



From Above

There are two basic ways to approach Christology: from below or from above.

The New Testament starts with the divine.

John

1 John 4:2–3

John 1:1–3

John 1:47–49

John 3:2

1 John 5:20

Hebrews

Hebrews 2:14, 9; 4:15; 5:8

Hebrews 1:1–4

Paul

2 Corinthians 8:9

Philippians 2:5–11

Synoptic Gospels

Mark 1:1

Daniel 7:13–14

Psalms 104:3

Isaiah 19:1



The Pre-Existence of Christ

John

John 1:1

John 1:14

John 8:57-58

Exodus 3:14

John 17:5

Hebrews

Hebrews 1:2

Hebrews 1:10

Hebrews 7:1–3

Paul

Galatians 4:4

Romans 8:3, 32.

John 3:16

Colossians 1:15–17

Synoptic Gospels

Mark 1:1–3; Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3

Mark 1:15

Psalms 96:12–13

Mark 10:45

Luke 19:10



Matthew 8:18–20

Mark 12:1–12

The Meaning of Pre-Existence

Incorrect meanings of pre-existence:

- Christ was pre-existent only in the sense that his mission was foreordained by God.
- Think of pre-existence in terms of biology. Jesus was linked by physical descent to Adam, and that is the only kind of pre-existence.
- Christ was not the incarnation of a divine person, but the incarnation of divine agency, divine presence, and divine glory.
- Pre-existence was an invention of the early church, but it is not found in Scripture.
- The Father and the Son had the same message but were not one in essence or being.

Two theological arguments for understanding the pre-existence of Christ as the pre-existence of a person.

- The post-existence of Christ.
- The deity of Christ.

Eternal Sonship and Generation

Eternal Sonship

The Son has for all eternity been the Son.

There are good reasons for acknowledging the eternal sonship of the Logos.

1. Without eternal sonship divine love is diminished. John 3:16
2. Without eternal sonship it is more difficult to defend the same essence or being of the Godhead.
3. Without eternal sonship the Trinity becomes inaccessible and incomprehensible.
4. Without our understanding of the Trinity, which includes eternal sonship, we lose the nature of God's love.



5. Eternal sonship is needed to maintain the unity of the immanent, or ontological, Trinity and the economic Trinity. The immanent Trinity refers to what the Trinity is, one essence and three persons. The economic Trinity refers to what the Godhead did, especially in redemption.

Eternal Generation

Eternal generation is the same as the Son being eternally begotten of the Father.

1. Divine generation cannot be understood in terms of human generation.
2. Divine begetting does not involve originating.
3. Divine generation should be distinguished from divine procession. John 15:26
4. Divine generation, or eternal begetting, is different from being made.

Three points that link eternal sonship and eternal generation.

1. The Father wills to be the Father, but the generation of the Son does not depend upon the Father's will.
2. The Father is ingenerate, that is, not generate, and the Son is generate.
3. Divine sonship, not human sonship, defines what it means to be a son.

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