

Christology

The Study of Jesus

Why do we study Christology?

If we have a distorted view of who Jesus is, it will impact our sanctification. Too often, Christians conceive of Jesus as someone who was, in a sense, not playing fair. Since he could walk on water, heal the lame, and came from heaven, he must not have struggled as we struggle. But, the witness of Scripture is that Jesus was genuinely human and genuinely obeyed His Father perfectly despite facing temptation in His humanity. In Christ, we are called to victory in our walk.

1. **The Person and Work of Christ** (i.e. Christology) is central not only to our theological convictions, but it is central to the “day-to-day lives of New Testament Christians.” We know this because the subject is treated in key NT passages.
2. Christ is like no other Person who has ever existed or could exist.
 - a. He is fully God and yet fully man.
 - b. **We make claims about our leader that no other religion does.** You can remove Buddah from Hindu and still have the path/way. You can remove Muhammed from Islam and still have the 5 pillars. If you remove Christ from Christianity, you have nothing. This is why the debates about who He is and what He has done matter so much. If we get Jesus wrong; we get eternity wrong. Jesus, rightly defined, is the Way, Truth, and Life.
3. Christology has been the source of controversy since the early church.
 - a. The early church worked out a biblical theology of Christ in a series of councils.
 - b. Modern-day denials of either the divinity or humanity of Jesus (e.g. Jehovah’s Witnesses) are recurrences of old heresies that the early church faced and refuted.
 - c. Because of who Jesus is, it is not enough to give Jesus prominence. He must have the preeminence. We live in a culture where many people seem to give Jesus prominence, but He demands preeminence. Jesus is not merely important or significant; He is everything.

A summary of where we are headed.

His Person (Ontological Dimension)		His Work (Functional Dimension)		
Full Deity	Full Humanity	Sinless Life	Vicarious Death	Bodily Resurrection
We must affirm three things: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The reality of His two natures 2. The integrity of His two natures 3. The unmingled union of His two natures 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Atonement <li style="width: 50%;">• Redemption <li style="width: 50%;">• Propitiation <li style="width: 50%;">• Ransom <li style="width: 50%;">(satisfaction) <li style="width: 50%;">• Sacrifice <li style="width: 50%;">• Reconciliation <li style="width: 50%;">• Example <li style="width: 50%;">• Substitution <li style="width: 50%;">• Justification 		

Four Crucial Texts From Kenneth D. Keathley	
Passage	Description
John 1:1–18; 8:58	Logos Christology
Philippians 2:6–11	Servant Christology
Colossians 1:13–23; 2:9–10	Cosmic Christology
Hebrews 1:1–14; 2:5–18	Summary Christology

Four Crucial Councils			
Year	Location	Refuted	Affirmation
325AD	Nicea	Arius	Jesus is fully God.
381AD	Constantinople	Apollanarius	Jesus is fully man.
431AD	Ephesus	Nestorius	Two natures fully joined.
451AD	Chalcedon	Eutychus	Two natures in one person.

Colossians 1:13–23; 2:9–10
(Cosmic Christology)

1. **The importance of Colossians 1–2** | The foundation of the argument of the letter is found in 2:9–10: *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.* Truth has as its source Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate of God’s revelation because “in Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily.” **This is a clear statement of the full deity of the Lord Jesus who exists bodily.**
2. **The nature of Colossians 1–2** | Col. 1:15–20 is very likely an **early Christian hymn** (F.F. Bruce, 1984, 100). This is important because:
 - 2.1. Some people try to say the church developed the idea that Jesus was divine over time. The idea is that Jesus did not believe Himself to be divine but the church arrived at this believe over decades. However, if this is a hymn familiar to Paul who is writing Colossians in 60AD, it is clear that the earliest believers affirmed that Jesus is God.

- 2.2. If this is a hymn, this is not just something that Paul came up with but something he received.
- 2.3. If this is a hymn, it means there was general/broad agreement about what it said by the early church. The debates about Christology did not come primarily from confusion about who Jesus is but from people trying to undermine the witness to who He is.
3. **The Background of Colossians 1–2.**
 - 3.1. The Colossian church was struggling with syncretism (a mixing in of other religious beliefs and practices).
 - 3.2. Paul’s solution to their problem of seeking the “fulness” of spiritual life through other places/practices than in relationship with Jesus is to remind them that Jesus, as God, is over all.
4. **Breaking Down Colossians**
 - 4.1. **Christ is the Lord of the Cross** (1:13–14, 20) | *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins* (Col 1:13–14). *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross* (Col 1:20).
 - 4.1.1. Delivered from darkness
 - 4.1.2. Transferred into His kingdom
 - 4.1.3. Redemption by His blood
 - 4.1.4. Forgiveness of Sins
 - 4.1.5. Peace with God
 - 4.2. **Christ is the Lord of Communication** (1:15a, *He is the image of the invisible God*)
 - 4.2.1. “Image” | likeness, representation form, manifestation and reflection
 - 4.2.2. Meaning | “image” is a relative term in which the degree of likeness must be inferred from the context. It is used 23x in the NT but only twice with reference to Jesus.
 - 4.2.2.1. Example of non-exact representation | Rom 1:23 in the context of idolatry, *“and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and [o]crawling creatures.”* (Rom 1:23, NASB95)
 - 4.2.2.2. But, **when referring to Jesus, the implication is not non-exact but precise and absolute correspondence** such that the worship of Christ is not idolatry but the very worship of the living God. Jesus is, according to Col 1:15a the “perfect visible manifestation of God who is invisible.” Paul expresses the same truth in 2 Cor 4:4ESV, *“in their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*
 - 4.2.3. Significance | What Paul is saying is this: “If you want to see and know God, then look at and believe in Christ.” Christ is not merely a picture of what God is like; He is God Himself.” If you want to know God, if you want Him communicated to you, look to Jesus. Christ is the Lord of communication. Jesus said to him, *“Have I been*

with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? – John 14:9

4.3. **Christ is the Lord of Creation** (1:15b, *the firstborn of all creation*)

4.3.1. “Firstborn” (Jehovah’s Witnesses/Arianism say this means Jesus is the first of all created beings).

4.3.2. Meaning | Can be used in a temporal or positional sense

4.3.2.1. Positional | In this sense, the world conveys the idea of primacy, priority, and supremacy. The Rabbis called Isaac, not Ishmael, Abraham’s firstborn. Though Esau was born first chronologically, Jacob is the one considered the “firstborn.” In Exodus 4:22, Israel, though not the first nation to exist, is called God’s firstborn. In Psalm 89:27, the Messiah is called “firstborn” in a context that clearly refers to His position as “the highest of the kings of the earth.”

4.3.2.2. Temporal | This refers to priority in time and supremacy in rank. This is the way JW’s interpret “firstborn.” However, firstborn is not the same as first created. There is a Greek word to express that idea, but it is not the word Paul used. He was drawing upon the OT usage of “firstborn.”

4.3.3. Significance | This term points to the preeminence and pre-existence of Jesus.

4.3.4. Demonstration of this truth | (vv. 16–17)

4.3.4.1.1. He is Creator of all | *For by him all things were created* (16)

4.3.4.1.2. He is Sovereign over all | *whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him* (16)

4.3.4.1.3. He is Primary | As Creator, “*He is before all things*” (17)

4.3.4.1.4. He is Sustainer | “*in Him all things hold together*” (17)

4.3.4.1.5. For the Jehovah’s Witnesses to be right, we would have to insert the word “other” between “all” and “things,” but **Jesus is not Creator of “all other things” but of “all things.”**

4.4. **Christ is the Lord of the Church** |1:18–20, *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross; cf. 2:9, For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.*)

4.4.1. Key term | “all the fulness”

4.4.2. Meaning | A technical term used by non-believers to refer to anything connected with, flowing from the divine in the unseen world

4.4.3. Significance | Christ lacks nothing of what it means to be God. He possesses all the attributes of God.

4.4.4. Explanation

4.4.4.1. His Preeminence (18)

4.4.4.1.1. He is the Head of the Church | *He is the head of the body*

4.4.4.1.2. He is the Source of the Church | *He is the beginning*

4.4.4.1.3. He is the Resurrection of the Church | *the firstborn from the dead*

4.4.4.1.4. He is the Focus of the Church | *that in everything he might be preeminent*

- 4.4.4.2. His pleasure (19, 2:9)
 - 4.4.4.2.1.1. The completeness of His divine nature | “all the fulness”
 - 4.4.4.2.1.2. The permanence of His divine nature | “should dwell” means to be at home in permanently. The incarnation of Jesus is a permanent reality. The second person of the Trinity has become a man, and He will rule heaven and earth. Jesus has been transfigured and glorified, but His flesh does not pass away. He reigns in body forever. The word “should dwell” signifies permanence.
 - 4.4.4.2.1.3. The essence of His divine nature (2:9) | “the deity” meaning the nature or state of being God is in bodily form. Here, Paul is affirming the full deity and humanity of Jesus.
- 4.4.4.3. His Propitiation (20), *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*
 - 4.4.4.3.1.1. The scope of “all things.” The death of Christ was a cosmic event.
 - 4.4.4.3.1.2. The means of reconciliation is “the blood of His cross.”
- 4.5. **Christ is the Lord of the Christian** | 21–23, *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.*
 - 4.5.1. Our Past Condition (21) | Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil deeds.
 - 4.5.2. Our Present Privilege (22) | But now He has reconciled by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.
- 4.6. Summary
 - 4.6.1. Image (15a) | Jesus is perfectly divine
 - 4.6.2. Firstborn (15b) | Jesus is pre-eminently divine
 - 4.6.3. All the fulness dwells (19) | Jesus is fully divine
 - 4.6.4. Godhead | Jesus is divine in His essence
 - 4.6.5. Dwells | permanently divine

Hebrews 1–2

A Christological Summary

1. The Situation | Writing to Christians tempted to fall away from faith in Jesus but to maintain faith in God through Judaism. To back away from Jesus is to back away from God because Jesus is the climax of revelation, the fulfillment of the OT, the David Messiah, our atonement and our advocate. In chapter 1 of Hebrews, the true deity of Christ and His ultimate revelation of God is stressed. In chapter 2, the humanity of Jesus, and, in particular, His work of atonement is stressed.

2. **Christ is Superior to the Prophets** | 1:1–3, *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 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. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*
 - 2.1. The Completion of Revelation (1:1–2a)
 - 2.1.1. *In these last days* (2) | no more revelation to exceed or surpass that which we have in Christ.
 - 2.1.2. Seven Characteristics in which He is Greater than the Prophets (1:2b–14)
 - 2.1.2.1. *Heir of all* (2) | This is an allusion to Psalm 2:8, *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*
 - 2.1.2.2. *Creator of all* (2) | “*through whom also he created the world*”, world here is the Greek *aiones* or ages. What is meant here is “the whole created universe of space and time, not just “the world.” (F. F. Bruce)
 - 2.1.2.3. *Divine Essence* (3) | *He is the radiance of the glory of God* (3), “radiance” expresses the idea of something like a blinding floodlight, like the brilliance of the sun
 - 2.1.2.4. *Divine Nature* (3) | *the exact imprint of his nature* (3)
 - 2.1.2.4.1. *Imprint* | the Greek is *charakter* meaning the exact impress, representation, or embodiment of God. This is even stronger term than “image” from Colossians 1.
 - 2.1.2.4.2. *Nature* | The Greek is *hypostasis* meaning “the basic nature or essence of a being” (Louw and Nida). The first is saying here that Jesus is just like what God really is. If Jesus is not God, worshiping Jesus is idolatry. If Jesus is God, He is the only way to know God.
 - 2.1.2.5. *Sustainer of All* (3) | *and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*
 - 2.1.2.6. *Savior of All* (3) | *After making purification for sins*
 - 2.1.2.7. *Lord of All* (3) | *he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*
3. **Christ is Superior to the Angels** | 1:4–14
 - 3.1.1. The Old Testament support (7 passages are quoted) is given to show that Jesus fulfills the OT promises in terms of His unique relationship with the Father as the Divine Son (4–6), has a divine nature as an eternal Son and King with no successor (7–14), and has a Divine Position (13) as sovereign Lord over all the angels. He is the Divine Son who has taken on flesh as David’s Son.
 - 3.1.1.1. (5a) Psalm 2:7 | *to which of the angels did He ever say, “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You?”*
 - 3.1.1.2. (5b) 2 Sam 7:14 | *“I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son”*
 - 3.1.1.3. (6) Deut 32:43 | *“Let all the angels of God worship Him”* (LXX)
 - 3.1.1.4. (7) Psalm 104:4 | *Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers (as opposed to the Son who is God) a flame of fire*

- 3.1.1.5. (8–9) Psalm 45:6–7 | *Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness; 7 you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;*
- 3.1.1.6. (10–12) Psalm 102:25–27 | Jesus needs no successor because He is an immortal King
- 3.1.1.7. (13) Psalm 110:1 | *But to which of the angels has He ever said, “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”* (Sidenote: it makes no sense for JW’s to say that Jesus is the angel Michael because Jesus is clearly referred to as over all the angels).
- 3.1.2. Four-fold Comparison of Christ and the Angels**
 - 3.1.2.1. His name is greater (5) | *For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son,*
 - 3.1.2.2. His dignity is greater (6) | *“Let all God’s angels worship him.”*
 - 3.1.2.3. His status is greater (7–12) | He remains unchanged.
 - 3.1.2.4. His function is greater (13–14) | He reigns at the Father’s right hand.
- 3.2. Christ is Superior in His Salvation (2:5–18)
 - 3.2.1. Hebrews continues the theme of Christ’s superiority by an exposition of Psalm 8:4–6.
 - 3.2.2. Christ has
 - 3.2.2.1. Suffered death (9)
 - 3.2.2.2. Tasted death for everyone (penal substitution) (9)
 - 3.2.2.3. Brought many sons to glory (10)
 - 3.2.2.4. Been perfected (experientially as a man) through suffering (10)
 - 3.2.2.5. Destroyed the devil (14)
 - 3.2.2.6. Freed us from the devil (15)
 - 3.2.2.7. Shared in our humanity and been made like us by without sin (14, 17 – 18; 4:15)
 - 3.2.2.8. Become a merciful and faithful High Priest (17 – 18)
 - 3.2.2.9. Made atonement (17)
- 3.3. Conclusion | Hebrews 1 and 2 give a full Christology. **Based on who Jesus is in chapter 1 (God the Son), He is able to accomplish what He does in chapter 2.** The deity (chapter 1) and humanity (chapter 2) of Jesus are on full display in Hebrews 1–2.

John 1:1–18

Logos Christology

1. Introduction | Logos is the word “word” in the statement, *“In the beginning was the word”* (John 1:1). John is focused on Jesus’s nature, who He is, in the opening of His gospel. After establishing who He is, the remainder of the gospel focuses on what He does.
2. John’s Prologue (1:1–18) draws together several facets of Christology.
 - 2.1. It reaffirms Christ’s deity (cf. Col 1–2, Heb 1–2)
 - 2.1.1. He is the Logos (revelation/communication) (1–2)
 - 2.1.2. He is life (creation/salvation) (3–4)

- 2.1.3. He is light (salvation/revelation) (4–5)
- 2.2. It presents Christ's incarnation, tying together deity and humanity (14).
- 2.3. It emphasizes Christ's unique relationship to the Father.
 - 2.3.1. He is the revealer of the Father (1:18; 14:9)
 - 2.3.2. He is the mediator to the Father (14:6)
- 2.4. It provides content for development of the doctrine of the Trinity.
 - 2.4.1. We see the essential oneness of the Father and the Son.
 - 2.4.2. We see the distinctiveness of the persons within the Godhead.
- 3. Background of Logos (Akin and Morris)
 - 3.1. Palestinian Judaism
 - 3.1.1. Wisdom is often personified in the Targums (a running Jewish paraphrase/commentary on the OT).
 - 3.1.2. Rabbis would have understood *logos* as the wisdom or thought of God.
 - 3.2. In Greek philosophy the word *logos* was used to describe the mind of God going back to the 5th c. BC.
 - 3.2.1. *Logos* referred to the thought behind the word. "This was the word that was not spoken or written. It was the word that remained in the mind. It usually stood for reason" (Morris, *ibid*). It's seen as God's reasoning powers. The chaos that is the world is ordered by God's *logos*. It's a cosmos and not a chaos because God's mind is at work.
 - 3.2.2. *Logos* also referred to that which lay beyond man. The Greeks looked out at the universe, and they saw order. They saw the *logos* as the reasoning/ordering principle that brought rationality to the universe.
 - 3.3. Hellenistic Judaism
 - 3.3.1. *Logos* is prominent in Philo (an Alexandrian Jew, trained in Hellenistic thinking who lived at the time of Christ. He uses *logos* as the personification of God's words and actions. The term is used more than 1300 times in his writing and denotes "the means whereby God creates the world."
 - 3.3.2. The *Logos* is the way in which God is known in the mind. However, while Philo is not far from accurate, the *logos* is not personal or eternal in Philo's writings.
 - 3.4. **The Old Testament | the "word of God" in the OT denotes God Himself in action.**
 - 3.4.1. The agent of creation (Gen 1; Ps 33:6; Prov 8:22); *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host* (Ps 33:6).
 - 3.4.2. The agent of revelation (Gen 12:1, 15:1, 22:11; Prov 8; Is 9:8; Jer 1:4; Amos 3:1, 8) | *After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."* (Gen 15:1). Even the Rabbis noticed that the word in the OT sometimes seems distinct from the Lord.
 - 3.4.3. Eternal (Ps 119:89) | *Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.*
 - 3.4.4. The agent of redemption (Psalm 107:20) | *He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.*
 - 3.4.5. In the OT, the word is God in action.
 - 3.5. John's Logos Doctrine
 - 3.5.1. John's motives and meaning

- 3.5.1.1. John utilized the word logos because of its capacity to communicate to multiple cultures.
- 3.5.1.2. Yet, John is building on the foundation of the OT not of secular culture. Philo's logos, for example, was a reason and an it, but Jesus is the word and a He. The logos is not merely God's agent in creation but God Himself.
- 3.5.1.3. The logos is God's personal, visible, communication to man in revealing and redeeming power.
- 3.5.1.4. The logos does not explain Jesus. Rather, Jesus explains and fills the word logos with its true meaning. Wisdom has become a person, divine reason in a man.
- 3.5.1.5. To the Greeks, logos is reason; to the Jews, it is word and wisdom, and to John the logos includes these concepts but in a person.
- 3.5.1.6. Jesus is the personal communication, revelation, and expression of God.

4. Exposition of John 1:1–18

4.1. **The Nature of the Word (1–5)** | *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

4.1.1. He is divine in His person (1) | 3 aspects of His nature

4.1.1.1. Pre-existence | *In the beginning was the Word*, the word “was” is in an imperfect verb which indicates “simple continuous existence” without any indication of an origin (A.T. Robertson: 3).

4.1.1.1.1. Coequal with God

4.1.1.1.2. Coeternal with God

4.1.1.1.3. Coexistent with God

4.1.1.1.4. Consubstantial with God

4.1.1.2. Distinctiveness | *and the Word was with God* (1)

4.1.1.2.1. *With* | Preposition that indicates equality and distinction. The literal idea here is “face-to-face” with God (Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 4).

4.1.1.2.2. This means any form of modalism (doctrine that holds that the persons of the Trinity represent only three modes or aspects of the divine revelation and not distinct and coexisting persons in the divine nature.) is ruled out. The Word and God, in the beginning, are “face-to-face.”

4.1.1.3. Deity | *and the Word was God* (1)

4.1.1.3.1. Not “*the Word was divine*” or only had some qualities of “Godness.” If this is what John had intended, he would have used the Greek word *theios*, but he uses the Greek word *theos* (God!).

4.1.1.3.2. Not “the Word was a god.” The lack of the article in the predicated is so the subject of the sentence may be distinguished from the predicate. If it were not for the definite article before logos, the subject of the phrase would be unclear.

- 4.1.1.3.3. To translate this term “a god” in the rest of John 1 where the word “God” lacks an article would be silly (see: 1:6, 12, 13, 18). The JWs are not consistent with their own translation philosophy in John 1:1 because they are allowing their theology rather than the Greek text determine how to translate.
- 4.1.2. He is divine in His relation (2) | *He was in the beginning with God (2)*
- 4.1.2.1. Temporal relation | *in the beginning*, when the beginning began, Jesus was already with the Father.
- 4.1.2.2. Positional relation | *with God*, They are distinct persons, but with no disharmony between them. They are together in the beginning.
- 4.1.3. He is divine in His creation (3) | *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (3)*
- 4.1.3.1. Positively | All things were made through Him
- 4.1.3.2. Negatively | and without Him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4.1.4. He is divine in His manifestation (4–5) | *In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* These verses refer both to the work of Jesus in creation and salvation.
- 4.1.4.1.1. He is life (4) | *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.* There is no life or life eternal without the Word who is life.
- 4.1.4.1.2. He is light (5) | *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* The way to see God is by Jesus the Word.
- 4.2. **The Incarnation of the Word (14)** | *14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
- 4.2.1.1. The enfleshment | *became flesh* (sarx, a very blunt word, not just man but flesh)
- 4.2.1.1.1. Not just man, but flesh
- 4.2.1.1.2. Not just robed in flesh, but incarnated
- 4.2.1.2. The dwelling | *and dwelt among us*, dwelt means “pitched his tent or tabernacled among us.” This is OT language of God’s glory dwelling in the tabernacle. In Jesus, God came down and put His glory on display in a man.
- 4.2.1.3. Glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father
- 4.3. **The Revelation of the Word (18)** | *No one has ever seen God; the only begotten God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*
- 4.3.1. His uniqueness | the only, unique, without precedent
- 4.3.2. begotten | eternally begotten of the Father, who alone can make Him known
- 4.3.3. His declaration | *He has made Him known*, “explained Him” (NASB95)
- 4.3.4. *Exegesato* | Word from which we get our word exegete
- 4.3.5. Jesus is the declaration and explanation of God.

Philippians 2:5–11

Servant Christology

1. Introduction | In John 1, John is purposefully giving us theology. He is intentionally informing us about who Jesus is. He is God the Word. In Philippians, Paul is using Christ's nature to make a point about our lives in practice. Doctrine lies in the background rather than on the surface of the text, but there are doctrinal implications for the deity and humanity of Christ nonetheless.
 - 1.1. Paul seems to be using another early Christian hymn here.
 - 1.2. The hymn appears to have two stanzas
 - 1.2.1. Stanza 1 (6–8) | Christ's humiliation
 - 1.2.2. Stanza 2 (9–11) Christ's exaltation
2. **The Prior State (5–6)** | *Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,*
 - 2.1. His nature | *"He existed in the form of God"*
 - 2.1.1. *Form* | from *morphe* meaning shape, appearance, or essence
 - 2.1.2. "The outward display of an inner reality or substance." **The word denotes Christ as possessing or of being the permanent unchangeable pattern of deity.**
 - 2.2. His selflessness | *did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped*
 - 2.2.1. Grasped | from *harpagmos* meaning "pickpocket" and denoting a robbery or a prize gained through robbery. "The point is that Jesus did not treat his equality with God as an excuse for self-assertion or self-aggrandizement. On the contrary, he treated it as an occasion for renouncing every advantage or privilege" (F. F. Bruce)
3. **The Condescension (7–8)** | *but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*
 - 3.1. Crucifixion was intended to show that the government considered that person to be less than human. They wanted you to suffer as much as possible before dying. The intention was to show that the person on the cross had no value whatsoever. People crucified were worthless in the eyes of the Romans, and they wanted to rip away every shred of decency, humanity, and dignity. They also wanted to expose you as powerless. The one crucified has his hands nailed to the cross, and there's absolutely nothing he can do about it. All of this is so the one's looking on will see it and tremble and walk away saying, "please never let that happen to me. If I must obey, I will obey."
 - 3.1.1. Humbled (emptied) Himself | Some theologians deny that Jesus is both human and Divine in His incarnation. They say that He laid aside some or all of His divine attributes. That the Father and Spirit were not with Him; He gave up governance of the universe, etc. This, of course, is entirely contradicted by Col 1:15–20, 2:9, and John 1:14.
 - 3.1.2. Paul's point is not that he ceased to be God but that he humbled Himself by adding humanity, "taking the form of a servant and being born in the likeness of men." For God to do this is unspeakable humility.

- 3.1.3. The Incarnation was not a laying aside of deity but the taking on of human flesh. This will always be beyond our full comprehension.
- 3.1.4. Analogy of Aristotle's annihilation of a number (infinte + 1 = infinite. The one seems to be annihilated by the infinite. What happened to the 1? This is why we struggle with understanding Christology. How does God become a man in such a way that it does not obliterate His humanity?
- 3.1.5. As with the Trinity, we can do a good job, as we will see, of identifying erroneous (unbiblical/heretical) ways of working this out, but we cannot fully explain how the two natures exist in the one person – Jesus of Nazareth.
- 3.1.6. The divine attributes were not discarded by Christ but were concealed in the weakness of human flesh. They were always available to our Lord, but he usually chose not to draw upon them or to exercise them in a different way in his interactions with others while on earth. At the cross, He could have summoned angels to His defense, but He instead chose the way of non-resistance which led to the cross. He imposed a definite limitation upon Himself not only when he became a man but also on His earthly pilgrimage. He remained fully God, but His divinity was hidden in His humanity and remains hidden except to the eyes of faith. (Bloesch, Essentials: 137–38).

4. The Exaltation (9–11)

- 4.1. An exalted position (9) | *Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,*
- 4.2. An exalted adoration (10) | *so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*
- 4.3. An exalted confession (11) | *and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

The Four Great Christological Passages by Kenneth D. Keathley				
	John 1:1–18	Phil. 2:5–11	Col. 1:13–23	Heb. 1:1–14
His Divine Relationship to the Father	The Word of God (1:1, 14)	The form of God (2:6)	The image of God (1:15)	The revelation of God (1:2)
	Radiant Glory (1:14, 14:7)		all the fullness of God...dwells (1:19)	exact imprint of God (1:3)
	Only begotten (1:14, 18)			
	Son (3:16)	Bondservant (2:7)	beloved Son (1:13)	Son (1:2a, 5, 8)
Divine Work				
a. Creation of all	1:1–3		1:16–18	1:2, 3, 10
b. Salvation	1:12, 13	2:6–8	1:4, 5, 19–22; 2:6, 13–15	1:3; 2:10, 11
Divine Nature	<i>Theos</i> (God) 1:1, 18	<i>Theos</i> (God) 2:6	<i>Theotetos</i> (God) 2:6	<i>Theos</i> (God) 1:8
a. Exclusively	1:18, 14:6	2:6	1:19; 2:9	1:3
b. In the flesh	1:14	2:7–8	2:9	1:6; 2:14–18

Christology | A Historical Survey

The Six Major Heresies

“The spiritual contrast between these variant views and what we now call orthodoxy lay first of all in the goal which each sought to accomplish: the radical (heretical) positions had in common a desire to understand the mystery of God; the orthodox sought to preserve the salvation Christians find in Christ.” (Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies*, 150).

1. **Ante Nicene Heresies** (those which emerged prior to the Council of Nicea in 325AD)
 - 1.1. **Gnosticism** | We do not have time to summarize the various beliefs that qualify as Gnosticism, but Gnostics held that there were a host of spiritual beings with divine power emanating from the ultimate divine power, and that one of those divine beings lost their way and gave birth to the material world – a world which is evil. Humans are a combination of the spiritual which is good and material which is bad. Salvation is attained by gnosis (knowledge) and activation of the divine spark within.
 - 1.2. **Docetism** | Therefore, Gnostics denied the actual humanity of Christ and claimed He only appeared to be human.
 - 1.3. Proponents of Docetism
 - 1.3.1. Cerinthus | The “aeon” Christ rested upon the man Jesus. According to Irenaeus, the Gospel of Joh presupposed a conflict between the Apostle John and Cerinthus.
 - 1.3.2. Valentinus | The Demiurge is the Creator of the material world. Between the Father and the Demiurge is a descending series of gradually less spiritual and more material aeons “intending to show that in this way the spiritual primal Father has nothing to do with base material reality.” According to Valentinus, Christ is the offspring of Sophia, the last of the 35 aeons who make up pleroma, or fullness, of the aeons. He

reveals the Father to those who have spiritual natures and leads them to salvation by a path of enlightenment. Christ was a man in appearance only and of course neither ate nor drank.” (Harold O. J. Brown).

1.3.3. Marcion | He believed there was a marked contrast between the “malevolent” God of the Jews and the good ultimate Father. He, therefore, created his own canon prompting the church to be serious about recognizing God’s canon.

1.3.4. Result | Gnostic thinking was a serious challenge to the early church. It led some to believe that enjoying any pleasures of the material world was sinful leading to things like the monastic movement. However, others saw the material world as a lesser reality that did not really matter, leading to indulging in the world as though it did not impact them spiritually.

1.3.5. Opponents

1.3.5.1. Ignatius of Antioch in his *Letter to the Trallians*, 9 – 10; in *Sources Chretiennes*, vol. 10, second ed, ed. P. Th. Camelot (Paris: Cerf, 1951), pp. 118–20) writes, “Do not pay attention when anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the family of David, the child of Mary, who was truly born, who ate and drank, who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and truly died, in full view of heaven, earth, and hell, and who was truly raised from the dead. It was his Father who raised Him again, and it is him (i.e. the Father) who will likewise raise us in Jesus Christ, we who believe in him, apart from whom we have no true life. But if, as some godless people, that is, unbelievers, say, he suffered in mere appearance – being themselves mere appearances – why am I in bonds?” Translation/Summary: “If I said I only believed in the Spirit of Jesus, no one would be mad at me.”

1.3.5.2. Tertullian

1.3.5.3. Irenaeus in *Adversus Heraesius* (Against Heresies) | “Saturninus...declared that the Saviour was unborn, incorporeal, and without form, asserting that he was seen as a human being in appearance only. The God of the Jews, he declares, was one of the angels; and because the Father wished to destroy all the rulers, Christ came to destroy the God of the Jews, and to save all who believed in him, and these are they who have a spark of life. He was the first to say that two kinds of human beings were fashioned by the angels, one bad and the other good. And because the demons assist the worst, the Saviour came to destroy evil human beings and the demons and to save the good. But marriage and procreation, they declare is of Satan. The majority of his disciples abstain from meat, and by this false temperance have led many people astray...”

1.4. Monarchianism | The first two views are quite different, but they have in common the conviction that the fundamental unity and oneness of God does not permit a second person to share the title of deity.

1.4.1. **Ebionism** | **Adoptionism** (The spirit of God “adopts” the body of Jesus at his baptism)

1.4.1.1. Ebionism was a false view of the nature of Jesus Christ that arose in the second century. **Ebionites denied Jesus’ divinity and believed that Jesus**

was the Son of God only by virtue of His being “adopted” by God as a human to fulfill His purposes according to Ebionism, Jesus was a descendant of David and a gifted man, but nothing more.

(www.gotquestions.org/Ebionism.html)

1.4.1.2. According to Ebionism, if one could just follow Jesus’ example and keep the Law perfectly, then he could also become a “christ” and be justified by God. (<https://www.gotquestions.org/Ebionism.html>)

1.4.1.3. The works-based salvation taught in Ebionism is explicitly condemned in Scripture, most notably in Paul’s writings: “A person is not justified by the works of the law. . . . By the works of the law no one will be justified” (Galatians 2:16). “No one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law” (Romans 3:20). Because of Paul’s countering of their doctrine, the Ebionites accused him of being a Gentile and denied his apostolic credentials, saying he had never been called by God. They also attacked his personal character, calling him deceitful, proud, and bitter. (gotquestions.org/Ebionism.html)

1.4.2. Sabellianism (Modalistic) | Patripassianism | Oneness Pentecostalism

1.4.2.1. In the third century Sabellius, though not the first proponent, was the most articulate proponent of the idea that there is only one person in the Godhead, so when Jesus suffered on the cross, it was not the Son but the Father suffering as the Son.

1.4.2.2. Tertullian, in opposing this heresy wrote, “The devil is opposed to the truth in many ways. He has sometimes even attempted to destroy it by defending it. He declares that there is only one God, the omnipotent creator of the world, only to make a heresy out of that uniqueness. He says that the Father himself descended into the virgin, was himself born of her, himself suffered; in fact that he himself was Jesus Christ. . . . It was [Praxeas] . . . who first brought this kind of perversity from Asia to Rome . . . he put the Holy Spirit to flight and crucified the Father.” (*Adversus Praxean*, 1 in Tertullian’s *Treatise against Praxeas*, ed. E. Evans (London: SPCK, 1948), 89.4-33.

2. Heresies Directly Condemned by Councils (325–451AD)

2.1. **Arianism** | Condemned at Nicea, a council called by Constantine, in 325AD

2.1.1. Arius | The Son is ontologically (by nature) subordinate to (less than) the Father. Arius said, “There is a time when the son was not” (denying his eternality and claiming he is a created being). For Arius, the Son is *homoiousios* (“of similar substance” with the Father) rather than *homoousios* “of the same substance.” As Will Durant quipped, “Athanasius split Christendom over an iota.”

2.1.2. “And before he was begotten or created or appointed or established, he did not exist; for he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted because we say, “the Son has a beginning, but God is without beginning.” For that reason, we are persecuted, and because we say that he is from what is not. And this we say because he is neither part of God nor derived from any substance.” Arius in a letter he wrote in 321AD

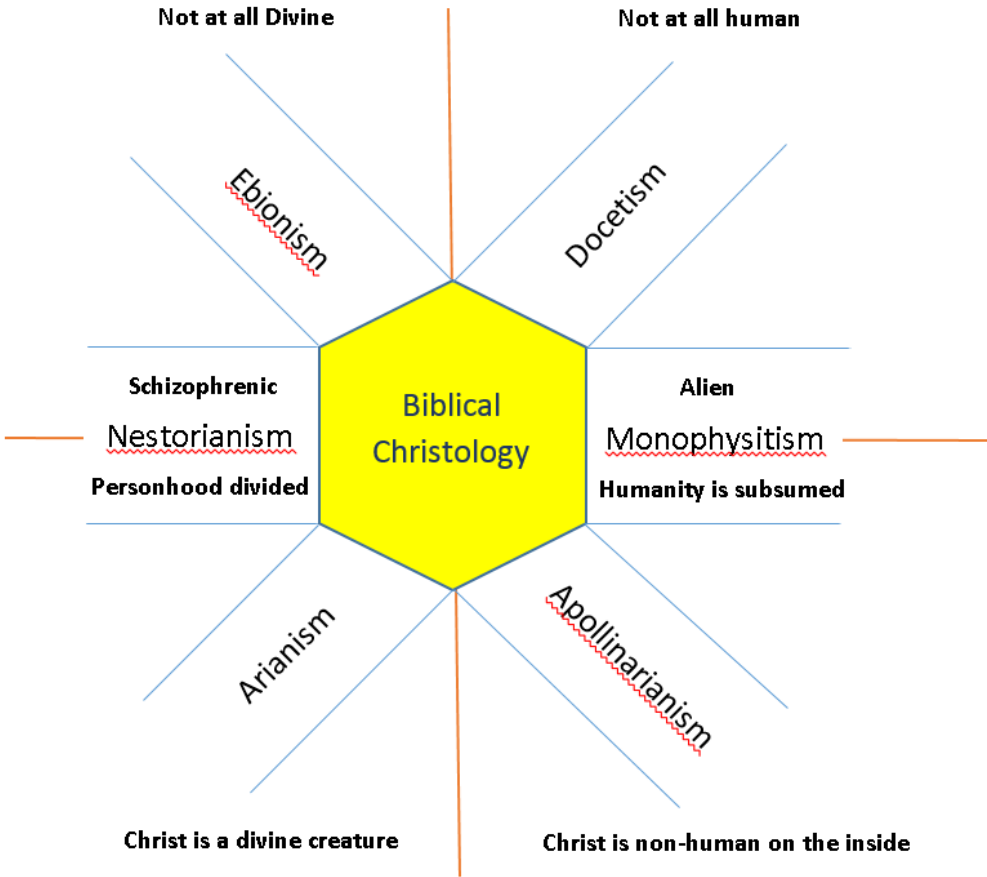
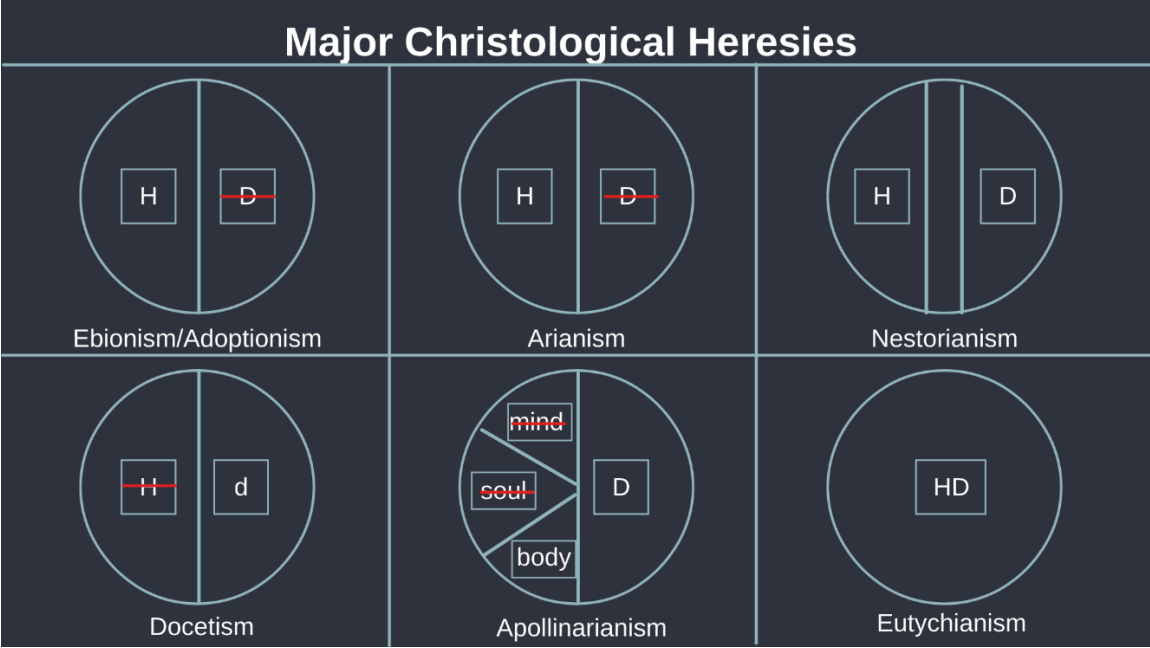
- 2.1.3. Athanasius (chased out of his own church at least 5x over this issue) | Opposed Arianism realizing that nothing less than our salvation was at stake if Jesus is not God. “If Christ is just another created being, even though he is the firstborn and most exalted of all created beings, then it is more natural to think of Him as our teacher and example than as our atoning sacrifice.... Because it considered Jesus a creature, and attributed our salvation to Him, Arianism exalted what a creature can do” (Brown, 119).
- 2.1.4. When Jesus dies on the cross, it is God satisfying Himself. God alone can save. No one else can save. Justification is being found guilty but paid for in Christ at the cross.
- 2.2. **Apollinarianism** | condemned at Council of Constantinople in 381AD
- 2.2.1. Apollinarius | Though he was an ally of Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers, he ended up becoming his own worst enemy by stressing the deity of Christ to the point that he ends up denying the full humanity of Jesus. Apollinarius struggled, in particular, with the idea that God the Word could assume a changeable human mind, and ended up envisioning a sort of “cyborg Christ”
- 2.2.2. “We confess that the Word of God has not descended upon a holy man (rejecting Ebionism/Adoptionism), which was what happened in the case of the prophets. Rather, the Word himself has become flesh, *without having assumed a human mind* – that is, a changeable mind, which is enslaved to filthy thoughts – but which exists as an immutable and heavenly divine mind.” (in McGrath).
- 2.2.3. Opposed by Cappadocian Fathers | Basil of Caesarea (330–79) with his younger brother Gregory of Nyssa (d. ca 395), and their lifelong friend Gregory of Nazianzus (d. ca 390) defended orthodoxy with an impressive mix of scholarship and Christian character. They made this key claim, **“That which was not assumed (by God in the incarnation) was not redeemed.”** In other words, if God the Son did not take on a human mind, then our minds cannot be redeemed, and we are still dead in our trespasses and sins. Jesus does not just redeem our bodies but our minds and souls as well.
- 2.3. **Nestorianism** | Condemned at the Council at Ephesus in 431AD
- 2.3.1. Nestorius | As Bishop of Constantinople, he burned the Arian chapel
- 2.3.2. In attempt to defend the full humanity and full deity of Jesus (good intentions), he ends up denying the unity of the natures in the one person. He taught a mechanical union of the two natures – that the Logos rested on Jesus the way one would lay upon another. Thus, he proposed a divided Christ, giving us essentially a schizophrenic Jesus. Rather than two natures in one man, he basically argued for two persons in one man.
- 2.3.3. Although Cyril of Alexandria has Nestorius condemned as a heretic, Nestorius will later affirm the Christological statement of the Council of Chalcedon in 451.
- 2.4. **Eutychianism** | Condemned at the Council of Chalcedon at 451AD
- 2.4.1. Eutychus | Rejected the two natures of Christ in favor of a *tertium quid* (i.e. third kind) of being. In other words, Jesus was neither God nor man but some mixture of the two.

2.4.2. In reacting against Nestorianism, Eutychus says that, by definition, a person can only have one nature (monophysitism). The difficulty here is the ambiguity of the word nature. When speaking of an individual, we mean the characteristic of that individual, but here we are using “nature” like we use the term “person” (i.e. that person is like a, b, c). When we say God has two natures in one person, we are not saying he has multiple personalities. Rather, every *essential* quality that makes someone human, Jesus has that quality. Those essential qualities that make God God are also fully present in the one person Jesus. Jesus has all the attributes and *essential* qualities of both natures.

2.5. Council of Chalcedon in 451AD

2.5.1. Laid down an understanding of the relation of the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ which became normative for the Christian churches, both east and west. The Council is adamant that Christ must be accepted to be truly God and truly human, without specifying precisely how we are to understand this mystery.

2.5.2. “Following the holy Fathers, we all with one voice confess our Lord Jesus Christ to be one and the same Son, perfect in divinity and humanity, truly God and truly human, consisting of one rational soul and a body (rejecting Docetism and Apollinarianism), being of one substance with the Father in relation to his divinity (rejecting Arianism), and being of one substance with us in relation to his humanity, and is like us in all things apart from sin (Heb 4:15). He was begotten of the Father before time in relation to his divinity (rejecting Arianism), and in these recent days, was born of the Virgin Mary (rejecting Nestorianism), the *Theotokos*, for us and for our salvation. In relation to the humanity, he is one and the same Christ, the Son, the Lord, the only-begotten, who is to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion (rejecting Eutychianism), without change, without division (rejecting Nestorianism), and without separation. This distinction of natures is in no way abolished on account of this union, but rather, the characteristic property of each nature is preserved, and concurring into one Person and one subsistence, not as if Christ were parted or divided into two persons (rejecting Nestorianism), for he remains one and the same Son and only-begotten God, Word, Lord, Jesus Christ; even as the Prophets from the beginning spoke concerning Him, and our Lord Jesus Christ instructed us, and the Creed of the Fathers was handed down to us.”



Christology

Theological Issues

1. The Hypostatic Union

- 1.1. Definition | “hypo” – under; “stasis” – to stand, the foundational essence or understanding of Jesus. The ontological reality of Jesus Christ is that he is both human and divine. He has two natures but is only one person/essence. Jesus is not a hybrid but a union of God and man such that neither nature is diluted or compromised in Him. Jesus is not part God and part man, but the God-man.
- 1.2. In Scripture, we see that the one Jesus acts through either nature. When he operates in his humanity, He is localized, learning, and limited. When He acts in His deity, He is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. All of Jesus’ physical abilities in His humanity are presented as normal in the Scriptures. He gets hungry and tired. He falls carrying the cross. He does not know when He will return. He did not come out of the womb talking but crying for nurture and nourishment.
- 1.3. **The Necessity of the Hypostatic Union** | In *Cur Deus Homo?* (Why God Man?), Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109) argues that it is an ontological necessity for humanity to be saved that God became a man. If Jesus is not God, we cannot be saved. If there is any part of our humanity that God did not assume in the incarnation, that part of us cannot be saved, and, because it is integral to us, we cannot be saved. The only way Jesus’ death can be atoning is if Jesus is Divine. The only way God could be true to His nature and pour out His wrath on sin is if God became a man in the incarnation. A righteous judge does not turn a blind eye toward sin. The only way God could bring fallen sinners into fellowship with Himself is by coming Himself to bear our sin and its punishment – as a man.
- 1.4. **The Necessity of His Humanity** | In Romans 5:12–21, Paul’s basic argument is this, “Adam got us into this mess; Jesus got us out.”
 - 1.4.1. Since it is man who sinned, it must be a man who pays the penalty for sin.
 - 1.4.1.1. *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. – Rom 5:18*
 - 1.4.1.2. *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. – Heb 2:17*
 - 1.4.2. The penalty for sins involves the suffering of both body and soul. God cannot experience human suffering unless He becomes a man.
 - 1.4.3. Only the One who lived in full obedience to the Law can satisfy God. Christ has obeyed in our place. Jesus displayed “active righteousness” by volitionally keeping the law. He displayed “passive righteousness” by yielding his life on the cross, a life that can qualify us for heaven because He lived as one who was truly righteous in every respect. He is the only one the law cannot condemn, and, in Him, neither can we be condemned.
 - 1.4.3.1. *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. – Rom 5:19*

1.4.4. His humanity had to be sinless humanity. Otherwise, His death would have been only for His own sins.

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

1.4.5. He had to be free not only from actual sin but also from original sin. His virgin conception by the Holy Spirit and consequent holiness meets this need.

1.4.6. He lives to make intercession for us. Because He is a man, He is able to understand, sympathize with, and help us.

1.4.6.1. *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. – Hebrews 4:15*

1.4.7. A Mediator who brings men to God must have a foot in both camps.

1.4.7.1. *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, - 1 Tim 2:5*

1.5. The Necessity of His Deity

1.5.1. Only God can survive the wrath of God.

1.5.2. Only God could provide an infinite payment for infinite wrath during the finite time of the cross.

1.5.3. Only God can provide atonement for all. If Jesus was merely a perfect man, He could have died in the place of just one sinner.

1.5.4. Only God can satisfy God. This is why salvation is by grace and grace alone. In Christ, God came and did for us what we could never do for ourselves. Salvation would not be possible even through a special or perfect created being. The creature cannot merit salvation before the creator. We can either be found in Christ or be found in Adam.

1.5.5. A mediator between God and man must Himself be God if He is to bring men to God. Something less than God cannot bring us to God.

2. The Virgin Birth of Christ

2.1. Really **the Virgin Conception of Christ** | Dale Moody notes that Protestants should emphasize the virgin conception of Christ to help differentiate the biblical doctrine of the Virgin Birth from the Roman Catholic dogma of the immaculate conception and the perpetual virginity of Mary (two of His brothers, James and Jude, wrote Scripture). The virgin conception of Christ is a classic example of how it is impossible to separate the historical events of the Bible from their theological meaning. If you deny the virgin birth, you are denying an essential, historical truth that is foundational to who Christ is and how He can save.

2.2. The Historical Significance of the Virgin Birth

2.2.1. The virgin conception of Christ demonstrated that He is the Messiah predicted by the Old Testament.

2.2.1.1. *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. – Isaiah 7:14*

2.2.2. The virgin conception of Christ is affirmed by the New Testament (Matt. 1:16–25; Luke 1:26–28; possibly Gal 4:4).

- 2.2.3. Mythological Approach | The birth narratives of Jesus are denied, but their theological truth or meaning should be retained (David Strauss, Rudolph Bultmann). For them, all we need is the theological truth, not the historical fact. The reasons given for rejecting the virgin birth (Garrett, 1990: 589).
- 2.2.3.1. The silence of other NT writers. This is quite literally an argument from silence. But, it is recorded in the Bible twice, that's not silence.
- 2.2.3.2. The accounts are borrowed from parallel pagan stories. There were many stories of pagan gods mating with human women and producing offspring. However, despite the efforts of some, no true parallel in any other religion of a virgin birth has been found.
- 2.2.3.3. Unscientific violation of natural law. For those who affirm that God is involved supernaturally in the world, this objection carries no weight.
- 2.2.3.4. The story was invented to hide Jesus' illegitimate birth. This is as old as the gospel records themselves and would be repeated down through the centuries, most frequently, by radical feminist theologians who see Mary as a victim of rape. *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* – John 8:41
- 2.2.4. Neo-orthodox Approach | The accounts are theologically true and valuable, but they are historically non-verifiable. All we can know for sure is that the early church believed in the virgin birth (Karl Barth).
- 2.2.5. **Biblical and Evangelical Approach** | The Bible clearly affirms the virgin birth, not once, but twice which is sufficient evidence. Because the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God, the virgin birth is a fact. However, we would also point out, historically speaking, that as long as one does not presuppose that God cannot intervene in human history and events, the virgin birth is well-attested.

2.3. The Theological Significance of the Virgin Birth

- 2.3.1. The virgin conception of Christ was the means of His incarnation. For Jesus to be one of us, he must be born like us. He is not a celestial baby with no connection to His mother. He had to have a real, organic connection to the human race to redeem the human race. The virgin birth is the way that God sent His Son to earth to bear our sins. There are other ways that Christ could have come, but none of them would have so effectively wed His humanity and His deity.
- 2.3.2. The virgin conception of Christ signified that, though He is fully human, He is a unique human. Jesus is the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45), and, as such, offers a new beginning for the human race.
- 2.3.3. The virgin conception of Christ signifies that he is uniquely holy. *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.* – Luke 1:35
- 2.3.4. The virgin conception of Christ is the means by which He was spared the taint of original sin.
- 2.3.4.1. Some theologians contend that this was not a function of the virgin birth. Theologians such as Erickson (1998:773) and Ryrie (1999:242) argue the virgin

birth was not necessary for Jesus to be born without a sin nature since God could have overshadowed both parents so as to protect the sinlessness of Christ. They also point out that the Bible never explicitly states this was the purpose for the virgin birth.

2.3.4.2. However, some contend (and I agree) that it was essential that Jesus be born of a virgin. Theologians such as Orr (1907:1–29), Conner (1936:159), and Grudem (1999:230) contend that in some way the transmission of original sin occurs through the Father. *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned* – Rom 5:12

3. **The Temptation of Christ** | peccability v. impeccability of Christ | If Jesus did not have a sin nature, can we really say He was tempted?

3.1. **The Reality of the Temptation** | Scripture is clear that He was tempted

3.1.1. *For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* – Heb 2:18

3.1.2. *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. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* – Heb 4:15–16

3.1.3. **His temptations were real.** | Matt 26:36–46 (Jesus in Gethsemane), “We must be careful not to think of Jesus as if His incarnation were the equivalent of Superman pretending to be Clark Kent.”

3.1.4. **His temptations did not require Him to possess a sin nature.** | Adam and Eve show us it is possible to sin without a sin nature.

3.1.4.1. *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,* - Rom 8:3

3.1.4.2. Thought experiment | If you could be anywhere you wanted to be right now, where would you be?

3.1.5. **Jesus never succumbed to temptation.** | 2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 3:5; Heb 4:15, 7:26

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

3.1.5.2. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* – 1 John 3:5

3.1.5.3. *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.* – Heb 4:15

3.1.5.4. *For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.* – Heb 7:26

3.2. **The Accomplishment of the Temptation** | Where we fail, Jesus was faithful.

Jesus Did in The Wilderness what Adam Did Not Do in the Garden		
Genesis 3:6	Luke 4:1–13	1 John 2:16
Tree Good for Food	Turn Stones into Bread	Lust of the Flesh
Pleasant to the Eyes	Kingdoms of the World	Lust of the Eyes
Desired to Make One Wise	Cast Yourself Down	Pride of Life

3.3. The Extent of the Temptation | (peccability vs. impeccability of Jesus)

3.3.1. Peccability = Jesus was able not to sin (House: 1992, 62)

3.3.2. Impeccability = Jesus was not able to sin (House: 1992, 62).

3.3.3. **Arguments for impeccability** (“Christ could not sin”).

3.3.3.1. Temptability does not necessarily imply susceptibility. Just because an army can be attacked does not mean it can be conquered. An attack can be real even though the possibility of defeat never was.

3.3.3.2. The human nature of Christ is never separate from His divine nature, which cannot be tempted, much less actually sin. *Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.* – James 1:13

3.3.4. **Arguments for peccability** (“Christ could sin”).

3.3.4.1. In order for temptation to be real, the susceptibility to temptation must be real. Is an attack of a tank with a butterknife really an attack?

3.3.4.2. Arguments for impeccability are implicitly docetic (denying the reality of Christ’s humanity). There are many things that Christ can do in His humanity that He cannot do as God (for example, die on a cross).

3.3.4.3. Perhaps the peccability position is better stated as “Christ would not sin.” He could have but would not sin.

4. The Atonement of Christ | Did the atonement do anything for God?

4.1. **Ransom to (or Victory Over) Satan Theory** | C.S. Lewis reflects this theory in the *Chronicles of Narnia* with Aslan being handed over to Satan.

4.1.1. With Christ’s death, a ransom was paid to Satan who demanded Christ’s blood. In other words, the ransom payment was determined by, paid to, and accepted by Satan.

4.1.2. Satan was deceived by the death of Christ and defeated. We can use the analogy of a mousetrap. The bait was the body of Christ, and the hook was His deity.

- 4.1.3. Satan, therefore, was defeated by the “holy deception” because deity cannot die.
- 4.1.4. Assessment | The theme of victory over sin and death, brought into the world through Satan’s temptation of Adam and Eve, is certainly a part of what Jesus accomplished (1 Cor 15) in the atonement. However, in offering Himself as a “ransom for many” (Mark 10:45), Jesus was not a payment to Satan but to God. We have no need to look any further than the OT for this. When the High Priest sprinkles blood on the mercy seat, it is God, not Satan, who meets the priest there. The sacrifice is always made unto God for sin. Jesus’s death brings victory over Satan but not because God paid Satan anything.

4.2. Recapitulation Theory

- 4.2.1. Christ recapitulates in Himself all stages of human life.
- 4.2.2. His obedience is substituted for Adam’s disobedience, thus reversing the course that Adam set us on.
- 4.2.3. Irenaeus held that everything about Jesus, from the moment of His conception forward, to be atonement. He redeemed infancy, adolescence, adulthood. The whole life of Christ is a part of the atonement, and His death is the capstone. Everything Adam lost, Christ redeems. There is no way for His death to be saving if His life is not also saving.

4.3. Satisfaction Theory

- 4.3.1. Proponent | Anselm (1033–1109), wrote *Why God Man?*
 - 4.3.1.1. The atonement is entirely objective/transactional. The atonement is the act of God satisfying Himself.
 - 4.3.1.2. There is a logical, ontological necessity for the incarnation and atonement.
 - 4.3.1.3. The atonement satisfies the offended majesty of God. Sin is seen as a dishonor to God.
 - 4.3.1.4. The atonement pays nothing to Satan, for Satan is owed nothing.

4.4. Moral Influence Theory

- 4.4.1. Proponents | Peter Abelard (1079–1142); Friedrich Schleiermacher (Father of Liberalism); Horace Bushnell (Father of American Liberalism)
- 4.4.2. The atonement is a demonstration of God’s love for us which inspires a response of love from us.
- 4.4.3. Whereas the satisfaction view is entirely objective, the moral influence view is entirely subjective. (Objective, what the atonement does for us. Subjective, what it does to us).
- 4.4.4. Proponents of this theory hold that the divine nature does not require satisfaction because love is the essential attribute of God.
- 4.4.5. Assessment | In Abelard’s view, God is not angry with us. Rather, God is love, and we are running from Him, and the cross arrests our attention and causes us to run back to Him. As Keathley says, “The problem with this view is that it ignores our sin and leads to a works-based salvation. This, however, does not bother the theory’s proponents because they do not perceive humanity as in rebellion against God. If God’s expectations are lowered, and man’s abilities are elevated, all man has to do is the best he can.”

4.5. Example Theory

4.5.1. Proponents | Faustus and Laelius Socinus; modern-day Unitarians

4.5.2. Modification of Moral Influence View | “Whereas the moral influence theory says that Christ’s death teaches us how much God loves us, the example theory says that Christ’s death teaches us how we should live.” – Grudem, 582

4.5.3. The theory basically takes the WWJD bracelet and makes it the way we are saved.

4.5.4. Jesus’ love for God is the example we are to follow. *For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.* – 1 Pet 2:21

4.5.5. They have a Pelagian view of humanity. (At the outset, every man is morally neutral at worst. Pelagianism teaches that people can avoid sinning and choose to live righteously, even without the help of God’s grace. This notion gives support to the idea that salvation can be earned through good works).

4.5.6. They have a humanistic view of God that allows for no wrath for sin.

4.5.7. They view Jesus as a man with a passion for God that we should emulate. He is the ultimate model we should pattern our lives after. They do not see anyone as “lost” because God has no wrath.

4.5.8. Jesus revealed faith and obedience as the way to eternal life.

4.5.9. Jesus’ death does not provide “atonement” because none is necessary.

4.6. Penal Substitution Theory | Jesus is the substitute for my penalty.

4.6.1. Proponents | Calvin, Hodge, Morris, Stott, and most Evangelical Christians

2.5.3. Description | Christ, by offering Himself as a sacrifice, by substituting Himself for us, and actually bearing the punishment which should have been ours, satisfied the Father and effected a reconciliation between God and man.

2.5.4. Jesus, on the cross, literally stands in the place of sinners and pays to God what they should have paid to God

2.5.5. Substantiation of the argument

2.5.5.1. *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.* – Rom 3:23–25a

2.5.5.2. *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.* – Heb 2:17

2.5.5.3. *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.* – 1 John 2:2

2.5.5.4. *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.* – 1 John 4:10

2.5.5.5. Propitiation is more than expiation (to be cleansed/forgiven). It certainly includes the idea of forgiveness and cleansing, but there can be no forgiveness without a payment for sin otherwise God’s holiness and justice are compromised.

- 2.5.5.6. Propitiation means to be satisfied or to appease, and the one who is satisfied is God. His righteous anger against sin is satisfied by the death of Christ. This is the purpose of propitiation. There is no such thing as a sin that God does not account for, and it must be paid for either with our death or by the death of Jesus.
- 2.5.5.6.1. *For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. 5 The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. 6 You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.* – Psalm 5:4–6
- 2.5.6. Biblical Argument
- 2.5.6.1. It is explicitly taught in every body of NT literature.
- 2.5.6.1.1. *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* – Mark 10:45 (cf. Matt 20:28)
- 2.5.6.1.2. *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.* – 1 Peter 2:24
- 2.5.6.1.3. *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.* – Acts 20:28
- 2.5.6.1.4. *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* – John 1:29
- 2.5.6.1.5. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* – 2 Cor 5:21
- 2.5.6.1.6. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* – Gal 3:13
- 2.5.7. Major Descriptions of the nature of the atonement
- 2.5.7.1. Sacrifice | Propitiation or satisfaction of God’s wrath toward sin is the essence of the purpose of sacrifice in the OT.
- 2.5.7.2. Substitution | In what respect was Christ our substitute? What does He bear that is ours except our sin? – Akin
- 2.5.7.3. Reconciliation | This is possible because the wrath of God was vented against Christ. There is a forgiveness available for us because someone else has paid the price to satisfy God’s righteous anger against sin.
- 2.5.7.3.1. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* – Romans 5:10
- 2.5.7.4. Justification | Man’s penalty was legally executed at the cross. We are declared guilty and Jesus offers Himself as the payment – demonstrating God’s justice and making a way for us to be justified before God.
- 2.5.7.4.1. *It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.* – Rom 3:26
- 2.5.7.4.2. There is no such thing as cheap grace. The gospel is not simply an announcement of pardon. In justification God does not merely decide unilaterally to forgive us our sins. That is the prevailing idea, that what

happens in the gospel is that God freely forgives us of sin because he is such a loving, dear, wonderful God, and it does not disturb him that we violate everything that is holy. God never negotiates his righteousness. God will never lay aside his holiness to save us. God demands and requires that sin be punished. That is why the cross is the universal symbol of Christianity. Christ had to die because, according to God, the propitiation had to be made; sin had to be punished. Our sin has to be punished. – R.C. Sproul

3. **The Resurrection of Christ** | *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.* – 1 Cor 15:19–20

3.1. **The Biblical Witness** | The resurrection of Christ is the testimony of the entire New Testament.

3.1.1. **The Gospels** | Matt 28:1–20; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–53; John 20:1–21:25

3.1.2. **Acts** | Peter (Acts 2:24–36; 3:20–36; 10:40–42); Stephen (Acts 7:55–56); Paul (Acts 13:30–41; 17:31–32; 22:6–8; 24:15–21; 26:13–23). The recorded sermons in Acts consistently have one point in common: they proclaim the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

3.1.3. **Pauline Epistles** | Paul, who met the risen Lord on the Damascus Road, repeatedly affirmed the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Thess 1:10; 4:14; Gal 1:1; 1 Cor 15:3–4; Rom 1:4; 4:24–25; Eph 1:10; Phil 3:10; Col 1:18; 3:1–2; 1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 1:10; 2:8).

3.1.3.1. *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.* – 1 Cor 15:3–8

3.1.4. **General Epistles** | Peter and the author of Hebrews make the most references to the resurrection of Christ (Heb 13:20; 1 Peter 1:3, 21; 3:18, 21).

3.1.5. **The Revelation** | Jesus Christ is “the firstborn from the dead” (1:5), “the Living One” who was “dead” but is “alive forever and ever” (1:18), and “He who died and came to life again” (2:8).

3.2. **Historical Evidence for the Resurrection** | Akin:1995, 142–47; Garrett: 1995, 76–107)

3.2.1. **The options available**

3.2.1.1. A great hoax (the resurrection is false).

3.2.1.2. A nice myth (the resurrection is a fable). Belief in the resurrection is wish fulfillment, kind of like a grown-up version of belief in Santa Claus.

3.2.1.3. It is the supreme event of history (the resurrection is fact).

3.2.2. Theories that Deny the Historicity of the Resurrection

3.2.2.1. **Stolen Body Theories** | This story is as old as the Gospel itself (Matt 28:11–15).

3.2.2.1.1. The body of Jesus was stolen **by the disciples**. | H. S. Reimarus (1694 – 1768) argued that the disciples stole the body and then fabricated the story of the resurrection for the purpose of gaining self-recognition and starting a new religion. However, “even modern rationalists (who deny the resurrection) have found this to be a psychological impossibility” (Garrett, 92). Why? Because in the 1st c. AD, the way to climb the social ladder was to not be a part of the church. If you wanted to set yourself back socially, or be persecuted, the way to do it was to be baptized and affirm the resurrection of Jesus.

3.2.2.1.2. The body of Jesus was stolen **by Joseph of Arimathea**. | H. J. Schonfield proposed in his book, *The Passover Plot* (1965) that Jesus plotted with Lazarus and Joseph of Arimathea to pretend to fulfill the OT prophecy about the Messiah by faking His death on the cross. However, the plan went awry when the Roman soldier pierced His side with the spear. Schonfield is not able to explain how the disciples are so motivated by a dying, fake messiah.

3.2.2.1.3. By the **Jews** or the **Romans**. | Of course, when the disciples began claiming they had been with the risen Christ, that would have been a good time to have produced the body of Jesus. If the Jews had stolen Jesus’ body, it seems that Saul of Tarsus would have known about it, produced it, and shut down the Christian movement. All the Sanhedrin needed to do when Peter said, “this Lord whom you crucified has been made both Lord and Christ” was produce a body.

3.2.2.2. **Swoon Theory** | Heinrich Paulus (1761–1851) argued that Jesus did not die but was unconscious when He was buried. The cool air of the tomb revived Him. He cannot explain, of course, how Jesus survived scourging, crucifixion, stabbing, and burial wrapping, and then emerges from a tomb sealed behind a large stone and guarded by Roman soldiers.

3.2.2.3. **Error Theories**

3.2.2.3.1. Wrong Person | Muslims deny the resurrection of Jesus by denying that He was crucified. The claim that God cast a spell over Jesus’ enemies in order to rescue Him and that Judas Iscariot was taken by accident and was crucified instead.

3.2.2.3.1.1. *“They that said (in boast), ‘We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of God’; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only the conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not.”* – The Quran 4:157

3.2.2.3.2. Wrong Tomb | Kirsopp Lake (1872–1946) argued that the women went to the wrong tomb and a gardener tried to direct them to the correct

one. He cites Matt 28:6 “*He is not here... Come see the place where the Lord lay*” but ignores the middle of the verse: “*for He is risen, as He said.*”

3.2.2.4. Hallucination (or Vision) Theories

3.2.2.4.1. **Subjective Visions** | David Strauss (1808–1874) and Ernest Renan (1823–1892) argued that the encounters with the resurrected Christ were internal visions brought on by the psychological stresses that the disciples were experiencing. Dominic Crossan (1995, 210) argues that the encounters may have been the result of visions and trances and that Jesus’ body was eaten by dogs. The basic problem with this theory is that hallucinations presuppose expectation, but the disciples, by their own admission, were not expecting a resurrection. Furthermore, visions are individual, not something that 500 people all have together.

3.2.2.4.2. **Objective Visions** | Hans Grass contends that the post-resurrection encounters were divinely-caused visions designed to teach His disciples that His resurrection was a spiritual reality.

3.2.2.5. **Legend or Myth Theory** | Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) argued that the basic character of the NT is mythological. Myth is defined by him as “the use of imagery to express the other worldly in terms of this world and the divine in terms of human life, the other side in terms of this side” (Garrett: 1995, 97). To Bultmann, he does not know if Jesus was really crucified, buried, and raised or not, and it does not really matter. All we have is the Christ of faith. There is no reliable, historical Jesus.

3.3. Contemporary Models of the Resurrection | Five Views (Akin: 143)

3.3.1. The reality of the resurrection is seriously questioned or dismissed. The nature of the original eyewitnesses’ experience cannot be ascertained (Bultmann, Marxsen, Koester, and Kung).

3.3.2. A literal resurrection may be true, but it cannot be historically verified. The important element is the nature of the disciple’s experience (revelation is occurring not in history outside of you but in you). As long as you feel/believe it is true, that is what matters.

3.3.3. A resurrection is probable, and an abstract reconstruction of the historical nature of the appearances is possible. The empty tomb is viewed as the best explanation of the available data. However, it is still argued that the resurrection is an eschatological event and is not demonstrable by historical methodology, although it may possibly be verified in the future. His resurrection can only be known by faith.

3.3.4. A literal resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the most probable solution based upon available data. Yet, Pannenberg rejects a corporeal resurrection body in favor of a spiritual body which appeared from heaven, was recognized as Jesus, spoke, and, in Paul’s case, was accompanied by a phenomenon of light.

3.3.5. A literal bodily resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the best solution of the Easter event based upon the evidence. This position differs from the one above in its affirmation of a “resurrected body.” This is the position of orthodox Christianity.

By the normal standards of history, we argue the bodily resurrection of Jesus is a true, historical fact.

3.4. An Apologetic (A Defense) for the Evangelical Model of a Literal, Historical, Bodily Resurrection | Habbermas, via Akin: 145–147

3.4.1.1. **A substantial number of historical facts are recognized by most critical theologians with regard to the death and resurrection of Jesus.** Virtually all scholars today agree that Jesus died by crucifixion and that His body was buried. Due to His death, His disciples were despondent, believing that all hope was gone. At this point, many contemporary scholars add that the burial tomb was found empty a few days later, but that it did not initially cause belief in the disciples. It is virtually unanimous that, soon afterwards, the disciples had experiences which they were convinced were appearances of the risen Jesus.

3.4.1.1.1. Jesus died due to crucifixion.

3.4.1.1.2. Jesus was buried soon afterwards.

3.4.1.1.3. Jesus' death caused despair and loss of hope in the disciples.

3.4.1.1.4. A few days later, the tomb in which Jesus was buried was found to be empty.

3.4.1.1.5. The disciples had real experiences that they thought were literal appearances of the risen Christ.

3.4.1.1.6. The disciples were transformed by these experiences from timid and despondent to bold and joyous.

3.4.1.1.7. The message of His resurrection was the center of preaching in the early church.

3.4.1.1.8. This message was especially proclaimed in Jerusalem, the same city where Jesus had recently died and had been buried.

3.4.1.1.9. As a result of this preaching, the church was born.

3.4.1.1.10. Even though the early church was entirely Jewish (and fanatical about Sabbath), the day of worship was changed to Sunday.

3.4.1.1.11. James, a brother of Jesus who had been a skeptic, was converted when he believed that he saw the resurrected Jesus.

3.4.1.1.12. A few years later, Paul was also converted to the Christian faith by an experience that he, likewise, thought was an appearance of the risen Jesus.

3.4.1.2. Types of evidences for the resurrection

3.4.1.2.1. Subjective (personal experience) | This is also referred to as “the pragmatic test.” It asks questions like, “does it work?”; “does Jesus make a difference?” What is true should answer these questions in a profoundly helpful way. The truth should meet needs. This is the testimony of countless Christians who testify to the change in their lives that has come through believing in the resurrected Christ.

3.4.1.2.2. Objective (historically verifiable evidence) | The resurrection of Jesus is a question of history to be verified using historical, not scientific criteria. The question we must answer is this: is a literal, bodily resurrection

of Jesus the most probable explanation of the historical evidence. Does the evidence persuade us that the event actually happened? We cannot scientifically prove that George Washington crossed the Delaware River, but we can demonstrate it from the evidence available to us in the historical record.

3.4.1.3. Summation of specific evidences for the resurrection

- 3.4.1.3.1. Naturalistic theories (those theories that being with the assumption that God does not exist and cannot intervene in the world) fail to explain away the event and have been disproved and rejected (even by other naturalistic theories)
- 3.4.1.3.2. It does work and meet genuine needs.
- 3.4.1.3.3. The birth and continuance of Christianity with the central message of the resurrection.
- 3.4.1.3.4. The change in the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday by the Jews.
- 3.4.1.3.5. Testified to have been seen by women first, in spite of the invalid nature of their witness in the first century.
- 3.4.1.3.6. The radical change in the disciples.
- 3.4.1.3.7. The moral character of the eyewitnesses.
- 3.4.1.3.8. The empty tomb/no body.
- 3.4.1.3.9. The numerous and various resurrection appearances.
- 3.4.1.3.10. The impossible nature of mass hallucination.
- 3.4.1.3.11. The reported appearances which lasted 40 days and then completely stopped for all people.
- 3.4.1.3.12. The 50-day interval between the resurrection and the proclamation at Pentecost in Jerusalem itself.
- 3.4.1.3.13. The multitude of fulfilled OT prophecies.
- 3.4.1.3.14. The Jewish leaders could not disprove the message.
- 3.4.1.3.15. The conversion of two skeptics: James and Paul.
- 3.4.1.3.16. The accepted character and claims of Jesus.
- 3.4.1.3.17. The articles left in the empty tomb.
- 3.4.1.3.18. The unexpected nature of the resurrection.
- 3.4.1.3.19. The reliable eyewitness documents (the NT) recording the facts.

3.5. The Theological Significance of the Literal, Bodily Resurrection of Jesus | Garrett: 1995, 104; Grudem:1994, 614).

3.5.1. The Resurrection Vindicates Jesus Christ:

- 3.5.1.1. That He is the **Son of God**.
 - 3.5.1.1.1. *and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,*
- Romans 1:4
- 3.5.1.2. That He is both **Lord and Christ**.

3.5.1.2.1. *“This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.... Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”* – Acts 2:32, 26

3.5.2. The Resurrection Insures Our Salvation:

3.5.2.1. Insures the **objective reality** of our salvation (justification)

3.5.2.1.1. *It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.* – Romans 4:24–25

3.5.2.2. Insures the **subjective reality** of our salvation (regeneration)

3.5.2.2.1. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* - 1 Peter 1:3

3.5.3. The Resurrection Guarantees Our Resurrection | 1 Cor 15:35–58

3.5.3.1. The Character of the Resurrection Body | vv. 35–50

3.5.3.1.1. **The Analogies** | vv. 35–41

3.5.3.1.1.1. The analogy of **seeds**.

3.5.3.1.1.1.1. *What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.* – 1 Cor 15:36b–38.

3.5.3.1.1.2. The analogy of **flesh**.

3.5.3.1.1.2.1. *For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.* – 1 Cor 15:39

3.5.3.1.1.3. The analogy of **stars**.

3.5.3.1.1.3.1. *There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.* – 1 Cor 15: 40–41

3.5.3.1.2. **The Application** | 42–50

3.5.3.1.2.1. *So is it with the resurrection of the dead.* – 1 Cor 15:42a

3.5.3.1.2.2. Like seeds, this body will give way to a glorious body.

3.5.3.1.2.2.1. *What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.* – 1 Cor 15:42b–44a

3.5.3.1.2.2.1.1. From rotting to imperishable (42b)

3.5.3.1.2.2.1.2. From shameful/dishonorable (due to sin) to honorable (43a)

3.5.3.1.2.2.1.3. From weakness to strength (43b)

3.5.3.1.2.2.1.4. From natural to spiritual (44) | Spiritual is not opposite of physical here, but opposite of our natural inclination toward sin. Keathley says, “Think about how much work it takes to do the right thing. It’s easier to take a nap than to pray the way we should. It’s easier to watch TV than to read your Bible – that’s why we call the things we do in following and knowing Jesus “spiritual disciplines.” Imagine when it will effortless to do the things which honor Christ. There’s coming a day in which it will be natural to be spiritual.”

3.5.3.1.2.3. Like different types of flesh, there are different types of bodies.

3.5.3.1.2.3.1. *If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. – 1 Cor 15:44b–46*

3.5.3.1.2.3.2. Life-giving spirit | Paul is not saying Jesus is immaterial but immortal. Through Him, we will have bodies fit for eternity.

3.5.3.1.2.4. Like the stars above the earth, the new body is fit for heaven.

3.5.3.1.2.4.1. *The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. 50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. – 1 Cor 15:47–50*

3.5.3.1.2.5. Summarized | The resurrected body comes from the old body, but it is different from the old body in the sense that it is infinitely more glorious and fit for eternity with God.

3.5.3.2. **The Mystery of the Resurrection Body** | vv. 51–53

3.5.3.2.1. *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.– 1 Cor 15:51–52*

3.5.3.2.2. This transformation occurs for both the dead in Christ and those who are living at the moment of Christ’s return.

3.5.3.2.3. The *mystery* (51) | What was once hidden is now revealed.

3.5.3.2.4. The *moment* (52) | some are going to sprout without being planted.

3.5.3.3. **The Glory of the Resurrection Body** | (vv. 53–58)

3.5.3.3.1. *For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the*

*imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* ⁵⁸ *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.* – 1 Cor 15:53–58

- 3.5.3.3.2. The joy of the resurrection (vv. 54–55)
 - 3.5.3.3.2.1. The devouring of the enemy (v. 54)
 - 3.5.3.3.2.2. The disarming of the enemy (v. 55)
- 3.5.3.3.3. The gratitude of the resurrection (v. 56–57)
- 3.5.3.3.4. The confidence of the resurrection (v. 58)