

We've looked at some very foundational topics from the Bible that are meant to inform and increase our understanding about our precious faith and at the same time safeguard us from unbiblical ideas that would hinder our growth in the grace and knowledge of the One True and Living God and detract from His proper worship and due glory.

We've covered topics already that hopefully have been familiar and comforting and, at the same time, we hope have to some degree deepened your understanding, strengthened your faith, and I pray have whetted your appetite to delve deeper into the fathomless wonders of the God who saves us and how all these several doctrines mesh together.

We've looked at Holy Scripture which is the sole source and foundation of all saving belief and learned that there is no other way to come to God and live acceptably in His sight.

From those same Scriptures, we have considered what they teach us concerning God in His infinite, ineffable, all-glorious self - what He would have us know, believe, trust in, love, concerning Himself, accompanied by the strict warning that He is most jealous of His attributes and glory, and that we should be careful not to go astray or beyond what He has been pleased to reveal.

We attempted to show that this God is in His eternal, unchangeable, all-knowing, all-wise, self-determining, sovereign self has decreed from eternity all that will ever be or come to pass - which if we have been given by His decree to Christ, is our greatest comfort.

We have also examined the works of our God in both creation and providence and beheld there His power and Godhood, as

well as His working all things together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose in His sovereign providence.

We have seen that His decree extended even to the fall of mankind and all the awfulness that entailed. We saw too that this fall was in order to bring about and reveal His greatest glory in the eternal Son of His love, the Lord Jesus Christ and those who would be saved from their sin and misery by His grace.

We discovered next that God would accomplish this stupendous feat of salvation of unworthy sinners, and restoring a right relationship of these recipients of His grace, by means of a covenant of His design and execution.

We come now to another great piece of the picture of God's revelation of Himself by considering how He would accomplish this salvation in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we will discover is the One who will give Himself a ransom to redeem His chosen bride, reconcile her to God, make satisfaction for her sin, propitiate God's wrath, earn a perfect righteousness which He will impute to her, raise her to eternal life from being dead in trespasses and sin, secure for her an eternal inheritance, and all done for the glory of God.

While a small child may come to a sufficient knowledge of this Redeemer of God's people to be saved, this Redeemer is Himself God and thus an infinite Being, so that there is enough to be learned and said of Him, again to do justice to what is revealed in Scripture, that will easily occupy more than a lifetime in gaining an appropriate appreciation for who He is and what He means to

us – all of which knowledge is meant to inform and inspire a proper worship and service of the One described.

Depending upon a person's time and education as a Christian, he or she may be somewhat surprised to learn that it took the community of believers what may seem to be an inordinate amount of time to come to a consensus of who Christ was, how He arrived here upon earth, and what must be true of Him in order to carry out His mission for which the Father sent Him to accomplish. As we have said already, the answers to these questions must be sought solely in God's self-revelation of Holy Scripture.

Historically the Church in the first several centuries was in a quest of a correct conception of Christ that would do justice to the following points:

- a. His true and proper deity
- b. His true and proper humanity
- c. The union of deity and humanity in one person
- d. The proper distinction of deity from humanity in the one person

All the Christological heresies that arose in the early Church originated in the failure to combine all these elements, giving due weight and proportion to each. Some denied wholly or in part the true and proper deity of Christ, and others disputed wholly or in part His true and proper humanity. Some stressed the unity of the person at the expense of the two distinct natures, and others emphasized the distinct character of the two natures in Christ at the expense of the unity of the Person.

That the Church did not have a carefully formulated creed that would answer all the necessary doctrinal points necessary to preserve whole and entire all the salient points that would accurately describe Jesus Christ who had suddenly appeared is not to be too much wondered at. This will become more understandable when you consider the centuries and history that had transpired since the original promise of a Savior from the beginning in Genesis. Factor in, too, that the Hebrew/Israelite nation had been schooled on the absolute oneness of the Godhead, together with all that had transpired in the history of mankind as it had developed to that point when Jesus appeared. Especially ought we to factor in the world situation of both the beliefs and philosophies that were present around the time of His birth.

Jesus was born of the Jews, but the Jews were under the power of Rome with all its pantheon of gods, and at the same time, the rigors of philosophical thought that predominated from the classical Greeks did much to shape the people of that period. Greek philosophy had a huge impact on the initial development of Christology in that the Greeks could not wrap their minds around a god appearing as a man of flesh and blood, given their belief that evil was inherent in the flesh and only the higher spirit realm was capable of giving rise to divinity and freedom from the pollutions of the fleshly world. Also, as it happened, the bigger thinkers and the more influential leaders of the church came, not from Palestine, but from other cultures like Alexandria, Egypt, Antioch of Pisidia, Rome, and Constantinople - all conversant in this dualistic philosophy. This is the intellectual soil into which the gospel had been spread by the missionary efforts of the Apostles obeying Christ's command to take the gospel into every

nation. These distant peoples were not steeped in the Holy Scriptures and so lacked the Hebrew foundations of world and life view from which to work out these ineffable and lofty doctrines concerning the person of Christ and attempted to shoehorn Him into their philosophical commitments.

We will split this chapter concerning Christ the Mediator into two parts, the first today will take up sections 2, 3 and 7 of our Confession that address how to properly conceive of the Person of the Mediator. This will take us into questions such as the great work of Bishop Anselm of Canterbury, titled: *Cur Deus Homo*, or *Why God (had to become) Man*. The answer to this inquiry also leads to how He became Man, and what were the properties of this One sent from heaven to be the Mediator between God and man, and how by His essential qualities is He fitted to be the Mediator and the Savior of mankind. The pursuit of these answers will necessitate some investigation in the Councils of the Church in the early centuries following the time of the Apostles – most especially the Council of Chalcedon. We are concerned to see how the Church, from its reaction to and handling unscriptural teachings concerning the Person of Christ the Mediator, which we outlined at the beginning of this study.

As an apologetical statement, the Definition of Chalcedon (451) addressed every problem that had plagued the church with regard to the person of Christ. We see these errors addressed in the language of our Confessions precise statements.

1. Against the **Docetists** it declared that the Lord Jesus Christ was perfect in manness, truly man, consubstantial (homooousion) with us according to the manness, and born of Mary.

2. Against the **Samosatian** adoptionists it insisted upon the personal subsistence of the Logos “begotten of the Father before the ages.”
3. Against the **Sabellians** it distinguished the Son from the Father both by the titles of “Father” and “Son” and by its reference to the Father having begotten the Son before the ages.
4. Against the **Arians** it affirmed that the Lord Jesus Christ was perfect in deity, truly God, and consubstantial with the Father.
5. Against the **Apollonarians**, who had reduced Jesus’ manness to a body and a “animal soul” (*psychē alogos*), it declared that Jesus had a “rational soul” (*psychē logikē*), that is a “spirit”.
6. Against the **Nestorians** it both described Mary as *theotokos*, not in order to exalt Mary in the slightest, but in order to affirm Jesus’ true deity and the fact of a real incarnation, and spoke throughout of One and the same Son and one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons and whose natures are in union without division and without separation.
7. Against the **Eutychians**, it confessed that in Christ were two natures without confusion and without change, the property of each nature being preserved and concurring in one person.

As an ecumenical statement, it declared to the “Word-flesh Christologists” of the Alexandrian school, who tended to be monophysitic, that they would have to make peace with two natures in Christ, the divine and the human, and that the one person of the Son, who was and is divine from and to all ages,

took into union with his divine nature in the one divine person a human nature, without confusion, without change. And to the “Word-man Christologists” of the Antiochene school, who tended to make too much of the distinction between the natures,, it declared that they would have to come to terms with the fact that the Lord Jesus was one and the same Son, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, God, Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, whose natures are without division, without separation.

Finally, as a clarifying statement, it drew a line of demarcation between a “person”, as a self-conscious substantive entity and a “nature” as a complex of attributes, and settled the meaning of the somewhat fluid terminology which, because of its elusiveness, had long been the source of misunderstanding and division in the church.

Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 8

Section 2. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature,^k with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin;^l being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance.^m So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion.ⁿ Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.^o

k. **John 1:1, 14.** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

l. **John 5:20.** And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Phil. 2:6. ... who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Gal. 4:4. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.

l. **Phil. 2:7.** ... but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

Heb. 2:14, 16-17. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.... For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Heb. 4:15. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

m. **Luke 1:27, 31, 35.** To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.... And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.... And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Gal. 4:4. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. **See Matt. 1:18, 20-21.**

n. **Matt. 16:16.** And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Col. 2:9. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Rom. 9:5. ... whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

1 Tim. 3:16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

o. **Rom. 1:3-4.** ... concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

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

Section 3. The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, was sanctified, and anointed with the Holy Spirit, above measure,^p having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;^q in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell;^r to the end that, being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth,^s He might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a mediator, and surety.^t Which office he took not

unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father,^u who put all power and judgment into his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.^w

p. **Ps. 45:7.** Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

John 3:34. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. **See Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18; Heb. 1:8-9.**

q. **Col. 2:3.** ... in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

r. **Col. 1:19.** For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

s. **Heb. 7:26.** For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

John 1:14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

t. **Acts 10:38.** ... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Heb. 12:24. ... and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Heb. 7:22. ... by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

u. **Heb. 5:4-5.** And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

w. **John 5:22, 27.** For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son... and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Matt. 28:18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Acts 2:36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Section 7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself;ⁿ yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one

nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.°

n. **John 10:17-18.** Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

1 **Pet. 3:18.** For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

Heb. 1:3. ... who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. **See Heb. 9:14.**

o. **Acts 20:28.** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Luke 1:43. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **See Rom. 9:5.**

Example: the council made it clear that *person* and *hypostasis* were the same thing, not different as Nestorius had said. It also stated that the *person/hypostasis* was a principle in its own right, not to be deduced from the nature. It further maintained that in Christ there was only one *person/hypostasis*, that of the divine Son of God. The human nature of Jesus did not have a *hypostasis* of its own.

The following chart should help you see the two natures of Jesus "in action":

GOD

He is worshiped ([Matt. 2:2, 11; 14:33](#))

He was called God ([John 20:28; Heb. 1:8](#))

He was called Son of God ([Mark 1:1](#))

He is prayed to ([Acts 7:59](#))

He is sinless ([1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15](#))

He knows all things ([John 21:17](#))

He gives eternal life ([John 10:28](#))

All the fullness of deity dwells in Him ([Col. 2:9](#))

MAN

He worshiped the Father (John 17)

He was called man ([Mark 15:39; John 19:5](#))

He was called Son of Man ([John 9:35-37](#))

He prayed to the Father (John 17)

He was tempted ([Matt. 4:1](#))

He grew in wisdom ([Luke 2:52](#))

He died ([Rom. 5:8](#))

He has a body of flesh and bones ([Luke 24:39](#))