



Systematic Theology

A study of the major doctrines of Scripture

TOPIC 2 – THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

LESSON 53 – THE TRINITY: JESUS THE SON – THE INCARNATE CHRIST (PART 2)

BIBLICAL DOCTRINE (JOHN MACARTHUR), PGS. 255-322

The Seed of the Woman

- ▶ The first Gospel announcement in Genesis 3:15 states that the victorious offspring who will defeat the serpent will not be the offspring of a man.
- ▶ Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”
- ▶ Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman...
- ▶ By omitting any relationship to Adam, God is telling us that the promised offspring will not partake of Adam’s sin.
- ▶ 1 Cor. 15:21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

The Virgin Birth

- ▶ Both the first Adam and the second Adam (Jesus) were fathered by God.
- ▶ Luke 3:23 Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.... 38 the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.
- ▶ Matthew 1:16 And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. 18 Now the birth (*genesis*) of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 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.”
- ▶ Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

The Virgin Birth

- ▶ If Matthew and Luke are not dependable when they tell us about Mary's pregnancy then their entire histories of Jesus become suspect.
- ▶ If Jesus was not born without human male parentage, then He could not have been sinless, and therefore could not have suffered as a substitute for fallen men and women before God. Rom. 3:23; 5:12-19; 6:23; see Psa. 51:5.
- ▶ The virgin birth allows for the pre-existence of the Second Person of the Trinity – Jesus existed before the miraculous conception in Mary's womb.
- ▶ He existed as the Son, and was born as a child. Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.
- ▶ Jesus took on a human body – yet it is antichrist that says He did not come in the flesh – 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7.
- ▶ He took on flesh in order to put away sin – Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:5.

Mary's Perpetual Virginity

- ▶ Catholic teaching proposes that Mary was miraculously conceived herself, was perpetually a virgin, and was assumed up into heaven without dying.
- ▶ According to Scripture, Mary was a sinner in need of her son as Savior just like the rest of us. "All have sinned," "There is none good, but God."
- ▶ Mary and Joseph had other children.
- ▶ Mark 6:3 Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him. (See also Matt. 13:55-56).
- ▶ His brother Judas was known as Jude, and wrote the epistle of Jude.
- ▶ His brother James led the church at Jerusalem and wrote the epistle of James.
- ▶ Galatians 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Human Titles for Jesus

- ▶ Jesus – Matt. 1:21 (Yeshua, deliverance)
- ▶ A Nazarene – Matt. 2:23
- ▶ Son of David – Matt. 12:23; 21:9; Rom. 1:1-4
- ▶ Son of Man – Mark 2:10; John 12:34; Acts 7:56; Rev. 1:13
- ▶ The Last Adam – 1 Cor. 15:45-49; Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:21-22
- ▶ Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus – 1 Tim. 2:5-6
- ▶ The Lion of the Tribe of Judah – Rev. 5:5
- ▶ The Root of David – Rev. 5:5

Hypostatic Union

- ▶ In AD 325 the Council of Nicea affirmed Scripture's revelation of Jesus as being truly God.
- ▶ In AD 451 the Council of Chalcedon agreed that Jesus was at the same time human and divine, involving a "hypostatic union" of the two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation.
- ▶ This union of His two natures maintains His deity undiminished and His humanity unexalted.
- ▶ The incarnation refers to the whole concept of God manifesting Himself in human flesh. The virgin birth constituted the means by which the incarnation was accomplished. The hypostatic union was brought into being by the incarnation.

Hypostatic Union

- ▶ The human nature received by Christ in His incarnation allows Him to experience humanity, but He does not exist as 2 persons. He remains one person with two natures.
- ▶ Jesus as a human experienced birth, growth, exhaustion, sleep, hunger, thirst, anger, sorrow, compassion, love, joy, temptation, suffering, and death.
- ▶ He also experienced first what all other humans will eventually experience, resurrection.
- ▶ Hebrews 2:17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Christ's Limited Knowledge

- ▶ Mark 13:32 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
- ▶ Jesus spoke these words during the time of His incarnation, thus the time of His “humiliation” wherein He was limited by His humanity and yet able to exercise divine attributes at the Father’s direction.
- ▶ Acts 1:6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.
- ▶ He knows now when He is coming back!

Christological Heresies

- ▶ Ebionism – Jesus was not divine nor pre-existent. He was merely a man, although a powerful prophet and good teacher.
- ▶ Gnosticims – matter is evil, spirit is good, thus Jesus was an emanation from God, far removed from Him, and more matter than spirit. Jesus is often described by Gnostics as a phantom, or apparition, not really existing in the flesh.
- ▶ Adoptionism – God adopted the man Jesus as His Son at His baptism. This is a denial of the Trinity and an example of Modalism.
- ▶ Docetism – Christ was divine but not human, He only appeared to be human. He had no body, could not die, and was an illusion.

Christological Heresies

- ▶ Arianism – Christ was a created being, not equal with God in essence or being.
- ▶ Apollinarianism – Christ was divine and did possess a real body but was just God masquerading in human flesh. He was in the body but did not take the body as His own.
- ▶ Nestoriansim – asserted that each nature dictated an individual person, so Jesus was two persons with two natures in one body. Jesus was not God in human flesh but by virtue of His virgin birth was a deified human being.
- ▶ Eutychianism – fused together the divine and human natures as one nature that was neither fully God or fully man but a third hybrid of the two.

Christological Heresies

*Table 4.5 Early Church Councils**

Council	Date	Issue
Nicaea	AD 325	Defended the deity of Christ; opposed Arianism
Constantinople I	AD 381	Defended the deity of Christ; opposed Arianism and Apollinarianism
Ephesus	AD 431	Defended the two natures of Christ; opposed Nestorianism
Chalcedon	AD 451	Defended the two natures of Christ; opposed Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, and Eutychianism/Monophysitism
Constantinople II	AD 553	Defended the two natures of Christ; opposed Eutychianism/Monophysitism
Constantinople III	AD 680-681	Defended the two natures of Christ; opposed Monotheletism
Nicaea II	AD 787	Defended the use of icons

* Adapted from the chart in Nichols, *For Us and for Our Salvation*, 56. Used by permission of Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, www.crossway.org.

Next Week

- ▶ Lesson 54: The Trinity – Jesus the Son – Teachings and Parables