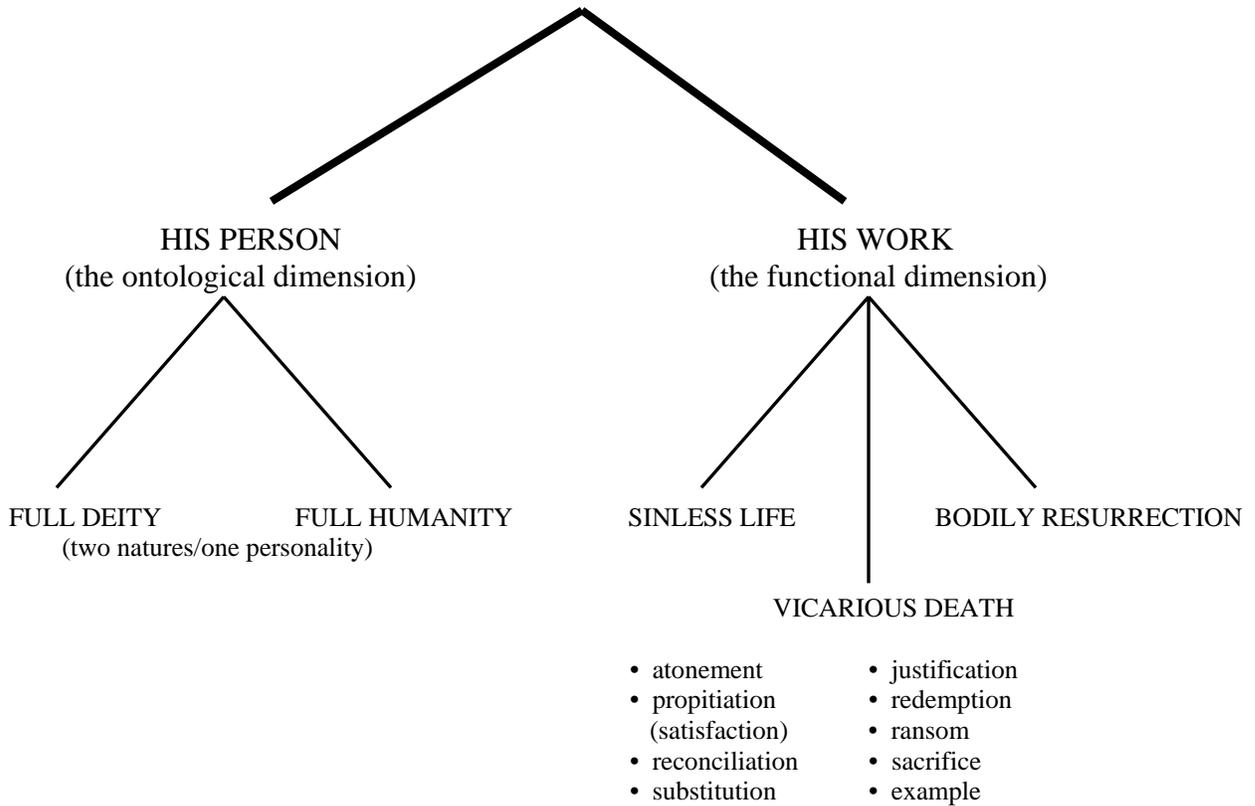


JESUS CHRIST: WHO IS HE?

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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)

“When God Became A Man”
John 1:1-18

- | | | |
|------|---|---------|
| I. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus continually pre-existed</u> | 1:1-5 |
| | 1) He is divine in His person | 1:1 |
| | 2) He is divine in His relation | 1:2 |
| | 3) He is divine in His creation | 1:3 |
| | 4) He is said to be divine in His revelation | 1:4-5 |
| | a) He is life | 1:4 |
| | b) He is light | 1:4-5 |
| II. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus was prophetically witnessed</u> | 1:6-9 |
| | 1) The witness came with power | 1:6 |
| | 2) The witness came with a pronouncement | 1:7 |
| | 3) The witness came with purpose | 1:7 |
| | 4) The witness came with perspective | 1:8-9 |
| III. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus was personally confronted</u> | 1:10-13 |
| | 1) Some reject Him in unbelief | 1:10-11 |
| | 2) Some receive Him with faith | 1:12-13 |
| IV. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus was permanently incarnated</u> | 1:14 |
| | 1) He took a body like us | |
| | 2) He tabernacled among us | |
| | 3) He transformed our understanding within us | |
| V. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus is properly exalted</u> | 1:15-17 |
| | 1) He is properly exalted because of His coming | 1:15 |
| | 2) He is properly exalted because of His blessings | 1:16-17 |
| VI. | <u>As the Word of God Jesus perfectly communicated</u> | 1:18 |
| | 1) His communication is perfect because of His essence | |
| | 2) His communication is perfect because of His exegesis | |

Notes

- 1:1 Although verbally parallel with Gen. 1:1 and 1 John 1:1, the contexts assign temporal differences. Whereas Gen. 1:1 speaks of the beginning of creation and 1 John 1:1 emphasizes the incarnate manifestation of God in Christ, John in this verse establishes the preexistence of Christ in eternity past. He already “was” when the beginning took place. Indeed He is affirmed as being: 1) Coequal, 2) Coeternal, 3) Coexistent and 4) Consubstantial with the Father. Jesus is called “word” (*Logos*, Gk.). The idea of the *Logos* was a philosophical concept in John’s day, but John uses the word in a larger sense that would include Hebrew ideas also. He also personalizes the term in the person of Jesus.

THE GOD WHO CAME DOWN

Philippians 2:1-11

- I. Cultivate the character of Christ. 2:1-4
 - 1. Enjoy divine blessings. 2:1
 - 2. Exhibit divine behavior. 2:2-4
 - a. Let your life be characterized by *unity*. 2:2
 - b. Let your life be characterized by *humility*. 2:3
 - c. Let your life be characterized by *sensitivity*. 2:4
- II. Consider the cross of Christ. 2:5-8
 - 1. See His humility in His *renunciation*. 2:5-6
 - 2. See His humility in His *incarnation*. 2:7
 - 3. See His humility in His *crucifixion*. 2:8
- III. Celebrate the crowning of Christ. 2:9-11
 - 1. Accept His exalted *position*. 2:9
 - 2. Acknowledge His exalted *adoration*. 2:10
 - 3. Adopt His exalted *confession*. 2:11

JESUS CHRIST: GOD'S VERY BEST

Hebrews 1:1-4

- I. If you want to hear God, listen to Jesus. (vs. 1-2)
 - 1. God's revelation through His prophets was true, but partial. (vs. 1)
 - 2. God's revelation through His Son is true and perfect. (vs. 2)

- II. If you want to see God, look at Jesus. (vs. 2)
 - 1. He is a divine *inheritor*. (vs. 2)
 - 2. He is the divine *creator*. (vs. 2)
 - 3. He is the divine *revealer*. (vs. 3)
 - 4. He is the divine *character*. (vs. 3)
 - 5. He is the divine *sustainer*. (vs. 3)
 - 6. He is the divine *redeemer*. (vs. 3)
 - 7. He is the divine *Savior*. (vs. 3)

- III. If you want to worship God, lift up Jesus. (vs. 4)
 - 1. He is not an esteemed servant. (vs. 4; also vs. 13-14)
 - 2. He is the exalted Son. (vs. 4; also vs. 5)

The Superiority of Jesus Christ

- 4. "Appointed heir of all things"
- 5. "Through whom... He made the world"
- 6. "The radiance of His glory"
- 7. "The exact representation of His nature"
- 8. "Upholds all things by... His power"
- 9. "Made purification of sins"
- 10. "Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty"

“The Lordship of Jesus Christ”

Colossians 1:13-20

- I. Jesus is Lord of the Cross (Savior) 1:13-14
(This denies universalism/deism/fatalism)
 - 1. God has delivered us from the power of Satan. 1:13
 - 2. God has transferred us into the principality of His sovereignty. 1:13
 - 3. God has redeemed us through the payment of His Son. 1:14

- II. Jesus is Lord of Communication (Revealer) 1:15
(This denies cultism/atheism/agnosticism)
 - 4. He is the representation of God. (His reflection)
 - 5. He is the manifestation of God. (His revelation)

- III. Jesus is Lord of Creation (Creator) 1:15-17
(This denies evolution/naturalism)
 - 1. He is Lord because of His sovereignty. 1:15
 - 2. He is Lord because of His agency. 1:16
 - 3. He is Lord because of His priority. 1:17
 - 4. He is Lord because of His consistency. 1:17

- IV. Jesus is Lord of The Church (Leader) 1:18-20
(This denies individualism)
 - 1. He is first. 1:18
 - a. In position
 - b. By resurrection
 - 2. He has fullness. 1:19
 - 3. He provides forgiveness. 1:20

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

(A Historical and Theological Analysis)

Our Options

1. A great hoax (The resurrection is false)
 2. A nice mythology (The resurrection is fiction)
 3. The supreme event in history (The resurrection is fact)
- A. Naturalistic Theories of the 19th century Liberals (and others)
1. Swoon (He did not actually die)
 2. Spirit (His spirit returned but not his body)
 3. Vision (The Disciples hallucinated)
 4. Legend/Myth (Quite popular today: Just a nice story with a teaching point. A real Jesus is not necessary, but useful and certainly probable).
 5. Stolen Body, by: a) Jews b) Romans c) Disciples Matt. 28:11-15 d) Joseph of Arimathea John 19:38 ff.
 6. Wrong Tomb
 7. Deliberate Lie for Profit
 8. Mistaken Identity (They confused Jesus for someone who looked like Him)
 9. Twin theory (He had an identical brother)
 10. Muslim theory (Someone replaced Jesus on the cross)
- B. Contemporary Models for the Resurrection
1. The facticity of the resurrection is seriously questioned or dismissed. The nature of the original eyewitnesses' experience cannot be ascertained (Ex. Bultmann, Marxsen, Koester, Kung, Van Buren).
 2. A literal resurrection may be true but it cannot be historically verified. The important element is the nature of the disciples experience, and the truth that the resurrection can only be accepted by faith (Ex. K. Barth, Brunner, Bonhoeffer, Bornkamm, Rahner, M. Barth and Torrance).
 3. A resurrection is probable and an abstract reconstruction of the historical nature of the appearances is possible. The empty tomb is viewed as the best explanation of the available data. However, it is still argued that the resurrection is an eschatological event and is not demonstrable by historical methodology, although it may possibly be verified in the future (Ex. Grass – Christ appeared in a spiritual form; Moltmann – the disciples witnessed visionary appearances of the risen Lord). Jesus' appearances, then, were more along the lines of private revelations (also included here are R. Fuller, Jeremias, O'Collins). Again, such appearances cannot be known except in faith.
 4. A literal resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the most probable solution based upon available data. (Ex. Pannenberg). Yet Pannenberg rejects a corporeal resurrection body in favor of a spiritual body which appeared from heaven, was recognized as Jesus, spoke, and in Paul's case, was accompanied by a

phenomenon of light (Also A.M. Hunter, R. Brown, J.D.G. Dunn, L. Gopplet and A.M. Ramsey).

5. A literal bodily resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the best solution of the Easter event based upon the evidence. This position differs from number four in its affirmation of a “resurrected body.” This is the classic orthodox position, and the one affirmed by evangelicals (significant contributions come from Ladd, Craig, Osborne, D. Fuller, Gundry and Geisler).

SPECIFIC EVIDENCES

1. Naturalistic theories fail to explain away the event and have been disproved or rejected (even by liberal scholarship).
2. It does work and meet genuine needs (subjective evidence).
3. The birth and continuance of Christianity with the central message of the resurrection.
4. The change in the day of Worship from the Sabbath to Sunday by Jews.
5. Testified to have been seen by women first, in spite of the invalid nature of their witness in major cases in the first century.
6. Radical change in the disciples.

- A. New power
- B. New courage
- C. Faithful to death

- * Men will die for a lie. They will not die for what they know is a lie.
7. Empty tomb/no body.
 8. Numerous and various resurrection appearances.
 9. Unlikely nature of mass hallucination.
 10. Reported appearances which lasted 40 days then completely stopped for all.
 11. The 50 day interval between the resurrection and the proclamation at Pentecost (Acts 2) in Jerusalem itself.
 12. Multitude of fulfilled Old Testament prophecies.
 13. The Jewish leaders could not disprove the message.
 14. Conversion of two skeptics: James and Paul.
 15. Accepted character and claims of Jesus.

He claimed to be God (John 8:58; 10:30; 14:9)

He claimed He would rise (Matt. 16:24)

C.S. Lewis said, “He is either Lord, Liar or Lunatic. He left us no other options.”

16. Articles left in the empty tomb (John 20:5 ff.).
17. Unexpected nature of the resurrection.
18. Reliable eyewitness documents recording the facts.

- * The New Testament is the most well authenticated document from the ancient world. There are more manuscripts of the New Testament (5300) of an earlier date and more reliable nature than any other book from antiquity.