

D. Heresies Concerning the Person of Christ

DEITY MESS'ED UP	Ebionism	denies the deity of Christ
	Monarchianism	denies the deity of Christ
	Arianism	denies the fullness of the deity of Christ
	Macedonianism	denies the fullness of the deity of Christ
HUMANITY MESS'ED UP	Docetism	denies the humanity of Christ
	Apollinarianism	denies the full humanity of Christ
	Monothelitism	denies the full humanity of Christ
NATURE MESS'ED UP	Nestorianism	denies the unity of natures in one person
	Eutychianism	denies the distinction of the natures

III. Conclusion (the necessity and implication of Christ's humanity)

- If Jesus is not God-man, we have no revelation of God.
- If Jesus is not God-man, we have no salvation.
- If Jesus is not God-man, we have no close and personal relationship with God.

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

Reflective Questions for You and Your Small Group

Icebreaker: What was your favorite Christmas present as a child? Why?

- How old were you when you first heard about the trinity? How have you grown in your understanding of this true and life-changing doctrine?
- Christianity requires that the doctrine of the trinity is true. If the trinity is not true, Christianity and its message is false. Discuss why this is so. What does it mean to say Jesus is one person in two distinct natures?
- After hearing this sermon, is there anything you understand more fully about the hypostatic union of Jesus?
- As with the doctrine of the trinity (see #2), the doctrine of the hypostatic union is an essential feature of Christianity. Discuss why this is so.
- Read the creeds together on the handout in the bulletin. What strikes you about these historical proclamations and defenses of your faith?
- Through history, people have sought to deny key things about Jesus (see II.D). What sorts of heresies (or even minor errors) about Christ do we face today? What are the arguments for these views? What are the answers to expose these errors and heresies? Are you prepared to continue the 2,000 year legacy of boldly proclaiming and defending Jesus?
- While orthodoxy (right-believing) has been stressed in the message, we must not forget orthopraxy (right-behaving). Discuss the things that challenge our orthopraxy to Christ. What personally and most regularly tempts your behavior?

ONE OF TWO KINDS

Christmas Christology Part 3

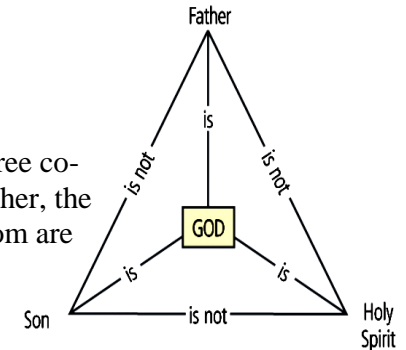
Del Rey Church, Pastor Matt Jones, PhD

I. Introduction

- Christmas Christology (*Christ* [Jesus Christ] – *ology* [study of])¹
- The doctrine of the trinity

Orthodox Definition

One God who eternally exists in three co-equal and different persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, all of whom are fully God, all of whom are equal.



- Christology covered so far

- Christ is fully and completely God [sermon 1] ← DIVINE NATURE
- Christ is full and completely human [Sermon 2] ← HUMAN NATURE

- Questions raised:

- How is it that Christ could be both God and man?
- Did he sacrifice some of his humanity to remain deity?
- Did he sacrifice some of his deity to become human?
- If he retained full humanity and deity, which one had control?

- Christology covered today

- The divine and human natures of Jesus are distinct.
 - The divine and human natures of Jesus are completely united in one person.
- } Hypostatic Union (One Person, Two Natures)

- Key terms

- Trinitarian terms
 - What is God?

Today (English)	East (Greek)	West (Latin)
God, being, divine nature, divine essence	<i>ousia</i>	<i>substantia, essential</i>

¹ In Greek it's *Christou logos* (χριστοῦ λόγος) literally "a word/discourse about Christ".

The 4 Essential Christological affirmations

b. Who are the 3 of God? (Father, Son and Spirit)

Today (English)	East (Greek)	West (Latin)
Persons, egos, relationships, subsistences, centers of consciousness (int., will, em.)	<i>hypostasis, prosopon</i>	<i>persona</i>

2. Christological terms

a. Biblical terms (Logos, Son of God, Jesus, Lord, etc).

b. Theological terms

- Nature – the essential properties of a thing.
- Person – The ego or “I” (that is, the subsistence, hypostatis or individual instance of a nature into a conscious, self aware and willing being).
- Incarnation – the biblical understanding that Christ took on a full human nature in the historical virgin birth.
- Theanthropos – historical name affirming Jesus is God-man.
- Homoousia – Jesus is of the same essence or nature [*homoousion*] with the Father and Spirit. (NOT HOMOIOUSIA)
- Heresy – The opposite of orthodoxy, that is, denying an essential feature of Christianity.
- Hypostatic union – the theological description of the union of the two natures of Christ in one person. Not a defied humanity, nor a humanified deity.

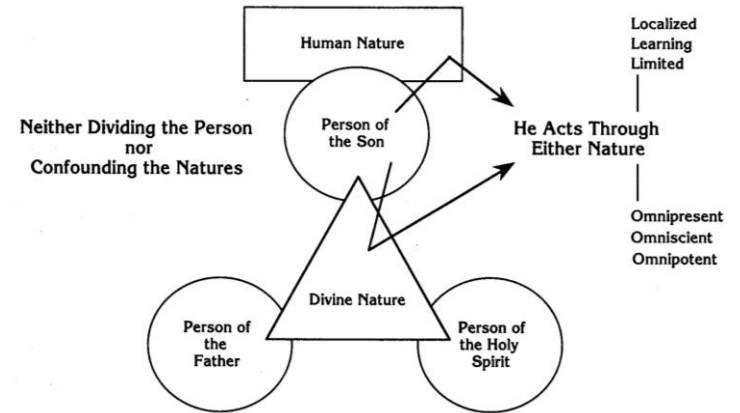
II. Hypostatic Union: Jesus is one dude with two natures

A. The Biblical evidence (John 1:1-3, 14, 4:1-26, 17:1-5)

- Jesus is fully and completely God (listen to sermon 1)
 Jesus is consubstantial (*homoousia*) with the Father and Spirit regarding His Deity.
- Jesus is fully human and completely human (sermon 2)
 Jesus is consubstantial (*homoousia*) with man regarding His humanity, yet without sin.
- The divine and human natures of Jesus are distinct.
 Without Division and Without Separation (*ἀδιαίρετος καὶ ἀχωρίστως*). Without Change and Without Confusion (*ἀτρέπτως καὶ ἀσυγχύτως*).
- The divine and human natures of Jesus Christ are completely united in one person.

B. Theological clarifications

- It is not theanthropic in nature
- It is personal (theanthropic person)
- It is incomparable and mysterious
- It is actual
- Not a tertium quid
- The Concept of “Anhypostasia”
 Anhypostasia = that which has no personality in itself
 Enhypostasia = that which subsists in another personality or partakes of another hypostasis
- The *Communicatio Idiomatum*



C. Historical affirmations

Church Council	Year	Trinitarian and Christological Actions
Nicea	325	Formulated Nicene Creed, which affirms the biblical teaching of the trinity and the divinity of Jesus. Rejected Arianism
Constantinople I	381	Reaffirmed the Nicene Creed. Biblically made clear the deity/role of the Holy Spirit and anathematized those with bad Christology (Apollinarians, Eutychians)
Ephesus	431	Condemned Nestorius.
Chalcedon	451	Chalcedonian Creed, which is the orthodox understanding of the hypostatic union. Rejected Eutychianism.
Constantinople II	553	Condemned Origen
Constantinople III	678	Condemned monothelitism and monoenergism

The Westminster Confession (AD 1643)

"The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon Him man's nature ..."

THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (451 AD)

“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] soul² and body; consubstantial [coessential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood;³ 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;⁴ one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in⁵ two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably;⁶ 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,⁷ 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. Since now we have drawn up this decision with the most comprehensive exactness and circumspection, the holy and ecumenical synod hath ordained, that no one shall presume to propose, orally, or in writing, another faith, or to entertain or teach it to others; and that those who shall dare to give another symbol or to teach another faith... shall be excommunicated.”

²Against Apollinarianism.

³“Consubstantial” (homoousios) is used here in two different senses. In the case of the Father, there is a numerical unity of essence. On the other hand, Christ’s consubstantiality with man is only of a generic kind.

⁴The reference to Mary as “Mother of God” (*theotokos*) is directed against Nestorianism. However, note the important limitation: she is the mother of God “according to the Manhood.” This is to guard against Mariolatry and heathenism.

⁵Important note: Originally the council favored the formula “*ek duo phuson*,” which left open the possibility of speaking of only one nature even after the incarnation. It was realized that this was problematic so the council adopted the formula “*en duo phusesi*,” which means that Christ is in two natures even after the incarnation. He is God-man!

⁶“Inconfusedly” (*asugchutos*) and “unchangeably” (*atreptos*) is directed against Eutychianism, which confounded the human and divine natures of Christ (the human nature was absorbed by the divine). “Indivisibly” (*adiaretos*) and “inseparably” (*achoristos*) is directed against Nestorianism, which lost sight of the unity of the person.

⁷The Greek here reads “eis prosopon kai mian hupostasin.”

THE ATHANASIAN CREED (c350-500 A.D.)

“Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the universal faith, which except everyone shall have kept whole and undefiled, without doubt he will perish eternally. Now the catholic faith is this: We worship One God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is One, the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit; the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated; the Father infinite, the Son infinite, and the Holy Spirit infinite; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet not three eternals but one eternal, as also not three infinities, nor three uncreated, but one uncreated, and one infinite. So, likewise, the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty; and yet not three almighties but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; and yet not three Gods but one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord; and yet not three Lords but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by Christian truth to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be both God and Lord; so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say, there be three Gods or three Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten but proceeding. So there is one Father not three Fathers, one Son not three Sons, and one Holy Spirit not three Holy Spirits.

And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, but the whole three Persons are coeternal together and coequal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity is to be worshipped. He therefore who wills to be in a state of salvation, let him think thus of the Trinity. He is man of the substance of His mother born in the world; perfect God, perfect man subsisting of a reasoning soul and human flesh; equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood. Who although He be God and Man, yet He is not two but one Christ; one however not by conversion of the Godhead in the flesh, but by taking of the Manhood in God; one altogether not by confusion of substance, but by unity of Person. For as the reasoning soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life eternal, and they who indeed have done evil into eternal fire. This is the catholic faith, which except a man shall have believed faithfully and firmly he cannot be in a state of salvation.”