

THE SON OF GOD: HIS DEITY & HIS HUMANITY

The Hypostatic Union of Jesus Christ

I would like to spend out time in the Word speaking a little bit about our Savior and our Salvation.

- (1Tim 3.16) Our Savior is Jesus Christ, Who is God manifest in the flesh.
- (1Tim 2.5) And, as the Mediator between God and men, our Savior is the man Christ Jesus.
- Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man; He has a divine nature (God) and a human nature (man).

I think it's good and healthy every now and then to have a topical sermon on Sundays.

- It gives us the opportunity to look specifically, and in some detail, at something with need to learn and understand in our Christian faith. This is one of those topics.
- We need to understand certain things about the two natures of Jesus Christ...
 1. In order to avoid some pretty serious heresies in Christendom today, and
 2. In order to appreciate the salvation we have (in Christ, and in no other) just a little more.

I. The Simple, Biblical Truth: Jesus Christ is Both God and Man

A. Christ's Deity: He is God

1. (Col 2.8-9) The Bible is very clear when it speaks about the deity of Jesus Christ.
 - The fullness of the Godhead (all that God is), dwells bodily in Jesus Christ. He is God.
2. (Heb 13.8) This is why the Bible says that Jesus Christ is immutable (which is one of the attributes of God that He shares with no one and nothing else; God alone is eternally unchangeable).

B. Christ's Humanity: He is Man

1. The Gospels give us several examples of Christ's human weaknesses and limitations.
 - a) (John 4.6) As He walked through Samaria, Jesus grew weary and wanted to stop and rest.
 - b) (John 19.28) When Jesus was on the cross, He got thirsty.
 - c) (Mat 4.2) After Jesus had fasted for 40 days and nights, He was hungry.
 - d) (John 11.25) Jesus wept—for whatever reason, Jesus became sad.
 - e) (John 12.27) As His time to go to the cross drew nearer, Jesus became troubled (concerned).
2. (Heb 4.15) Jesus experienced all our human infirmities, but with one distinction: He never sinned. And this brings up an important question...

C. Could Jesus Christ have sinned?

1. (Heb 4.15) Obviously Jesus did not sin. But the question is: Could He have sinned?
 - a) If He was tempted in all points like as we are, then the answer has to be, “Yes.”
 - b) If He could not have sinned, then where was the temptation (e.g., you cannot tempt me to flap my arms and fly to the moon to take bite out of it to see if it's made of cheese; I don't have the capacity or the desire to do that—there is no temptation in that for me)?
 - c) If Jesus could not have sinned, then He was not tempted like I am (because I can sin and that is precisely what make a temptation to sin a temptation).
 - d) In this sense, Jesus was like Adam before he (Adam) sinned: A perfect man with no sin nature, but with the capacity to sin (and therefore Jesus had to confront very real temptation to sin).

2. (Jam 1.13) Here's the problem: God cannot even be *tempted* to sin.
 - a) God's nature is such (He is all good and no bad) that He is not even *tempted* with evil.
 - b) Jesus was and is and will always be God. So, He cannot even be tempted to sin. Could He, then, have sinned? This passage clearly says, No (because He cannot even be tempted to sin).
3. How do we reconcile these two aspects of Jesus Christ? The answer lies in what is called the *hypostatic union* of Jesus Christ.

II. The Hypostatic Union: Jesus Christ is Fully (100%) God and Fully (100%) Man

A. Jesus Christ is one Person with two natures.

1. Hypostatic Union, definition: Two distinct and dissimilar natures are united in one.
 - a) (Col 2.8-9) In His divine nature, Jesus Christ is fully (100%) God.
 - b) (Heb 4.15) In His human nature, Jesus Christ is fully (100%) man.
 - c) However, even though He has *two* natures (one divine, one human), He is *one* Person.
2. There is nothing like this in any other creature in all of creation.
 - a) Do not confuse this with the “dual nature” of a born-again Christian.
 - (1) We have the divine nature (in our spirits) and we still have the sin nature (in our flesh), but we are *not* 100% divine, nor are we 100% human. We are 100%, and that is a mixture of the new man and the old man.
 - (2) Jesus Christ is fully (100%) God. And at the same time, Jesus Christ is fully (100%) man.
 - b) Do not think you will ever fully understand this hypostatic union that is found only in Jesus.
 - (1) This concept is easy to *see* in the Scripture, just like the Trinity is easy to see.
 - (2) But also like the Trinity, it can never be fully understood because it is *unique* in all of creation—only God can be this thing (every comparison we can make will fall short).

B. Examples of the Hypostatic Union of Jesus Christ

1. The apparent contradiction in Jesus Christ's *omnipresence*.
 - a) The *omnipresence* of God refers to Him (all of Him) being in every place all the time.
 - b) (John 3.1-2) Jesus sat in *one* place at *one* time and spoke with Nicodemus.
 - c) (John 3.13) And yet Jesus says that He *is* in heaven at the very same time. How is that?
 - (1) As a man (human nature) Jesus was limited by space and time; He was sitting in one specific location at one specific time speaking with one specific person, no one else.
 - (2) As God (divine nature) Jesus Christ was everywhere fully present.
 - d) The apparent contradiction in John 3.13 is explained by the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ.
2. The apparent contradiction in Jesus Christ's *omnipotence*. Was Jesus all-powerful or not?
 - a) (Mat 8.23-24) Apparently He was not because He showed the same weaknesses that we have. He got tired (very tired!), so much so that He could sleep through a storm.
 - b) (Mat 8.25-27) And yet Jesus can control all of creation with only a spoken word.
 - c) It's not a contradiction. It's the hypostatic union of two natures (human and divine) in one Person: the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The apparent contradiction in Jesus Christ's *omniscience*.
 - a) (Mark 13.32) Jesus stated clearly that He did not know the day or the hour of the second coming. Therefore, by His own admission, Jesus was not omniscient, right?
 - b) (John 21.17) And yet at the same time we see that Jesus knew (and knows) all things.
4. Jesus is one Person with two full and complete natures:
 - a) In His human nature, He was limited in presence, power, and knowledge. In His divine nature, He is fully and completely God.
 - b) This hypostatic union is unique in all of creation. For example: Jesus knew things in His divine nature (e.g., the day and the hour of the second coming) that He did not know in His human nature. That is totally foreign to us—a complete mystery!

C. Heresies the Hypostatic Union of Jesus Christ Helps Us Avoid

1. Jesus Christ, as God (divine nature), was never “begotten” (born).
 - a) This heresy is perpetuated even today by those who hold to the old, Catholic creeds (still propagated by many of the “Reformed” churches today).
 - (1) For example, the Nicene Creed says: “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, *begotten of the Father before all worlds...*”
 - (2) Other versions of the same Creed say it this way: “We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, *eternally begotten of the Father...*”
 - (3) Was Jesus Christ, as God (His divine nature), “begotten”? If He was, then He is not the same yesterday, and today, and tomorrow—He is not immutable.
 - b) This is a *heresy* (not just bad doctrine) because it directly affects our salvation: It describes a different Jesus than the Jesus of Scripture.
 - (1) In the Mormon heresy, Jesus is born as the brother the devil. Same name, different Jesus.
 - (2) In the Jehovah's Witness heresy, Jesus is Michael the Archangel. Same name, different Jesus.
 - (3) In the Nicene Creed, Jesus is a begotten god. Same name, but not the Jesus of the Bible.
 - c) (Heb 1.5-6) The “begotting” (birth) of Jesus refers to the *day* (in time, not before) when He was brought into this *world*. It refers to the day God was born a man, born of a virgin.
 - (1) *As God*, Jesus Christ was *never* “begotten”—His divine nature *is* God and therefore He is immutable, eternal, and infinite. He never changes—never has and never will.
 - (2) *As man*, Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary—the “only begotten” that way.
 - (3) He is one Person, but He has two complete, distinct, dissimilar natures: God and man.
2. (Php 2.5-8) The “Kenosis” Heresy
 - a) Many use this passage to teach that Jesus laid aside some of His divine attributes when He was born into this world.
 - (1) The term *kenosis* comes from the Greek in Philippians 2.7.
 - (2) This heresy teaches that Jesus was “less than fully God” when He was on the earth.
 - b) The Bible never teaches that Jesus was anything less than fully God always.
 - (1) (Heb 13.8) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. He is immutable.

(2) What changed when He became a man was His role and position.

(a) He laid aside the riches of His glory in heaven; He laid aside His privileges as King.

(b) And He took the form (the role, the position, the body) of a servant in order to save us.

D. The Hypostatic Union of Jesus Christ was Necessary for Salvation

1. (Heb 10.3-7) The union of the divine and human natures in one body of flesh (v5)—the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ—was specifically designed for our salvation.
2. Because a man sinned, justice demands that a man must die.
 - a) I am a man, and I have sinned. Justice demands my death—the death of a man (not an animal).
 - b) Therefore, God became a man (fully man) in order to pay the sin debt of a man.
3. However, one man can only pay the sin debt for one man.
 - a) To pay my own sin debt, I would have to suffer an eternity of God's wrath in the lake of fire.
 - b) If I could find one perfect man, he could take my place... but only my place because he is only one man.
4. Jesus Christ was fully (100%) man and fully (100%) God, and therefore He is the only Person who can satisfy the sin debt for all men.
 - a) The only way one Person can pay the sin debt for all men who have sinned, is if that one Person is a man who has an infinite life to give.
 - (1) Because Jesus Christ is a man, He can take the place of men.
 - (2) Because Jesus Christ is God, He could suffer the eternal, infinite penalty of sin for all men.
 - b) (Isa 53.3-10) Jesus suffered, in body and in soul (v10), for the sins of all men.
 - (1) Only an infinite and eternal Being could do that because He had to suffer an eternity of God's wrath for each and every sinner.
 - (2) The hypostatic union made our salvation possible: God became man and took our place.

(1Tim 2.5) There is only one Mediator—one Savior—because there is only one man who is also God.

- God chose to save men, so He became a man. But in order to save all men from eternal punishment, the Savior had to have an infinite life to lay down.
- There is no salvation in any other because no other person has the hypostatic union required to save us.

Therefore, we can rest assured that Jesus Christ died for all men, for all sins.

- If Jesus Christ did not die for all men and all sins, then the life He sacrificed on the cross was not infinite and He was not, therefore, God in the flesh.
 - ✓ If the atonement of Jesus on the cross was a “limited atonement,” the Jesus was not God in the flesh.
 - ✓ Because if Jesus was God, His sin payment was infinite: He suffered all God's wrath for all sinners.
- You can be fully and completely saved (forgiven and accepted by the Creator) because Jesus Christ, God in the flesh (the God-Man), suffered and died in your place (He suffered and died for all men).

Rest assured that you can come confidently into the presence of Christ for grace and help in time of need.

- Just like the Bible says, Jesus Christ was a man and He suffered in all points like as we are.
- He's “been there and done that.” Everything that you experience, He's been through it. Rest assured that He can comfort you and keep you in times of trials, temptations, and difficulties.