



## Jesus Christ's Two Amazing Natures

The nature of Christ is one of the most fundamental aspects of the gospel message. Scripture teaches that within His one person, Christ possessed both a divine and human nature. His divine nature has no beginning, being from eternity. His human nature began when Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the virgin Mary.

### **Jesus Christ, God and Savior**

For the believer, Christ's divinity ensures that His sacrifice was sufficient. The ransom of a soul is costly – such a price is divine blood! The solution to the infinitude of sin was the infinite value of Christ's obedience – infinite because of Christ's divine nature. His sacrifice was of everlasting efficacy because He is the everlasting God.

Scripture presents many proofs of Christ's divinity:

- Scripture attests His divinity (Matt. 1:23; Phil. 2:5-11; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8).
- God the Father attests Christ's divinity (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 9:7; 2 Peter 1:17).
- Christ Himself claims divinity. He claims to be one with the Father (John 10:30, 38) as the Son of God (Mark 14:61-62).
- Various other people testify that Jesus is God, such as Thomas (John 20:28), Peter (Matt. 16:16), Paul (Acts 9:5), and even devils (Matt. 8:29).
- Jesus attests His transcendence over men and angels. He transcends Jonah and Solomon (Matt. 12:41ff; Luke 11:31ff), Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:3; Mark 9:4), David (Mark 12:36), and John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11); and Christ is superior to angels, who are His servants (Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13), His army (Matt. 26:53), and those who do His will (Matt. 16:27; 25:31; Mark 8:38).
- Attributes of God are ascribed to Jesus, such as eternity (John 8:58), omnipotence (Rev. 1:8), omnipresence (John 1:48), omniscience (John 2:25), and immutability (Heb. 13:8).
- He is given honor that is only given to God, such as divine baptism (Matt. 28:19), divine benediction (2 Cor. 13:14), divine worship (Heb. 1:6), and divine honor (John 5:23).
- He performs divine tasks, such as forgiveness of sins (Mark 2:10-12), creation (John 1:3), providence (John 5:17), resurrection and judgment (John 5:22), preservation (John 10:28), and redemption and grace (Eph. 1:7).
- He makes divine demands, such as faith in His person (John 14:1; 5:24; 6:40; 8:51) and supreme love (Matt. 10:37, 39; Luke 17:33). He accepts religious worship (Matt. 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25).
- He is given the names of God: Mighty God and Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6), the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6), Lord and God (John 20:28), God blessed forever (Rom. 9:5), Lord of all (Acts 10:36), and true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20).

There are five reasons why Christ must be truly God:

1. For the burden that had to be sustained and the battle that had to be fought, He needed divine power to be able to lay down and take up His own life.

2. His divinity was necessary to obtain infinite value for His satisfaction to divine justice.
3. Christ's divinity allowed Him to merit everlasting righteousness.
4. He needed to be divine to be able to apply the salvation He has merited.
5. He must be divine to be an object worthy of our worship.

Thomas Watson in his sermon, "Christ the Mediator of the Covenant," outlined four applications to the believer's life of this doctrine of Christ's divinity.

**USE 1:** Admire the glory of this God-man. Watson advised us to see Christ's *"Godhead shining through the manhood"* (Rev. 1:16). Worship Him in the beauty of His holiness (Ps. 96:9)!

**USE 2:** Because Christ is divine, the believer must look to Christ alone for salvation. His divinity wrought the righteousness required for salvation. Watson said, *"If we could weep rivers of tears, out-fast Moses on the mount, if we were exact moralists, touching the law blameless, if we could arrive at the highest degree of sanctification in this life, all this would not save us, without looking to the merits of him who is God."* Look unto Jesus (Heb. 12:2)!

**USE 3:** Because He is divine and human in one person, believers can have great comfort in knowing they are closely united to Him. Watson wrote, *"All that Christ in either of his natures can do for believers, he will do."* *"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength"* (Isa. 26:4).

**USE 4:** Marvel at the love of Christ, who humbled Himself, though He was equal with God, to become obedient unto death. Believers should embrace Christ as their heavenly husband (Song 1:13). Watson said that every believer *"should have Jesus Christ written in his heart."*

## **Jesus Christ, the Word Became Flesh**

It would be disastrous to only affirm the deity of Jesus Christ, ignoring that the divine *"Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"* (John 1:14). The Scriptures affirm equally that Christ was both divine and human. For the Christian, Christ's humanity holds tremendous significance, beyond even the supreme necessity of salvation. Indeed, as John Flavel notes regarding this doctrine, we can lay the world upon it.

Christ in His divine nature assumed humanity. This means He took upon Himself a nature that was truly human. He remained what He was (divine) while He took to Himself that which He had not yet been (human). He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh in all respects, yet without sin.

The Scriptures reveal Christ's real human nature from birth to burial. He was born (Luke 2:7). He grew to maturity (Luke 2:40). He was hungry (Luke 4:2). He labored (John 5:17). He was tired and slept (Luke 8:23). He ate and drank (Luke 24:42-43). He was sorrowful and wept (Mark 14:34). He experienced pain and suffering (Luke 22:44) both in body and soul (Matt. 26:38; 1 Peter 2:24). He died (Mark 15:37) and was buried (vv. 45-46).

There are at least six reasons why Christ had to become truly man:

1. To meet the demand of God's righteousness that the nature which had sinned must also be the nature to pay for sin.
2. To be able to suffer and die for His elect.
3. To be able to be our self-sacrificing and sympathetic High Priest.
4. To be subject to the law in His obedience.
5. To be our nearest Kinsman to redeem us.
6. To be the Second Adam who restores us from our fall.

There are many applications of Christ's incarnation for the believer. John Flavel in volume one of his *Works* outlines several of these affections for Christ the believer experiences.

1. *Adoration.* "Adore the love of the Father, and the Son, who bid so high for your souls." Flavel notes that the love of God is expressed chiefly in this: that Christ took upon Himself the form of a servant and became obedient unto death. The Father so earnestly *"willed our salvation, that he was content to degrade the darling of his soul to so vile and contemptible a state"* as humanity. The Son became of no reputation – *"how astonishing is the love of Christ, that would make such a stoop as this to exalt us!"*
2. *Wonder.* Gaze at the wisdom of God at devising such a means for His people's salvation. This even *"chains the eyes of angels and men to itself"* as unimaginable. That the Word should become flesh, and dwell among us – *"oh, how wisely is the method of our recovery laid!"*
3. *Delight.* Taste the *"incomparable sweetness"* of Christianity that allows us to rest our *"trembling consciences"* upon a sure foundation. Though the misery of His state and the distress of His soul overwhelms him, the believer can safely rely on the incarnation. Christ united His divine person with our flesh; *"hence it is easy to imagine what worth and value must be in that blood; and how eternal love, springing forth triumphantly from it, flourishes into pardon, grace, and peace."*
4. *Consolation.* Assuming a human nature and experiencing the suffering and misery of humanity, Christ is now touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15). He is a merciful High Priest (Heb. 2:17-18). Flavel writes: *"God and man in one person! Oh! Thrice happy conjunction! As man, he is full of an experimental sense of our infirmities, wants, and burdens; and, as God, he can support and supply them all."*
5. *Happiness.* Christ's incarnation was to bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10). *"Hence we see, to what a height God intends to build up the happiness of man, in that he hath laid the foundation thereof so deep, in the incarnation of his own Son."* The soul of man joys in salvation, but the body also will be glorified. Christ assumed the flesh to demonstrate *"how God intends to honour and exalt it"* in eternity.
6. *Comfort.* Flavel concludes with this last point: *"How wonderful a comfort is it, that he who dwells in our flesh is God?"* The struggling Christian can say: *"But let me be a sinner, and worse than the chief of sinners, yea, a guilty devil, I am sure my well-beloved is God, and my Christ is God. And when I say my Christ is God, I have said all things, I can say no more. I (wish) I could build as much on this, **My Christ is God**, as it would bear: I might lay all the world upon it."*

I wish you and yours a God-glorifying commemoration of the human birth of our precious God-man Redeemer.

Joel R Beeke

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