

The Person of Christ

Instructor's Guide

The purpose of this course is to gain an understanding of five core principles: 1) the nature of the Godhead, 2) the interrelationship of the two natures of Christ, 3) the humiliation and exultation of Christ, 4) the offices of Christ, and 5) the work of Christ. This is a course on the central figure of the gospel, so a balance between law and gospel *per se* should not be expected.

This course is set up to be taught in six 90-minute sessions, but the material in the lessons can be regrouped for any number of class periods that are available. From educational research we know that reading the material before the class, answering the study questions, and considering the issues that are being raised by the readings are essential to maximize learning. Students should be strongly encouraged to do so. It is good to close the lessons with hymns written by Lutheran lyricists. The texts of suitable hymns are included in the student notes.

Note that the study questions and answers are inserted in the teaching text where they might be used, but they can be moved in the actual presentation or ignored. Below are four considerations that may be useful in teaching this course:

1. **The things of God are beyond our comprehension.** We must give the scriptural explanation, but we must be careful about not trying to rationalize the things of God by contriving examples.
2. **We need to try to understand Christ to the best of our ability.** If we make no effort to understand, the teachings of the Bible will be just rote, and not affect the heart.
3. **Christ is God's solution to our problem.** God's decision to have His Son become one with the human race is so farfetched that it would not have been our solution. We must not try to add to God's plan of salvation so that it seems more reasonable to ourselves and our audience.
4. **The art of learning.** a) Reading with discernment the available material. b) Thinking and restating the material in one's own words. c) Listening and asking questions when the material is presented.

1. The Divine Nature of Jesus Christ

Suppose I told you an 800-pound gorilla was now in this room. What would you do? You'd be terrified. Supposed I told you a hungry-looking tiger was now in this room. What would you do? You'd be terrified.

Supposed I told you the LORD God Almighty was now in this room. What would you do? Nothing. You would treat Him like electricity, i.e., something powerful but under control. Despite the fact that He can destroy both body and soul in hell (Matthew 10:28), that he is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29), and that it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:31), we treat the presence of the Lord of lords and King of kings in a ho-hum fashion. It is time to change this.

I. God as a Being

In this class it will be necessary to think deeply.

A. Unity of God

1. Inherent unity of the Godhead. a) Only one God exists. Central to all the statements about God in the Scriptures is that there is only one God. Everything in the Scriptures must be understood based on this essential truth. *So holy that you fall on your face.* b) Moses wrote, "*Hear, O Israel:*

The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” Deuteronomy 6:4 c) *Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.”* Isaiah 44:6. *So holy that you die if you see Him.* d) Jesus said, *“This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”* John 17:3

2. Unity in our worship of God. a) The LORD, the only true God, is to be the sole object of our worship. All other gods are idols, the creation of man’s hands or of his mind. Regardless of their beauty or sophistication, they are powerless in the presence of the LORD. *Self-evidence means nothing.* b) Moses wrote, *“It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. You shall not go after other gods.”* Deuteronomy 6:13–14 *So holy that you dare not say His name Yahweh. Even the word in the Hebrew is given the vowel points for adoni.* c) The LORD God Himself said from Mt. Sinai, *“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God.”* Exodus 20:3–5 d) Jesus quoted Deuteronomy when he said, *“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”* Matthew 4:10

B. God as a trinity. *This is an incomprehensible mystery.*

1. God is a trinity having three distinct persons in one divine essence. *It is more profound than light being both a wave and a particle.* a) *The Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”* Luke 3:22 *We must marvel at this display.* b) Jesus said, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”* Matthew 28:19 c) Jesus said, *“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.”* John 14:13–17
2. The Father is identified as God in the Scriptures. *The Jews thought of God solely as the person of the Father.* a) Jesus said, *“For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”* John 5:26 b) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!* 1 Peter 1:3 c) Jesus said to her, *“Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”* John 20:17
3. The Son is identified as God in the Scriptures. a) *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.* John 1:14 *The Son is from eternity and therefore as “old” as the Father.* b) Jesus said, *“That all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”* John 5:33 c) Jesus said, *“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”* John 10:30 d) *He [the Son] 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, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”* Hebrews 1:3–6

4. The Holy Spirit is identified as God in the Scriptures. The “spirit” is used interchangeably with “God.” a) David said, “*The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is on my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me.*” 2 Samuel 23:2–3 b) Jesus said, “*But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*” John 15:26 c) *God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”* Galatians 4:6

C. Actions of God Two types of actions.

1. Some of God’s actions are internal to God and some involve things and beings which are external to the being of God. Internal actions involve the persons of God individually, while all the persons of God participate in some manner in all His external actions.

Q: What is Jesus’ relationship to God the Father? A: Of one substance with, co-eternal, and begotten of.

2. Internal – Personal acts. a) The Father begets the Son. {*In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world.* 1 John 4:9} We do not know how the Father begets the Son. b) Jesus said, “*But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*” John 15:26 / *Inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.* 1 Peter 1:11 We do not know how the Holy Spirit proceeds. These are eternal actions.
3. External. Decrees. a) Creation – The Bible relates the role of God the Father (Genesis 1:1), the Son (John 1:3), and the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2) in creation. b) Redemption – The Bible relates the role of God the Father (Galatians 4:4,5), the Son (1 John 1:7), and the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35) in redemption. c) Conversion – The Bible relates the role of God the Father (Galatians 4:6), the Son (Matthew 11:27-30), and the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3) in conversion.

Remember the hungry tiger? Suppose it came over and nestled with its head on your lap. Unexpected! Remember that gorilla? Suppose it went into the kitchen and brought you an ice cream cone. Amazing! Now consider the Son of God becoming incarnate. Absolutely and totally unexpected and amazing!!!

II. Jesus Christ is True God

A. Introduction

Q: What teaching is the rock on which the Christian church is built? A: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

1. The Rock. Christ is God. a) That Jesus is the Christ, both true God and true man, is the rock upon which the Christian church rests. b) *Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah....On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* Matthew 16:16-18
2. The battlefield. a) Because Satan realizes that this teaching is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, it is only logical that he would devote a large amount of his effort to make people not believe it. He wants to remove Christ or change His identity. b) “*But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.*” Matthew 10:33

B. The teaching of the Bible – Jesus is truly God

Q: What does “All the fullness of the Deity” mean? **A:** The complete divine majesty of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

1. “All the fullness of the Deity” {Colossians 2:9}. a) John’s overview – So that no one would get lost in the details of Jesus’ life and miss His full divinity, the apostle John starts his gospel clearly addressing this point. {*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning....The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* John 1:1-2,14} **Clear statement of the incarnation.** b) Jesus’ claim – If Jesus’ claim that He was fully God is rejected, then He is either a liar (**knew claim was false**) or a lunatic (**falsely thought claim was true**) for making such a claim. {*Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?* John 14:8-10}

Q: What are some of the divine attributes that Jesus possesses? **A:** Omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, love, compassion, holiness.

2. Divine works and attributes – These are some examples. a.) Creation – **Being almighty, he called it into being.** The Son was involved in the creation of everything that exists. {*Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.* John 1:3} b) Preservation – **He keeps it in existence.** The Son is involved in the preservation and maintenance of the whole creation. {*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.* Hebrews 1:3} c) Omniscience – **He knows all.** Jesus knew all things, including the thoughts of those with whom He was dealing. {*Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?”* Luke 5:22} d) Omnipotence – **By a single word He can....** All nature responded to His commands, and even the demons were subject to Him. The people seeing His works knew they were the works of God. {*He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”* Matthew 8:26-27 / *The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching--and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.”* Mark 1:27} e) Divine forgiveness – **Divine power to forgive and heal.** Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sins, an authority which only God has because all sins are against God. {*“But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . .” He said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.”* Luke 5:24} f) Raising the dead – **Divine power to restore life.** He made the dead to live again, which only divine authority can do. {*When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.* John 11:43-44} g) **“The strong man armed has bound....”** He defeated death and the demons – When Jesus rose from the dead, the power of death was broken for all who believe in Him. {*And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.* Colossians 2:15} h) Judgment – **Luther said that we should fear God’s wrath.** Jesus will return to execute God’s judgment of the world on the final day. {*Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.* John 5:22-23}

Q: What are some of the divine names which are ascribed to Jesus? **A:** I AM, Son of God, Prince

of Peace, LORD, Christ.

3. Divine names. a) Son of God – Claiming to be the Son of God made Jesus equal to the Father in the eyes of the Jews. (Son = Father in power and authority. In Jewish culture the oldest son eventually became “the father.”) Many times He is called this by believing Jews, demons, the writers of the Scriptures, and the angel Gabriel. {*The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Luke 1:35 / Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matthew 16:16 / He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!” For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you evil spirit!” Mark 5:7-8*} b) Christ the Lord – The Messiah Being called “the Lord” gave Jesus the same name that the Greek version of the Old Testament used to refer to the Savior God by the people of Israel. {*Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11 / But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. 1 Peter 2:15a*}
4. Divine honor. a) Jesus demanded it. – Divine honor is his due. Jesus repeatedly made statements that He and the Father were similar in all respects, including honor. {*The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. John 5:22-23*} b) The apostles proclaimed it. – We need to emphasize it, shout about it. The message of the apostles had power only if the Christ that they preached had power. He who had that power deserved the honor. {*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11*} c) The chorus of heaven validates the claim. – In heaven it is forever sung. In John’s vision of heaven, all the saints, angels and other creatures are continually proclaiming the honor of Christ in the various guises in which He appears. {*“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” Revelation 5:13*}

C. False teachings

Q: What was the false teaching of the Ebionites? A: Jesus was merely a more perfect man, the Messiah, and a lawgiver.

1. Ebionites. a) They believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah, but that he was only human, an example. He came to provide mankind with a more perfect way to serve God than did Moses. b) The Christian Scientists, Unitarians, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses all have this idea as the underlying basis of their teachings.
2. Elkesaites. a) Elkesai claimed to have received the true teachings of Jesus directly from heaven (prefiguring Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons). He was holy, but not truly divine. b) Elkesaite teachings influenced Muhammad in his understanding of Christ because remnants of this sect had fled to Arabia.

Q: What is Modal Monarchianism? A: God wore different masks and played the roles of the three persons of the Trinity.

3. Modal Monarchianism. God is a single actor in multiple roles. a) Nature – This teaching pictures God as being only one person who alternately wears 3 different masks. This is how actors in a Greek play behaved so that they could play different roles. b) Oneness Pentecostalism – Starting

with the general ideas of Pentecostalism, this group merges the three persons in the Trinity into one.

4. Dynamic Monarchianism. God adopted the “man Jesus” in some way. a) Nature – Jesus was a man into whom God poured his being so that he had the power of God while he dwelt upon earth. This power was withdrawn, however, before Jesus was crucified and died. b) Adoptionism – Jesus was a perfect man whom God elevated to divine status through giving him some of His divine power and majesty. As Mormon teaching has evolved, it has embraced this type of adoptionism.

Q: What was Subordinationism? A: Jesus and the Holy Spirit were lesser Gods than the Father.

5. Subordinationism. The Son and Holy Spirit are subordinate to the Father. a) The false doctrine of subordination claims that while Jesus was God, he had lesser power and authority than the Father. In the same way, the Holy Spirit is believed to be God, but subordinate to the Father in power. Only the Father is the eternal, omnipotent God. By making a difference between the nature of the persons, subordination in whatever form it takes, destroys the concept of the Trinity. b) Justin Martyr – He taught that the Son and Holy Spirit did not have all the attributes of the Father. c) Origen – *Are not equal*. He taught that the Son was God from eternity because he clung to the Father but always was lesser than the Father. The Son was, in effect, a demigod of sorts, and the Holy Spirit a creation of both. d) Arius – The Son was not of the same substance as the Father, but he was created out of nothing in eternity when no time yet existed. The Son is therefore a lesser God than the Father. Many “Christians” think this way today. They elevate angels and devalue the Son.

2. The Human Nature of Christ

The name “Jesus” came into existence for the Son of God with the incarnation and did not exist before. There were noted actions of the preincarnate Son of God where the Bible calls Him the “angel of God.” We struggle to understand the relationship between eternal and temporal.

III. Jesus Christ is True Man

We need to put ourselves into God’s place and Jesus’ place to understand this. Imagine you are God. Why did you create angels and people the way you did?

A. Introduction

Q: Why did humanity need a Christ? A: God had demanded perfect human obedience to His laws and man could not keep them perfectly. This created the need.

1. The need. a) When man sinned, he experienced spiritual death by being cut off from God. God demanded perfect human obedience, which man could not give. God’s own perfection and the perfect obedience of the angels could not help man because they were not like him. What man needed was human perfection that he could substitute for his deeds of sin. b) *“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”* Genesis 2:16,17 also see Romans 6:23

2. The promise. **God committed Himself to fix the problem, but how?** a) God responded to man's hopeless plight by promising a Savior who would be born from the human race and therefore could be the champion for mankind. b) *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."* Genesis 3:15
3. The delivery. **God is timeless. How can this work?** a) When God determined the proper time had come, He sent forth His Son to redeem the world from sin, and the Son was born of a human mother. b) *But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."* Luke 2:10-11

B. The teaching of the Bible – Jesus is truly man

Q: What evidence do we have that Christ is human? **A:** He appeared to those around Him as human. He had human characteristics. He performed human actions.

1. He called Himself man. **Jesus was empathic about His human nature.** a) In His weakness – Jesus lived the life of a poor man and had little in the way of creature comforts. {*Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."* Matthew 8:20} b) In His actions – Jesus did what people normally do, and He pointed this out to His adversaries. {*"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."* ' But wisdom is proved right by her actions." Matthew 11:19} c) In His powers – Jesus acted with the power of God, yet applied that power to His presence in the world as a man. {*"For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."* Matthew 12:8}
2. Biblical writers called Him man. a) The human mediator – He can go to God in our place as one of us. {*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* 1 Timothy 2:5} **Jesus was the restart of the human race.** b) The redeemer of man – Jesus came as the new Adam, a man to undo what the first man had done. {*For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.* Romans 5:17}
3. Human genealogy (See Luke 3:23-37). **This shows God's planning.** a) Son of the patriarchs – He came from the bedrock of God's people. {*Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.* Romans 9:5} **Angelic proclamation.** b) Son of David – He is specifically declared by the angel Gabriel to be a descendant of the human king David. {*"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David."* Luke 1:32} **Anticipation of the virgin birth.** c) Son of a woman – Jesus had a human mother. {*In a loud voice she [Elizabeth] exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!"* Luke 1:42}
4. Human attributes. **No one who saw Him doubted that He was a man.** a) Body – {Jesus said, *"When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial."* Matthew 26:12} b) Soul (spirit) – {Jesus said as he died, *"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!"* Luke 3:46} c) Flesh and bones – {Jesus said, *"Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."* Luke 24:39} d) Sorrow – {*Jesus wept.* Luke 11:35} e) Sleep – {*As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger.* Luke 8:23} f) Eat and Drink – {*"Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'"* Luke 13:26}

C. A description of Jesus' human nature

1. Not sinful. **Therefore qualified to stand before God.** a) While Jesus was human in all aspects of His being, He did not have the original sin that came from Adam. In His conception, He had been preserved from that malady. b) Perfect priest – *{Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Hebrews 7:26}* c) Perfect lamb – *{But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Peter 1:19}*

Q: What unique feature of Jesus made him recognizable? A: There was none.

2. Other key points. **His natures cannot be separated. The human soul shared a single will with the divine nature.** a) His human nature was united with His divine nature – Once conceived, Jesus had a human nature, but He also had a divine nature from eternity. Therefore, the human nature never existed apart from the divine nature. It was assumed into the divine person. b) He was undistinguished – He didn't stand out from the crowd by physical features because many people had a hard time understanding how He could have any special powers or godliness. **People did not see Him as inherently special.** *{“Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” And they took offense at him. Matthew 13:55-57}*

D. False teachings

Q: What are Docetists? A: People who believe that Jesus only appeared to be human.

1. The Docetists. a) They believed that Jesus was God but only appeared to be man. Although they were divided into various camps based on how they explained Jesus' apparent humanity, they all agreed that Jesus had no real human nature. b) Perhaps he was a ghost (**a hologram**) – One group claimed that Jesus was merely a ghost. He appeared to be human, but there was really no human substance to him at all. He was an illusion. c) Perhaps he merely had a flesh wrap (**like when God visited Abram in the Old Testament**) – Others claimed that while Jesus appeared to be human and had a body, the body did not have a soul, but was a temporary creation of God to allow God to walk among men. It was discarded at or before the crucifixion.
2. Modern mockers. a) **A need existed for a great man, so one was “created.”** No Jesus – One group of theologians claims that there never was a Jesus. He was created in the same way other Jewish and Greek myths were to show God's love for mankind. Like Paul Bunyan, he was larger than life, and a hero to the downtrodden in the Roman Empire. b) **A dedicated man was deified by his followers.** Mythicized Jesus – Another group believes that Jesus was a humanistic teacher who got himself into trouble with the authorities. After his death, his followers wanted to regain that feeling of fellowship they had when he was with them, so they embellished what he had done to form the Gospels as we know them. c) **God used a man to accomplish His goals, but the details are irrelevant.** Mysterious Jesus – The man Jesus is unknowable. At a critical time in history God may have associated Himself with one or several men to introduce a world-changing message. Jesus was whatever God made this man (men?) to be, and we are left with the effects of God's action with only limited knowledge of what He did.

IV. The Virgin Birth

A. The evidence of the Scriptures

Q: What is the Biblical proof for the virgin birth? A: Isaiah foretold it. Matthew and Luke both affirm that it happened.

1. Predicted. a) **A sign was needed.** A virgin birth – The birth of a son from a virgin was foretold as a sign to mark the deliverance of God’s people. {*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.* Isaiah 7:14} b) **The coming of a special being.** God as man – The birth of a Savior who was God Almighty was foretold when Judah’s fortunes looked bleak. {*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. and he will be called Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* Isaiah 9:6} c) **The miracle of the human egg and cell differentiation.** Science of birth – A human has 46 chromosomes in the nucleus of its cells, half of which come from each parent. In particular, for a male child, it must receive a “Y” chromosome from its father to establish its gender. However, all children also receive mitochondrial DNA, which comes solely from the mother. Her egg supplies all the cell machinery that is necessary for the cell to decode the nuclear DNA and carry out the mechanics of life.
2. Announced by angels. a) **Put yourself in Mary’s sandals.** To Mary – {*In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David....The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.... So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”* Luke 1:26-35} b) **The Old Testament solution vs. Joseph’s solution vs. God’s solution to Mary’s pregnancy.** To Joseph – {*This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit....An angel of the Lord appeared to him [Joseph] in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”* Matthew 1:18-21} c) **Note that it was not too cold to have sheep outside at night, shepherding was not a highly respected job, and shepherds were often young with credibility problems.** To shepherds – {*And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.....”* Luke 2:8-12}
3. Jesus claimed a personal link with God. a) **The Temple of God.** His Father’s house – {*“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”* Luke 2:49} b) **God’s works and His gifts.** His Father’s works – {*Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”* John 6:32-33} c) His Father is in heaven – {*“Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.”* Matthew 10:32-33} d) **Jesus had equality with God.** His rank is the same as His Father – {*“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”* Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him. John 10:29-31}

B. Theological necessity

Q: Why is the virgin birth important? A: A child of a human male would have been sinful because God blamed Adam for mankind falling into sin.

1. Original sin **is like a “genetic defect.”** a) Because all mankind has inherited a sinful nature through the fall of Adam and Eve, any natural son of a man and a woman would also be sinful and therefore in the same predicament as the rest of the human race, **having general sins and sins**

of rebellion. He could do nothing to save the human race. b) *Man had no way to crawl out of the pit. Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned--for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nonetheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.* Romans 5:12-14

2. Redemption. a) *Justice must be carried out. The LORD...will by no means clear the guilty.* Numbers 14:18 b) *We cannot bear God's justice.* We are all guilty. No human being, not even a perfect one, could endure the punishment of God for his own sins, much less for the sins of the rest of the human race. Because Jesus had to do this, he needed to be more than man, but he also needed to be human to be under the Law so he could produce human works to replace our sinful works. c) *To be under the Law required circumcision. When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.* Galatians 4:4-5 also see 1 Timothy 2:5-6

V. The Personal (Hypostatic) Union

A. The relationship of the two natures

Q: What is the relationship between the two natures of Christ? A: They are distinct but completely intermingled so that they cannot be separated.

1. The divine nature and the human nature of Christ were, from the moment of His conception, and are forever, inseparably united into one indivisible person. *How can this be?*
2. The divine nature took on human form. *A human nature was assumed into God.* a) He was God – *{The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14}* *Suddenly the infant was everywhere in the universe!* b) He became human – *{Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil. Hebrews 2:14}* *Limited in substance but nevertheless unlimited.*
3. He remains that way today in heaven – *{It (baptism) saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. 1 Peter 3:21b-22}* *Jesus is still the God-man.*
4. He is but one person in His two natures. a) *Regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 1:3-4* b) *Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen. Romans 9:5* *(Explaining the personal union of sovereigns where the independent countries are united by loyalty to a single monarch might be helpful, although the analogy is not perfect.)*

B. The communion of natures

1. Although the two natures personally united in Christ are and remain essentially distinct, each retaining its own essential properties, yet there is in Christ a communion of attributes so that the divine nature is indeed the Son of Man and the human nature is indeed the Son of God, both being jointly located. This will be explored more in the next lesson, *although this is beyond our understanding.*

2. The human held the divine. *Present on earth but also present everywhere.* – {*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.* Colossians 2:9}
3. The divine became the human. – {*God sent his Son, born of a woman.* Galatians 4:4b}

C. False teachings

Q: What did Nestorius believe about Christ? A: The two natures were completely separate but contained in one body.

1. Nestorius – Christ has two natures which are totally separate, glued together like two boards. *One envelope, two beings.* This effectively created two Christs. This teaching continues among Zwingli's followers.
2. Eutyches – The two natures of Christ have merged to form a single new nature with some properties of each. *One being formed by merging the two natures.*
3. Body and soul analogy – Christ has no human soul, but the divine nature takes the role of the soul with the human nature being only the human flesh born of Mary. *God merely wrapped with flesh.*

3. The Two Natures of Christ

We need to struggle with the divine view and the human view of Christ, looking at Him from both sides.

VI. The Communication of Properties

We must get all our ducks (attributes) in *two* rows.

Q: What is meant by the communication of properties? A: The properties of one nature work as if they were the properties of both. Christ is not divided.

A. The relationship of Christ's two natures

1. In the person of Christ, there is a divine nature that possesses all the eternal attributes of God, all of which are essential attributes, that is, God cannot do without any of them because collectively they form the divine essence. *Perhaps explain the divine essence as a collection of interlaced attributes that cannot be separated. God is God.*
2. In the person of Christ, there is a human nature that possesses all the essential attributes of a human being (*and many of the non-essential*) and some attributes that are characteristic of being male and of being of the seed of David and Abraham. *He had a distinct human nature, not just any human nature.*
3. In the person of Christ, each nature retains the attributes characteristic of that nature, but the divine nature communicates its attributes to the human nature and participates in the attributes of the human nature. *The divine nature assumed a human nature; the human nature had nothing to give the divine.*
4. When Christ acts, the two natures act in a coordinated fashion, each nature contributing to the action what is characteristic of it. This will be covered in the apotelesmatic genus below. *There were no conflicting goals.*

B. The idiomatic genus

Q: Describe the idiomatic genus. **A:** The person of Christ is referred to as having the attributes of both natures.

1. The genus in which attributes of either nature are ascribed to the entire person of Christ. a) In his earthly ministry, Jesus appeared to those about him to be a man, much like every other Jewish man in his nation. No one doubted that he was a man, yet at times he needed to use the power of his divine nature to do what he could not do as a human. b) God sent his Son into the world to redeem the world. To do so, he had to use the properties of the human nature that the Son had assumed to fulfil the law and to atone for the guilt of human sin. **Jesus had to be alive as a human, yet selectively use the powers of God.**

Q: Give examples of the divine participating with the human; the human participating with the divine. **A:** Jesus walked on water; He chased out demons; He multiplied food. Jesus was born; He was baptized by the Holy Spirit.

2. The divine participating with the human. a) **Jesus was empathic about this.** Jesus ascribes the divine property of omnipotence to himself while still as a man on earth. {*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* Matthew 28:18} b) Jesus, as a man, had to rely on his divine power as God to forgive sins, which only God can do. {*"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."* Matthew 9:6} c) Although as a man, Jesus had aged during his life on earth, yet the essence of his being did not change and was fixed at his exultation. {*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* Hebrews 13:8} d) Despite being physically a man, Jesus was omniscient. **His disciples recognized this.** {His disciples said, *"Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God."* John 16:30} e) As a man standing before them, Jesus could tell his enemies that he had existed before his birth. **This was a clear claim of divinity.** {Jesus told the Jews, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."* John 8:58} f) In numerous cases Jesus performed miracles which were far beyond the ability of even the most skilled healer or craftsman. **His actions clearly showed divine status.** {*He awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm.... The disciples said, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"* Luke 8:24,25} **No one said, "you are using your divine nature again!" The references were always to the one Christ.**
3. The human participating with the divine. a) **Blood.** Only a divine act could remove sin, but the human attribute of blood participated. {*The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.* 1 John 1:7} b) **Death.** It was the human nature that was killed, yet this death was of the divine creator. {*"You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead."* Acts 3:15} c) **Crucifixion.** The human nature of Jesus was crucified, but the act was directed against the LORD. {*None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* 1 Corinthians 2:8} d) **Born.** God and His Son acted for our salvation but by means of a human nature created through the divine interaction with a woman. {*God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.* Galatians 4:4,5} e) **Human form.** The Son of God is the divine actor who assumed human flesh. {*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.* John 1:14} f) **Human ancestry.** The Son of God assumed a place in a human lineage that ran back to King David, who himself was a descendant of Adam, the man who first sinned. {*Concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh.* Romans 1:3}

C. The majestic genus (Divine attributes shared with human nature.)

Q: Describe the majestic genus. A: The eternal attributes of God were shared with Jesus' human nature.

1. The human nature in the person of Christ remains truly human. Isaiah 53 tells us that he was a "man of sorrow," even in his suffering. *The human nature remained human.*
2. All the divine properties, perfections, honor, and glory of the second person of the Trinity are truly communicated to His human nature. *The human nature received divine properties. Why? Well...*
3. Omnipresence. *For Christ to be one person, the human nature needed to be everywhere like the divine nature.* a) Jesus claimed the ability to be everywhere when he said, *"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."* Matthew 18:20 b) Jesus also claimed the ability to be present anywhere at any time in the future when he said, *"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:20 c) St. Paul noted that Christ is fully present everywhere. *{The fullness of him [Christ] who fills all in all. Ephesians 1:23 d) Jesus, as a human, claimed to have been in heaven where only God dwells. {"No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man." John 3:13}*
4. Omniscience. *For Christ to be one person, the human nature must have the same will and therefore the same knowledge as the divine nature.* a) Jesus did not need to rely on human agents to ferret out intelligence for him. *{But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man. John 2:24-25}* b) His disciples recognized that he had God-like knowledge about everything around him. *{Peter said, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." John 21:17} This knowledge was evident to others.* c) St. Paul pointed out that everything that was hidden from even the smartest man was known by Christ. *{Which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2,3}*
5. Omnipotence. *For Christ to be one person, the human nature had to be able to participate in all divine actions.* a) Jesus claimed that God the Father had given him complete authority to judge the human race when he said, *"You have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him."* John 17:2 b) Jesus also claimed complete authority over everything that exists in the entire universe when he said, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* Matthew 28:18 c) St. Paul noted that Christ indeed had the power to subject all things to himself, including the power to radically alter our bodies. *{The Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20-21}*

Zwingli did not accept that Christ's human nature could receive divine attributes because the "finite cannot contain the infinite." He thought Christ's two natures were like two figures tied together at the toe so one could roam everywhere but the other remain fixed. The Roman Catholic Church gives the divine nature of Christ the worship due God but the human nature only the reverence due a saint.

D. The apotelesmatic genus

Q: How does the majestic genus differ from the apotelesmatic genus? A: In the majestic genus the

divine attributes were shared with the human nature. In the apotelesmatic genus the two natures used their own attributes working together.

1. The personal union of the two natures in Christ, the assumption of the human nature by the divine nature into one person, has taken place for the purpose of the salvation of mankind. *{For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16}* In the execution of the works of the threefold office of prophet, priest and king, the entire person has performed and performs what each nature did and does, each nature contributing what is proper to itself. *This is like structural steel and brick in a building, where they work together to make the building strong. Each does what is peculiar to it.*
2. Christ acted as one person to earn our salvation. a) *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3* b) *The Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father. Galatians 1:3,4* c) *Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:2* *Paul teaches that Christ is one person, and He acts as one.*
3. Both natures concurred in His work. *The human and the divine natures can be seen in the careful wording of the Scriptures.* a) *The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7* b) *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. Hebrews 2:14,15* c) *To care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. Acts 20:28* d) *For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. Romans 5:10-11* e) *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Romans 8:32* f) *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8*
4. Each nature in communication with the other did what was proper for it. *His natures worked like multiple actors carrying out a plan perfectly. It takes communication and the same will in all.* a) *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. 1 Timothy 2:5,6* b) *Jesus said, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28* c) *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Romans 8:3,4*

VII. Applying the Doctrine of the Two Natures of Christ

Q: Why is the doctrine of the two natures of Christ essential to our salvation? **A: Only a man** could live a perfect life under the law and then die. **Only God** could make that sacrifice sufficient and overcome death by rising.

A. To our salvation

1. Because Jesus Christ is God, He could offer a sacrifice that will make us acceptable before God. *Only God can know how to placate God's justice and spread salvation to all the world.* a) *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 b) *He [Jesus] died for all.* 2 Corinthians 5:18
2. Because Jesus Christ is man, He can serve as our high priest, interceding for us before God. *Only someone who is perfect can stand in the presence of God to intercede for us.* a) *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* Hebrews 2:17-18 b) *Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* Romans 8:34

B. To our earthly struggles

Q: Why is the doctrine of the two natures of Christ important in our daily life? A: Jesus understands our problems as a human would. Jesus can strengthen us to deal with life's problems.

1. While living on earth Jesus Christ personally experienced the same things that we experience and therefore knows our hurts and weaknesses as one of us. *He has walked in our shoes.*
2. Weariness. a) *Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.* John 4:6 b) *So they [the disciples] set out, and as they sailed he [Jesus] fell asleep.* Luke 8:22,33 *He suffered the weakness of fatigue.*
3. Poverty. a) *She [Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger; because there was no place for them in the inn.* Luke 2:7 b) *And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."* Matthew 8:20 *He was extremely poor.*
4. Loss by death. a) *He [Herod] sent and had John beheaded in the prison....Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself.* Matthew 14:10-13 b) *When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"* John 11:33-35 *He experienced death among His friends.*
5. Betrayal. a) *After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"* John 6:66–67 b) *Jesus said, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"* Luke 17:17–18 c) *Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him."* Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Matthew 26:48-49 *He was abandoned and figuratively stabbed in the back.*
6. Rejection. a) *He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.* John 1:11 b) *Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"* Matthew 23:37 *He had the feeling of failure.*

C. To our confidence

Q: Why is the doctrine of the two natures of Christ important to our confidence? A: It means that God is with us, so we need not fear.

1. No matter what happens to us on earth, we can feel confident and secure because we know that we have a route directly to God and someone there to speak for us. It is a matter of who you know. In the end we will win.
2. *By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.* 1 John 3:19–20 We should not despair when we feel guilty.
3. *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* Romans 8:31–34 Our enemies cannot accuse us before God as long as we keep our focus on Christ.

4. Humiliation and Exaltation

It is a good idea to begin this session with a review of the three modes in which attributes are shared as was discussed in the last lesson.

VIII. The “Beggar’s Cloak

A. The incredible mystery

1. How could God... a) Allow the whole world to become so corrupt? Couldn’t God have stopped the world from becoming so corrupt? Yes, by eliminating man. The LORD created the world to be perfect because He is perfect. {Genesis 1:31} Yet He gave man a free will so that man’s obedience to His will would not be forced. {Genesis 3:6} When man disobeyed, God could have destroyed him and started over, but He didn’t. Once God didn’t destroy man, the total corruption of the world became inevitable. {Genesis 6:5} b) Allow Himself to conduct such an intervention? His intervention forced God to either destroy or rescue man. Although God didn’t destroy man immediately, His justice would compel Him to destroy him eventually because people had become evil and could not purify themselves. {John 3:5,6} God did not want mankind to perish {Ezekiel 18:23}, and He is almighty. Only He had the power to act, and He did. {1 Corinthians 1:18}
2. Why did God... a) Wait so long to intervene? God’s timetable is not ours. Because the LORD is not a creature of time, human time to Him is irrelevant. {Psalm 90:4} He therefore chose a time that best suited His purpose. {Galatians 4:4,5} His selection of when to act accomplished a series of sub-goals, such as showing people that they could not redeem themselves and creating a political environment that would facilitate the spread of the Gospel. b) God is not limited by the way we think. Act in such an irrational way? God’s ways are not our ways. {Isaiah 55:9} His ways always succeed, while our ways do not have such a good track record. Through the way He has acted, He has totally frustrated “the wisdom of the wise,” {1 Corinthians 1:19} and forced us to accept what He has done by faith, not by reason. {Hebrews 11} (The foolishness of God.)

B. The state of humiliation

Q: What was Jesus' state of humiliation? A: The time He served under the Law for mankind.

1. What it was. a) Hiding His power (Jesus was still almighty outside His physical presence, but in the visible world He limited His majesty.) – Although He was God and had the power to act as God at all times, He did not show this power fully or continually, even though that would have attracted many people to Him. *{Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be flaunted. Philippians 2:6; also see John 5:18}* b) Acting like a servant (effectively invisible as good servants are) – He didn't just step back from being God, like a powerful person on vacation may pretend to be just an ordinary well-off guy, but He reduced Himself to the level where people would take no notice of Him because of anything about Him. *{But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Philippians 2:7; also see 2 Corinthians 8:9}* c) Making himself obedient to death Doing the incomprehensible. How could God? What a plan!) – While some powerful people might be willing to play the commoner until times get tough and then call upon their resources to rescue them, Jesus went all the way to death in carrying out His mission on earth. *{And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross! Philippians 2:8; also see John 10:17}*
2. What it was not. a) Taking on a human nature (human nature ≠ state of humiliation) – If it had been that, then He would either have been perpetually in the state of humiliation or have ceased to be human when He was again exalted. b) Kenoticism – The second person of the Trinity did not give up some of His powers as God during His state of humiliation here on earth. He remained fully God. He was not emptied of His divinity. *{The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. John 3:35}*

C. Stages in Christ's humiliation

Q: What were the stages in Jesus' humiliation? A: Conception, birth, circumcision, ministry, suffering, death & burial.

1. Conception – God made the choice of a humble woman; He seemingly could have picked any woman. Jesus was conceived not by a prominent woman living in a palace or a sacred place, but by an unmarried peasant girl living in a town remote from Jerusalem. *{In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. Luke 1:26-17a; also see Matthew 1:20}*
2. Birth – Jesus' birth was as might be expected among the common folk. Special visitors went unnoticed. Jesus was born in animal quarters in a small town. He had to flee for His life soon after birth. *{Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger. Luke 2:4-7; also see Matthew 2:13}*

Q: When did Jesus' suffering begin? A: At circumcision.

3. Suffering – Jesus suffered all the discomforts of living in a sinful world and a lot more. Jesus began to suffer by being placed under the Law on His eighth day. His suffering continued in both body and soul during His ministry and reached its peak during His final two days. a) *{On the*

eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived. Luke 2:21} b) {Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." Matthew 8:20} c) {"The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face. John 19:2-3} d) {Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Matthew 26:38} e) {But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. Matthew 27:26} "What wondrous love is this, o my soul."

Q: Why was Jesus' suffering on the cross different from other crucifixions? A: He had to endure the pains of hell as well as the pain of crucifixion.

4. Death – Jesus suffered an "awful end," humanly speaking. Jesus died a violent and disgraceful death in the eyes of man and a death filled with the agonies of hell in the eyes of God. At death His human soul went to His Father in heaven. *{When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" Matthew 27:35-40; also see Hebrews 2:14-15 and Luke 23:44}*
5. Burial – Jesus' body was hastily disposed of. This is the Almighty God we are talking about here! After His death, Jesus was buried hurriedly with little fanfare because of the approaching Sabbath. *{At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. John 19:41-42}*

IX. Return to Power and Glory

A. Jesus' exaltation

1. The reason for: a) Jesus was exalted because the work that had brought Him into humiliation was completed. *The job had been finished.* b) *And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. Philippians 2:8-9*
2. The nature of: a) In His state of exaltation Jesus always and continually uses His divine powers in both His divine and human natures. *Jesus' human nature remains, but its power is also divine.* b) *Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. 1 Peter 3:21b-22*

B. The descent into hell

Q: When did Jesus enter the state of exaltation? A: At His resurrection.

1. After His return to life. a) When Jesus' soul reentered his body on Easter morning, He immediately went to show Himself to the demons and damned souls in hell as the victorious conqueror. *Demons are not all-knowing. Jesus wanted to make sure they knew this.* b) *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to*

death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. 1 Peter 3:18-20

2. The victory lap. a) Having defeated the forces of evil, He wanted to make clear to them that their hope of derailing God's plan was ended. *They were totally and permanently beaten. They would not be able to "get 'em next season."* b) *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.* Colossians 2:15

C. The resurrection

Q: In what ways is Jesus' resurrection significant? **A: It shows that His sacrifice for sin was sufficient.**

1. The significance. a) Fulfilled Old Testament prophecies (*promises*) – David in the Psalms and Isaiah in his prophecies of the Christ both proclaimed the resurrection. *{Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, ... Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. Isaiah 53:10-12a; also see Psalm 16:9-10}* b) Jesus connected His death and resurrection. (*He had predicted both.*) – When Jesus spoke of His death, He also always spoke of His resurrection. He knew He would not stay dead. *{From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Matthew 16:21}* c) Established the claim of being God. (*Established His deity in the eyes of men.*) – Other resurrections from the dead in the Bible were effected by agents of God. When Jesus came forth from the dead without the help of any agent of God, He showed that He Himself was God. *{Who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 1:4}* d) Showed His sacrifice was sufficient. (*The resurrection meant victory over death.*) – That Jesus could return to life and continue to proclaim the message of salvation means that He had accomplished what was necessary for the message to be true and God the Father had accepted His sacrifice. *{The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Romans 4:23-25}* e) Showed resurrection from the dead is real. (*Proved the possibility of resurrection.*) – Because the resurrection of the dead is not possible by the laws of nature, an example of such a resurrection was necessary to convince people that it was really something that could happen. *{If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 1 Corinthians 15:13-14}*

Q: Discuss one of the challenges to the resurrection. **A: Members of the class might choose any of those covered in the book, such as the theft theory.**

2. The challenges – Because of its significance to the Christian faith, the historical fact of the resurrection is one of the most challenged teachings of the Scriptures. Nevertheless, the amount of Scriptural evidence for the resurrection is very large. a) Grave robbery theory (*the disciples were too frightened.*) – Some claim that the disciples stole the body. It is not possible that a bunch of scared and disillusioned men would have overcome a group of Roman soldiers in order to steal the body. *{On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the*

doors locked for fear of the Jews. John 20:19} b) Swoon theory (*The evidence was conclusive.*) – Some claim that Jesus only appeared to die, but later revived and claimed to have risen from the dead. Roman soldiers were masters at making sure people were dead. The piercing of Jesus showed that His blood had clotted, an irreversible process. *{Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. John 19:34}* c) Substitution theory (*When did the substitution occur? People knew Jesus.*) – Some claim that someone else was substituted for Jesus, perhaps by tricking the soldiers who captured Jesus or by bribing the executioners. Many of the Sanhedrin knew Jesus by sight and knew whom they condemned. Jesus was followed to His crucifixion by a crowd, so there could have been no substitution. *{A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Luke 23:27}* d) Hallucination theory (*Too many people saw Him.*) – Some claim the disciples so badly wanted Jesus back with them, that they began to imagine they saw Him in the dark corners of their dwellings. The number of sightings of Jesus, the number of witnesses involved, and the places where He was sighted all make this theory silly. *{He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 1 Corinthians 15:5-7}* e) Pious fraud theory (*The conspiracy would have had to be too big to hold together.*) – Some claim the disciples made up the story of the resurrection to gain followers by convincing people of the importance and power of Jesus. While such fraud might be carried out by a single author (e.g., Book of Mormon, Koran) and two or three conspirators, the number of witnesses was too large and the cohesiveness of their story is too strong for this to be a serious possibility. Many of disciples endured torture and death rather than deny the resurrection story. Jewish enemies would have produced the body if they could have. *{When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13}*

D. The ascension era

1. Pre-ascension period. a) Validation (*Lots of witnesses were needed.*) – By appearing to a number of people over a 40-day period, Jesus proved that He had indeed risen from the dead. (See 1 Corinthians 15:5-7 above} b) Instruction & commission (*Like the time between the approval of a project and its actual start.*) – He could talk with His disciples with an authority that He had previously not displayed. He prepared them for the work that lay ahead and the coming of the Holy Spirit. *{He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3}*
2. The ascension. a) (*A clean break. The church needed to start without always looking over its shoulder.*) The ascension cleanly ended one era and began another. By leaving them in a visible manner, He showed them not to expect to see Him again for personal interaction. b) *He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1:9*
3. The destination. (*Jesus stepped out of His visible presence.*) a) The ascension not only removed Jesus from the company of His disciples and the earth's surface, but also from a localized presence in the universe. b) *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:20*

E. Sitting at the right hand of God

Q: What is the significance of Jesus being at the right hand of God? **A:** He can intercede for us in all our spiritual and temporal needs.

1. The position of power and honor. **He resumed His position completely above everything.** a) The right hand is a symbolic rather than a physical location. We still use the phrase “right hand man” to indicate that someone has the position of most importance to a leader. b) *Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, in both the present and coming ages.* Ephesians 1:20-21
2. Strategic help for Christians. **A friend in high places.** a) A friend in a position of power can be of great assistance. Having our brother Jesus on the throne as the omnipotent God means that we as Christians have an unfailing source of help. b) *Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.* Romans 8:34

F. He will return to judge the world.

1. Return in glory. **His return to being physically present will be overwhelming.** a) Jesus’ return will be dramatically different from His original appearance at Bethlehem or His quiet departure from His disciples. All the heavens and earth will tremble at His coming in power and glory. b) *For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels.”* Matthew 16:27
2. Final judgment. a) His final act before time disappears and our forever being in eternity with Him will be His judging of all the peoples of the earth. **The final judgment ends the creation account.** b) *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”* Matthew 25:31-32

5. Priest and Prophet

We use ideas of a prophet, a priest, and a king to help us understand how Christ works. Christ’s actions are united in the fulfilment of the “decree of redemption.”

X. Christ the High Priest

A. Old Testament worship

Q: Who offered sacrifices before Moses lived? A: Cain, Abel, Noah & the patriarchs.

We naturally have a lot of questions, but we must be careful not to overread the Scriptures.

1. Pre-Mosaic sacrifices. **God implanted the idea of sacrifice, but we have been given no details.** a) Initial sacrifices – The first sacrifices recorded in the Bible are those of Cain and Abel. **We must not make too much of the details of the sacrifices.** The manner of the sacrifices is unknown. {*In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.* Genesis 4:3-4} b) Sacrifices of the patriarchs **recognized God’s blessings.** – The patriarchs (Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) built altars and sacrificed to God at important times in their lives. We know that by this time sacrifices involved burning. {*Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.* Genesis 8:20}

Q: Give some facts about the Aaronic priesthood. A: They were descendants of Aaron, had special rules of purity, and made all the sacrifices before the LORD.

2. Levitical priesthood was God's first effort at establishing order in Israel. a) Line of Aaron – The LORD chose Aaron and his descendants to be His priests for the nation of Israel. Others were not admitted to the priesthood. {*“Speak to the Israelites and get twelve staffs from them, one from the leader of each of their ancestral tribes. Write the name of each man on his staff. On the staff of Levi write Aaron's name, for there must be one staff for the head of each ancestral tribe. Place them in the Tent of Meeting in front of the Testimony, where I meet with you. The staff belonging to the man I choose will sprout, and I will rid myself of this constant grumbling.”* Numbers 17:2-5} b) Higher standard of conduct – Priests had special regulations concerning purity and behavior that exceeded those of the other Israelites. **Priests were to model pure living.** {*“No descendant of Aaron the priest who has any defect is to come near to present the offerings made to the LORD by fire. He has a defect; he must not come near to offer the food of his God.”* Leviticus 21:21}

Q: What types of offerings were required of the Israelites? A: Daily, first fruits, festival, purification & sin and guilt offerings.

3. Required offerings. (No “strange fire.”) a) Daily sacrifices were a daily reminder of God's blessings, like milking cows twice a day. – Every morning and evening a sacrifice had to be made. They were to remind the people that they daily sinned and needed to come before the LORD for His mercy. {*“This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day: two lambs a year old. Offer one in the morning and the other at twilight.”* Exodus 29:38-39} b) Monthly sacrifices recognized the changing of the seasons. – The new moon festivals called the people's attention to God's preservation of them. As the year passed, the LORD was always watching over them. {*“Also at your times of rejoicing--your appointed feasts and New Moon festivals--you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your God. I am the LORD your God.”* Numbers 10:10} c) Offerings for first fruits recognized that our very lives are a gift of God. – The LORD claimed every firstborn male as his own. Firstborn sons were redeemed with animals, and the first fruits of crops were brought to the Levites. {*“Redeem the firstborn donkey with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem all your firstborn sons.”* Exodus 34:20a} d) Offerings for cleansing because impurities needed to be made “pure.” – An offering needed to be made after women gave birth and when people were cleansed from contagious diseases. {*“When the days of her purification for a son or daughter are over, she is to bring to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting a year-old lamb for a burnt offering....”* Leviticus 12:6-8} e) Offerings for sin because sin makes one unclean. – When someone committed a public sin, he was required to offer a sacrifice. {*“When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD's holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, It is a guilt offering.”* Leviticus 5:15}
4. Great Day of Atonement (yom kippur). a) Atonement for high priest to make a “holy” priesthood. – The high priest had to enter the Holy of Holies to make a prescribed offering for his own sins and those of his family. {*“Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household.”* Leviticus 16:6} b) Atonement for people to make a “holy” people. – Once the high priest was purified so he could stand before the LORD, then he needed to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. {*“Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering.”* Leviticus 16:9} c) Scapegoat (Something had to carry the burden of sin for the people so they can be made innocent – “One man must die....”) – The sins of the people were symbolically transferred to a goat which was then led out into the wilderness to die. {*“The goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement.”* Leviticus 16:10}

B. Jesus as high priest on earth

Q: What is vicarious satisfaction? A: Satisfaction made by someone other than the offender.

1. Vicarious satisfaction. (To take someone's place, like a stunt double in a movie.) a) The requirements of the law – To provide the righteousness that God requires of mankind, a man had to obey the moral law which God had established for mankind. Someone had to take man's place. {*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.* Hebrew 2:14-15} b) Punishment for sins – God's justice for sins committed had to be carried out. **God's way of thinking is not ours.** The punishment that every person deserved had to be borne. Someone had to take man's place. {*In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.* Hebrews 7:22}

Q: What is the difference between Christ's active and passive obedience? A: Active: kept the Law perfectly. Passive: atoned for the sins of the world.

2. Active obedience a) Born as a human (**Human from conception.**) – As the Savior, Jesus had to become man. {*The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* Luke 1:35} b) Circumcised (**Made one with His people.**) – To be placed under the Law, He had to be circumcised. {*On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.* Luke 2:21} c) Obeyed moral law (**which Adam had failed to keep.**) – He had to obey the moral law which was given to all mankind. {*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, ...--yet was without sin.* Hebrews 4:15} d) Obeyed ceremonial law (**The special law required of God's Old Testament people that they had not kept.**) – To be an appropriate sacrifice, he had to keep the ceremonial law through which the Jews gained access to God's mercy seat. {*After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" "Yes, he does."* Matthew 17:24-25}
3. Passive obedience. a) Arrest and condemnation by Jews (**condemned according to the Mosaic Law to show there is no salvation there.**) – He had to be condemned by those whom God had put into place as religious leaders because they were responsible for the sacrifices made to the LORD. {*Jesus said, "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you.* Matthew 23:2-3} b) Flogging and condemnation by Gentiles (**Condemned by the civil law to show there is no salvation there.**) – He had to be condemned by the political rulers whom God had put in place to show there is no salvation through civil righteousness. {*Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities....If you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.* Romans 13:1-4} c) Crucifixion with criminals (**Died with sinners because he had been made the greatest sinner.**) – Because He was taking the place of sinners, He needed to be punished with them. {*When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals--one on his right, the other on his left.* Luke 23:33} d) Pains of hell (**Punishment of God for the guilt of sin.**) – To save mankind, He had to endure the punishment of hell. {*About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" --which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* Matthew 27:46} e) Death in agony (**A curious and senseless death from the human viewpoint.**) – He had to finish His work by accepting and overcoming death. {*When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is*

finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. John 19:30}

C. Jesus as high priest in heaven

Q: What does Christ do now since His ascension? A: He reigns in heaven and intercedes for His church.

1. Eternal justifier (Jesus deflected God’s judgment.) – As each believer comes before the judgment throne, Jesus pleads his case by showing that no sins remain for which He has not atoned. *{Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Romans 8:34}*
2. Intercessor. a) Christians are still so helpless. – Jesus intercedes for the Christians still in this world. When they pray, He seeks their wellbeing before His father. *{He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Hebrews 7:25}*
b) Growth of the church – Jesus intercedes on behalf of the church to gain more blood-bought souls for heaven. His desire is for it to continue to add new members to those being saved. *{My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin,...He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2}*

XI. High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek

Christ was extremely different from Levitical priests.

A. Melchizedek – Very different. Why?

1. Unusual characteristics. a) Only mentioned once – Melchizedek appeared suddenly and unexpectedly. He disappeared in the same manner, completely out of character with the rest of the narrative. *{Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. Genesis 14:18a}* b) Both king and priest – He held the position both of king and priest, which was unusual in any era of history. Kings liked priests who they could hire and fire, depending on the results that they could get from various gods. *{He was priest of God Most High. Genesis 14:18b}*
2. Priest to Abraham. a) Blessed Abraham – Abraham was the LORD’s “chosen one” of his era and therefore should have blessed anyone else he encountered, if there was a blessing that was to be given. By blessing Abraham, Melchizedek showed his superior position in God’s scheme of things. *{He blessed Abram. Genesis 14:19}* Father Abraham bowed to another. b) Accepted tithe – By accepting this offering from Abraham, he was acknowledging that the LORD had appointed him to intercede for others, even those as prominent as Abraham. *{Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. Genesis 14:20b}* He took the tithe in the name of God.

B. Jesus as high priest

Q: In what ways was Jesus like Melchizedek? A: No relevant history, sudden appearance, was priest to all God’s people.

1. Lack of priestly pedigree. He was separate, not one of a long line. He was not of the Levitical family. a) His ancestors were not priests. – In Israel genealogies were carefully kept so that only legitimate descendants of Aaron could obtain the office of priest. Jesus was not of the family of Aaron any more than Melchizedek was. *{A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of*

David, the son of Abraham: Matthew 1:1 b) Appeared suddenly – Jesus appeared suddenly on the scene. The “lineage-watchers” had not foreseen this coming. Many were waiting for the Savior, but they did not expect someone like Jesus to be the one. {“I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” John 1:26-27}

2. Priesthood without end. a) Death could not hold Him so God could end the human priesthood. – Previous priests needed to be replaced because they died. By His resurrection Jesus showed that more priests were unnecessary. {“He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee.” Luke 24:6} b) Is forever in heaven – The focus changed from efforts on earth to divine activity in heaven. The work now moved from earth to heaven, where Jesus needs no sacrifice to approach the Father, nor do we because we are clothed with His righteousness. {For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. Hebrews 9:24}
3. No personal sacrifice needed – Before they sinned, Adam and Eve could approach God without fear. Those who keep God's Law do not need purification before God will meet with them. {The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. Genesis 2:25}
4. Once for all. a) Efficacious sacrifice – The blood of animals could not atone for sins. This was the weakness in Levitical sacrifices. Only someone who had a worth more than all mankind could suffer a punishment that could substitute for the punishment all people deserved. {For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed..., but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Peter 1:18-19} b) Doesn't need repeating – Once the punishment for a crime has been paid, it does not have to be paid again. The prisoner walks. This was a spectacular end to the role of the earthly priesthood. {Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. Hebrews 7:27}

XII. Christ the Prophet

In the Old Testament the government of the priesthood failed, so God sent in kings and prophets.

A. The role of a prophet (= messenger)

1. Spokesman for the LORD. a) Speaks the word of God – When the LORD called a prophet, He gave him the message that he was to proclaim and the target audience. {But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.” Jeremiah 1:7} We have the same commission as Jeremiah. b) Speaks the truth (The message of the law and gospel, saying no more and no less than the Scriptures.) – People who claimed to be prophets needed to be tested to see whether what they said came true and was consistent with previous messages from the LORD. {If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him. Deuteronomy 18:21-22}
2. Chosen by the LORD. a) Called directly (God pointed His finger and said “Go.”) – At times the LORD came to His chosen representatives in a dream or directly to call them into service. {“So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” Exodus 3:10} b) Anointed by God's appointees – The church has processes for calling “prophets.” The LORD also called prophets through their anointing by His representatives. {Also, anoint Jehu son

of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. 1 Kings 19:16}

B. Christ the ultimate prophet

1. He was predicted in the Old Testament. a) By Moses (**Moses knew he was not the final word from God.**) – {*The LORD said to me: “What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.” Deuteronomy 18:17-18*} b) By Ezekiel (**The Prophet would be unusual.**) – {*I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken. Ezekiel 34:23-24*} c) By Isaiah (**He would be recognized by His actions.**) – {*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion. Isaiah 61:1-3*}
2. He was recognized by the people. **The people knew what to expect.** a) Feeding of the 5000 – {*After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” John 6:14*} b) Authoritative speaking – {*On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.” John 7:40*} c) After His death – {*“What things?” he asked. “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.” Luke 24:19*}
3. He showed His divine character. **There was no doubt that this was the One.** a) Approved by God – {*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17*} b) Fulfilled the Scriptures – **He worked to fulfil the Scriptures.** {*He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Luke 4:21*} c) Displayed godly majesty – **He had limitless power.** {*There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Matthew 17:2*}

Q: What is the function of a prophet? **A: To speak the message given him by his sender, like an ambassador.**

6. King and Redeemer

Review: 1) role of a prophet – spokesman of God and chosen by Him. 2) Christ was the perfect prophet who was predicted in the Old Testament, recognized by the people, and showed His divine character.

XII. Christ the Prophet (continued)

C. The message of Christ, the Prophet

Q: In what ways has Jesus fulfilled the role of prophet? **A: He preached the whole counsel of God: 1) repentance, 2) the forgiveness of sin, 3) transformed life.**

1. Whole counsel of God (**The substance of His message was comprehensive.**) – Jesus preached everything that His disciples needed to build their faith and to prepare them for their great

mission. {“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” John 15:15}

2. With power (authority) **Clearly the Word of God.)** – When Jesus spoke and acted, it was clear that His message was not an ordinary human message or spoken as by a servant for his master. {*All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!"* Luke 4:36}
3. Repentance **)Absolute need for repentance.)** – Jesus accepted sinners of every kind, but He expected that they would repent of their sins. Those too obstinate to repent found no sympathy from Him. {*From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."* Matthew 4:17}
4. Gospel **(Focus on His critical mission.)** – The primary message of Jesus was the Gospel of salvation through His blood. {*One day as he was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel.* Luke 20:1}
5. Transformed life **(Works done to gain merit must be replaced by works done out of a changed heart.)** – The Gospel transforms our lives by changing our motivation from serving God out of fear to serving God out of love. {*"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."* Matthew 5:20}

D. Christ continues to serve as a prophet

Q: How does Jesus still serve as a prophet? A: 1) Through the Scriptures. 2) Through the evangelizing efforts of the church.

1. Through the writers of Scripture **(Documentation of His activities.)** – Jesus works through the words written by His disciples. {*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* John 20:31}
2. Through the evangelizing of Christians **(Christ speaks through us, which is the main reason Simply Lutheran was written.)** – Jesus works through all who spread the message of His salvation across the world. {*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Matthew 28:19-20}

XIII. Christ the King

Q: What is the function of a king? A: To rule for the good of his subjects.

A. Jesus as king

1. The promise – In the Old Testament a Savior-king was promised by the LORD to His people. a) The double promise **(1) Solomon and the physical temple, 2) Jesus and the spiritual temple.)** – {*"When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."* 2 Samuel 7:12-13} b) The refined promise **(A permanent king for Israel.)** – {*"The days are coming,"*

declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.” Jeremiah 23:5}

2. The expectation. a) Many prominent Jews were waiting for the kingdom of God to come. *(They knew of the promise.)* – {*Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God. Mark 15:43*} b) Most, however, wanted a material kingdom that would make their lives easier. *(Most misunderstood the promise.)* – {*Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. John 6:15*}

Who is the real Israel? God’s people or the physical descendants of Abraham?

3. The reality. a) People were disappointed when they learned Christ’s kingdom was not a place of easy living and the exercise of power. *(On earth Christ’s followers suffer rather than rule.)* – {*From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. John 6:66*} b) It did not have any of the trappings of an earthly kingdom. *(No riches and honor, but the ever-present question: Why doesn’t God solve the world’s problems?)* – {*Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews.” John 18:36*}

B. The three-fold kingdom

Q: Describe Jesus’ threefold kingdom. A: 1) of power – rule over nature, 2) of grace – rule over the church militant, 3) of glory – rule over the church triumphant.

1. Of power. a) Jesus claimed authority over all. *(The almighty actions of God.)* – {*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Matthew 28:18*} b) The apostles echoed that claim. *The recognition of all creation.* {*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11*}
2. Of grace (= invisible church, the church militant). a) It is composed only of believers. *(“All and only” but we do not know how big.)* – {*“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.” John 10:27,28*} b) It is not visible to the human eye. *(No visible form.)* – {*Jesus replied, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.” Luke 17:20,21*} c) It will never fail. *(Christ will continue to find ways to bestow His grace.)* – {*“On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” Matthew 16:18*} *We cannot “save lives” because all will die. We cannot “save souls” because that is the work of the Lord.*
3. Of glory. a) Home of the faithful *after death or Judgment Day.* – {*“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Revelation 2:10*} b) A place of nobility. *(“O sons and daughters of the king....”)* – {*“And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Luke 22:29,30*} c) Ruled in majesty *(never-ending glory).* – {*Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” Revelation 5:13*}

C. The relationship of the three kingdoms

1. Power serves Grace. a) From the very beginning of the world in Genesis 1, man was the LORD's favored creature. When man fell into sin, God promised a Savior from sin. It is therefore only natural that the LORD would point all things toward the salvation of mankind and that Jesus would rule the universe for that purpose. *The salvation of mankind is God's highest goal for His creation.* b) *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.* Ephesians 1:22-23 *All things work together for good....*
2. Grace serves Glory. a) Jesus uses Christians, those in the kingdom of grace, both to spread the message of salvation and to attract people to God by reflecting the light of the Gospel in their lives. b) Spreading (*Preach*) – {*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Matthew 28:19,20} c) Lighting (*Reflect the light of the Gospel.*) – *"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."* Matthew 5:14-16}

XIV. Redemption

A. Jesus paid the price. *But why? God for man!?*

1. No one else could. a) It was impossible for anyone else to pay enough to ransom his own soul, much less the souls of the whole world. *Modernity failed, and post-modernism and wokism are doomed.* b) *No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him--the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough--that he should live on forever and not see decay.* Psalm 49:7-9 *Without Jesus there is complete hopelessness. It is like being dropped into the middle of the ocean.*
2. Only Jesus could. a) Jesus paid the price to redeem all mankind when He shed His blood and died on the cross. *The great sacrifice – God for man, the creator for the creature.* b) *For you know that it was not with perishable things (everything we own is perishable) such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world (which occurred because of God's eternal decree), but was revealed in these last times for your sake.* 1 Peter 1:18-20
3. The payment was sufficient for all. a) The ransom covered all people whether they believe in Him and His work or not. b) *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"* John 1:29 *Jesus' payment for the guilt of sins was both universal and sufficient. Calvinists teach it was not universal, Roman Catholics that it was not sufficient.*

B. We have been redeemed.

Q: Describe Jesus' threefold redemption. A: 1) from sin – we now can please God, 2) from death – we suffer temporal death, but we shall rise again and not suffer eternal death, 3) from the power of the devil – the devil no longer can accuse us before God.

1. Redemption from sin. a) Sin was slavery (*Slavery is being bound to another. Today it is being bound to lying hope.*). – A slave is someone who is owned by another and does not have the right to do as he wishes. For a slave to become free, someone must buy him and set him free. *{But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin. Romans 6:17-18}* b) Sin brought guilt. – Guilt is the imputed consequence of sin. In a courtroom it does not matter what a person actually did, but what he is found guilty of doing. *Guilt is the liability for punishment under the law.* It is guilt (the curse of law) that leads to punishment, so guilt must be removed to prevent punishment. *{Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” Galatians 3:13}* c) No law means no sin. – If there is not a law against something, one cannot break the law and be guilty. *One cannot be convicted of breaking a law that does not apply.* Christ redeemed us from service under the law. *{For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. Romans 6:14}*

2. Redemption from death. (*Death is separation.*) a) Our death is deserved. – When someone is guilty of a capital offense, they deserve the death penalty, whether the state administers it or not. *Guilt deserves punishment, and A pardon from the governor is therefore the gift of life. {For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23}* b) Spiritual death is more pressing than physical death. – While physical death is the grim reality all must face, spiritual death is by far the worse because it cuts us off from God and puts us on the road to eternal punishment. *{When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. Colossians 2:13}* c) Spiritual life starts here. *We must be spiritually alive to avoid eternal death. There will be no additional chances after rejecting Jesus.* – If we are to escape eternal death, we must be made alive spiritually while we are still living physically, which can only happen through Christ. *{Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26}*

3. Redemption from the power of the devil. a) The devil’s kingdom is evil. – No good can happen to anyone as long as the devil holds power over him. For a person to be saved, the devil’s power over him must be broken. *{He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. 1 John 3:8}* *The devil wants to accuse us before God, and he has plenty of evidence.* b) The devil accuses sinners. – Like an evil child who goads another child into doing something wrong and then tattles on him, so the devil tempts people to sin and then accuses them before God. Christ has covered over all the sin that the devil could hold up before God to demand our condemnation. *{Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. Revelation 12:10}* *Jesus’ payment removes our guilt and therefore our punishment.*

C. The purpose of Christ’s redemption

Q: What are the two purposes of our redemption? **A:** 1) eternal life in heaven, 2) to serve God while here on earth.

1. Long-term – The ultimate purpose of Christ’s redemption is to bring us to heaven to live with Him forever, *namely, our salvation.* This is shown by many of the Scripture verses above.

2. Short-term – The intermediate purpose is to allow us to serve in Christ’s kingdoms of power and grace while we are still on earth, while we await the arrival of the kingdom of glory. {*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.* Ephesians 2:10} *Note that this verse occurs immediately after “by grace you are saved....”*

D. Subordinating our reasoning about Christ to God’s greater wisdom

Q: In what ways does the person of Christ challenge our reason? **A: The great mysteries of faith which do not make sense to the human mind.**

1. **The Trinity (Mystery of three in one.)** – The Trinity has but one divine essence, but there are three distinct persons in that essence. Only the person of Son, while remaining a part of the Trinity, assumed a human nature.
2. **The Incarnation (Understanding time versus eternity.)** – The eternal God also took upon Himself the body and soul of a human nature which became so bound to the divine nature that they could and must act as one person.
3. **The state of humiliation (How could He not use the available power?)** – Despite having all the power of God, the person of Christ did not always use that power but instead suffered the indignities that are part of human life and death.
4. **The vicarious atonement (So many questions – How can such a thing be?)** – Jesus was able to accept the guilt of all the sins of everyone who had ever lived or would ever live and to suffer the eternal punishment of hell for all that guilt in a finite amount of time. How could God the Father accept such a substitution?
5. **The Great Exchange (Like the power of elephants bestowed on ants.)** – God the Father was able to transfer the guilt of all the sins of all the sinners to Jesus and then transfer the righteousness that Jesus had earned under the Law to all those sinners. They are declared righteous even if they are not saved.
6. **The state of exultation (How can a human nature have divine attributes?)** – The human nature of Jesus has been able to fully share in the glorious nature of the eternal God.
7. **The modes of Christ’s presence (How can a human nature have different modes of presence?)** – Christ could simultaneously be locally present on earth but be globally present in the universe throughout all space and time.
8. **Election (Why did God elect some and not others?)** – While firmly desiring the salvation of all people, God predestined only some through Christ to eternal life.

Q: List the modes in which Christ can be present. **A: Physically, as a sustaining presence, in the sacrament, in the church, in our hearts, in his word.**