

# The Savior – The Person of Jesus Christ

## The Two Natures of Christ

### The God-Man

The fact that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was a *man* is a fact that is widely known. The historical record of Jesus life and ministry is clear for all to see. In fact there have been more books written about Him, more pictures painted of Him and more attention focused on Him down through ages than any other man who has ever lived. He is the *most famous* person who lived in the history of mankind without dispute. But look closer at the person of Jesus and you find Him to be the *most unique* person who has ever lived as well. He was a man of amazing supernatural powers unlike any other person who has existed. In the Bible, the life, ministry and supernatural power of Christ are seen to be the result of the fact that He is actually the very Son of God. In the Bible, Jesus Christ is presented as **God incarnate in the flesh**. This fact is known as “the deity of Christ”, or “the divinity of Christ.”

**John 1:14** - 14 And **the Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. NASB

So when we consider the *biblical Jesus*, we find Him to be this unique person in history in which God became a man and lived in the flesh as a man, the God-man. In the history of the world, no other claim as this has been the center of more controversy, study, and focus of theologians and religious worshippers as the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. More than this, the claims of this man Jesus Christ and the supernatural powers he bore, witnessed by thousands, makes Him a wonderful and fearful man indeed. Consider just a few of His claims and works....

- He claimed to be God in the flesh (**Matt 26:64, John 8:23, 58, 10:36, 11:25, Rev 1:17, 22:13**)
- He claimed to be the promised Messiah of the Jews (**John 4:25, 6:35-40, 51**)
- He claimed to have pre-existed his life on earth in Heavenly Glory (**John 3:13, 6:41, 17:5**)
- He claimed to be the final judge of all people at the end of the ages (**Matt 16:27, 25:31-46**)
- He claimed to give eternal life to those who embrace His message (**Matt 19:29, John 11:25**)
- He taught with supernatural wisdom never heard of in history (**Luke 6:20-49, 12:1-18:33**)
- He did miracles of healing lame, blind and deaf people (**John 9:1-41, Matt 9:18-35**)
- He raised people from the dead (**John 11:40-46, Luke 7:11-17, 8:49-56**)
- He walked on water and fed 5000 people with a few loaves and fish (**Matt 14:15-32**)
- He made prophecies of future events with pinpoint accuracy (**Matt 17:22, 24:2, Luke 21:24**)

When you combine these claims and works of Jesus, along with the amazing story of His birth, and His Passion and resurrection from the dead, He is an amazing person indeed.

**Acts 10:37-41** - 38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how **God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed** by the devil; for God was with Him. **39** "And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. **40** "God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible, NASB

One does not have to think real hard to realize that no one person who has ever lived even resembles the person of Jesus Christ. He is in fact the *most amazing* person of wonder, power and wisdom. Even those who embrace His message today, some 2000 years later, claim to have their lives completely transformed in a supernatural way that brings inner peace, joy and a desire to love and do good like no other thing that has ever happened to them. Consider that if all of this be true about this man Jesus Christ, His person and His message is one that we should give close scrutiny to. Jesus answers all the great concerns about our lives and our world. He claims to hold the keys of death, promises immortality and has manifested God to us in most profound manner. Upon close examination, we are left in awe and wonder, proclaiming with doubting Thomas.....

**John 20:28** - 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, **"My Lord and my God!"** NASB

## One Being Two Natures

Being both the Son of God and the son of man is unprecedented in the world. When Jesus the Christ came into the world, born of a virgin, having been conceived by God Himself, the eternal Son of God manifested Himself as a man.

**Luke 1:35** - 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason **the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.** NASB

Here we have an idea, or a concept which the human mind can hardly grasp, God in the flesh of a man. In the passages below, we will examine the *Deity* and the *Humanity* of Jesus Christ in the Bible. But here we will give a brief definition of what it means that Jesus Christ had two natures. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, the Church finally resolved a long struggle to understand this unique idea that Jesus possessed two natures. This happened when a large church council convened for this very purpose in Chalcedon in 451 A.D. The statement on Christ's two natures that was produced is very comprehensive and is referred to as the **Chalcedonian Definition**. It reads as follows... "We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, **the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood**; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; **consubstantial [coessential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood**; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, **to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has been handed down to us.**"

This definition sought to correct several false teachings about the nature of Jesus Christ, which it did, and has been accepted by orthodox churches ever since its inception. Wayne Grudem comments on this.... "When the Chalcedonian Definition says that the two natures of Christ occur together **"in one Person and one Subsistence,"** the Greek word translated as "Subsistence" is the word *hypostasis*, ὑπόστασις (G5712) "being." Hence the union of Christ's human and divine natures in one person is sometimes called the **hypostatic union**. This phrase simply means the union of Christ's human and divine natures in one being."

The Bible makes very clear statements about the fact that Jesus was both human and divine, and this miracle is a precious treasure for us to embrace as we worship our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Romans 1:3-4** - concerning His Son, who was **born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,** according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, NASB

**Galatians 4:4** - 4 But when the fulness of the time came, **God sent forth His Son, born of a woman,** born under the Law, NASB

Many times as we read through the Bible, we will encounter various passages which may stress one or the other nature of Jesus. When this happens we must remember that we understand the verses in the Bible in their larger context of the passage, chapter, book, and even in the context of the whole Bible. Therefore we must understand these difficulties in the light of what the entire Bible teaches about each one. As we see Jesus revealed in the pages of Scripture, let us worship Him with reverence and awe, and with the hymn writer say "hail the incarnate Deity!" "Christ, by highest heav'n adored: - Christ, the everlasting Lord; Late in time behold him come, Offspring of the favored one. Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see; Hail, th'incarnate Deity: Pleased, as man, with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

# The Savior – The Person of Jesus Christ

## The Incarnation and Virgin Birth

### The Incarnation – What Does the Bible Say?

When considering the person of Jesus Christ from the Bible, one soon learns that Jesus is extraordinary. This is because He is the One unique person in all of history in whom God became “**incarnate**.” This is to say that God became “incarnated” as a man in the person of Jesus Christ by the agency of the virgin birth.

**John 1:14** - 14 And **the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. NASB

So when we consider the nature of Jesus from Scripture, we find that He is “**fully man and fully God**.” The Bible teaches that He is God in the flesh.

**1 John 4:2-3** - 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: **every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God**; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. NASB

This is what distinguishes Jesus Christ from every other religious leader, Jesus is in fact God Himself, come into the world to be with us and manifest God to us in a way that we can understand clearly by taking on our very nature. The name Immanuel is a title for Jesus meaning “**God with us**.” God took on a human nature in Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 1:23** - 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "**God with us**." NASB

### The Virgin Birth

The Bible clearly speaks of the fact that Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit and that He did not have a human father.

**Matthew 1:18-20** - 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, **before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit**. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly. 20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which **has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit**." NASB

This divine miracle is remarkable indeed. It clearly speaks of the nature of the baby to be born, that it will be divine. This child will be Holy and without the iniquity of an earthly father being passed to Him. He will be the very Son of God!

**Luke 1:35** – 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason **the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God**." NASB

So we see that Jesus not only had a human mother, Mary, but His father is God Himself. This is a thing of wonder indeed. The **humanity and the deity of Christ are clearly seen** in the fact that Jesus is the son of man, being born of Mary, and the Son of God, being conceived of the Holy Spirit. Thus, God took on a human nature and became a man.

**Galatians 4:4** – 4 But when the fulness of the time came, **God sent forth His Son, born of a woman**, born under the Law, NASB

This was absolutely necessary for Jesus to come into the world to die as a substitution for our sins. No one other man could ever do this for us because Jesus was the only One without sin, and therefore able to die in our place. This doctrine of the Virgin Birth is always and continually under attack for this very reason. If we forsake this fundamental teaching of Scripture, the doctrine of substitutionary atonement loses its foundation of a “lamb without blemish”, and we are therefore left with a less than perfect Savior to die in our place.