

## **Systematic Theology: The Life of Jesus Christ**

Memory Verse: Philippians 2:6-8

### **THE HYPOSTATIC UNION**

The Hypostatic Union refers to the fact that Jesus was truly God and Jesus was at the same time truly human. Hypostatic is best defined as 'personal.' So the "hypostatic union" is the truth that Christ's human nature and divine nature can be 'unified in one person.' Not only is Jesus truly God and truly man, but He is also fully God and fully man. He has a divine will, and a human will, as each nature possesses its own will.

**Humanity:** Jesus experienced birth, growth, exhaustion, sleep, hunger, thirst, anger, sorrow, weeping, compassion, love, joy, temptation, prayer, suffering, and death. His resurrection body continues to prove His humanity (Luke 24:39-42). Jesus' full humanity is a necessary and essential doctrine (1 John 4:2-3).

1. He had to have perfect obedience as our representative—Romans 5:18-19, 12-21; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:45, 47
2. He had to be our substitute sacrifice, high priest, and mediator—Hebrews 2:16-17; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:5
3. His perfect life also becomes an example for us to follow—1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:21.

**Deity:** Jesus was fully God, as attested to repeatedly in Scripture, & was God in human flesh in the incarnation.

- "God/Lord" used of Christ (John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Romans 9:5; 2 Peter 1:1; Luke 2:11; Matthew 3:3)
- Claimed to be God and God with us (Matthew 1:23; John 8:58-59; Revelation 22:13)
- Son of Man and Son of God (Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 26:64-66; 11:25-30; Hebrews 1:1-3, 5, 8)
- Divine attributes: omnipotence (Matthew 8:26-27; 14:19; John 2:1-11), omniscience (Mark 2:8; John 6:64), omnipresence (Matthew 28:20), forgive sins (Mark 2:5-7)
- Full deity (Colossians 1:19; 2:9). Never emptied of divine attributes but voluntarily chose to submit His exercise of them fully to the Father's will in the Spirit's power.
- Deity necessary for infinite wrath to be atoned, for salvation to come from God, & to be our Mediator

There are many ERRONEOUS VIEWS on the person of Christ, especially in the early church. Most of them reject either the deity or humanity of Christ or try to fuse/change/twist the two essential natures of Christ.

### **BAPTISM**

Jesus was baptized to reveal the personal presence of the Messiah in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. John the Baptist identified the Messiah as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Jesus explained: "It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). By submitting to John's baptism, Christ obeyed the will of God and identified himself with sinners. This act of obedience in baptism was a necessary part of the righteous life he lived that would be imputed to believers. It marked his identification with those whose sins he would bear (Isa. 53:11; 1 Pet. 3:18) and it publicly affirmed his messiahship by testimony directly from heaven (Matt. 3:17, Ps. 2:7, and Isa. 42:1).

### **TEMPTATION**

In accord with the categories listed in 1 John 2:16, Satan tempted Jesus with "the desires of the flesh, the pride of life, and the desires of the eyes." Through this specific time of testing as throughout his earthly life, Jesus was tempted "in every respect... as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

**Impeccability:** Scriptures testify that Jesus, being truly God, could not have possibly sinned. However, His temptations were more than valid... Jesus took temptation's fullest weight and still resisted.

- Jesus's impeccability does not undermine His genuine humanity/temptations, much like pure gold passing the test of fire does not undermine the genuineness/intensity of the fire.
- To argue otherwise is to suggest that Jesus was able not to be truly God. This is to circumscribe Jesus's deity by his humanity and to deny the fundamental principle of the hypostatic union.
- His obedience was to the Father and the Father's will—John 4:34; 8:12, 29; 15:10; James 1:13; John 5:19
- He knew no sin, is without sin, & spotless—2 Corinthians 5:21; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:19; 2:22; 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:5; John 14:30
- His human temptation & sinless life have practical application to us—Hebrews 4:15-16.

## TRANSFIGURATION

The event known as the transfiguration came at a turning point in Jesus's ministry and gave the disciples assurance that Christ was the Messiah. Jesus had predicted his coming death (Matt. 16:21), and this preview of glory was meant to reassure the disciples that the kingdom he promised would be established. The brilliant light of Christ's countenance during the transfiguration (Matt. 17:2) portended the glory of "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). The transfiguration event most powerfully and dramatically demonstrated that Jesus was the true glory of God. Though Christ's first coming was in humility, the second will be in glory, robed in light.

## TEACHING

Jesus's teachings reveal the fact that he was a master teacher and storyteller who possessed knowledge and wisdom beyond any other person. His teaching was always grounded in **divine revelation**. Jesus handled tough questions from critics but showed understanding for his students. In every setting and with every hearer, Jesus displayed a mastery of communication.

**Parables...** consist of an analogy cast in the form of a simple and often brief story taken from everyday life. Jesus employed them to obscure the truth from unbelievers while at the same time making it clearer to his disciples (Matt. 13:11-12). This veiling of the truth acted as both judgment and mercy. It was judgment because it kept them in the darkness that they loved (John 3:19), but it was mercy because they had already rejected the light, so any exposure to more truth would only have increased their eternal condemnation. Jesus's parables are not allegorical stories with hidden, complex, or symbolic meanings. Jesus's parables have one main, uncomplicated point. When a parable's symbolism tends to be more complex, Jesus usually explains the symbolism for his hearers, so that they will not miss his main point.

**"I Am" Statements:** Bread of life (John 6:35, 48, 51), Light of the world (John 8:12), Door of the sheep (John 10:7, 9), Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14), Resurrection and Life (John 11:25), Way, Truth, and Life (John 14:6), True Vine (John 15:1, 5).

## MIRACLES

Jesus proved his deity and his role as Messiah by means of many miracles (Matt. 11:4-5). Jesus's miracles came about through his inherent divine power (Matt. 4:23-24; John 10:25, 37-38; 15:24; 20:30-31). Jesus's miracles sometimes resulted in belief (John 2:11; 9:30-33; 11:45) or created a willingness in his hearers to listen to his teachings (Mark 12:37; Luke 5:15). However, most people rejected Jesus despite his miracles. Miracles do not necessarily convince people to believe in the Lord or in his gospel message (Matt. 13:58; Luke 16:31; John 2:23-25; 12:37; 15:24). Rather, they demonstrate his deity, supernatural origin, power as Creator, and authority as the sovereign Lord of all creation.

## ARREST

The Jewish leaders hatched a conspiracy to "arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him" (Matt. 26:4). But this was all by the "predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23 Isa, 53:10) and he himself announced his arrest beforehand (Matt. 17:22; 20:18). God himself had foreordained the very minutest details of how Jesus would die, and all went according to God's perfect plan (1 Pet. 1:18-21). Jesus' arrest reveals the perfect plan of God and the willing obedience of Christ to that plan, no matter the consequences for him personally (Matt. 26:39). Therefore, dying was Christ's consummate act of submission to the Father's will. Jesus was in absolute control (John 10:17-18) and His divine sovereignty brought purposeful fulfillment of the OT prophecies concerning Him.

## TRIALS

Nearly all regulations were openly flouted in the trial of Christ. His trial was unjust and illegal by virtually every principle of jurisprudence known at the time. The trial the Sanhedrin imposed on him was one extended act of deliberate injustice, the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of the world. Sheer political expediency, and a desire to placate the Romans, was their motive for the arrest and crucifixion of Christ (John 11:47-53). Jesus endured 5 trials of injustice with corrupt characters including Annas, Caiaphas, Herod Antipas, and Pontus Pilate.