

Jesus Christ: The Son of Man

Introduction

1. John 1:1, 14. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."
2. Matthew 1:23. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"
3. Philippians 2:5-8. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."
4. Many have a difficult time reconciling the dual nature of Jesus while He was upon the earth, that He was both man and God.
 - a. The Gnostics of the 1st century.
 - 1) Since they thought flesh was intrinsically evil, they believed that God could not come in the flesh.
 - 2) They had many explanations to solve what they believed to be a dilemma
 - b. Modernists of today who look to Him as "just a good man" do not recognize His deity.
 - c. "Johannes Weiss tells us that it is unthinkable that Godhood and manhood should be united in a single person walking upon the earth; that, while no doubt man of ancient time could conceive 'that a man might really be an incarnate deity,' modern men feel much too strongly the impassable barrier which separates the divine and the human to entertain such a notion."
(Benjamin Warfield, *Person and Work of Christ*, p. 211)
5. Both natures, divine and human, can be found in Christ without a conflict between them.

I. The Son of Man - Matthew 8:20

- A. "Son of man" is a self-designation frequently used by Jesus. (Matt. 16:13)
 1. It is used some 85 times in the New Testament, 81 of those by Jesus.
 2. Four exceptions.
 - a. John 12:34. The multitude questions Jesus' use of the term.
 - b. Acts 7:56. It is used by Stephen.
 - c. Rev. 1:13 and 14:14. It is used by John.

- B. The meaning of the term remains an enigma.
 - 1. Neither Jesus nor His apostles ever explained its significance.
 - 2. We must determine its meaning from the contexts in which it appears.
- C. The use of the term.
 - 1. It is sometimes used to simply designate man.
 - a. Num. 23:19. "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"
 - b. Job 35:8. "Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness a son of man."
 - c. Jer. 49:18. "'As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors,' says the LORD, 'No one shall remain there, nor shall a son of man dwell in it.'"
 - 2. It was used by God in speaking to Ezekiel. (Ezek. 2:1, 3, 6, 8)
 - a. Ezekiel 3:1. "Moreover He said to me, 'Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.'"
 - b. Ezekiel 37:3. "And He said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' So I answered, 'O Lord GOD, You know.'"
 - 3. It is used to designate the Messiah.
 - a. An uninspired Jewish book, "The Book of Enoch," uses it to designate a Messianic figure.
 - b. Daniel 7:13-14 connects it with the Messiah. "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed."
 - 4. It connected Jesus with humanity.
 - a. He had an earthly mother.
 - b. He took on the form of man. (Phil. 2:7)
 - c. He possessed human characteristics. (Heb. 2:14)
 - d. It seems hard for man to understand that He was both divine and human.

II. The Deity of Jesus

- A. He is designated as divine. (John 1:1-2)

- B. He was the “fullness of the Godhead.” (Col. 2:9)
 - 1. If one saw Him, they saw the Father. (John 14:7-11)
 - 2. “He was and is, absolute and perfect God.” (R.C. Trench, quoted by W.E. Vine in *The Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, p. 331)
 - 3. He was “Immanuel,” “God with us.” (Matt. 1:23)
- C. He could forgive sins that which only God had the authority to do. (Mark 2:5-7)
- D. Thomas called Him “God” and Jesus did not correct Him. (John 20:28)
- E. He existed “in the form of God.” (Phil. 2:6) In the Greek, the word translated “form,” is *morphe*.
 - 1. It “means the essential attributes as shown in the form. In his preincarnate state Christ possessed the attributes of God and so appeared to those in heaven who saw him. Here is a clear statement by Paul of the deity of Christ.” (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the NT*, p.444)
 - 2. “*Morphe* is therefore properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists.” (Gifford, quoted by Vine, 463)

III. The Humanity of Jesus

- A. Jesus “made Himself of no reputation” (ASV & NASV: “emptied himself”). (Phil. 2:7)
 - 1. He gave up the environment of glory.
 - 2. “Christ did not empty Himself of Godhood. He did not cease to be what He essentially and eternally was.” (Vine, 365)
 - 3. He left the riches of heaven. (2 Cor. 8:9)
 - a. The footnote in the NASV on Philippians 2:7 states, “I.e., laid aside His privileges.”
 - b. He had no regard for self. His regard was only for others.
- B. He took upon Himself the “form of a bondservant” and the “likeness of men” in “appearance as a man.” (Phil. 2:7-8)
 - 1. *Morphe*. “Denotes the special or characteristic form or feature of a person or thing; it is used with particular significance in the N.T., only of Christ, in Phil. 2:6-7, in the phrases ‘being in the form of God,’ and ‘taking the form of a servant.’” (Vine, 463)
 - 2. “The word became flesh.” (John 1:14; 2 John 7; 1 John 4:2)
 - a. He was born of the flesh. (Rom. 1:3)
 - b. He had a body prepared for Him. (Heb. 10:5)
 - c. He had a body of flesh and blood. (Heb. 2:14; Luke 24:39)
 - d. “God was manifested in the flesh.” (1 Tim. 3:16)

3. How did humanity and deity come together? By the virgin birth. (Luke 1:26-35; Matt. 1:18; Gal. 4:4)
- C. Jesus had characteristics of humanity.
 1. He was subject to certain laws of human development.
 - a. He grew. (Luke 2:40, 52)
 - b. He was subject to His parents. (Luke 2:51)
 2. He possessed human attributes.
 - a. Hunger. (Matt. 4:2)
 - b. Weariness. (John 4:5-6)
 - c. Sleep. (Luke 8:23)
 - d. Agony. (Luke 22:44)
 - e. Compassion. (Matt. 9:36)
 - f. Sorrow and trouble. (Matt. 26:37-38)
 - g. Weeping. (John 11:35; Luke 19:41)
 4. Though He was human, He was sinless. (John 8:46; 1 Pet. 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21)
 - a. He was tempted. (Heb. 4:15)
 - b. What kept Him sinless?
 - 1) Not His deity. If so, what kind of example would He be to us? (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21-22)
 - 2) He resisted the devil. (Matt. 4:1-10; Jas. 4:7)
 - 3) He was made perfect through His suffering. (Heb. 2:9-10; 5:8-9)

Conclusion

1. One should love Jesus the man because:
 - a. He is deity yet He left the glories of heaven with all its beauty, peace and happiness in the presence of God and took the likeness of man to suffer, be hated and rejected, and put to death.
 - b. His dual nature enables Him to be the perfect Mediator between God and man. (1 Tim. 2:5)
 - c. He gave His life. (2 Cor. 5:21; John 10:17-18)
 - d. He will be a righteous judge. (Acts 17:31)
2. May all of us come to a better knowledge of the Son of Man so that we might have a deeper love for Him.