

LESSON
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Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All He Lived

Lesson Objectives

Welcome in the strong name of Jesus Christ! After your reading, study, discussion, and application of the materials in this lesson, you will be able to:

- Articulate the general purpose for Jesus' coming to earth: to reveal to us the Father's glory and redeem us from sin and Satan's power.
- Outline the creedal language regarding Jesus' humanity, his conception by the Holy Spirit and birth to the Virgin Mary.
- Summarize two of the prominent historical errors that have arisen from contesting Jesus' becoming a human being: Nestorianism—*that Christ was two distinct persons*, and Eutychianism—*that Christ has one blended nature*. The Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (381) settled these questions, affirming that Jesus was *fully God and fully human*.
- Evaluate and refute errors associated with misreading Jesus' humanity: *Docetism* which asserted that *Jesus was not human* and *Apollinarianism* which asserted that *Jesus was not fully human*.
- Restate the practical implications of the unity of Jesus' divine and human nature, and the significance of Jesus' humanity for us: Jesus, our high priest, can empathize with our needs and represent us before God. As our Second Adam, we will be conformed to his image in our future glorification with him.
- Identify and biblically defend the concept of Jesus as the Baptized One who identified with the plight and peril of the sinners he came to save, as well as the concept of Jesus as the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God—Jesus reasserting God's right to rule over creation, showing through his person, miracles, healings, and exorcisms the signs of the Kingdom present in his own person on earth.
- To analyze and unpack the idea of Jesus as the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, sketching his Messianic mission from the public announcement of his ministry, and the way in which Jesus revealed himself as the expected Servant of Yahweh through his proclamation of good news to the poor, his demonstration of justice among God's people, and his vicarious sacrifice on behalf of God's people as a "ransom for many."

Today this Scripture Has Been Fulfilled in Your Hearing

Luke 4.14-21 - And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. [15] And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. [16] And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. [17] And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, [18] “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, [19] to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” [20] And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. [21] And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

2 Will the real Jesus please stand up? Like the old game show where contestants sought to fool a celebrity panel on what they really were in real life, at the time of Jesus many were playing a guessing game on the true identity of Jesus Christ. Undoubtedly, the fervor of anticipation was at a high level during this moment in Jesus’ earlier ministry. Some would come to view Jesus as an itinerant rabbi whose teaching threatened the well-being of the nation. Others would go so far to suggest that he was mentally challenged, self-deluded, even controlled by the powers of the evil one. Surely the tension of these questions had begun to simmer that early Sabbath morning in his hometown of Nazareth, as Luke tells us, “where he had been brought up.” Going to the synagogue, which was his spiritual discipline, he was the reader for the service. Luke tells us that he took the scroll of Isaiah and read from the 61st chapter: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” On this reading he handed the scroll back to the attendant, and sat down.

The statement he made next was the most anticipated statement of that town, their time, and all human history. Jesus replied, “*Today*, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” By this answer, Jesus here identifies himself as the long awaited Servant of Yahweh, the Messiah king who would come to reign and rule over God’s Kingdom.

Devotion

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Here are a sampling of a number of important texts which provide an overall context to understand Jesus' momentous announcement of himself as the Servant-King (i.e., the Messiah [anointed One] of God):

Isa. 9.6-7 - For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isa. 11.2-5 - And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. [3] And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, [4] but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. [5] Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

Isa. 42.1-4 - Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. [2] He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; [3] a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. [4] He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

Jesus here announces in his hometown that without doubt or equivocation, he is the fulfillment of the ancient prophetic hope of the Servant King who would come and inaugurate afresh the reign of God over his people and his creation. For the rest of his ministry, he would give concrete, tangible evidence that he was the King of Israel, the Servant of Yahweh who would give his own soul as a ransom for the sins of many (Isa. 53.1ff.).

It can be said that our appropriation of the benefits and blessings of Messiah are directly connected to our understanding and convictions about him. In other words, the work of God in this era is to believe on the One whom God anointed and

sent, Jesus of Nazareth (cf. John 6.35). Allegiance to him, love and worship of him, obedience and trust in him is the essence of citizenship in the Kingdom of God. Jesus is the *one true Messiah* [anointed One] of God, and without him, apart from him is no forgiveness, mercy, direction, or grace.

If you have found Jesus, you have found the One. You need look for none other. May God give us the wisdom to realize that the Scriptures of the Messiah and the Kingdom come *has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth*.

Mark 1.14-15 - Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, [15] and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

After reciting and/or singing the Nicene Creed (located in the Appendix), pray the following prayer:

Almighty God who wonderfully created us in your image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son, Jesus Christ: Grant us to share in his divine life as he shares our humanity; who is now alive, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever.

~ The Church of the Province of South Africa.

Minister’s Book for Use With the Holy Eucharist and Morning and Evening Prayer.
Braamfontein: Publishing Department of the Church of the Province of South Africa. p. 27.

**Nicene Creed
and Prayer**

2

Put away your notes, gather up your thoughts and reflections, and take the quiz for Lesson 1, *Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Came..*

Quiz

Review with a partner, write out and/or recite the text for last class session’s assigned memory verses: John 1.14-18.

**Scripture
Memorization
Review**

Turn in your summary of the reading assignment for last week, that is, your brief response and explanation of the main points that the authors were seeking to make in the assigned reading (Reading Completion Sheet).

Assignments Due

CONTACT**Could Jesus Have Sinned?**

1 In a discussion on the humanity of Jesus, it became clear in an adult Sunday School class that real confusion reigned concerning Jesus' ability or inability to commit sin as a human being. Those who said that it was possible argued that, in light of the numerous verses that suggest that Jesus was like us in every way *except without sinning*, he had to be *able to sin* (if he were *truly like us*). Others argued that, given his divine nature and holy nature, Jesus could not have sinned because he was *God in the flesh*, and since it was impossible for God to sin, *neither could Jesus* (being himself *God*). How would you have sought to settle their discussion on this critical theological question?

It Doesn't SEEM Like the Kingdom Is Present

2 In discussing Jesus' announcement of the Kingdom present in his person in Mark 1.14-15 and other texts, some students raised the question of whether or not this interpretation was defensible in light of the *actual problems and situations that the world was undergoing*. "If the Kingdom in some sense has already come in the person of Jesus, then why are things so bad, why are so many innocent people suffering in the world today, and why doesn't he stop all the mayhem and cruelty on earth?" If the Kingdom really was inaugurated in the announcement of Jesus at his sermon at Nazareth, then why don't we see more *signs of its presence in the midst of the earth today*? How would you answer these and similar questions about Jesus as the Inauguration and Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God in this age?

The Head and Not the Tail

3 Much of today's current teaching tends to practice a kind of selective hermeneutic regarding the meaning of Jesus' ministry for us as the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. With boldness and courage, many television evangelists and religious broadcasters have crafted a well-articulated scheme of "health and wealth" which tends to define Christianity as a means of receiving prosperity and blessing in light of the correct and ongoing applications of "laws" of prosperity. In many ways, the images of Jesus as Suffering Servant are replaced with ideas of "storehouses of blessing," of "confessing until the blessings come," and related phrases all focused on the individual coming into a knowledge of God's principles of blessings, and applying these laws so the attached and associated gifts of grace would manifest themselves.

This focus raises serious questions about the nature of Christ, of Christian discipleship, and the present and ongoing validity of some of the primary images and symbols of the Christian life: the cross, the altar, the blood, the Lamb. This focus on prosperity and blessing applies with great intensity certain select texts, all of which tend to emphasize the “triumphant crown wearing” side of Christian discipleship over against the “humble cross bearing” side. How would you suggest we begin to understand the differences in emphasis, and how does Jesus as our Suffering Servant help us understand what God’s will might be for us in the Church today?

Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Lived

Segment 1: Christ’s Human Nature

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis

Jesus appeared on earth as a man to reveal to humankind the Father’s glory and redeem us from sin and Satan’s power. Jesus was fully human, conceived by the Holy Spirit and carried to birth by the Virgin Mary. Two ancient heresies contested Jesus’ becoming a human being: Nestorianism—that *Christ was two distinct persons*, and Eutychianism—that *Christ has one blended nature*. The Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (381) settled these questions, and affirmed that Jesus was *fully God and fully human*. Additional errors misread the meaning of Jesus’ humanity: *Docetism* which asserted that *Jesus was not human* and *Apollinarianism* which asserted that *Jesus was not fully human*. Jesus, however, is fully human and can represent us perfectly before God as our high priest, mediator, and new pattern for glorified humanity as our Second Adam.

Our objective for this segment, *Christ’s Human Nature*, is to enable you to see that:

- The general purpose for Jesus’ coming to earth was to reveal to us the glory of God the Father in his person, as well as to redeem humankind from the penalty and power of sin and Satan.
- The Scriptures teach the full and certain humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to the woman, the Virgin Mary.



Summary of
Segment 1

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“ . . . Christ perfectly fulfilled and united in His person the three main strands of Old Testament Messianic expectation. The Carpenter of Nazareth is first the Prophet who proclaims the Word of the Lord, then the Priest who abolishes sin by sacrifice and intercession, and finally the King who rules over the entire universe. This threefold scheme provides a picture of the mediatorial work which our Lord came to earth to accomplish.”
 ~ Bruce Demarest, *Jesus Christ: The God-Man*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1978. p. 102.

- Two prominent historical errors that contested Jesus’ humanity were put forth and refuted in the early Church councils. Nestorianism, the doctrine that *Christ was two distinct persons*, and Eutychianism, the doctrine that *Christ has one blended nature* were rejected as heresies because of their rejection of the full humanity of Jesus. The Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (381) settled these questions, affirming that Jesus was *fully God and fully human*.
- The early councils also refuted and rejected other key errors associated with misreading Jesus’ humanity: *Docetism* which asserted that *Jesus was not human* and *Apollinarianism* which asserted that *Jesus was not fully human*.
- The doctrine of the humanity of Christ is filled with many and important practical implications of the unity of Jesus’ divine and human nature. Being like us in every way *yet without sin*, Jesus as our high priest can empathize with our needs and represent us before God. As our Second Adam, we will be conformed to his glorious body in the time of glorification to come.

.....
We who believe that God really lived on earth, and took upon Him the low estate of human form, for the purpose of man’s salvation, are very far from thinking as those do who refuse to believe that God cares for anything. . . . Fortunately, however, it is a part of the creed of Christians even to believe that God did die, and yet that he is alive forevermore.

~ Tertullian (c. 207, W), 3.319.
 David W. Bercot, ed. *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. p. 96.

Video Segment 1
 Outline

I. The Purpose of God the Son’s Coming to Earth: Revelation and Redemption

A. For Revelation

1. Jesus revealed to us God’s very *being and person*.

a. John 1.14-18

b. Matt. 11.27

c. John 14.8-11

2. Jesus revealed to us *God's exalted salvation purpose*, 2 Tim. 1.8-10.

3. Jesus revealed to us *God's mission program*.

a. 1 John 3.8

b. Gen. 3.15

c. Luke 24.44-48

B. For Redemption

1. As the Nicene Creed affirms, Jesus became human for our redemption (i.e., "Who for us men and for our salvation").

a. 1 Tim. 2.5-6

b. Luke 2.10-11

c. Heb. 2.9-10

2. To pay the penalty as a *sacrifice in our place*
 - a. 1 Pet. 3.18
 - b. Titus 2.14
 - c. Heb. 9.28
3. To set us free from *the power of sin's dominion*, Rom. 6.6-11
4. To deliver us from the kingdom of Satan, Col. 1.13
5. To reassert God's right to rule in his universe, Mark 1.14-15

If Christ was only man, how did he say, "Before Abraham was, I am?" For no man can be before someone from whom he himself has descended. Nor can it be that anyone could have been prior to him of whom he himself has taken his origin. Yet, Christ, although he was born of Abraham, says that he is before Abraham. . . . How can it be said that "I and the Father are one," if he is not both God and the Son?

~ Novatian (c. 235, W), 5.624, 625. Ibid. p. 99.

II. Jesus of Nazareth, the God-man: the Unity of Jesus' Personhood

A. His Godhood: Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

1. The biblical evidence
 - a. The visitation to Mary, Luke 1.31-35
 - b. Matthew's account of Joseph's dilemma, Matt. 1.18-25

2. Its theological significance

- a. The Holy Spirit's working and God's overshadowing power made Mary pregnant with Jesus: *she had no sexual intimacy with any man who served as the seed giver of Jesus' person.*
- b. The Holy Spirit was the active cause of Mary's conception: *no human male was involved in his unique conception.*
- c. Jesus shared human nature fully, and did not lack any human element that is found in all of us as human beings.
- d. Jesus was conceived in the womb of a woman, was nurtured through a human mother, and grew as other human beings in the context of human family and growth.

B. His Humanity: Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.

1. The biblical evidence

- a. Messiah's birth in the Lukan account, Luke 2.4-7
- b. The prophetic promise of a virgin giving birth to Messiah, Isa. 7.14
- c. Mary's pregnancy and birth of Jesus in Matthew, Matt. 1.25,

As he was born of Mary in the last days, so did he also proceed from God as the First-Begotten of every creature.
~ Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.576.
Ibid. p. 101.

- d. Jesus, a descendant of David's tribe and family, Rom. 1.3 (cf. 2 Sam. 7.12-16; Ps. 89.36-37; Isa. 9.6-7; Jer. 23.5-6; Jer. 33.15-17; etc.)
- e. Paul's assertion of Jesus' human lineage, Gal. 4.4 (cf. the human genealogies of Matt. 1.1-17 and Luke 3.23-38).

2. Its theological significance

- a. Jesus was born to a woman as a fully human person.
 - (1) Matt. 2.11
 - (2) Matt. 12.47
 - (3) Matt. 13.55
- b. He referred to himself as a man, John 8.40.
- c. Jesus' *physical nature* was in every way just like our own.
 - (1) He grew in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and people, Luke 2.52.
 - (2) He had the appearance of a man, with a human body, John 4.9; Luke 24.13; John 20.15; cf. Heb. 2.14.
 - (3) His contemporaries recognized his human nature, 1 John 1.1-3.
 - (4) He experienced hunger and thirst, and needed food and water for sustenance, Matt. 4.2; Mark 11.12; John 19.28.
 - (5) He experienced fatigue, needed sleep and rest as we do, John 4.6; Matt. 8.24.
 - (6) He suffered physically and died on the cross, Heb. 2.9.

- d. Jesus' *psychological nature* was in every way like our own.
- (1) He loved his own till the end, and had compassion for the lost (John 13.1-3; Matt. 9.36; 14.14; 20.34).
 - (2) He wept over Lazarus' passing, John 11.35.
 - (3) He experienced sorrow, and could be troubled at various affairs and events, Matt. 26.37; John 12.27.
 - (4) He felt the loneliness of isolation, Mark 15.34.
 - (5) His knowledge was remarkable in its scope, but his understanding had genuine limits (cf. John 4.18 with Mark 9.21).
 - (6) He mourned over Jerusalem's hard-heartedness, Matt. 23.37.
 - (7) He longed for human companionship in the Garden, Matt. 26.36, 40.
 - (8) He was tempted in all points as we are, Heb. 4.15.

C. Errors associated with misreading the unity of Christ's person

These errors arose from individuals in early Church history wrestling with the question "What does it really mean that Jesus was fully God as well as fully human?" The Nicene Council (325) and the Council of Constantinople (381) settled the question that Jesus was fully God and fully human. These errors emerged from attempts to define precisely just what this means theologically.

1. Nestorianism: *Christ was two distinct persons.*
 - a. Nestorius, patriarch (*bishop*) of Constantinople (428 A.D.)
 - (1) Poor language: denied that Mary could be referred to as the *theotokos* (God-bearer)
 - (2) Argued that God could not have a mother (no being could give birth to a member of the Godhead)

*The perfect Word
born of the perfect
Father was begotten
in perfection.
~ Clement of
Alexandria (c. 195, E),
2.215. Ibid. p. 101.*

*What did the Church
confess about Christ
back in the fifth
century? Four things
stand out: (1) His
proper deity; (2) His
authentic humanity;
(3) the union of His
divine and human
natures in a single
person—His person
was fully integrated,
not split or divided;
and (4) the proper
distinction of the two
natures. In the union
each nature retains its
peculiar properties, as
the creed put it,
without "confusion,"
"change," "division,"
or "separation."
~ Bruce Demarest,
*Jesus Christ: The
God-Man*. Eugene, OR:
Wipf and Stock
Publishers, 1978. p. 64.*

- (3) Mary didn't bear God, but a man who was a means for God to reveal himself
 - b. His teachings seemed to suggest a split between two different beings in the person of Jesus
2. Eutychianism: *Christ has one blended nature.*
 - a. A leader of a monastery in Constantinople (ca. 375-454)
 - (1) He taught that after Jesus was born, he only possessed a single nature (not two natures in one person)
 - (2) Jesus' humanity blended with his deity and nearly obliterated it
 - (3) Unclear as to what this single, blended nature is: a confusing teaching
 - b. His teachings confuse the importance of the integrity of the two natures in one person in Jesus
3. The Council of Chalcedon, 451
 - a. Denounced ideas of Eutyches
 - b. Affirmed the two-nature declaration as orthodox
 - c. Mary was declared to be the "God-bearer" (*theotokos*) of God the Son, who became human.

- d. Jesus was declared to be “consubstantial with the Father,” through his deity and “consubstantial with us in manhood” in his humanity.
- e. Concluded that Christ’s divinity and humanity exists in two natures “without confusion, without change, without division, without separation.”

D. Implications of the unity of Jesus’ personhood

1. Both natures of Jesus have integrity and are united in his person.
2. The precise definition of Jesus’ two natures cannot be fully explained.
3. Jesus is the perfect mediator between God and humankind, for he can represent both perfectly.

III. “And Became Human”: Further Aspects Concerning Jesus’ Humanity

A. Aspects of Jesus’ human nature

1. His humanity had *integrity*: the Word was made flesh, John 1.14.
2. His humanity was *in every way like our own*: he shares our essential human nature.
 - a. Heb. 2.14

The Hypostatic Union of the Two Natures of Jesus

*The hypostatic union may be defined as “the second person, the preincarnate Christ came and took to Himself a human nature and remains forever undiminished Deity and true humanity united in one person forever.” When Christ came, a Person came, not just a nature; he took on an additional nature, a human nature—He did not simply dwell in a human person. The result of the union of the two natures is the theanthropic Person (the God-man). ~ P. P. Enns. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. (Electronic ed.) Chicago: Moody Press, 1997.*

- b. Heb. 2.17-18
3. His humanity was *sinless*.
- a. Heb. 7.26
 - b. Heb. 4.15
 - c. Heb. 9.13-14
 - d. 1 Pet. 1.19
 - e. 1 Pet. 2.22
 - f. 1 John 3.5
4. His humanity was *representative*: Jesus was the Second Adam (cf. Rom. 5.12-21; 1 Cor. 15.22-49).
- a. As second Adam, Jesus is the Head and Source of new life for redeemed humanity.
 - b. As second Adam, Jesus is God's Pattern for providing salvation through his righteousness.
 - c. As second Adam, Jesus is the true Image bearer for all humanity.

B. Errors associated with misreading Jesus' humanity:

1 John 4.2-3 - By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, [3] and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

1 Tim. 3.16 - Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: he was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

1. *Docetism*: Jesus was not human (heresy in the early Church).
 - a. *Dokeo* (Greek, meaning "to seem or appear")
 - b. Jesus only appeared to be a human being.
 - c. God could not unite with human flesh; Jesus' physical nature was not real, an illusion (like a spirit or ghost).
 - d. Directly refuted by Jesus' own words, Luke 24.38-43
2. *Apollinarianism*: Jesus was not fully human.
 - a. Bishop of Syria in 4th century
 - b. Jesus could not have both human reason and divine reason.
 - c. Jesus was a compound being, a combination of human and divine elements.

- d. The Word took the body only; it took the place of the human soul. Jesus did not have a *human* soul but a *divine* soul.
- e. Multiple problems: Jesus has no human will. Humanity is not affirmed (condemned as heretical at Council of Constantinople [381]).

C. The implications of Jesus' humanity: Jesus is *fully human*.

1. Empathy: as our high priest, he can empathize with our needs and concerns, Heb. 2.14-18.
2. Representation: as our second Adam, he represents us perfectly to the Father, Rom. 5.12ff.
3. Hope for immortality: as our image bearer, we know that our bodies will one day be conformed to his own glorious body.
 - a. 1 Cor. 15.48-49
 - b. Rom. 8.29
 - c. Phil. 3.20-21
 - d. 1 John 3.2

Conclusion

- » In the hypostatic union of Christ, Jesus' divine and human natures are perfectly joined in one person: Jesus is fully human, in every way as we are, *yet without sin*.
- » The Nicene Creed affirms the teaching of Holy Scripture of the full Godhood and humanity of Jesus Christ.
- » Jesus on Nazareth was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. His divine and human natures are intact, perfectly united in his one person.

The *Kenosis* (Self-Emptying) of Christ: Of What Did He Empty himself?

The *kenosis* problem involves the interpretation of Philippians 2.7, "(He) emptied [Gk. *ekenosen*] Himself." The critical question is: Of what did Christ empty Himself? Liberal theologians suggest Christ emptied Himself of *His deity*, but it is evident from His life and ministry that He did not, for His deity was displayed on numerous occasions. Two main points may be made. (1) "Christ merely surrendered the independent exercise of some of his relative or transitive attributes. He did not surrender the absolute or immanent attributes in any sense; He was always perfectly holy, just, merciful, truthful, and faithful."³⁰ This statement has merit and provides a solution to problem passages such as Matthew 24.36. The key word in this definition would be "independent" because Jesus did on many occasions reveal His relative attributes. (2) Christ took to Himself an additional nature. The context of Philippians 2.7 provides the best solution to the *kenosis* problem. The emptying was **not a subtraction but an addition**. The four following phrases (Phil. 2.7-8) explain the emptying: "(a) taking the form of a bond-servant, and (b) being made in the likeness of men. And (c) being found in appearance as a man, (d) He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death." The "emptying" of Christ was taking on an additional nature, a human nature with its limitations. His deity was never surrendered [emphasis mine].

~ P. P. Enns. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*.
Chicago: Moody Press, 1997.

Segue 1

Student Questions
and Responsepage M21  4page M21  5

Please take as much time as you have available to answer these and other questions that the video brought out. This lesson highlights the full humanity of the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and his ability to empathize, represent, and serve as a pattern for a new humanity in the Kingdom to come. Articulating the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ has been one of the central theological discussions throughout the history of the Church. Our ability to understand Jesus' humanity greatly impacts our opportunity to counsel others who are enduring hardship and need to believe in a Savior who truly empathizes and understands their plight. Your ability to understand his human nature is therefore critical to your ability to persuade others of Jesus' empathy during times of crisis. Answer the following questions with these ideas in mind, and support your answers with Scripture.

1. Explain the purposes given in this lesson regarding the appearance of Jesus as a human being upon earth: revealing the Father's glory in the Incarnation and redeeming humankind from the power, penalty, and presence of sin and Satan.
2. What are the divine-human contributions in the conception and birth of Jesus Christ? How do these contributions help us understand the integrity and unity of the divine and human natures that he possesses?
3. What is the theological significance and certainty of the virgin birth of Jesus? In what way did Jesus share our human nature without sharing the sinful *Adam's sin nature*? Explain your answer.
4. What is *Nestorianism* and why was it condemned in the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople?
5. What is *Eutychianism* and why was it condemned in the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople?
6. What does it mean when we say that "the humanity of Jesus was sinless?" How, too, should we understand Jesus as the *Second Adam*, as the representative of a new humanity before God?
7. Explain the heresies of *Docetism* and *Apollinarianism*, and why were they rejected as alternative views for understanding the humanity of Jesus Christ.
8. What are the key ramifications of being able to assert that Jesus of Nazareth in every way is fully human even as we are, in terms of his ability to empathize with us, represent us before God, and serve as the pattern for our glorified humanity in the world to come?

Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Lived

Segment 2: The Messianic Mission of Jesus Christ

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis

Three important aspects of Jesus' life help us to understand the meaning of his Messianic mission. Jesus is the Baptized One who identified with the plight and peril of the sinners he came to save. Furthermore, Jesus is the Inauguration and Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, reasserting God's right to rule over creation, showing through his person, miracles, healings, and exorcisms the signs of the Kingdom present in his own person on earth. Jesus is also the expected Servant of Yahweh who proclaimed good news to the poor, demonstrated justice among God's people, and ultimately, gave up his life as a vicarious sacrifice and a ransom for many.

Our objective for this segment, *The Messianic Mission of Jesus Christ*, is to enable you to see that:

- Jesus of Nazareth entered the world as a member of Israel, as the Baptized One who identified with the plight and peril of the sinners he came to save.
- In the person of Jesus, the long-awaited Kingdom of God has been manifested. In his person, the Kingdom of God has come. Jesus is therefore the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, reasserting God's right to rule over creation, showing through his person, miracles, healings, and exorcisms the signs of the Kingdom present in his own person on earth.
- In fulfillment of the OT prophecy, Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. From the public announcement of his public ministry and throughout his encounters in life, Jesus revealed himself as the expected Servant of Yahweh who would proclaim the Good News to the poor, do justice among God's people, and ultimately, give his life as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the people.

Summary of
Segment 2

Video Segment 2
Outline

*We sing hymns to
the Most High alone
and to His Only-
Begotten, who is the
Word and God.*
~ Origen (c. 248, E),
4.639. David W.
Bercot, ed. *A
Dictionary of Early
Christian Beliefs.*
Peabody, MA:
Hendrickson
Publishers, 1998.
p. 99.

I. Jesus Is the Baptized One Who Identified with Sinners.

A. The biblical portrait of Jesus as the Baptized One

1. John the Baptizer (cf. Matt. 3.1-12; Mark 1.2-8; Luke 3.1-20; John 1.19-28)
2. John as the forerunner of the Messiah in OT prophecy
 - a. He is the messenger who clears the way before Messiah, Mal. 3.1.
 - b. He is the voice crying in the wilderness, cf. Isa. 40.1-3 with Matt. 3.1-3.
 - c. He would instruct the people in the ways of the Lord, Mal. 2.7.
 - d. He would come in the spirit and power of Elijah.
 - (1) Mal. 4.5-6
 - (2) Matt. 11.13-14
 - e. Prophecies were made regarding John's life and mission before Messiah would appear, cf. Luke 1.13-17.
3. Jesus acknowledges John as the messenger before Messiah, Matt. 11.10-11.

4. Jesus is baptized by John, Matt. 3.13-15.
5. God confirms Jesus' identity and sonship at the baptism, Matt. 3.16-17.

B. The theological implications of Jesus as the Baptized One who identifies with sinners

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT Messianic prophecy.
2. Jesus identifies completely with sinners in his baptism (he was baptized not because of a need to repent, but a desire to empathize with the people of God).
3. Jesus is well able to represent us in his priestly office because of his deep sympathy and love for those who are broken and despised.
 - a. Heb. 2.14-18
 - b. Heb. 4.15-5.2

II. Jesus Is the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God.

A. The biblical portrait of Jesus as the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God

1. The OT in numerous places asserts God as the King of the universe.

Christ performed all those miracles . . . by the inherent might of His authority. For this was the proper duty of true Divinity, as was consistent with His nature, as was worthy of Him.

~ Arnobius (c. 305, E), 6.425. Ibid. p. 100.

- a. Ps. 145.11-13
 - b. 1 Chron. 29.11
 - c. Dan. 4.34-35
2. Because of the rebellion of Satan (= *adversary*) and the first human pair, the world has been thrown into chaos and sin.
 - a. The devil has rebelled against God, Isa. 14.12-17 cf. Ezek. 28.13-17.
 - b. Humankind participated in the voluntary rebellion of Adam and Eve, Gen. 3.1-7 with Rom. 5.1-11.
 3. God made a covenant with David that one descending from his royal line would come and rule in justice in God's Kingdom forever, cf. 2 Sam. 7.1-17 with Ps. 89.3-4.
 4. The hope of the Kingdom is that God would reassert his kingly rule over creation, destroying Satan, delivering God's nation Israel, ending Gentile domination and oppression, and refreshing creation.
 - a. In the day of the Lord the serpent would be destroyed.
 - b. Israel would be regathered and restored.

- c. The social order would be changed: Gentile oppression would cease.
 - d. All creation would be transformed.
5. Jesus proclaimed himself as the presence of the Kingdom of God in his person at his first appearing.
- a. He introduced himself as *the promised Messiah* of the Kingdom which had then come into being, Mark 1.14-15.
 - b. His most often used title by which *he referred to himself was the “Son of man,”* an allusion to Daniel’s coming king, Dan. 7.13-14.
 - c. He *exercised dominion over Satan and his minions* through his ministry of exorcism and deliverance.
 - (1) Luke 11.17-23
 - (2) Luke 10.17-20
 - (3) Acts 10.36-38
 - d. He gave *signs of the Kingdom’s coming* and the visible end of the curse’s power through his healings and miracles.
 - (1) The feeding of the 5,000 (cf. Mark 6.30-44)
 - (2) He opened the eyes of the blind, John 9.1-7.
 - (3) He commanded the storm winds and waves, Matt. 8.23-27.
 - (4) He healed the lame, paralyzed, and the sick, e.g., Mark 2.1-12.
 - (5) He brought the dead back to life again, John 11.

- e. His *teaching* outlined the reassertion of God's kingdom ethic in the here and now, e.g., the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7.
 - (1) Love as the supreme commandment and fulfillment of the Law's ethical norms, Matt 22.34-40
 - (2) He himself as the subject proper of Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets (i.e., the Old Testament in its entirety), John 5.39-40; Luke 24.27, 44-48

- f. His *character* reveals the glory of the Father's own splendor as well as his kingdom righteousness, John 1.14; Matt. 5.17-18.

B. The theological implications of Jesus as the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT prophecy regarding the coming Lord and Messiah, Acts 2.34-36.

2. In Jesus' first appearing, the Kingdom of God has appeared and been inaugurated. Although it will not be consummated until his Second Coming, Jesus has translated those who believe into the Kingdom of his Son, Col. 1.13; 1 John 3.8.

3. Jesus' mission on earth was the display and reassertion of God's rule in this domain, to defeat the devil and to restore his creation under God's rulership, 1 John 3.8.

He is called His Servant by the God of all things, and Israel, and Light of the Gentiles.

~ Origen (c. 228, E), 9.314. Ibid. p. 370.

III. Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Yahweh.

A. The biblical portrait of the Servant of Yahweh

1. Jesus inaugurated his public ministry in Nazareth by an appeal to an OT Messianic text regarding Yahweh's Suffering Servant, Isaiah 61.1 with Luke 4.18-19
2. Jesus thus identifies himself with the Servant of the Lord in the OT (e.g., the prophet Isaiah)
 - a. He concentrated on meeting the needs of the broken and the beaten, suggesting that "only the sick need a physician," Mark 2.14-17
 - b. He rebuked the religious leaders for their inability to be merciful and compassionate to the poor, Luke 18.9-14
 - c. He made treatment of the poor the litmus test of the quality of one's relationship with God, Matt. 25.31-46
3. Jesus is acknowledged by the early Christian community to be the Servant of the Lord, John 1.41; Acts 4.27; Acts 10.38
4. Jesus fulfills the OT witness regarding the faithful Servant of the Lord who would judge and lead justly over God's people (cf. Matt. 12.16-20 with Isa. 42.1-4)
5. Jesus is Yahweh's Servant whose prophetic word brings sustenance and power to those who hear, (cf. Matt. 11.29-30 with Isa. 50.4)
6. Jesus in his death would be the dramatic Sacrificial Servant of Isaiah 53, the one whose life and experience of suffering would end in his substitutionary death for all humankind, Isa. 53.2-6

B. The theological implications of Jesus as the Servant of Yahweh

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT Messianic prophecy regarding the Servant of Yahweh.
2. In all of his life and relationships, Jesus demonstrated that quality of lowliness and humiliation that allowed him be to both forgiving and compassionate to sinners and the sick throughout his earthly life.
3. Jesus not only fulfilled the prophecies of Yahweh's Servant regarding his humble life and cruel death, but he will fulfill all the prophecies regarding the reassertion and completion of God's Kingdom to come at his Second Coming, Isa. 11.1-4.

Conclusion

- » Three key biblical motifs can be seen to comprise Jesus' life and Messianic ministry on earth.
- » As the Baptized One, Jesus identified with the sinners he came to redeem.
- » As the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, Jesus inaugurated the reign of God and reasserted God's right to rule over creation.
- » As the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies of God's anointed servant, preaching the Good News to the poor, doing justice among the people, and giving his life as a ransom for many.

The following questions were designed to help you review the material in the second video segment. In each of these three biblical motifs (images, themes), Jesus reveals himself to be the long awaited Messiah of Israel. In his baptism he identified with the sinners he came to redeem. In his kingdom proclamation he inaugurated the reign of God and reasserted God's right to rule over creation. In his fulfillment of OT prophecy, he expressed clearly the signs of the One anointed of God to give his life as a ransom for many. An understanding of these motifs are central for urban ministry, especially since the urban community is desperate for One who understands its pain, proclaims the good news of peace and reconciliation, and who can restore the relationships we have broken with God and one another. Answer the following questions with these key applications in mind as you try to clearly understand the facts supporting these great biblical themes.

1. What role does John the Baptist play in the narrative of Jesus of Nazareth and the announcement of the Messiah?
2. How are we to understand the meaning of the baptism of Jesus by John, especially since Jesus had never sinned—why would Jesus participate in a *baptism to repentance*? Explain your answer.
3. How might the baptism of Jesus related to his role for us as high priest, i.e., as one who must be able to empathize with the needs and weaknesses of the people (cf. Heb. 4.14-15 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. [15] For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin)?
4. In the story of God, how did the Jews of Jesus' day understand the coming manifestation of the reign of God to come about? How did Jesus' teaching and ministry signal a new understanding of the timetable and manifestation of the Kingdom *in his own person*?
5. How did Jesus give evidence in miracles and healings that the long prophesied Kingdom of God had in fact come in his life and ministry? How did his teaching demonstrate the present reality of the Kingdom come in his life?
6. What is the relationship between Jesus' initial inauguration of the Kingdom and his Second Coming? Explain your answer.

Segue 2

Student Questions and Response

7. How did Jesus announce his identity in his public announcement in his hometown Nazareth? With whom did he identify himself? Why is this significant for understanding Jesus' role as Messiah?
8. How does the OT (e.g., Isaiah 53) outline the ministry of the Servant of Yahweh as a *substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the people*? How did the death of Jesus fulfill this important prophecy?
9. Why can we be confident that if Jesus is truly the Suffering Servant of Yahweh that he will return and finish the work that he began through his Incarnation, his death and resurrection?

The Importance of the Nicene Creed in Christological Controversy

The Nicene Creed, which is used in worship today, is dated from the Council of Constantinople in 381. All creeds that use the phrase "of the same substance (reality, being, essence) as the Father" were regarded as Nicene. The Council of Constantinople also eliminated the anathemas from the Creed of 325 and added a statement affirming the deity of the Holy Spirit as well as the one holy catholic Church, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the dead. The Council of Nicea, in affirming that Jesus Christ was truly God, raised the question of the humanity of Christ, and therefore of the doctrine of the person of Christ. The Church of the 5th century, in an amazingly catholic theological endeavor, defined its understanding of the person of Jesus Christ at the Council of Chalcedon (431) in which it affirmed that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man in one person (one acting subject).

~ John H. Leith. "Creeds." *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. D. N. Freedman, ed. (Vol. 1). (electronic ed.). New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1996. p. 1205.

CONNECTION

Summary of Key Concepts

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This lesson focuses upon the important lessons of Christ's person in his humanity as well as the richness of his life and ministry as the promised Messiah demonstrated in his baptism, kingdom ministry, and identification with the image of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. The critical concepts associated with this lesson are important for urban leaders to understand and apply as they not only follow the Lord in their

own personal discipleship, but also as they lead others to maturity. Listed below are some of these critical ideas and truths.

- The general purpose for Jesus' coming to earth was to reveal to us the glory of God the Father in his person, as well as to redeem humankind from the penalty and power of sin and Satan.
- The Scriptures teach the full and certain humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to the woman, the Virgin Mary.
- Two prominent historical errors that contested Jesus' humanity were put forth and refuted in the early Church councils. *Nestorianism*, the doctrine that *Christ was two distinct persons*, and *Eutychianism*, the doctrine that *Christ has one blended nature* were rejected as heresies because of their rejection of the full humanity of Jesus. The Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (381) settled these questions, affirming that Jesus was *fully God and fully human*.
- The early councils also refuted and rejected other key errors associated with misreading Jesus' humanity: *Docetism* which asserted that *Jesus was not human* and *Apollinarianism* which asserted that *Jesus was not fully human*.
- The doctrine of the humanity of Christ is filled with many important practical implications of the unity of Jesus' divine and human nature. Being like us in every way *yet without sin*, Jesus as our high priest can empathize with our needs and represent us before God. As our Second Adam, we will be conformed to his glorious body in the time of glorification to come.
- Jesus of Nazareth entered the world as a member of Israel, as the Baptized One who identified with the plight and peril of the sinners he came to save.
- In the person of Jesus, the long awaited Kingdom of God has been manifested. In his person, the Kingdom of God has come. Jesus is therefore the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, reasserting God's right to rule over creation, showing through his person, miracles, healings, and exorcisms the signs of the Kingdom present in his own person on earth.
- In fulfillment of the OT prophecy, Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. From the public announcement of his public ministry and throughout his encounters in life, Jesus revealed himself as the expected Servant of Yahweh who would proclaim good news to the poor, do justice among God's people, and ultimately, give his life as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the people.

**Student Application
and Implications**

Now explore with your fellow students your more personal questions about the person and work of Jesus as Messiah who lived among us. Your ability to make disciples of Jesus is directly connected to your understanding of who he was, what he did (and why), and how what he did (and is doing) applies to both your life and your ministry. As you have pondered some of the truths covered in this lesson, what kinds of issues and ideas have come to the surface that you personally want answers for? What issues have come to light through this study that affect your own personal discipleship and walk with the Lord? The questions below are designed to help you form your own, more specific and personal questions.

- * How is it possible that God could become a human being for the purpose of revelation and redemption? Is it necessary for us to understand *how* this is possible, or should we simply concentrate on *that* it occurred? Explain your answer.
- * To what extent are the theories about *how* Jesus' divine and human natures united ultimately an issue of mystery and faith, not reason and analysis. Explain your answer.
- * Is it right to say that Jesus is *in every way* just like us except that he *never sinned*? In other words, was Jesus like us in his emotions, thoughts, human feelings and needs, in every way?
- * In what ways do the errors concerning Jesus' humanity (i.e., those *ancient heresies*) find expression in the speculations about Jesus today? How do the ideas that people have of Jesus today parallel those which were refuted in the great Councils of the Church?
- * Why is it extremely important to be able to say to others that Jesus feels our weakness and understands our vulnerabilities? How does the doctrine of his humanity help us explain and communicate this to those whom we serve in the city?
- * How should we as urban ministers proclaim the Kingdom of God as *present* in the city today? In what senses must we in our preaching and teaching emphasize *both sides of the perspective* of Christ's inaugurating the Kingdom in his first coming, and consummating it in his Second Coming?
- * The NT affirms that God's intent is that we as his people are conformed to his image, both in his death as well as in his resurrection, ascension, and return (cf. Rom. 8.29; Gal. 4.10ff.; Phil. 3.20-21; 2 Cor. 3.18; 1 John 3.1-2;

Rom. 6.1-11, etc.). How might the teaching of Jesus as the Suffering Servant of Yahweh help us understand God's purpose to conform us to his image, sharing in his suffering and death in order to share in his exaltation and glory (1 Pet. 2.21-25; Rom. 8.16-18).

CASE STUDIES

He's Been There Before

In counseling a bereaved family who recently lost a young child, you are called as pastor to give comforting words to them. Of all the thoughts that have caused them the greatest pain, the one lingering idea is their fear of death. They are Christians, they love the Lord and are faithful members of a solid, biblical, missions-minded church, but the absence of their daughter/sister has crushed the family. They want to believe that God understands and that he is taking care of little Sarah, but on their darkest days, they are nearly overwhelmed with grief and pain. How might the teaching of the humanity of Jesus help you help them cope with the loss of their little one? How might the knowledge that Jesus has experienced death help you comfort them with the loss of Sarah? How does Paul integrate his knowledge of Christ into his counsel to the Thessalonians on this same subject (i.e., 1 Thess. 4.13-17)?

1

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2

Would He Have Come?

To do good theology we must be willing to use our imaginations as well as our reason to understand what God has given for us. In a discussion on the nature of God's purposes and the Incarnation, some advanced seminary students in a Christology class raised the question of the *necessity and inevitability* of the Incarnation. They asked, in what sense, if any, was the Incarnation an actual inevitability? In other words, would Jesus of Nazareth have been born if Adam had not sinned, and humankind had not needed a Savior? One student believes that all such thinking is of little or no value, since the secret things belong to God and the things which are revealed belong to us (Deut. 29.29). Another believes that such thinking is helpful, imitating the work of the angels with the prophets to understand the purposes and intentions of God recorded in Scripture (1 Pet. 1.10-12). What do you think?

2

Compromised Faith or Merely Identifying with Sinners

3

The current “insiders movements” are an important and powerful phenomena of the Holy Spirit in missions today. Many countries are now inaccessible to foreign Christian workers, missionaries, or “tent makers”—Christians who go into “closed nations” to work in secular positions for the sake of sharing the Gospel. Many Buddhists and Muslims (among others) are coming to Christ, but, retaining their original cultural customs and contacts for the sake of “identifying with their fellow countrymen for the sake of the Gospel.” For instance, some Buddhist “followers of Christ” have professed faith in Jesus, but refuse to go by the term “Christian,” which in many cultural contexts is equal to saying “I’m a pro-Westerner and have turned my allegiance away from my people.” There are reports of robust movements within Islamic communities of individuals who have come to Jesus by faith but still remain within the cultural boundaries of Islam and Islamic society. Arguing analogies with Judaism and early Christianity, these believers are convinced that there is no other way to reach these millions without true *identification with them, which means retaining a connection with them within their religious and cultural grids*. Is this compromising faith or simply like Jesus *identifying with sinners for the sake of salvation*?

Jesus of Nazareth or the Christ of Faith

4

In many of our churches today, the teaching concerning Jesus of Nazareth is in exile. The ethics, principles, and commands of the Lord Jesus are often overlooked for “principles and laws” of prosperity and blessing, and the hard sayings of Jesus are replaced by the golden statements of television evangelists who promises a faith that includes only riches, health, joy, and prosperity. Frankly, in extreme cases, those who suffer illness and poverty have only themselves to blame because of their inability to apply the truths of Scripture, which oftentimes are not integrated into the teaching of Christ. This teaching is so popular today that many assume it to be the heart and soul of Jesus’ own teaching about the Kingdom. Positive thinking, prosperity and blessing, health and comfort—this has become the mantra that substitutes for Christ’s humble demands to take up our crosses and follow him. In what ways are we to teach the *humanity of Christ* today; does his life offer us a *pattern to follow*, or did Christ suffer in the flesh in order that *we might have an abundance that excludes his kind of suffering and lack*?

Jesus appeared on earth as a man to reveal to humankind the Father's glory and redeem us from sin and Satan's power. Jesus was fully human, conceived by the Holy Spirit and carried to birth by the Virgin Mary. Two ancient heresies contested Jesus' becoming a human being: *Nestorianism*—that Christ *was two distinct persons*, and *Eutychianism*—that Christ *has one blended nature*. The Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (381) settled these questions, and affirmed that Jesus was *fully God and fully human*. Additional errors misread the meaning of Jesus' humanity: *Docetism* which asserted that *Jesus was not human* and *Apollinarianism* which asserted that *Jesus was not fully human*. Jesus, however, is fully human and can represent us perfectly before God as our high priest, mediator, and new pattern for glorified humanity as our Second Adam.

Three important aspects of Jesus' life help us to understand the meaning of his Messianic mission. Jesus is the Baptized One who identified with the plight and peril of the sinners he came to save. Furthermore, Jesus is the Inauguration and Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, reasserting God's right to rule over creation, showing through his person, miracles, healings, and exorcisms the signs of the Kingdom present in his own person on earth. Jesus is also the expected Servant of Yahweh who proclaimed good news to the poor, demonstrated justice among God's people, and ultimately, gave up his life as a vicarious sacrifice and a ransom for many.

If you are interested in pursuing some of the ideas of *Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Lived*, you might want to give these books a try:

Brown, Raymond E. *The Birth of the Messiah*. New York: Doubleday, 1979.

Hoehner, Harold W. *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

Ladd, George Eldon. *Jesus and the Kingdom*. New York: Harper, 1964.

Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. New York: Doubleday, 1991.

In covering so much theological ground in our lesson, we must take the time to pause and ponder what this high theology has to do with our lives in practical ministry connection. The humanity and life of our Lord touches upon dozens of practical issues in our lives which we need to address. What particular questions has

Restatement of the
Lesson's Thesis

Resources and
Bibliographies

Ministry
Connections

the Holy Spirit been suggesting to you regarding your understanding of the life of Jesus, and how you are living in conjunction with his life today? Is there a particular idea that the Lord has given to you regarding your own life and ministry that you need to apply this week in connection to the principles you have learned here? Is there a particular situation that comes to mind when you think about how God might want to form this teaching in your own walk with God, your relationships with others, or in your teaching and mentoring of other disciples. Lift these and your own questions up to God, asking for his wisdom and help as you explore the connections of these truths and your own life situation today.

Counseling and Prayer

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As in every lesson, it is critical that we solicit the prayer of our brothers and sisters, and our leaders to help us both process and apply the truths of God. God’s truth concerning the doctrine of Christ is for our *formation and transformation*, not merely for our *curiosity and consideration*. Prayer activates truth in a way that study cannot do alone. Ask your mentor and/or instructor to pray for you during the week—to apply the truth, to connect with others, and to teach and preach the truths in a new and fresh way in your church and ministry. Pray that the Holy Spirit will enable you to freshly comprehend and apply the life-giving power of the doctrine of Christ—his peerless life and genuine ministry—to others. Ask God to grant you wisdom as you seek to make this teaching come alive, in your own life as well as others. Be confident that he will grant wisdom to us if we only believe (James 1.5).

ASSIGNMENTS

Scripture Memory

Hebrews 2.14-17

Reading Assignment

To prepare for class, please visit www.tumi.org/books to find next week’s reading assignment, or ask your mentor.

Other Assignments

Please read carefully the assignments above, and as last week, write a brief summary for them and bring these summaries to class next week (please see the “Reading Completion Sheet” at the end of this lesson).

Now is the time for you to begin planning your own ministry project, as well as determining what Scripture passage you will use for your exegetical project. It is important that you neither postpone nor procrastinate in selecting both your ministry and study projects. The sooner you determine what you want to do, the more time you will have to prepare, and the better (and hopefully, more informative and inspiring) your projects will be!

In this lesson we explored the integrity of Jesus' human nature, and the unity between Jesus' divine and human natures. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, Jesus is he whose divine and human natures are intact, perfectly united in his one person. We also considered the three key biblical motifs that comprised Jesus' life and Messianic ministry on earth. As the Baptized One, Jesus identified with the sinners he came to redeem. As the Proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, Jesus inaugurated the reign of God and reasserted God's right to rule over creation. Finally, as the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies of God's anointed servant, preaching good news to the poor, doing justice among the people, and giving his life as a ransom for many.

In our next lesson entitled, *Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Died*, we will consider the significance of the humiliation of Jesus Christ, to use Oden's language, in both his lowliness in life and his sacrifice in death for the world.

**Looking Forward to
the Next Lesson**



Name _____

Date _____

For each assigned reading, write a brief summary (one or two paragraphs) of the author's main point. (For additional readings, use the back of this sheet.)

Reading 1

Title and Author: _____ Pages _____

Reading 2

Title and Author: _____ Pages _____

Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All He Lived

Welcome to the Mentor's Guide for Lesson 2, *Jesus, the Messiah and Lord of All: He Lived*. In this lesson we will concentrate on the issues and implications surrounding the biblical testimony of Jesus' Incarnation in the earth, his descent from the realms of glory to become a human being in order to effect salvation for creation and humankind. Your goal is to explore in depth with the students the reality of the biblical teaching regarding Jesus' actual presence in the earth, what he accomplished and what it means for us in urban ministry.

An excellent summary of some of the critical concepts associated with this important idea is given by D. R. W. Wood and I. H. Marshall:

*When the Word 'became flesh' his deity was not abandoned, or reduced, or contracted, nor did he cease to exercise the divine functions which had been his before. It is he, we are told, who sustains the creation in ordered existence, and who gives and upholds all life (Col. 1.17; Heb. 1.3; John 1.4), and these functions were certainly not in abeyance during his time on earth. When he came into the world he 'emptied himself' of outward glory (Phil. 2.7; John 17.5), and in that sense he 'became poor' (2 Cor. 8.9), but this does not at all imply a curtailing of his divine powers, such as the so-called **kenosis** theories would suggest. The NT stresses rather that the Son's deity was not reduced through the incarnation. In the man Christ Jesus, says Paul, 'dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. 2.9; cf. 1.19). The incarnation of the Son of God, then, was not a diminishing of deity, but an acquiring of manhood. It was not that God the Son came to indwell a human being, as the Spirit was later to do. (To assimilate incarnation to indwelling is the essence of the Nestorian heresy.) It was rather that the Son in person began to live a fully human life. He did not simply clothe himself in a human body, taking the place of its soul, as Apollinaris maintained; he took to himself a human soul as well as a human body, i.e. he entered into the experience of human psychological life as well as of human physical life. His manhood was complete; he became 'the man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. 2.5; cf. Gal. 4.4; Heb. 2.14, 17). And his manhood is permanent. Though now exalted, he 'continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever' (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 21; cf. Heb. 7.24).*

~ D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall. **New Bible Dictionary**. (3rd ed.) (electronic ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

We are not, therefore, seeking to emphasize in his descent that in any way he might have actually changed his nature in the sense of *diminishing his deity*, but rather that he *acquired his manhood*, i.e., shared with us our fundamental human nature. This is the stuff to thrill our souls and our hearts, and not merely inform our heads and minds. Remember, the purpose proper of good Christological thought is to lead us to love the Lord Jesus more and more (Phil. 3.7-8), and not merely satisfy curiosities about abstract theological themes. We engage in this study to know precisely whom it is we love and worship (John 4.24).

Please notice again in the objectives that these truths are clearly stated. As usual, your responsibility as Mentor is to emphasize these concepts throughout the lesson, especially during the discussions and interaction with the students. The more you can highlight the objectives throughout the class period, the better the chances are that they will understand and grasp the magnitude of these objectives.

This devotion focuses on Jesus' identity as the fulfillment of the OT prophecy regarding the coming Messiah, the anointed One of God who would come and reestablish in truth the reign of God in the earth. What it hopes to capture for the students is the remarkable miracle that Jesus in the earth represents. The Messiah has come. The anointed One of God prophesied through Moses and the prophets has arrived. The day of salvation and the Kingdom has drawn near, and Messiah has arrived, in response to the many centuries of waiting for the precise moment for the Messiah to come. Now we know who he is, and what he will do. It makes Jesus' inauguration of his identity in the synagogue that Sabbath so many years ago perhaps the greatest single announcement that has ever been made in the annals of human history. The Messiah, God's anointed Servant and King, has now entered the world and is demonstrating in the here-and-now that the Lord Jehovah is consummating his Word.

The focus here, therefore, ought to be on the "already" side of the "already/not yet" Kingdom of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Like the title of the classic work on the Kingdom by George Eldon Ladd, Jesus of Nazareth represents in his person the *presence of the future*. In him, the life of the Age to Come was manifested plain as day

before the people of Israel. His teaching, his exorcisms, his miracles, his very character and self—all of these provide us with a clear picture of the kingdom promise that God made to the fathers through the prophets (Heb. 1.1-2).

In your discussion of the devotional thought do not hesitate to stir in the students the drama and wonder of the coming of Christ and what it signified then and now regarding the covenant faithfulness of God, and the prospects of salvation ahead for us. The actual promise of God is fulfilled in the person of Jesus, and the Kingdom of God is now underway in his person. This current corrupt world system is passing away, and the day of the reign of God is fulfilled! Look at some of the texts which speak to this reality:

1 John 2.17 - And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

1 Cor. 7.31 - . . . and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

1 Pet. 4.7 - The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

Rom. 13.12 - The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Phil. 4.5 - Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

Heb. 10.25 - not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

James 5.8 - You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

2 Pet. 3.9-11 - The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. [10] But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done

on it will be exposed. [11] Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness

1 John 2.18 - Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

With the coming of the Jesus Christ into the world, the very eschaton has arrived. The Kingdom has come, and its consummation is not too far in the distant future. Let us ready ourselves for the glorious celebration to come.

Throughout this lesson we will mention the analogy between Adam and Jesus as federal heads and representatives of their respective humanities, Adam of the cursed humanity, and Jesus of the new humanity redeemed by his blood, and slated to live forever with him in the new heavens and new earth at the restoration of all things.

What is clear in the discussion of the Incarnation is the necessary concept of Jesus bearing the image of God as *his Son*, yet also being the perfect representative of humankind before the Father. Alexander and Rosner capture the nuance of this important doctrine in an article on the nature of Jesus bearing God's image, and its relationship to Adam:

Implicit in all this is that Jesus bears the image of God and is his Son. There is a distinction between the image of God borne by Adam, which is also borne by all human beings, and the image of God borne by Christ (2 Cor. 4.4; Col. 1.15) to which believers are conformed (2 Cor. 3.18; Col. 3.10). The background to the idea of God's image in Christ (e.g. in Heb. 1.3) is probably to be found in the description of Wisdom as the image of God's goodness (Wisdom of Solomon 7.26). Jesus is thus an exact copy of God's being; if the invisible God could be seen, he would look like Jesus. Jesus is thus God's son, made in his image, just as Adam was the father of a son 'in his likeness, according to his image' (Gen. 5.3, NRSV). Paul does not use the term 'Son' of Jesus very often (Rom. 1.3-4; 1 Cor. 1.9; Gal. 2.20; et al.), but in doing so he expresses the closeness of Jesus to God and above all the greatness of the sacrifice made by the

Father in giving up his own Son (like Abraham with Isaac; cf. Gen. 22.2, 12, 16) to death for us all (Rom 8.32).

~ T. D. Alexander and B. S. Rosner. **New Dictionary of Biblical Theology.** (electronic ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

What we are seeking to help our students understand is that Jesus is in fact in every way like we are, but, at the same time, he represents the pattern of an entirely new beginning for the human race, he is the firstborn of creation (cf. Col. 1.15-19), the firstfruits of those who sleep (cf. 1 Cor. 15), and the authentic first prototype of entire new human race which will be patterned on his person (Phil. 3.20-21). The precise character of his human nature, therefore, should be of interest to everyone who believes that we will share his glory and be conformed to his image at his return (1 John 3.1-3; Rom. 8.29).

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Student Questions
and Response

In the questions below you will find the focus is upon mastering the data and the facts associated with the claims regarding Christ's divinity and humanity covered in our first video segment. The statement in the student workbook on *kenosis* is a direct and effective way to emphasize the issues surrounding the Incarnation of Christ into the world, and, what precisely was the nature of his humility while upon earth.

Make sure that you take the time to carefully and thoroughly cover the critical concepts associated with the Incarnation of Christ, concentrating especially on the issues covered in the previous video segment. Of course, as always, make certain that you watch the clock here, covering the questions below and those posed by your students. Watch for any tangents which may lead you from rehearsing the critical facts and main points.

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Student Questions
and Response

While it is necessary and important for a study of Christology to cover the most pressing and difficult heresies regarding Christ, it will be nearly self-evident that this is some of the most difficult material to teach. This should not be alarming to us, for several reasons. The heresies themselves took place in a setting where they would be



more believable and seen to have more credibility than they would today. Second, many of the false ideas seem to us post-moderns as “much ado about nothing,” and don’t have the ring of difficulty for us as it did for them. Finally, these heresies have been, in their original form, laid to rest, so to speak, so it is raising issues that do not have immediate resonance or relevance to us.

As much as this may be the case, heresies continue to reify themselves in new ways in our current time, and the ability to identify false Christological teaching is as important today as it was in the time of the Apostles and the Fathers. The citations in this lesson on the various heresies are given in order that you may acquaint your students with the major falsehoods associated with the various dimensions of teaching on the person of Christ. You probably will not have the time to probe these heresies further, but for those students who desire to explore them in greater depth, one book is peerless for their research. The book is entitled *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church* by Harold O. J. Brown (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988). It is one of the most thorough and cogent accounts on the kinds of Christological heresies that emerged in the early history of the Church, and what they may mean for our work today as teachers of the Word concerning the person and work of Christ.

One of the most helpful aids in training the students on the issues of Christological understanding is to know what the very earliest theologians in the Christian Church believed about Christ. The following quotation is a concise yet remarkably thorough summary of the main tenets of the apostolic fathers on the person and work of Christ.

The apostolic fathers share with the entire Church the faith that the one God who exists and who is Creator and Lord of all, has sent to the world His unique Son Jesus Christ. . . . Clement of Rome describes Christ as the Son of God (1 Clem. 36.4), as superior to the angels (1 Clem. 36.2-5, alluding to Heb. 1) and as the one who spoke through the OT (1 Clem. 22.1). Clement can refer to Christ as the “scepter of the majesty of God” (1 Clem. 16.2). A triadic form referring to God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is found in 1 Clement 58.2.

For *Hermas*, Christ was instrumental in the creation (*Herm. Sim.* 9.12.2; in *Sim.* 5.6.5 the pre-existent Christ as Holy Spirit “created all creation”) and sustains it (*Herm. Sim.* 9.14.5). *Hermas* also can write: “the gate is the Son of God, this is the only entrance to the Lord. No man can enter into him otherwise than through His Son” (*Herm. Sim.* 9.12.6 [cf. 4–5]). *Hermas* also refers to Christ as superior to the angels (*Herm. Sim.* 5.6.2).

The letters of *Ignatius* are known for the freedom with which they can refer to Christ as God (e.g., *Ign. Eph. presc.*; 1.1; 15.3; 17.2; 18.2; *Ign. Rom. presc.*; 3.3; *Ign. Smyrn.* 1.1; *Ign. Pol.* 8.3). *Ignatius* refers to Jesus Christ as the Son of God (*Ign. Eph.* 20.2), Lord (e.g., *Ign. Eph.* 7.2) and one “who was from eternity with the Father” (*Ign. Magn.* 6.1) and as God’s “Word (logos) proceeding from silence” (*Ign. Magn.* 8.2). A trinitarian-like formula occurs in *Magnesians* 13.1, “in the Son and the Father and the Spirit.” For *Ignatius*, Jesus is God become man (cf. *Ign. Eph.* 7.2; 19.1-3). *Polycarp* not only repeatedly refers to Christ as “Lord” (e.g., *Pol. Phil.* 1.1-2; 2.1) and as “the Son of God” (*Pol. Phil.* 12.1), but he also refers to Jesus Christ as “our God” (*Pol. Phil.* 12.2, although some MSS omit these words).

The *Didache* refers to Christ as “the Lord” (e.g., *Did.* 6.2; 8.2; 9.5; 11.8; 14.1; 16.8) and “the Holy Vine of David thy child” (i.e., *pais*, possibly “servant,” *Did.* 9.2-3; 10.2-3). Also to be noted is the threefold baptismal name, “of the Son, of the Father and of the Holy Spirit” (*Did.* 7.1-3). *Barnabas* holds to a high Christology, putting Christ at the beginning of creation (*Barn.* 5.5, in reference to *Gen.* 1.26), referring to him as “the Son of God” (e.g., *Barn.* 5.9; 7.9; 12.10) who will be the eschatological judge (*Barn.* 15.5). The high Christology of *2 Clement* is indicated from the very opening sentence: “We must think of Jesus Christ as of God, as of the Judge of the living and the dead” (*2 Clem.* 1.1). The preexistence of Christ is clear from the reference to His being “originally spirit” before He became flesh (*2 Clem.* 9.5). The Church, however, also exists from the beginning, and the implication seems to be that God created both at the beginning (*2 Clem.* 14.2).

~ R. P. Martin, and P. H. Davids.

Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Developments. (electronic ed.).

Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

What is significant about this excellent summary of the concept of Christ in some of the earliest Christian thinkers and writers is how thorough-going their belief in the divinity of Christ. It should encourage our students greatly that the very earliest reflection on the person of Jesus Christ was consistent with Christian belief today—Jesus of Nazareth was the divine Son of God who was manifested in the earth for the purpose of revealing God’s glory and effecting redemption on behalf of humankind.

These case studies are designed to help the students wrestle with the specific implications of the humanity of Jesus Christ on their actual ministry to people in the city. The *connections* that they must make between doctrine and actual spiritual warfare and justice in the city must be an ongoing teaching concern you embrace while you walk through the concepts with your students. Do not assume that they will recognize the significance of the doctrine for either their personal lives or ministries. It is our duty as trainers and teachers to help them *make the intersection* between what God has revealed to us about the person of Jesus, and what that revelation actually means in terms of the kinds of lives God has called us to live and the work he has called us to do among the urban poor in the city. Explore such *intersections* as you discuss the case studies with your students.

Prayer is one of the most powerful forces in all teaching, ministry, and learning. Never underestimate it, and always seek to find more time to pray with and for your students. There is not sufficient space here to outline how prayer has dramatically and forcefully enabled spiritual students and prospective leaders to gain new insight, to be transformed in their personal lives, and to penetrate the meaning of a teaching or revelation. It is the difference between simply using one’s own mind and logic to comprehend the truth, or being led and filled with the Spirit of God to see into what God is saying in a text or situation. Look at some examples of what the Scriptures say about the necessity of the Spirit’s anointing in teaching the Word of God concerning Christ:

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Case Studies

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Counseling and Prayer

1 John 2.20-21 - But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. [21] I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

1 John 2.27 - But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything—and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you—abide in him.

John 14.26 - But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 16.13 - When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Never consider it to be an overly familiar or unnecessary thing, therefore, to ask the students if they need prayer for someone or something connected to the ideas and truths presented in the lesson. Prayer is a wonderfully practical and helpful way to gain the Spirit's aid to both understand and to apply truth; by taking specific needs to God in light of a truth, the students can solidify those ideas in their soul, and receive back from the Lord the answers they need in order to be sustained in the midst of their ministries. Of course, everything is somehow dependent on the amount of time you have in your session, and how you have organized it. Still, prayer is a forceful and potent part of any spiritual encounter and teaching, and if you can, it should always have its place, even if it is a short summary prayer of what God has taught us, and a determination to live out its implications as the Holy Spirit teaches us.