new hybrid.

The Council of Chalcedon & “Hypostatic Union”

Hypostatic Union: the belief that Jesus the divine Son of God fully took on human nature, yet at the same time remained fully God – *“the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, 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...”* Creed of Chalcedon

Bottom-line: Jesus is both fully God and fully human. He has always been God; he became human when conceived in Mary; with no mixture or dilution of these two natures, forever united in one Person.