

God the Son

Article II

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:lff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:lff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

Key Text:

Psalm 2: 7-9: “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.’”

Psalm 110:1-4: “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Isaiah 7:14: “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

Isaiah 53:6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12: “Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred

more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; so shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider. Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked— but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Matthew 1:18-23: “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*” which is translated, “God with us.”

Matthew 3:17: “And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Matthew 8:29: “And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with you, Jesus, you Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Matthew 11:27: ““All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”

Matthew 16:16: “Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

John 1:1, 14, 18: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared Him.”

John 1:1-18: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’” And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.”

John 10:30: “I and My Father are one.”

Philippians 2:5-11: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Colossians 1:13-22: “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven,

having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.”

1 Timothy 2:5-6: “For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

Titus 2:13-14: “looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.”

Hebrews 1:1-3: “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Key Text Missing:

Genesis 3:15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

Genesis 12:1-3: “Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 49:10: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people.”

Numbers 24:17: “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel...”

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me [Moses] from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.”

2 Samuel 7:12-16: “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.””

Psalm 8, 16, 22, 45

Daniel 7:13-14: “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed.”

Micah 5:2: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth *are* from of old, from everlasting.”

Zechariah 12:10: “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”

John 8:58: “Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

1 John 2:1-2: “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”

1 John 4:10: “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”

Revelation 5:6: “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

Major Theological Observations: A Narrative

The uniqueness of Jesus as God’s Son is taught throughout the New Testament. We find this within the Gospels (John 1:14; 3:16, 18), as well as the rest of the New Testament (1 John 4:9; Heb 1:1-2).

Most importantly, Jesus himself both explicitly (Mark 12:1-12; 13:32; Matt 11:25-27) and implicitly (John 20:17) taught of his unique relationship as God’s Son. During his ministry, he was recognized as the unique Son of God by demons (Mark 5:7), Satan (Matt 4:3, 6) and most importantly the voice from heaven at his baptism and transfiguration (Mark 1:11; 9:7).

During his ministry, he acted as one who possessed a unique authority over the temple by cleaning it (Mark 11:15-19, 27-33; John 2:13-21), over demons and Satan by his exorcisms, over disease by his healings, over the Sabbath by his actions (Mark 2:23-28), over death by his raising the dead and at times even over the Law (making plain its true intentions) by his teachings (Matt 5:21-48; Mark 7:18-19).

He assumed the divine prerogatives of forgiving sins (Mark 2:5-10; Luke 7:36-50), claiming that one's eternal destiny was grounded in a relationship to him (Matt 10:32-33; 11:6) and claiming that he would ultimately judge the world (Matt 9:28; John 5:22-29; Acts 10:42).

He also maintained that he was greater than all who have preceded him, whether Abraham (John 8:53-58), Jacob (John 4:12-15) or Moses (Matt 5:21-48).

In the New Testament Jesus is accorded such divine attributes as being the Creator (John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2) and possessing pre-existence (John 1:1-2; 1 John 1:1; Col 1:17). In a number of instances, he is specifically referred to as God (John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:8; cf. also Rom 9:5; 1 John 5:20).

It should be remembered that the use of this title for Jesus is found in passages written by Jewish-Christians whose Scriptures begin with "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen 1:1). This is extraordinary in a 1st century Jewish context.

Although the human nature of the Son was denied by the first Christological heresy (Doceticism), it is clearly taught throughout the New Testament. Along-side of statements of Jesus' uniqueness and deity are statements of his full humanity. He is fully God and fully man.

His virginal conception in no way minimizes this. The incarnation (John 1:14) involves experiencing a human birth (Gal 4:4), being circumcised on the eighth day (Luke 2:21), possessing a true human nature (Heb 2:14), being tempted in all points like us yet without sin

(Heb 2:18; 4:15), experiencing sorrow and agony (John 11:35; Mark 14:34-42; Heb 5:7), hungering (Matt 4:2; Mark 11:12) and thirsting (John 19:28), becoming weary (John 4:6), possessing flesh and blood (Luke 24:39; John 19:34) and learning obedience (Heb 5:8).

He is the one mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5; Rom 5:15; Heb 9:15). Because of his sinless life (Heb 4:15; 2 Cor 5:21), he could bear the penalty of sin that all humanity deserves.

By grace he became a curse for those under the curse (Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 2:24) and satisfied the righteousness of God (Rom 3:24-26). Thus, by offering himself once for all time (Rom 6:10; 1 Pet 3:18; Heb 9:28; 10:12-14), he brought about for sinful humanity expiation of sin and propitiation from the divine wrath (Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

In so doing, Jesus Christ brought a host of benefits such as justification (Rom 3:24; 8:33), peace (Rom 5:1), reconciliation (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:18-19), forgiveness (Matt 26:38; Rom 4:7-8), adoption as sons (Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:4-5), being born again (1 Pet 1:23; John 3:1-8), dying to sin (Rom 6:1-2, Col 3:3), being raised in newness of life (Rom 6:4; 7:6; 2 Cor 5:17) and eternal life (John 3:16, 36; Rom 6:22).

In addition to these present benefits, there awaits for his followers the resurrection of the body (John 11:25-26; Rev 20:5-6), a joyous reunion with Christians who died (1 Thess 4:13-18), faith turning to sight (Rev 22:4), being no longer able to sin and participating with the Son of God in the judgment (1 Cor 6:2). [Robert Stein is the primary author of these sections].

Major Theological Observations: 5 Specific Issues

The Baptist Faith & Message sets forth the article "God the Son" in a chronological manner. Philippians 2:5-11 nicely provides a scriptural framework for a chronological exposition of the person and work of God the Son.

First, God the Son is pre-existent (Phil. 2:6). The term "pre-existent" conveys the claim that the existence of God the Son did not begin with his earthly life. The BF&M highlights the pre-existent state by two key concepts, "eternal" and "Son of God." In contrast to the ancient heresy of Arianism and contemporary Jehovah Witnesses, Baptists affirm that Christ existed before time. Christ always was, Christ always is, and Christ will always be. There never was a time when the Son was not. Furthermore, Christ is the Son of God; He eternally possessed equality in essence or being with God the Father.

Second, God the Son humbled Himself (Phil. 2:7-8). God the Son became incarnate (in flesh) as Jesus Christ. The BF&M 2000 committee made a significant improvement over the BF&M 1963 statement. The 1963 edition states, "...taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature." A foster mother temporarily may take upon herself the demands and necessities of motherhood without being a mother. The BF&M 2000 states, "...taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities." The 2000 revision sets forth the full-humanity of Jesus stronger than the earlier edition. The incarnation of Jesus, the uniting of God and man, became a permanent union. Jesus remains the God-Man today.

Third, the Spirit of God conceived the incarnate Son in the womb of the virgin Mary. The BF&M states, Jesus was "born of the virgin Mary." I find an increasing number of Baptists that prefer the phrase "born through the virgin Mary." This phrase reflects the heretical teachings of some second-century Gnostics and sixteenth-century Anabaptists. In this false view, Jesus brought his human nature with Him from heaven. This teaching denies that the crusher of Satan came from the "seed" of woman (Gen. 3:16); repudiates Paul's teachings that Christ is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:15-16); and mythologizes Scripture's teaching that Jesus literally descended from David (Acts 2:29-30; Rom. 1:3).

Fourth, the greatest humbling of Jesus occurred at His shameful death. The BF&M 2000 committee properly added the adjective "substitutionary" to describe the death of Jesus. The substitutionary death of Jesus means that Jesus became our sacrifice for sin, substituted Himself for us, and bore our iniquities and curse.

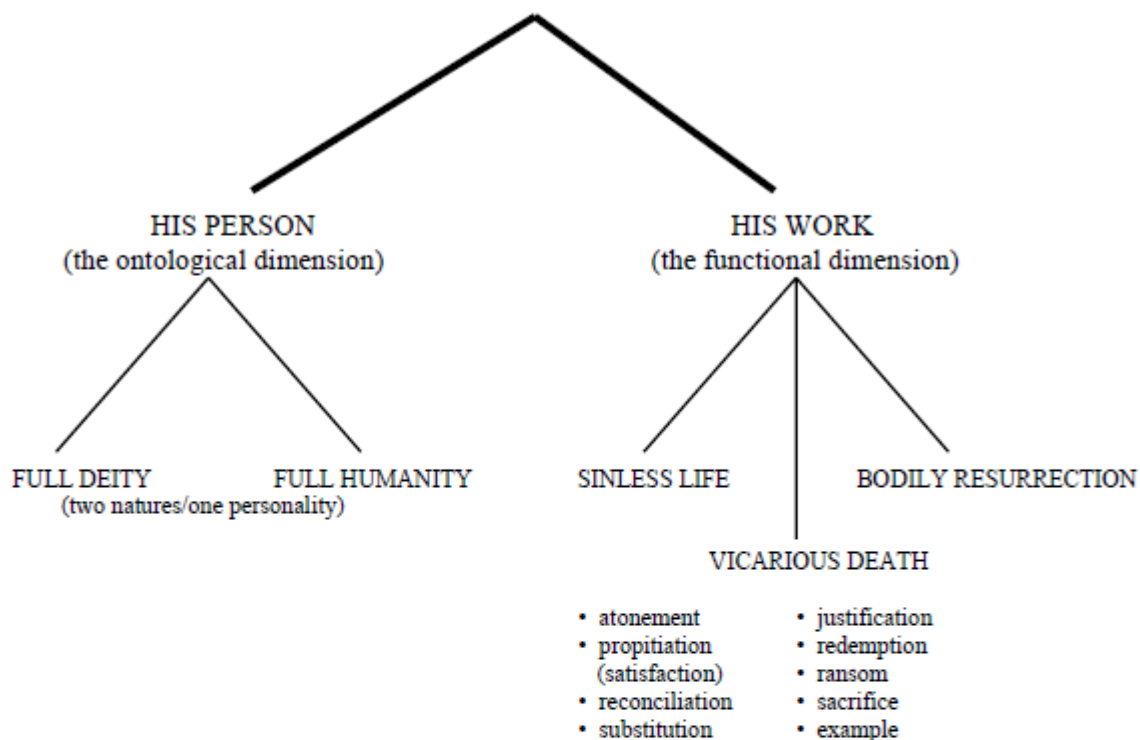
Fifth, God the Father exalted God the Son (Phil. 2:9-11). The exaltation of Jesus involves His resurrection, ascension, seating at the right hand, and return. Because of the exaltation of Jesus, the New Testament asserts that Jesus is our intercessor, cosmic Lord, and giver of gifts. Jesus literally, physically rose from the dead. Jesus then ascended into heaven, and He sat down at the right hand of God the Father. He sat down as King. He sat down as our priest. Our high priest sat down because He completed His priestly service. God the Son will return personally, visibly, and gloriously.

Baptists affirm that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the Incarnate Son, the Sacrificial Son, the Reigning Son, and the Returning Son. The Gospel or good news centers on God the Son.

This section is adapted from "BF&M Commentary 3: God the Son," by Dr. Mark Rathel (Florida Baptist Witness, 2-14-08).

CHRISTOLOGY

(The Study of Jesus Christ)



THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO CHRISTOLOGY

Philosophical
Implication/Speculation

Systematic
Analysis/Synthesis

Historical
Creeds/Confessions

Biblical
Exegesis/Exposition



FOUR GREAT CHRISTOLOGICAL PASSAGES – DOCTRINE OF CHRIST			
John 1:1-18; 8:58	Philippians 2:5-11	Colossians 1:13-20; 2:9-10	Hebrews 1:1-3; 5-14; 2:5-18
Christ is the God of Incarnation	Christ is the God of Humiliation	Christ is the God of Creation	Christ is the God of Revelation
The <u>Word</u> of God - Logos Doctrine -	The <u>Form</u> of God	The <u>Image</u> of the Invisible God	The <u>Revelation</u> of God
<p><i>Logos</i> = Word/Jesus Hinge Texts: 1:1; 1:14; 1:18</p> <p>His Relationship to the Father: The Word 1:1, 14 Radiant Glory 1:14 Only Begotten One 1:14 Son 3:16</p> <p>His Divine Work in Creation: Of All Things 1:3 Of Life 1:4</p> <p>His Divine Work in Salvation: Those Who Receive Him 12-13</p> <p>His Divine Nature: <i>Theos</i> = (God) 1, 18 Exclusively God – 18 In the Flesh – 14 In Eternity Past - 1</p>	<p>Early Church Hymn: Christ's Humiliation – 6-8 Christ's Exaltation – 9-11</p> <p>His Relationship to the Father: Form of God Equal with God Bondservant</p> <p>Set Aside His Divine Glory Did Not Set Aside His Divine Nature</p> <p>His Divine Work in Salvation: (6-8) Emptied Himself Became a Man Obedient to Death</p> <p>His Divine Nature: <i>Theos</i> = (God) – 6 Exalted – 9 Lord - 11</p>	<p>The Lordship of Christ Exists Over: Creation – 15-17 Church – 18; 2:10 Christians – 13-14, 20</p> <p>His Divine Work in Salvation: He Has – 13-14 Delivered Us Transferred Us Redeemed Us Forgiven Us</p> <p>His Relationship to the Father: Firstborn – 1:15, 18 The Son He Loves – v. 13 Co-Eternal/Father – 17</p> <p>His Divine Work in Creation: Of All Things – v. 16 Pre-Existent – v. 17 Pre-Eminent – v. 18</p> <p>His Divine Nature: <i>Theotetos</i> = Godhead 2:9 "Essence" of God 1:19 Complete Deity</p>	<p><u>Greater Than Prophets</u> Seven Character Affirmations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heir of All Things – v. 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creator – v. 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manifestation of God's Being – v. 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Perfect Representation of God – v. 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainer of All Things v. 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Savior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exalted Lord – v. 3 <p><u>Greater than Angels</u> Seven Scripture Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psalm 2:7 (v. 5) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Sam. 7:14 (v. 5) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deut. 32:43 (v. 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psalm 104:4 (v. 7) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psalm 45:6, 7 (vs. 8-9) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psalm 102:25-27 (vs. 10-12) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psalm 110:1 (v. 13)