

CHRISTOLOGY

Who is Jesus and What did He Do?

CHRISTOLOGY ASKS 2 QUESTIONS

- Who is Jesus (Nature)
- What did he do (Work)
- We have a number of trite Christologies that haunt the American church: Jesus as our handyman, interior decorator, EMT, personal trainer, pharmacist, along with the most common one—Jesus as our mascot. We welcome him among us to cheer us on, to inspire our efforts, to give us confidence in the outcome of the contest. But in the end the game is really about us, not Him. – Steve Seamands.

WHO IS JESUS? AND WHAT IS HIS WORK?

- These 2 questions are inseparable
- This is the most important question in Christianity because the answer is the line of distinction between Christianity and all other religions.
- Christianity is a relation to a Person. It is not essentially an idea or an institution. Being a Christian does not mean first and foremost believing in a message. It means believing in a person – Thomas Oden.

WHERE DO WE FIND ANSWERS TO OUR ???

- Scripture is the Primary Source
- Mitch Mayer says the whole Bible can be understood in 5 Jesus centered divisions: Anticipation, Manifestation, Proclamation, Explanation and Consummation.
- The Bible is one long Christology—from the first page to the last page, it points at the nature and work of Christ.

ENCAPSULATED CHRISTOLOGIES

- Colossians 1:15-20
- Philippians 2:5-11
- Hebrews 4:14-5:10
- Hebrews 8:1-6
- Hebrews 10:1-18
- John 1:1-18
- I Timothy 3:16

AGGREGATE TRUTHS

- Affirm assertions that are expanded in Christologies
- Examples
 - Romans 3:25
 - Romans 5:11
 - Romans 6:23
 - John 3:17-18
 - Can you think of others?

CHURCH CREEDS

- Meant to be a summary of Scripture that can be recited by an illiterate society in which there is an absence of printed materials.
- Apostles Creed
- Nicene Creed

WHAT IS THE NATURE AND WORK OF CHRIST?

- Build a list by looking at SOME of the Scriptures
- Boil that down to 4 pillars/Essential Truths
- T-Chart : Colossians 1:15-20
- Great Bible Study or ongoing List for your encouragement.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

- Visible Image of the Invisible God (15)
- Firstborn of all creation (15-17)
- Head of the Church (18)
- Firstborn of the dead (18)
- Fully God (19)
- Reconciler, Peacemaker, Sacrifice (20)

FOUR ESSENTIAL TRUTHS ABOUT
CHRIST FROM SCRIPTURE

Summary of
Encapsulated Christologies and
Aggregate Truths of Scripture

In Codified Form

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

- Jesus is the personal name of One who existed in history
- Christ (Greek) Messiah (Hebrew) = the Anointed One Sent by God
- He cannot be reduced to either/or He must always be BOTH
- All Heresies/Misbelief try to pry Jesus loose from his identity as Christ OR Christ away from the historical person of Jesus.
- “All errors, heresies, idolatries, offenses, abuses and ungodliness in the church have arisen primarily because of this” – Martin Luther
- **The Person and Work of Jesus Christ are inseparable.**
- **Why does this matter? Heresy emphasizes one at the expense of the other**

TWO NATURES ONE PERSON

- **Fully Human**

- Augustine in his Confessions said that in his pre-Christian days he had read and studied the writings of all the great pagan philosophers, but none had ever said, “The Word became flesh.” It never crossed their minds.
- E. Stanley Jones “The Word became flesh is the Great Divide. In all other religions it is the Word became a philosophy, a moralism, a system or a technique. Only in Christianity, for all time and for all people did the Word become flesh.
- By becoming fully human, Jesus reveals what human beings are like according to God’s original design and intent.

TWO NATURES ONE PERSON

- **Fully Human (2)...** WHY did God become Human? (a Scriptural summary)
 - To reveal God to humanity (John 1:18; 14:7-11)
 - To provide a High Priest interceding for us able to sympathize with our weakness (Hebrews 4:14-16)
 - To offer humanity a pattern or example of the fullness of human life (1 Peter 2:21, 1 John 2:6)
 - To provide a substitutionary sacrifice adequate for the sins of all humanity (Hebrews 10:1-10)
 - To bind up demonic powers (1 John 3:8)
 - To provide humanity with a final judge at the end of time (John 5:22-27)

TWO NATURES ONE PERSON

- **Fully Divine**

- Jesus is the full and final disclosure of God. We do not need to go behind Christ or beyond Christ to know what God is like. – Steve Seamands
- He is not part human and part divine—fully human and fully divine
- He does not oscillate between human and divine--fully human and fully divine all the time

- **Jesus Christ was Fully Human and Fully Divine**

- **Why Does this Matter? He had to be human to take on our sin and divine to deal with our sin once and for all.**

DEATH AND RESURRECTION AS KEY TO THE WORK OF CHRIST

- Jesus' teachings are important, as is his incarnation, his moral life and his example, *but in comparison, his death and resurrection are the key to his nature and work.*
- **Jesus' Death** is understood in terms of:
 - A court of law (we are justified by his death)
 - World of Commerce (we are bought with a price)
 - Personal Relationship (we were enemies; now we are children)
 - Worship (He was the atoning sacrifice)
 - Battleground (His death triumphed over evil and death)
- Death is key because it cannot be understood apart from the gravity of sin

DEATH AND RESURRECTION AS KEY TO THE WORK OF CHRIST

- **Jesus Resurrection** announces victory over death and the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)
- NT writers concentrate on four works of the devil
 - The Law (being made right with God by effort)
 - Fall Human Nature (this is who you are, you can't help it)
 - Godless Society (everybody else is doing it)
 - Death (there is no hope for you)
 - Doesn't mean they cease to exist—it means they are overthrown!
- **Jesus Christ suffered, was dead and buried, and on the third day he rose from the dead.**
- **Why does this matter? Jesus' primary role is as Savior of the World**

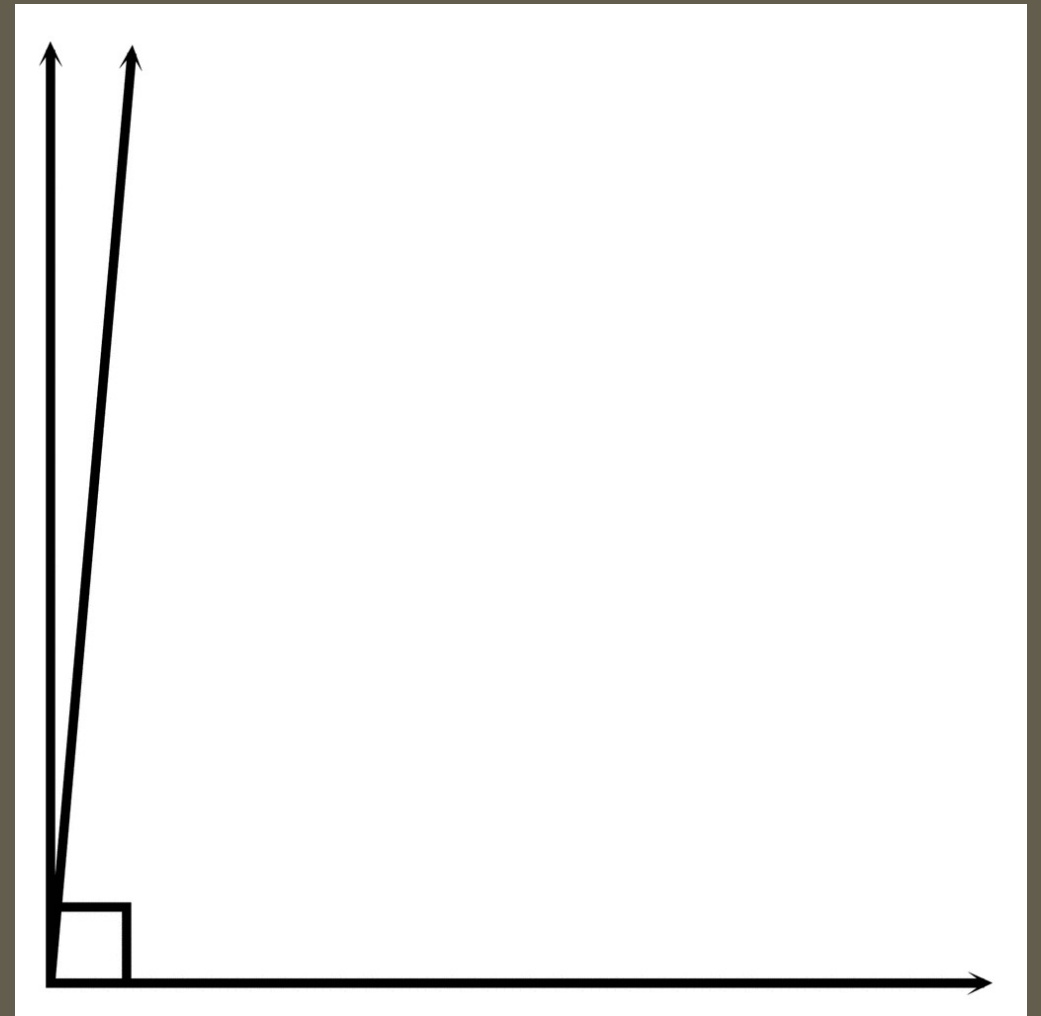
THE THREE OFFICES

- **Prophet** –The prophet speaks for God and Jesus the prophet announces God’s plan to redeem the world not destroy it.
- **Priest** – The priestly ministry of Jesus focused on a single event—his self-giving death as a sacrifice for our sin. He is priest who intercedes and the offering that atones.
- **King** – prophet and priest were expressions of Jesus’ humble servanthood; King is demonstrated by resurrection, ascension, and session (sitting in place of power) Matthew 28:18
- Only in Jesus; Moses (prophet); Aaron (priest); David (king)
- **Jesus is not OR...He is AND—the all sufficient One.**
- **Why Does this matter? He announces God’s plan, He fulfills God’s plan, He consummates God’s plan**

HOW DO WE GET THIS
WRONG?

The Davinci Code Example

Good Heresies
are like Good Fiction



HISTORICAL HERESIES

- Gnosticism (140) – Salvation by knowledge
- Monarchianism (190) – God is one person; there is no Trinity
- Arianism (318) – Jesus is not divine; he is human
- Monophysitism (371) – Jesus has one divine nature; he is not human
- Pelagianism (390) – Salvation by good works
- Marcionism (160) – OT God and NT God are two different Gods.
- Docetism (400) – Jesus did not have a real body he only appeared to

HOW HERESIES ARISE

- No new heresies
- We make Jesus who we want him to be instead of who he is...
- We choose the wrong lens---Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience
- We Don't Know the Scriptures – Matthew 22:29

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- This is THE question of Christianity: Who is Jesus and What did He do? Get it wrong and nothing else matters.
- If you don't believe these "Core Four" then you don't have a faith, you have a philosophy and Buddhism, Hinduism or Islam would be an easier philosophy because this "philosopher" Jesus ask us to come and die.