

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

Direct Scriptural Claims⁹

- The word “God” (theos) used of Christ

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. (John 1:18)

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 9:5)

...waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:13)

But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8)

...To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:1)

- The word “Lord” (kyrios) used of Christ (used in the Septuagint & NT)

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" (John quoting Isaiah 40) (Matthew 3:3)

"The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet?" (Jesus quoting Psalm 110) (Matthew 22:44)

...yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (1 Corinthians 8:6)

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:3)

- Other important claims to deity

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (Revelation 22:13)

⁹Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 543-547.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Matthew 16:13)

Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:64)

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:28)

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power... (Hebrews 1:1-3)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

...that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. (John 5:23)

Evidence that Jesus possessed attributes of deity¹⁰

1. Omnipotence

And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" (Matthew 8:26-27)

Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matthew 14:9)

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. (John 2:1-11)

¹⁰Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 543-547.

2. Eternity

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (Revelation 22:13)

3. Omniscience

But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) (John 6:64)

Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God." (John 16:30)

4. Omnipresence

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. (Matthew 18:20)

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)

5. Sovereignty

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:5-7)

*"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' **But I say to you** that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." (Matthew 5:21-22)*

6. Worthy of Worship

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." (Hebrews 1:6)

How can a right understanding of the deity of Christ strengthen our intimacy with God?

How can a right understanding of the deity of Christ strengthen our missional activity?

THE INCARNATION

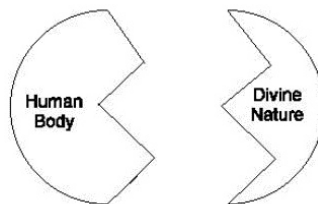
(DEITY AND HUMANITY IN ONE PERSON OF CHRIST)

*The incarnation of Christ is a most extraordinary and amazing affair; it is wonderful indeed, that the eternal Son of God should become man; that he should be born of a pure virgin, without any concern of man in it; that this should be brought about by the power of the Holy Ghost, in a way unseen, imperceptible and unknown, signified by his overshadowing; and all this in order to effect the most wonderful work that ever was done in the world, the redemption and salvation of men: it is a most mysterious thing, incomprehensible by men, and not to be accounted for upon the principles of natural reason; and is only to be believed and embraced upon the credit of divine revelation, to which it solely belongs.*¹¹ (John Gill)

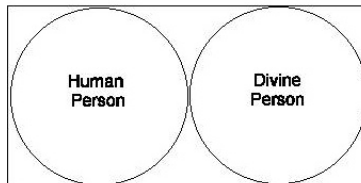
The incarnation means that the eternal Son of God became “flesh”, that is, He assumed an additional nature, namely, a human nature.

Three inadequate views of the person of Christ¹²

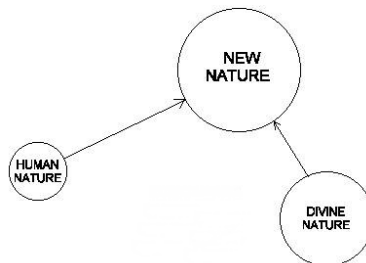
1. Apollinarianism (Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea in A.D. 361) – the one person of Christ had a human body but not a human mind or spirit, and the mind and spirit of Christ were from the divine nature of the Son of God



2. Nestorianism (Nestorius, a popular preacher at Antioch, and from A.D. 428, a bishop of Constantinople) – Christ had two persons in one body, rather than one person



3. Eutychianism (Eutyches A.D. 378-454 – was the leader of a monastery in Constantinople) - Christ had one nature only. Denied that the human nature and divine nature in Christ remained fully human and fully divine.

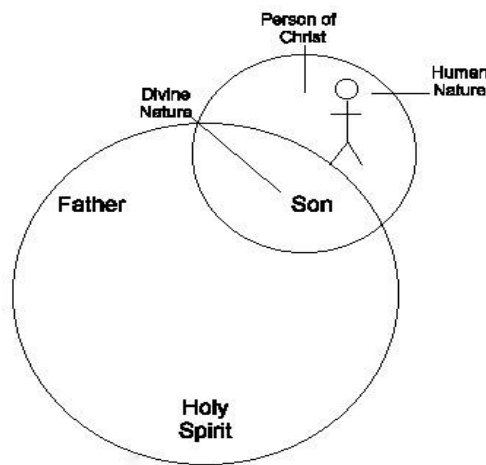


¹¹John, Gill, *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity: Or A System of Evangelical Truths, Deduced from the Sacred Scriptures*. New Edition. Vol. I & II. (Tegg & Company, 1839), 536.

¹²Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 554-556.

The Chalcedonian Creed of 451:

*We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, 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, 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; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.***



Against Apollinarianism: *truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood*

Against Nestorianism: *indivisibly, inseparably...concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons*

Against Eutychianism: *to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably...the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved*

Understanding the Incarnation¹³

1. The doctrine of the Incarnation means that two distinct *natures* (divine and human) are *united* in one person: Jesus. Jesus is not two people (God and man). He is one person: the God-man. Jesus is not schizophrenic.
2. When the Word became flesh he did not *cease* to be the Word. The Word veiled, hid, and voluntarily restricted the use of certain divine powers and prerogatives. But God cannot cease to be God.

¹³Sam Storms, "Incarnation and Humanity," *Enjoying God*, October 21, 2013, accessed July 3, 2015, <http://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/incarnation-and-humanity/>.

3. When the Word once became flesh he became flesh forever. After his earthly life, death, and resurrection, Jesus did not divest himself of the flesh or cease to be a man. He is a man even now at the right hand of God the Father. He is also God. He will always be the God-man.

*...all the qualities and powers that are in us, as well as all the qualities and powers that are in God, were, are, and ever will be really and distinguishably present in the one person of the man from Galilee.*¹⁴ (J. I. Packer)

*The fact that the infinite, omnipotent, eternal Son of God could become man and join himself to a human nature forever, so that infinite God became one person with finite man, will remain for eternity the most profound miracle and the most profound mystery in all the universe.*¹⁵ (Wayne Grudem)

How can a right understanding of the incarnation strengthen our intimacy with God?

How can a right understanding of incarnation strengthen our missional activity?

*I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God.*¹⁶

C. S. Lewis

¹⁴J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, 105.

¹⁵Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 563.

¹⁶C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 40-41.