

# 26 QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING!

## QUESTION #11: WHO IS JESUS?

Q. Who is Jesus? Is he God or is he human? Is he a mix of both?

A. Jesus is fully human and fully God in one person, forever.

### 1. JESUS IS A TRUE HUMAN

The idea of defending Jesus' humanity would have seemed silly to the disciples, during Jesus' earthly ministry. He looked like them, he ate and drank like them, he slept like them... he was ultimately human! It wasn't until later, when false teachers came along, that anyone ever had to defend Jesus' humanity.

Let's begin by examining some realities that relate to his humanity...

#### A. JESUS WAS BORN OF A VIRGIN

*Luke 1<sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (See also Matt 1.18, 20, 24-25)*

The virgin birth is important for at least two very large reasons: (1) It is what makes possible the fullness of deity and the fullness of humanity to both be present in one person. (2) It makes possible the birth of a human who will not inherit Adam's guilt, which is passed on to all his descendants.

#### B. JESUS HAD HUMAN WEAKNESS & LIMITATIONS

##### I. IN BODY

Jesus' body functioned just like ours. He grew, got tired, and could be thirsty or hungry (Luke 2.52; John 4.6; 19.28; Matt 4.2). Even after his death and resurrection, Jesus proved his humanity by eating and showing that he had true 'flesh and bones' (Luke 24.39).

##### II. IN MIND, SOUL AND EMOTIONS

*Luke 2<sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom ... // John 12<sup>27</sup> "Now is my soul troubled. ... // Heb 5<sup>7</sup> In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears ...*

#### C. JESUS WAS SINLESS IN HIS HUMANITY

*Luke 4<sup>13</sup> And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.*

*John 8<sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts me of sin? (And this is **after** John 8.12, 29!)*

*2Cor 5<sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*Heb 4<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

## D. JESUS HAS TO BE HUMAN

Jesus had to be human for representative obedience and to be our sacrificial substitute.

*Rom 5<sup>18</sup> Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.<sup>19</sup> For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (See also 1 Cor 15:45, 47)*

*Heb 2<sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.<sup>17</sup> Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

He also had to be human to act as mediator (1 Tim 2.5), as high priest (Heb 2.18), and to be an example for us (1 Pet 2.21).

## 2. JESUS IS TRULY DIVINE

The NT authors use diverse methods to display Jesus' divinity with great clarity.

### A. JESUS AS THEOS (GOD) AND KURIOS (LORD)

The Greek word for God (*theos*), though normally reserved for God the Father, is used of Jesus repeatedly in the NT.

*Rom 9<sup>5</sup> To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*

*Titus 2<sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,*

*Heb 1<sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of your kingdom.*

*2Pet 1<sup>1</sup> Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:*

*See also, John 1.1, 18; 20.28; and Isaiah 9.6 (as an OT example of the same).*

The Greek word for Lord (*kurios*) was used to translate the proper name for God (YHWH), when the OT was translated into Greek. In several important places, this title is used of Jesus, fulfilling prophecies which had previously been understood as referring to God.

*Matt 3<sup>3</sup> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" (See also Mark 1.3)*

*Acts 2<sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' (See also, Rom 10.9, 13)*

*1Cor 12<sup>3</sup> Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.*

The significance of Thomas's declaration of faith after Christ's resurrection must not be overlooked!

*John 20<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"*

## B. JESUS AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY

Jesus is shown to possess the attributes of God. For example: omnipotence (Matt 8.26-27; 14.19; John 2.1-11), eternity (John 8.58; Rev 22.13), omniscience (Mark 2.8; John 2.25; 6.64; 16.30), omnipresence (Matt 18.20; 28.20), and sovereignty (Mark 2.5-7; Matt 5.22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). The NT pictures Jesus as being entirely worthy of worship (Phil 2.9-11; Heb 1.6).

## C. JESUS AND THE AUTHORITY OF GOD

Throughout his earthly ministry, Jesus showed remarkable authority—authority that only God could justly claim. This included authority over prior revelation of God (Matt 5.17-48; 7.28-29; 17.1-8); authority over the Sabbath (Matt 12.6, 8; John 5.17); and authority to forgive sins (Luke 5:17-26; 7:36-49).

## D. OTHER WAYS JESUS IS REFERENCED AS DIVINE

*Heb 1<sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*

*Col 1<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

*Rev 22<sup>13</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*

## E. JESUS HAS TO BE DIVINE

Jesus has to be divine because (1) only an infinite being can pay an infinite penalty for sin; (2) salvation is from the Lord, so it must be God who initiates and intervenes—all of Scripture combines to show us that God must save us or we're doomed; (3) only someone who is God could be mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2.5).

## 3. SOME THOUGHTS ON DEITY AND HUMANITY IN ONE PERSON

We believe, with the Chalcedonian Definition, that 'the property of each nature is preserved' in Christ. In other words, there is one nature which is fully divine and another which is fully human; they are fully one, but never inter-mixed.

### A. ONE NATURE DOES SOME THINGS THE OTHER NATURE DOESN'T DO

Some examples:

- Jesus could be tired, even though omnipotent (see above)
- Jesus could depart from the earth, even while telling his disciples that he was with them to the end of the age Matt (20.28)
- Jesus was born, but has always lived (John 8.58)
- Jesus died, but has the power of indestructible life (Heb 7.16)

### B. ANYTHING EITHER NATURE DOES, THE PERSON OF CHRIST DOES

Some examples:

- John 8.58 – 'Before Abraham was born, I am' (not 'Before Abraham was born, my divine nature was')
- 1 Cor 15.3 – 'Christ died for our sins' (not, 'Christ's human nature died...')

## 4. APPLICATION

### A. TRUTH / AUTHORITY

Jesus is the image of God (2 Cor 4.4). So much so that he could tell his disciples that to see him *is* to have seen the Father (John 14.9). Therefore, whatever Jesus says, does, or sends his Spirit to inspire (John 16.13) is ultimate, authoritative truth.

### B. HUMILITY

The simple reality is that we will never understand the incarnation. The majesty and wisdom and might and meekness of our God demands humility, reverence, and worship.

### C. FREEDOM

Christ, as a man, experienced every temptation, yet was free from sin. Part of his salvation is the gift of his Spirit, who lives in us, who can recall to us Christ's victory over temptation, and give us the strength to remain pure.

### D. DELIGHT

Experiential delight in any truth about Christ is increased when we meditate on the reality of God become man for us. For example:

- Jesus Christ, the image of the glory of God, the exact imprint of his nature, loved *me* and gave himself for *me* (Gal 2.20)
- Jesus Christ, the deserving recipient of all praise and honour from all creation for all eternity bore my shame and was mocked and murdered for me