

The Person of Jesus Christ

Introduction:

We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ is both perfect Man and perfect God; that He possesses a human nature (yet without sin) and a divine nature.

Here we will contemplate the union of these two natures of Christ, which has engaged the minds of philosophers, theologians, and church men for centuries — often with violent repercussions!

I. The Hypostatic Union

The phrase “hypostatic union” is a theological term for the union of the two natures of Christ in one Person.

A. Unscriptural Explanations

1. The Union is comparable to marriage.

The wedding of a man and a woman is in reality “two becoming as one,” because there are still two people involved. Such an explanation of the union of 2 natures in Christ is wrong because Christ is ONE Person.

2. Jesus is a man Indwelled by Christ.

This reduces our Lord to the same level as the believer, because every Christian is a man indwelled by God through the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus Christ is much more than a man filled with the Spirit.

3. Jesus had Dual Personality.

By this explanation is meant some form of “Jekyll and Hyde,” on/off type of arrangement.

This concept is not supported by Scripture. In fact, it comes closer to describing the believer who has both the old sin nature and the divine nature — in a state of conflict!

4. Jesus is Half-God and Half-Man.

To be half of anything is not to be anything. A “half-God is no God!

5. Jesus is a Man of God.

This is basically the same as # 2 above. The contrast between Christ and John in John 1:1-8 answer this explanation.

6. Jesus is a Deified Man.

This is an impossibility — akin to the Mormon heresy!

B. The Scriptural Understanding.

The Lord Jesus Christ always spoke of Himself as ONE PERSON. There was never any interchange of “I” and “Thou” between His human and divine natures.

The Lord Jesus Christ clearly has TWO NATURES, not one.

It is correct to speak of the person (singular) of Christ, but not of the nature (singular) of Christ, for He has two distinct natures!

The Person of Jesus Christ

The person of Christ is theanthropic (deity embodied in human form), but not His nature. That is, we can speak of the “God-Man” when we wish to refer to His person, but ought not to refer to a “divine-human” nature (singular.)

This union of two natures in one Person is in reality incomprehensible to the human mind. Like the doctrine of the Trinity — three Persons in one essence — we must accept it as fact because the Bible teaches it to be so.

II. The Importance of the Union of the Two Natures in One Person

A. Why the Savior Needed to be a Man.

Christ had to become a man in the best and fullest sense of the word in order to atone for the sins of mankind.

It was a man that sinned — thus only a man could pay the penalty. — Hebrews 10:5-10

Because Christ is a man, tempted in all points like as we are (yet without sin), He is approachable. (If He were only God in the sense of being pure Light — no man could come to Him.)

B. Why the Savior Needed to be God.

As God, Jesus Christ is able to forgive sin and reconcile men to the Father. Because He is God we can trust Him with our souls for eternity — something we would not do if He were just a man.

Since Jesus had no earthly father, He inherited no sin nature. Thus He, and He alone, is perfect in His humanity and His deity.

III. The Character of the Lord Jesus Christ

This union of two distinct natures in one lovely Person produced the beautiful character of our Lord.

A. He is Absolutely Holy.

Luke 1:35; John 8:29, 46; 14:30; Acts 2:27; 3:14; 4:27; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; I John 3:3

B. He is Genuinely Compassionate.

Matthew 9:36; Mark 10:21; John 10:11; 15:13; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 3:19

C. He was Truly Humble.

Matthew 20:28; Luke 9:58; II Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-8

D. He was Completely Submissive (Meek).

Matthew 11:29; Luke 7:37-39; 23:34; II Corinthians 10:1

E. He Lived a Life of Prayer.

Matthew 14:23; 26:36-46; Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12; 22:44; Hebrews 5:7

F. He was a Continuous Worker.

Matthew 8:16; 12:22-13:53; John 4:34; 5:17; 8:2; 9:4