

## WEEK 4 | THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. . . perfect in manhood. . . truly man, of a reasonable soul and body. . . consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like us. . .

### CREED OF CHALCEDON

We believe. . . in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. . . For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human.

### CREED OF NICEA

Scripture teaches us that the person of Jesus Christ is both God and man—one person fully possessing two natures. He is the theanthropic person, the God-man, the most unique and amazing person to ever live. Last week we saw how Scripture teaches and affirms his deity. This week, we will see what Scripture teaches us about his humanity.

We should also recognize that it was no accident that our savior was fully human; in fact, it is theologically necessary. In his systematic theology, Wayne Grudem lists seven reasons Scripture declares it was *necessary* that Jesus be fully human:<sup>1</sup>

#### 1) For Representative Obedience<sup>2</sup>

Jesus is “the last Adam,” the representative head of a new humanity. Where Adam failed to resist temptation and obey God, Jesus succeeded (Matthew 4:1-11). Thus, whereas Adam’s transgression brought condemnation and death to the whole human race, Jesus’ obedience brought justification and life to all who are in him (Romans 5:12-19).

#### 2) To Be a Substitute Sacrifice

In order to die in the place of men and pay their price for sin, Jesus had to be a man. Only man was under the penalty of eternal death for sin (Romans 6:23), so only a man could legally pay the penalty for that sin. As the author of Hebrews says, “Since therefore the

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994),

<sup>2</sup> See Brandon D. Crowe, *The Last Adam: A Theology of the Obedient Life of Jesus in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017).

children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death. . . he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:14, 17).

### 3) To Be the One Mediator Between God and Men

In order to be the mediator between God and men, Jesus had to be both human and divine. In this way, as a man he could represent men before God (1 Timothy 2:5), and as deity he could represent God to men (Hebrews 10:19-22). As Job said, we needed one who “might lay his hands on us both” (Job 9:33).

### 4) To Fulfill God’s Original Purpose for Man to Rule Over Creation

Man was created to exercise dominion over creation as God’s vice-regents (Genesis 1:26-28), a task in which Adam and Eve failed. Later, the author of Hebrews would recognize that man had yet to achieve this destiny, the purpose for which he was created (Hebrews 2:5-8, c.f. Psalm 8:4-6). Jesus, as the last Adam, succeeded where Adam failed and this earned the right to rule over creation *as a man*. Thus, the author of Hebrews writes, “But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death (Hebrews 2:9). By using the language of Psalm 8, the author of Hebrews is showing that Jesus has achieved man’s destiny to rule. Indeed, all authority has been given to him (Matthew 28:18) and God has put everything in subjection to him (Ephesians 1:22).

### 5) To Be Our Example and Pattern in Life

By living a fully human life in obedience to the Father, Jesus demonstrated a life of holiness for us to emulate. We are called to “follow in his steps” (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6). Thus, we are increasingly being conformed into his image and likeness through the process of sanctification (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18). This will culminate in our glorification when “we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).

### 6) To Be the Pattern for Our Redeemed Bodies

In his discussion on the nature of the resurrection body, Paul tells us that Christ is the “first fruits” of those raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23), an agricultural metaphor that describes what the rest of the harvest will be like. His resurrected body becomes the pattern upon which our resurrected bodies will be based, so that “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven (1 Corinthians 15:49).

## 7) To Sympathize As High Priest

The author of Hebrews tells us that because Jesus was “in every respect tempted as we are” he is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” (Hebrews 4:15). Because “he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:18). If Jesus had not come as a man, he would not have known *experientially*<sup>3</sup> what we go through when we face temptations and trials in life. Because he has experienced these things, he is able to more fully sympathize with us.

Having seen why it was necessary that our Savior and Redeemer be fully human and why the Biblical storyline demanded it, we now turn to Scriptural affirmations of Jesus’ humanity.

### I. DIRECT ASSERTIONS

**A. He Is Declared To Be a “Man” (John 19:5; Acts 2:22; 1 Timothy 2:5)**

**B. He Is Declared To Be Human (John 1:14; Philippians 2:7; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14)**

### II. HIS TITLES

**A. Jesus – his human name given at birth**

**B. Son of Joseph – used by others who perceived Jesus as human**

**C. Son of Mary – indicates Jesus had a human mother**

**D. Son of Man – while the term also has divine and eschatological significance, the Semitic construction also indicates Jesus had all the characteristics of a man**

**E. The Last Adam – he is the head of a new, redeemed humanity (1 Corinthians 15:45)**

### III. HIS COMPOSITION

**A. Fully Human Body – Luke 24:39-42; Hebrews 2:14**

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<sup>3</sup> We must be careful to not say that Jesus gained additional objective knowledge or information by becoming a man. This would violate his divine omniscience. At the same time, the author of Hebrews draws a clear connection between Jesus’ subjective experience and his ability to sympathize. Thus, whereas God has always had factual information about man’s temptation, by becoming human Jesus experienced it subjectively and is now able to recall that experience and is able to more fully sympathize with us.

**B. Fully Human Soul – Matthew 26:38; John 12:27; Acts 2:27**

**C. Fully Human Spirit – Mark 2:8; Luke 23:46**

#### IV. HIS DEVELOPMENT

**A. Human Ancestry – His genealogies (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38)**

**B. Human Conception and Birth – Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-7; Galatians 4:4**

It is important to recognize that having a human father is not an essential part of being a human being. Adam was fully human but had not human father or mother—he was created from the ground by God. However, Jesus had to be descended from Adam in order to fully represent the human race, and he had to be descended from Abraham and David to be the Messiah. Jesus had this lineage physically through Mary and legally through his adoption by Joseph.

**C. Human Growth**

Jesus went through the normal stages of human development. He was a baby (Luke 2:16), a child (Luke 2:40), and an adult, all the while increasing “in wisdom and in stature” (Luke 2:52), indicating mental, physical, and spiritual growth.

#### V. HIS LIMITATIONS

**A. Weariness – Matthew 8:24; Luke 23:26; John 4:6**

**B. Hunger – Matthew 4:2; 21:18**

**C. Thirst – John 19:28**

**D. Sleep – Matthew 8:20, 24**

#### VI. HIS EMOTIONS

**A. Joy – Luke 10:21; Jon 15:11; 17:13; Hebrews 12:2**

**B. Grief – Matthew 26:36-37; John 11:33-35**

**C. Love – Mark 10:21; John 11:3; 13:23**

**D. Compassion – Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34**

**E. Amazement – Mark 6:6; Luke 7:9**

**F. Indignation – Mark 10:14**

**G. Anger – Mark 3:5**

**H. Zeal – John 2:15-17**

**I. Feeling Abandoned and Lonely – Mark 15:34**

**J. Inner Agony – Luke 22:44; John 11:33, 38; 12:27**

**K. Fervency in Prayer – Hebrew 5:7**

## VII. HIS MANNER OF LIFE

**A. He Submitted to His Parents – Luke 2:51**

**B. He Paid Taxes – Matthew 17:24-27**

**C. He Ate and Drank – Matthew 11:19**

**D. He Lived as a Godly Man**

1. He Attended Public Worship – Luke 4:16
2. He Prayed – Luke 3:21; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 6:12
3. He Trusted God – Matthew 27:43

## VIII. HIS TEMPTATION

**A. The Sphere of His Temptation**

Jesus was tempted in his humanity, for “God cannot be tempted with evil” (James 1:13). Thus, he experienced genuine temptation in his human nature.

**B. The Nature of His Temptation**

1. Test God’s Provision – Matthew 4:2-3
2. Test God’s Protection – Matthew 4:5-6
3. Test God’s Plan – Matthew 4:8-9

**C. The Response to His Temptation**

To each temptation Jesus responds with Scripture. In other words, Jesus resists temptation by trusting in God's word and relying on God's spirit, not by relying on his divine power. (We will spend more time on this question when we study the impeccability of Christ.)

1. Man needs God's word more than physical sustenance – Matthew 4:4
2. Man must obey God by not testing him – Matthew 4:7
3. Man must obey God by worshipping Him alone – Matthew 4:10

## IX. HIS LIMITED KNOWLEDGE

### A. Possible Instances of Limited Knowledge

1. The woman with a blood disorder – Mark 5:30  
Jesus may not have known who touched him, or he may have wanted her to publicly confess her faith.
2. The demon-oppressed boy – Mark 9:20-21  
Jesus may not have known how long the epileptic boy had been having seizures, or he may have wanted the people listening to know from the father how long the boy had been having seizures.
3. The fig tree – Mark 11:12-14  
Jesus may not have known he would find no fruit on the fig tree, or he may have wanted his disciples to see and learn from what the tree symbolized.
4. Lazarus – John 11:34  
Jesus may not have known where Lazarus was buried, or he may have wanted people to lead him there so they would be present and know Lazarus was truly dead.

### B. Definite Instance of Limited Knowledge

Jesus did not know the time of the Second Advent. In Mark 13:32 he says, "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (We will look how this limited knowledge is reconciled with Jesus' divine omniscience when we study the hypostatic union in a later lesson.)

## X. HIS DEPENDENCE ON THE SPIRIT

### A. OT Prophecies of the Messiah's Dependence on the Holy Spirit – Isaiah 11:2-3; 42:1-4; 61:1-3

**B. He Was Dependent on the Holy Spirit in His Conception – Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35**

We should also note that the God the Son also actively chose to become human, even as he depended on the Holy Spirit; his own divine attributes did not cease to function (Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; 10:5-7).

**C. He Was Filled by the Spirit from Conception – c.f. Luke 1:15**

**D. He Was Given the Spirit without Measure – John 3:34**

**E. He Was Anointed by the Holy Spirit for Messianic Ministry – Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 3:21-23**

**F. He Was Led by the Spirit – Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1; Mark 1:12**

**G. He Preached by the Power of the Spirit – Matthew 12:15-21; Luke 4:17-22; Acts 10:38**

**H. He Taught by the Spirit – Acts 1:2**

**I. He Performed Miracles by the Power of the Spirit – Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:30; Acts 10:38**

**J. He Offered Himself through the Spirit – Hebrews 9:14; c.f. John 10:17**

**K. He Was Raised by the Spirit – Romans 1:4; 8:11**

One Problem that arises is how Jesus' dependence on the Holy Spirit reconciles with his divinity. Do his own divine attributes cease to operate when he is living in dependence on the Holy Spirit? We can understand this by looking at the analogous way that the Holy Spirit operates in our lives. In our lives, the Holy Spirit uses what we have been given by God through natural generation. In the case of Christ, the Spirit used all that was inherent in Christ—including his divine knowledge and power—in leading him to do righteous works. Thus, though Christ provides for us an example of dependence on the Holy Spirit, He is unique in that the Spirit is working in and through not just a man but the God-man. This is why Jesus' preaching, teaching, miracles, and other Spirit-dependent works are evidence of his divinity.

An example of this can be seen in the work of the Spirit to raise Jesus from the dead. Jesus also states that he will raise himself from the dead (John 2:19-22; 10:17-18). Even in his dependence on the Spirit, Jesus' divine perfections never cease to function.

## XI. HIS DEATH

Jesus experienced a fully human death, as evidenced by his own recorded experiences and by the testimony of those present to witness it.

- A. Separation of Body and Spirit – Matthew 27:50; John 19:30**
- B. Cessation of Breathing – Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46**
- C. Evidence of Physical Death – John 19:33-35**

## XII. HIS RESURRECTION

- A. He Was Perceived as Human by More than 500 People – 1 Corinthians 15:6**
- B. He Ate and Drank after the Resurrection – Luke 24:41-43; Acts 10:41**
- C. He Could Be Touched – Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:38-40; John 20:17**
- D. He Possessed a Human Form – Luke 24:38-40; John 20:20**
- E. He Had the Scars from His Crucifixion – John 20:25-27**

## XIII. HE IS FULLY HUMAN FOREVER

- A. His Scars – John 20:25-27**
- B. His Body – Luke 24:39-42**
- C. His Ascension – Acts 1:11**
- D. His Post-Ascension Appearances**
  - 1. To Stephen – Acts 7:56
  - 2. To Paul – 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8
  - 3. To John – Revelation 1:13, 17
- E. His Promise – Matthew 26:29**
- F. His Offices**
  - 1. Prophet – Hebrews 1:1



2. Priest – Hebrews 2:18; 7:24-25; 1 Timothy 2:5
3. King – Matthew 26:64; Revelation 19:11-19