

MILILANI COMMUNITY CHURCH
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES
June 2003

LESSON 5: CHRIST (Part 1) THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

HIS DEITY

Athanasius, in his debate with Arius in the 4th century, was one of the earliest Christian writers to point out that the Old Testament teaches that only God can save. Yet in the New Testament Christ is the Savior. What does this statement concerning the function of Christ tell us about His identity? If Jesus Christ is capable of functioning as Savior, who must he be? The only possible solution, Athanasius argued, is to accept that Jesus is God incarnate:

- Only God can save
- Jesus Christ saves
- Therefore Jesus Christ is God.

A. Christ Has The Attributes Of Deity

1. Eternal (John 8:58)
2. Omnipresent (John 3:13; Matthew 18:20; 28:20)
3. Omniscient (John 16:30; 21:17)
4. Omnipotent (Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:3; Mark 4:35-41)
5. Immutable (Hebrews 1:12; 13:8)

B. Christ Has The Offices Of Deity

1. Creator (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10)
2. Upholder of all things (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)

C. Christ Has The Prerogatives Of Deity

1. He forgives sins (Matthew 9:2,6)
2. He will raise the dead (John 5:25-29)
3. He will be the final judge of all men (John 5:22)

D. Christ Is Identified With Jehovah Of The Old Testament

1. He was the creator (Psalm 102:24-27; Hebrews 1:10-12)
2. He was seen by Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-4; John 12:41)
3. He was preceded by a forerunner (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:3; Malachi 3:1; Luke 1:76)
4. He is the object of faith (Joel 2:32; Romans 10:9,13)

E. Christ Is Identified By Names And Titles That Imply Deity

1. "Immanuel" (Matthew 1:22; Isaiah 7:14)
2. "God our Savior" (I Timothy 1:1; 2:3; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4)
3. In several passages "Jesus" and "God" are so grammatically related to each other as to teach their essential unity (II Thessalonians 1:12; Titus 2:13; II Peter 1:1)
4. "Logos" John 1:1-2 He is to God what speech is to thought--the expression of it. Jesus as the "Word" revealed God to us.
5. "Image" Colossians 1:15 Perfectly manifests God
6. "Exact image" Hebrews 1:3
7. "First born" Colossians 1:15 in sense of preeminence not chronology
8. "Jehovah" Luke 1:76; Malachi 3:1

F. Christ's Own Consciousness And Claims Prove His Deity

1. He claimed eternal pre-existence (John 8:58)
2. He claimed absolute oneness with the Father (John 10:28-33)
3. He placed Himself on terms of equality with the Father (John 5:17-22)
4. He equated a man's attitude toward Him with his attitude toward God: To honor him was to honor God (John 5:23); to know Him was to know God (John 14:7-9); to believe in Him was to believe in God (John 12:44); to receive Him was to receive God (Mark 9:37); to hate Him was to hate God (John 15:23).
5. He claimed that He will raise the dead and be the final judge of all men (John 5:22)

HIS INCARNATION

By the incarnation of Christ we mean His coming into the world as a man.

- A. The coming of Christ was predicted in the Old Testament (Isaiah 7:14).
- B. History records the birth of our Lord. His birth was different from all other births.
 - 1. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35)
 - 2. He was born of a virgin (Matt. 1:23)
 - 3. Yet He was truly man (Hebrews 10:5; Matt. 26:38; Luke 23:46)
- C. Christ came in human form in order to:
 - 1. Reveal the Father (John 14:9)
 - 2. Put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9:26)
 - 3. Destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8)

Note Well: One of the foundation truths of the Christian faith is that Jesus Christ is truly God and that He came into the world as a man by the miracle of the virgin birth. As a man, He was absolutely sinless.

HIS WORK

Under this heading, we will discuss the Lord's death, resurrection and ascension.

- A. His death
 - 1. The death of Christ was necessary (John 3:14). It was part of God's eternal purpose (Hebrews 10:7). It was necessary to fulfill Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 53:5). It was necessary to provide salvation for man (Ephesians 1:7).
 - 2. The death of Christ was for others. He died as a substitute (I Cor. 15:3).
 - 3. The death of Christ was sufficient. It completely meets God's claims because Christ endured and exhausted the judgment of God against sin. It completely meets man's need because it was the death of an Infinite Person, and therefore its value is infinite.
- B. His resurrection
 - 1. The resurrection of Christ was necessary to fulfill prophecy, to complete the work of Christ on the Cross (Romans 4:25), and to enable Christ to undertake His present work in heaven.

2. Christ's resurrected body was real. It was not a spirit (Luke 24:39). It was the same body that was crucified because it had the print of the nails and the spear-wound (John 20:27). Yet it was a changed body, with power to overcome physical limitations.
3. After His resurrection, Christ appeared to certain of His followers at least ten times. More than five hundred reliable witnesses saw Him after He arose (I Corinthians 15:6).
4. The resurrection of Christ is an important truth. If there was no resurrection, there would be no Christian faith.

C. His ascension

1. At the end of His ministry on earth, Christ was carried up into heaven (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9).
2. He ascended so that He might enter into His reward (John 17:5), and continue His ministry for His people.

HIS OFFICES

Christ is presented in Scripture as a Prophet, a Priest and a King.

- A. As Prophet, He tells men what God has to say to them, and He thus reveals God to men (John 1:18).
- B. As Priest, He represents believers before God (Hebrews 4:14-16; Heb. 5-10).
- C. As King, He reigns today in the hearts of those who are loyal to Him. In a coming day, He will reign upon the earth for one thousands years. Psalm 72 describes His reign on earth.

In the next lesson we go into more detail on the Offices of Christ as our great prophet, priest and king.

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