

Christmas Is Jesus (Jesus Christ - Human and Divine)

by Colin Peckham

Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine, and His sacrifice is sufficient for the salvation of the world.

Topics: "Christology", "Divine Nature"

Description

Colin Peckham preaches on the fullness of Deity in Jesus Christ, emphasizing His perfect humanity and divinity. Jesus, born of a woman, experienced human limitations and divine qualities, such as pre-existence and life-giving power. The historic creeds affirm Jesus as truly God and truly man, with His sacrifice as a divine substitute being sufficient for the sins of the whole world. This gospel, conceived and executed by God, offers salvation rooted in His integrity and faithfulness, leading believers to become new creatures in Christ Jesus and partakers of the divine nature.

Transcript

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form' (Col 2:9). In Him we have the fullness of Deity framed in humanity. Jesus Christ is perfect man and perfect God.

HUMAN

His humanity is seen in that He was born of a woman; He grew in wisdom and stature as other humans; He was subject to the sinless infirmities of humanity such as hunger, thirst, sleep, temptation and grief; human names were given to Him, such as 'Jesus', the 'Son of Man'. His was no phantom body. He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He is man.

DIVINE

He is also God. Divine names are given to Him such as 'God', 'the Son of God', 'Lord'. Names given to God in the Old Testament are given to Jesus in the New: 'the first and the last' (Is. 44:6. cf. Rev. 1:17); the 'Alpha and the Omega' (Rev. 1:8 cf. 22:13). Divine worship is ascribed to Him. He possesses the qualities of Deity, such as pre-existence (John 1:1), and self-existence and life-giving power (John 5:21,26). Divine offices are ascribed to Him: He is Creator (John 1:3), upholder of all things (Col. 1:17), He forgives sins (Luke 7:48). Divine attributes are possessed by Him: omnipotence (Matt. 28:18), omniscience (John 16:30), omnipresence (Matt 18:20). His name is coupled with that of the Father in the apostolic

benediction (II Cor. 13:14), and in the Baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19).

Other passages could be used to show that Jesus was God. Thomas, the doubting disciple, certainly thought so, for he said 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:28). It must be remembered that Thomas was a monotheist. He could not conceive of any other God but God Almighty. He was a Jew - completely! He recognized that Jesus is to be identified with Yahweh (or Jehovah) of the Old Testament. Jesus did not rebuke him, as He should have done had Thomas spoken blasphemously, but He accepted His worship.

Finally the word from Isaiah 9:6 is a deathblow to those who oppose His deity, 'For to us a child is born and He will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace'. No amount of wriggling or spiritual gymnastics can alter the meaning of those words. Jesus is the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father!

God did not send an angel to accomplish our salvation, but He projected Himself into the human race. In the person of His Son, and in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, He accomplished it all. We worship 'Christ, who is God over all, for ever praised!' (Rom. 9:5). If we worship Him and He is not God, then we are idolaters. In the New Testament they worshipped Him and He accepted their worship, proving that He is God.

CREEDS

The historic creeds of the church confirm the biblical teaching of the nature of Jesus Christ. In the Apostles' Creed (third and fourth centuries), we read that Jesus Christ was 'conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary'. In the Nicene Creed (325 AD.) the statement of faith reads, 'I believe in ...one Lord Jesus Christ. the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father: by whom all things were made',

In the Chalcedon Creed (451 AD.), we read. 'We 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....one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, unconfusedly, 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'.

The Athanasian Creed (fourth and fifth centuries) dealt mainly with the Trinity but confirmed the doctrine of Christ as follows: 'We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man: God, of the Substance of the Father; begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the Substance of His mother, born in the world. Perfect God: and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood. Who, although he be God and Man; yet he is not two, but one Christ. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood unto God. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person'.

The teaching has been maintained down the centuries as is seen in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1571). 'The Son. which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed

Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for the original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men'.

DIVINE SUBSTITUTE

In human terms a substitute's death is sufficient only for the person for whom he dies, but because Jesus is God, His death is sufficient not only for one person, but for the world. 'He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world' (I John 2:2). As man the sacrifice is insufficient: as God it is abundantly sufficient and it avails for all who come. For the plan of salvation to be effective for all, Jesus had to be God.

We have this confidence then that when we present the gospel to men and women, we know that it was conceived by God Almighty and executed by God in Christ on earth. The plan and offer of salvation is thus endorsed by the omnipotence and faithfulness of a God who is able to see it through to actuality in the lives of those who respond to His call.

This gospel is not a fraud or deception; it is not a fabrication or make-believe, it is rooted in the integrity and faithfulness of God. He has provided a way by which man can be rid of his sins, be a partaker of the divine nature and become an heir to eternal life through Jesus Christ, and He is able to make that good. His promises hold. His salvation is sure. The offering of the Substitute is sufficient to atone for our sins, and by gratefully claiming the mercy which He extends, we are forgiven. The risen Jesus has promised to be with us and in us, and when we trust Him, we find that this marvellous miracle does take place. We have become children of the living God and are new creatures In Christ Jesus. We have longings and desires which we had never dreamed possible. We are in a fellowship and a family of which we knew nothing before-- the family of God!

This salvation works! It is designed by God the Father, the architect of it all, It is accomplished by God the Son, who achieved it all, and it is conveyed and transmitted to us by God the Spirit, who executes it all. It is living, vital and real, because the living God is vital and real! Our salvation is of God and in Him we rejoice.

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