

Christ: His Person and Works

Introduction

At the center of the Christian religion is Jesus Christ. Beyond the acceptance of a set of fundamental beliefs, in its inmost essence our religion is first and foremost a commitment to a Person: Jesus Christ. The same is true of the Christian message. The gospel is about an event at the center of which is Jesus Christ. Christianity does not go back merely to an early community of believers. It is rooted in Jesus of Nazareth. Christianity is Christ. But who is He?

The aim of this study is to make a reflective and systematic study of the person and mission or work of Jesus Christ, however brief and selective, based on the Scriptures, particularly on the NT. The starting point in this study is that the Gospels are historically authentic and dependable materials describing what Jesus did and said. The remainder of the Scriptures, both OT and NT, are likewise recognized as trustworthy and reliable sources. After all, the person and work of our Lord, as well as their implications, are a matter of revelation more than of human thought.

This study will consider various aspects of the person and work of Jesus Christ, namely His person, death, resurrection, ascension, high priestly ministry, and second coming according to the following outline.

- I. The Word Became Flesh
 - A. The Incarnation
 1. Christ's Preexistence
 2. Christ's Incarnation
 3. The Virgin Birth
 - B. Human and Divine
 1. The Humanity of Christ
 2. A Sinless Human Nature
 3. The Deity of Christ
 4. One Person—Truly Divine, Truly Human

- II. His Ministry and Death
 - A. The Work He Came to Do
 1. To Confirm God's Promises
 2. To Establish the Kingdom of God
 3. To Impart the Knowledge of God
 4. To Be the Servant of God
 5. To Leave an Example
 6. To Heal the Weak and Sick
 7. To Make Sin Exceedingly Sinful
 8. To Be a Faithful High Priest
 9. To Save Sinners Through His Death

 - B. A Work Foretold in the OT
 1. A Fact Present in Christ's Mind
 2. A Conviction Shared by the NT Writers
 3. A Death of Utmost Importance

- C. The Atonement: Background Factors
 - 1. The English Word “Atonement”
 - 2. An Original Harmonious Relation
 - 3. The Cause of the Estrangement
 - 4. The Atonement and Christ’s Death
 - 5. A Divine Work
- D. Christ’s Atoning Work: The NT Teaching
 - 1. A Sacrificial Death
 - 2. A Vicarious Death
 - 3. The Expiation-Propitiation Dimension
 - 4. Justification
 - 5. Reconciliation
- E. The Extent of the Atoning Deed

III. The Exalted Lord

- A. The Risen Christ
 - 1. A Fundamental Event
 - 2. The Empty Tomb
 - 3. A Physical Resurrection
 - 4. The Significance of Christ’s Resurrection
- B. The Ascended Lord
 - 1. The Scriptural Evidence
 - 2. The Ascension’s Relation to Christ
 - 3. Its Relation to Believers
- C. Christ’s High-Priestly Ministry
 - 1. The Scriptural Evidence
 - 2. Two Distinctive Ministries
 - 3. Ascended to Rule and to Fill All Things
- D. Christ’s Second Coming
 - 1. The Scriptural Evidence
 - 2. The Manner of Christ’s Return
 - 3. The Triumph of the Kingdom
- E. Calling for a Response

IV. Historical Overview

- A. The Ancient Church
 - 1. Denying the Reality of the Two Natures
 - 2. Denying the Integrity of the Two Natures
 - 3. The Nicene Response
 - 4. The Relationship Between the Two Natures
 - 5. The Chalcedonian Definition
- B. The Middle Ages
 - 1. Focusing on the Work of Christ
- C. The Reformation
 - 1. The *Communicatio Idiomatum* Issue
 - 2. Of Christ’s States and Offices

- D. Modern Times
 - 1. A Monumental Shift
 - 2. Friedrich Schleiermacher
 - 3. Albrecht Ritschl
 - 4. Kenoticism
 - E. Contemporary Approaches
 - 1. Karl Barth's Trinitarian Christology
 - 2. Rudolf Bultmann's Demythologized Christ
 - 3. Donald M. Baillie's Paradoxical Christology
 - 4. Oscar Cullmann
 - 5. Process Christology
 - 6. Wolfhart Pannenberg
 - 7. Liberation Theologies
 - 8. *The Myth of God Incarnate*
 - 9. The Jesus Seminar
 - 10. Roman Catholic Christology
 - F. Current Crosswinds
 - G. Seventh-day Adventists
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- V. Ellen G. White Comments
 - A. The Word Became Flesh
 - B. A Fallen Humanity
 - C. Two Natures in One Person
 - D. Christ Our Example
 - E. A Sacrificial Death
 - F. A Demonstration of God's Love
 - G. Christ's Resurrection
 - H. Christ's Ascension
 - I. Christ's High Priesthood