

CHRISTOLOGY

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C. As a King, Christ Governs Over the Affairs of Men (Matt. 1:1).

EIGHT QUESTION QUIZ

CHRISTOLOGY

In your “small group,” discuss and answer the following questions.

CHRISTOLOGY

1. Can you deny the complete deity and humanity of Jesus and be a Christian [i.e. be saved in the evangelical | biblical meaning of that idea]?
2. Is Jesus as the Christ fully divine and fully human provable apart from the New Testament Record? How do we prove Jesus as the Christ fully divine and fully human from the New Testament?
3. Concerning His Perfection, immutability, or Sinless life [Heb. 4:15]; “Was Jesus not able to sin [deity] or able not to sin [volition]?” [The **Impeccability** of Jesus]. Is temptation sin? See further page 8.
4. How can Jesus be fully God and fully man and not know the time of His return [Matt. 24:36]? Which of His natures controls the other? Is there a hierarchy within His person? [The **Hypostatic Union** within Jesus] vouchsafe = to give or grant. See further page 15.
5. If Jesus is the sole means to the Father [John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5], what are we to make of those who have never heard the gospel for the last 2,000 years? [The Mission Movement | Evangelism] See further page 15.
6. What Do These Verses Tell Us About Jesus? What do they prove?
 - Mark 2:1-12; Luke 7:47, 48; Col. 3:13; John 10:28

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- John 5:21, 25

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- John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31

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- John 15:26

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- John 5:21, 28, 29; 11:24, 25

7. What do each of the I AM statements say about Jesus?

- John 6:35-48

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- John 8:12

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- John 8:58

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- John 10:7-9

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- John 10:11

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- John 11:25

-
- John 14:6

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- John 15:1

8. What kind of nuance would you place on each word [mediator {1 Tim. 2:5}, advocate (1 John 2:1, 2), and intercessor {Heb. 7:25}] and what does this say to you as His child? See further page 21.

INTRODUCTION

I. WHY CHRISTOLOGY | WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Who is Jesus Christ? On this question hangs the destiny of man's immortal soul. To deviate but a hairbreadth from the New Testament record is to be separated from God forever. Who is Jesus Christ?

Listen to what some in the world believe:

- Jesus Christ is the designation of Jesus of Nazareth (d. c. 30 CE), who was an itinerant Jewish prophet from the Galilee in northern Israel. In the middle of the 2nd century CE, Christian leaders (mostly bishops) later designated as Church Fathers, began writing *apologia* to Roman Emperors and others in defense of Christianity. As educated men in various schools of philosophy, they utilized philosophical concepts of the universe and terminology to accord Christian views of Jesus with philosophical claims. Thus, the elevation of Jesus of Nazareth from a Jewish wonder-worker to a source of all power in the universe.¹
- "Detroit artist Bennie White Ethiopia's depiction of Jesus is complete with twisted hair called locks. Because Jesus lived in Nazareth, Ethiopia illustrated his hair to be consistent with the vow of the Nazarites."²
- "Outside the mainstream of Christian Bible study, iconoclastic scholars are piecing together the portrait of a Jesus no one ever encountered in Sunday school. These experts believe that the Biblical Jesus was a myth created by church-building Christians decades after the Crucifixion. The *real* Jesus, many of them say, was no more the child of God than anyone else. He was a Jewish peasant possibly not the firstborn in his family and probably illiterate. This 'historical' Jesus performed no miracles, but he did have the healer's touch, a gift for alleviating emotional ills through acceptance and love. The authorities executed him, almost casually, after he caused a disturbance in Jerusalem during Passover. Jesus lived on in the hearts of followers old and new, but he did not physically rise from the dead. Taken down from the cross, his body was probably buried in a shallow grave C and may have been eaten by dogs."³
- "There was no such person in the history of the world as Jesus Christ. There was no historical, living, breathing, sentient human being by that name. Ever. (The Bible) is a fictional, non-historical narrative. The myth is good for business."⁴
- "Muslims see him as the greatest prophet before the prophet of Islam. He is the prophet of inward spiritual life."⁵
- "Jesus, to succeed, *had* to choose martyrdom. He had been a failure in all sorts of human enterprises. He was an abysmal failure at that. So, basically, the only power he had at the end was the power of abdication. It's very, very important that Jesus chooses to die. That he *wants* to die."⁶
- Modern Judaism

"Is there a Jewish consensus on how Jews are to regard Jesus? Perhaps not, but in recent decades many Jewish scholars have tended to view him as one of several first- and second-century Jews who claimed

I. Why Christology | Who is Jesus Christ?

to be the Messiah, and who attempted to rid Judea of its Roman oppressors. However, almost no Jewish scholars believe that Jesus intended to start a new religion. Were Jesus to return today, most Jews believe, he undoubtedly would feel more at home in a synagogue than a church. An increasing number of Jewish scholars believe that Christianity's real founder was another first-century Jew, Paul."⁷

Who is Jesus Christ? To the Jehovah Witness He is not God in human flesh, but rather a created being. To the Mormon He was a preexistent spirit like the rest of us. Though distinct from us by being the firstborn of God's spirit children. To the Hindu, Buddhist, Confucius, or Moslem, Jesus is a great man or even a "sinless" prophet, but He is not the only begotten of the Father, the God-man as He is declared in the New Testament."⁸

Who is Jesus Christ? It is a question on which no one can remain neutral. Either He is received as He is declared in the New Testament or He is rejected. Neutrality is impossible. To remain impartial is to despise Him. To attribute to Him anything other than complete Lordship is to deny Him.

Such strong language is a reproach to most. Jesus Christ of the New Testament, however, is not capable of being divided. To reject a part is to reject the whole. This is the message of the New Testament.

Who is Jesus Christ? This same question has been asked since the beginning of His initial appearance in the sandy shores of Galilee. Based on the record provided for us in the New Testament Jesus Christ is either a liar (John 8:44), a lunatic (Mark 3:21), or Lord of all creation (John 20:28).

C.C. Ryrie notes how, "The doctrine of the person of Christ is crucial to the Christian faith. It is basic to soteriology [the study of salvation], for if our Lord was not what He claimed to be, then His atonement was a deficient, not sufficient, payment for sin."⁹

Interestingly enough Jesus Christ put forth this same question to His disciples in Mark 8:27-38. The question was progressive in nature in that it moved from the general to the specific. Jesus was identified by the multitudes as being several different individuals. Some said He was John the Baptist, others thought He was Elijah and still others believed Him to be one of the prophets. Now, all of these men were great and to be associated with them would be flattering, but to identify Jesus Christ as being a mere mortal is wrong and damnable.

Also consider the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8 with Philip the Evangelist.

Mankind has said many moving and glorious things concerning Jesus Christ. Some believe Him to be a monumental man or an inspirational instructor. Others believe Him to be an excellent example. Yet, if Jesus Christ is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all. The only legitimate and proper response to question is that which was stated by Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." All of this is verified by Paul (2 Cor. 5:21), Peter (1 Peter 2:22; 1:9), John (1 John 3:5) and the author of Hebrews (4:15; 7:26,27).

This isn't a question of whether or not He is Savior or Lord. The question of who Jesus is, isn't hair splitting or angels arguing. This is the question on which all other questions are built. To get this wrong determines one's eternal destiny.

Jesus claimed equality with the Father. Even the Jews themselves understood this much (John 5:18). In our quest of comprehending who He is, let us begin by initially considering the gospel. Our Christology makes GOSPEL possible. There is no gospel where there is no Christ.

II. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Whatever might be said in the following study all comes out of the idea of gospel. The gospel is “good news.” In fact, **it is the best news anyone from any age can ever hear**. Simply put, the gospel says, “You Can’t, But God Can, And Jesus Did!” Just simplicity however, begs the question, “What is it that I could not do, God can, and Jesus did?” In the answering of the question multiple areas collide. **First**, the question defines who we are. **Second**, it defines why we are where we are and where we hope to be. **Third**, it answers the question how we get to where we want to go. All of this is answered in Jesus. The gospel isn’t a “what,” but a “whom.” Jesus is the gospel. Because of who He is and what He does, we can reenter into a relationship with the Father. The gospel is rooted in His incarnation, His sinless life, His substitutionary death, His declarative resurrection, and His authoritative ascension. What follows is an expanded explanation of these areas concerning the gospel.

III. WHO HE IS IN HIS PERSON

It is somewhat impossible to describe who Jesus is apart from His attributes. What was said of God as to His attributes is equally true of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit.

A. The Deity of Jesus Christ Our Lord

Who He is [God] causes the attributes to be intrinsic to His being. He cannot be anything other than this.

"The true meaning of this doctrine has been often misunderstood. It is not the declaration that God is to be found only in Jesus, but that he is everywhere and always like Jesus. It is the confession of Christian faith that in Christ we have the revelation of the true nature of the ultimate reality who is the source and law of all things."¹⁰

The idea of Deity is that of being of the same essence or substance as God. The deity of Christ is seen in several distinct areas.

1. His Deity Is Proven by what He did.

Christ, in His actions, carried out functions that can only be attributed to deity. No one else and nothing else carried out any one of these functions let alone one function.

- As seen in Creation
 - a. He Created All Things (John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).

Christ creates from nothing. He creates new 'things.' Mankind might 'create' life, but it will always be from animated objects. God can create life from inanimate objects or from nothing at all!!!

b. He Sustains All Things - By Him All Things Consist (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

"Neither accident nor mere natural law keeps the universe in existence and everything in it in its proper place, but the word of Christ."¹¹

Christ is the unknown agent that holds all things together. Without Him actively preserving and sustaining creation all things would dissolve. Even in His incarnate state He still was upholding all things by the word of His power.

- As seen in Salvation

c. He Can Forgive Sin (Mark 2:1-12; Luke 7:47, 48; Col. 3:13; John 10:28).

d. He Can Impart Life -- Spiritual Life to the Spiritually Dead (John 5:21, 25).

Life is generated within Himself and life generated can be imparted to others.

e. He Can and Will Judge All Things (John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31).

We cannot judge motive, but He can. Our judgment is fallible, but His is flawless and infallible.

f. He Sent the Holy Spirit (John 15:26).

g. He Can Raise the Physically Dead (John 5:21, 28, 29; 11:24, 25)

C.S. Lewis

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic -- on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg--or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."¹²

Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life.

2. His Deity Is Proven By what is said of Him.

This is the praise, honor or esteem attributed to Him by others. Jesus Christ accepted and encouraged worship of Himself (Matt. 14:31-33; 15:25-28; 28:9-10, 16-18). In fact, He not only demanded worship (John 5:23), but commanded worship (Heb. 1:6).

"The Scriptures do not merely inform us that Christ was worshipped, but they ask us to worship Him (John 5:23; Heb. 1:6). If He is not God, He is a deceiver or is self-deceived, and, in either case, if He is not God He is not God."¹³

- a. The Sending Father Declared His Deity (Matt. 3:17; 17:5).
- b. The Saved Sinner Declared His Deity (Matt. 16:16).
- c. The Satanic Helpers Declared His Deity (Matt. 8:29).
- d. The Soldier Declared His Deity (Matt. 27:54).

The above was all taken from Matthew, but others can be added such as John 20:28; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 5:12-14; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Tim. 4:18 and Heb. 13:21.

"Here is enjoined an attitude of mind towards Christ which would be idolatrous if Christ were not God."¹⁴

One day He will be worshipped universally (Philippians 2:10, 11; Rev. 5). What is the worship of God?

"Here is a simple definition of worship: worship is honor and adoration directed to God. When we talk about worship, we are talking about something we give to God. That consuming, selfless desire to give to God is the essence and the heart of worship. It begins with the giving first of ourselves, and then of our attitudes, and then of our possessions -- until worship is a way of life."¹⁵

"Worship is an active response to God whereby we declare His worth. Worship is not passive, but is participative. Worship is not simply a mood; it is a response. Worship is not just a feeling; it is a declaration."¹⁶

The knowledge of His deity is to stimulate in us a response of worship.

3. His Deity Is Proven By what He said of Himself.

Jesus Christ claimed for Himself deity.

"Perhaps the strongest and clearest occasion of such a claim was at the Feast of Dedication when He said, 'I and the Father are One' (John 10:30). The neuter form of 'one' rules out the meaning that He and the Father were one Person. It means that they are in perfect unity in natures and actions, a fact that could only be true if He were as much Deity as the Father. The people who heard this claim understood it that way, for they immediately tried to stone Him for blasphemy because He made Himself out to be God (v. 33)."¹⁷

Each "I am" statement gives different facets of one central truth and that is in Christ is life.

- a. John 4:14 "I am the Living Water"
- b. John 6:35-48 "I am the Bread of Life"
- c. John 8:12 "I am the Light of the World"
- d. John 8:58 "I am the Eternal One"

"The intention of the saying, however, is primarily what Jesus means for salvation, rather than of his being. In this context the assertion 'Before Abraham was, I am,' forms the basis of the promise of salvation to God's people." The formula is not only 'expression' of the revelation, but is says itself what the revelation is and that it is here."¹⁸

- e. John 10:7-9 "I am the Door"
- f. John 10:11 "I am the Good Shepherd"
- g. John 11:25 "I am the Resurrection and the Life"

"The greatest gift of God's saving sovereignty is precisely life eternal under that sovereignty and entry upon it through resurrection. The power to initiate it resides in Jesus ('the Resurrection') and to grant it in its fullness ('the Life'). Both elements of this function are his by God's appointment (5:21,26)."¹⁹

- h. John 14:6 "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"

"The saying is commonly recognized as ranking with 3:6 as an outstanding expression of the Gospel. 'It forms a classical summary of the Johannine doctrine of salvation that is based entirely on Jesus Christ.'"²⁰

- i. John 15:1 "I am the True Vine"

4. His Deity Is Proven by His Attributes.

Let us make sure that we do not become comfortable in the study of theology. There must always be a sense of awe and reverence. Listen to the words of Augustus Hopkins Strong in his monumental work Strong's Theology written in 1906.

"I make no apology for the homiletical element in my book. To be either true or useful, theology must be a passion. Theology is a science which can be successfully cultivated only in connection with its practical application. Abstract theology is not really scientific. Only that theology is scientific which brings the student to the feet of Christ."²¹

"The content of the Christian idea of God is set forth in detail in the doctrine of the attributes. The attributes of God are the different elements which together make up the Christian thought of God."²²

"Attributes are qualities that are inherent to a subject. They identify, distinguish, or analyze the subject."²³

"Jesus possesses all the attributes of Deity. Note the sweeping claim He makes for Himself in John 16:15."²⁴ Our treatment of His attributes will be suggestive, not exhaustive.

a. Jesus is identified as Sinless [i.e. Perfection]

"Sinlessness in our Lord means that He never did anything that displeased God or violated the Mosaic Law under which He lived on earth or in any way failed to show in His life at all times the glory of God (John 8:29)."²⁵ What do the Scriptures have to say concerning the sinlessness of our Lord?

1a. Scripture Declares Our Lord to Be Without Sin in His Nature (Heb. 9:14; 1 John 3:5).

- Heb 7:26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
- 1 John 3:5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

2b. Scripture Declares Our Lord to Be Without Sin in His Speech (1 Peter 2:21, 22)

- 1 Pet 2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

Have you ever considered the thought that our Lord never sinned with His mouth?

3c. Scripture Declares Our Lord to Be Without Sin in His Constant and Never-Failing Victory Over Temptation (Heb. 4:15)

Even under the closest scrutiny, no one could find nor accuse Him of wrong doing.

- John 8:46 Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?
- John 14:30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me

"Take for a witness Pilate himself, who gave sentence upon Him, saying, *I find no fault in this Man*: and when he gave Him up, and had washed his hands, he said, *I am innocent of the blood of this just person* [John 18:38; 19:4,6]. There is yet another witness of the sinlessness of Jesus, the robber, the first man admitted into Paradise; who rebuked his fellow, and said, *We receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss*; [Luke 23:41] for we were present, both thou and I, at His judgment."²⁶

4d. Scripture Declares Our Lord to Be Without Sin in His Substitutionary and Sacrificial Death for Damned Sinners (John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:28; Isaiah 53:4-6; 1 Peter 2:24)

- 2Co 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures, "Jesus had no personal acquaintance [with sin]."

5e. Scripture Declares Our Lord to Be Without Sin in His Judgment Against Unrepentant Sinners (John 5:22,27,30; Matthew 25:31,32,41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11)

- John 5:22, 27, 30
²²For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²⁷And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ³⁰I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Question: The Impeccability of Jesus. "Was Jesus not able to sin or able not to sin?"

b. Jesus is identified as Eternal [i.e. Self-Existence]

Eternality not only means that Jesus existed prior to His incarnation, but that He exists without beginning. Why is this so important? There are two perspectives I wish to bring into the discussion. Self-Existing (John 1:4; 14:6). He is life. He sustains and perpetuates life within Himself. He needs nothing outside of Himself for His existence, both in origin and continuance.

Eternal (Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 8:35; 1 John 1:2; 5:11) | Immutable | Unchanging (Heb. 1:10-12; 13:8). Jesus Christ was eternally the Son. In Col. 1:15 Christ is the 'firstborn of every creature.' This speaks of His position not chronology. This is His authority.

The very nature of Jesus Christ is not susceptible to change, apparently there can be a changing of form or state of existence (i.e. incarnation / Kenosis), but the very nature of God was left untouched.

He is unchanging (Heb. 13:8). This means He is constant, dependable and true. He is indivisible. This means He is whole in every part. Everything that He is, is everywhere at the same time. His love, mercy, grace, and fellowship are right now with each of us world-wide.

- The Christology of the Jehovah Witness

"Christ Jesus, also called Logos, was the first creation of God, and was thereafter used as a Master Workman in successive creative works. Millenniums later Christ was made flesh and dwelt on earth. Neither do they [JW] elevate Christ to equality with Jehovah God by belief in a religious 'trinity'. Jesus never taught such a thing, but said: 'My Father is greater than I.' (John 14:28)"²⁷

- The Christology of the Mormon

For the Mormon, “He was not born without the aid of a man, and that man was God.”²⁸

Like the Mormon, the Jehovah Witness, see Jesus as of the same stature as Lucifer. Only Mormon’s make them brothers. The JW identifies Michael the archangel as being Jesus before His incarnation.

- The Christology of the Moonies

Even the Moonies (Sun Myung Moon) identifies Jesus as having attained deity, and thus “may well be called God. Nevertheless he can by no means be called God himself.”²⁹

Both Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons believe in a preexistent Christ, but neither will grant eternity. Both see our Lord as a creature.

Thus, the issue is not, “did He exist before the incarnation,” but rather, “did He have a beginning?”

Charles C. Ryrie notes the importance as to why we must maintain His preexistent state. **First**, "If Christ came into existence at His birth, then no eternal Trinity exists." This idea feeds the very reason as to why God created in the first place. **Second**, "If Christ was not preexistent then He could not be God, because, among other attributes, God is eternal." **Third**, If Christ was not preexistent then He lied, because He claimed to be. Then, the question arises, what else did He lie about?"³⁰

There are several statements in Scripture that declare the absence of origin for our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1a. The Absence of Origin for Our Lord Jesus Is Seen in The Charge of Blasphemy (John 8:58-59; 10:30-33)

Why the charge? Because our Lord claimed to be God and at the very least He claimed to be co-equal with God. Listen carefully. To make a god that is not fully God is to not have a god regardless as to how many qualities they might have that would reflect God (i.e., demon, angels, glorified believers). They would stone Him because He claimed that “all God is, I am.” If He has origin, then He is not God. If He is God, then He can have no origin. You either have one, none, or many.

- 2b. The Absence of Origin Is Seen in The Apostle John Identifying Isaiah’s Vision as That of Our Lord Jesus (John 12:37-42 with Isaiah 6:1-5)

The apostle John says that Isaiah saw our Lord Jesus. No one disputes the thought that Isaiah saw Yahweh, yet according to John Jesus is being identified as the object of Isaiah’s vision! Jesus is God.

- 3c. The Absence of Origin Is Claimed by and for Our Lord Jesus With the Title, “the Alpha and Omega” (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13 with Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12)

The idea of being, “the first and the last”, speaks of having no origin nor ending. If it suggests the first of creation, then it must also suggest that He will be the last to die out. Jesus claims the same title as God in the Old Testament.

4d. The Absence of Origin Is Seen in John's Identification of The Word as Being God (John 1:1)

John 1:1 In the beginning was (εἶμι) the Word, and the Word was (εἶμι) with God, and the Word was (εἶμι) God – “Three times in this sentence John uses this imperfect of εἶμι (to be) which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, *but* simply continuous existence.”³¹

The same structure found in John 1:1 is that found in 1:49 with “the King of Israel.” In both cases there is no definite article, and thus none is supplied nor an indefinite article, which does not exist in the Greek language. Yet, the JW translation supplies the indefinite in 1:1, but leaves it absent in 1:49. In fact, John 1:1 read, “and God was the Word.” Perhaps making the point even more emphatic.

Jesus is God. And for the JW if Jesus is but a god alongside of Jehovah God, then you have polytheism that is a major dilemma. That Jesus is God and there is only one God is the mystery of the Trinity. But it is to be believed.

5e. The Absence of Origin Is Seen in The Kenosis Formula in Our Lord Being Declared God (Phil. 2:5, 6).

All that God is, Jesus is. Jesus is God.

6f. The Absence of Origin Is Seen in The Design of Creation Formula (Col. 1:15-17; Rom. 11:33-36)

Col. 1:16 uses the Greek prepositions δια and εις. Romans 11:36 uses the Greek prepositions εκ, δια, and εις. Jesus is God.

APPLICATION

No Other Plea

My faith has found a resting place, Not in device nor creed;
I trust the Everliving One, His wounds for me shall plead.

Enough for me that Jesus saves, This ends my fear and doubt;
A sinful soul I come to Him, He'll never cast me out.

CHORUS

I need no other argument, I need no other plea, It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me.

c. Jesus is Omnipresent (Matt. 18:20; 28:20; Col. 3:11).

Christ is everywhere at the same time in the fullness of His being. His physical body was always localized even as it is today.

Where Is Jesus Christ today? The question has three distinct answers. **First**, Jesus Christ is described as being omnipresent. Theologically, Jesus Christ is described as being everywhere at the same time in the fullness of His person (John 1:1-4; 14:6; 8:58, 59 "I am." That our Lord by this expression asserted his divinity and eternal existence, as the great I AM, appears evident from the use of the present tense, instead of the past tense; Matthew 28:20; 1 John 1:1,2).

Second, Jesus Christ is described as being at the right hand of God the Father. Jesus Christ is described as localizing His presence at the Father's right hand (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62; 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:32,33; 5:30,31; 7:55,56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Col. 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22).

The right hand is a place of prominence, power, and privilege. Even though Jesus Christ is localized in heaven, this does not diminish the truth of His omnipresence.

Revelation 4 and 5 describe for us our Lord sitting upon a throne. It is this position of authority that cause all of creation to cry out, "Thou art worthy."

Finally, Jesus Christ is described as dwelling within the true believer. Practically, Jesus Christ lives within each true believer (John 15:4; Romans 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27).

All that He is, is in me. This presence enables me to bear fruit, resist sin, and rest securely. Our difficulty with this truth is its objectivity. We do not feel His presence, yet He is here nonetheless. We speak of asking Jesus into your heart or of Jesus living within your heart. The heart, however, is your immaterial makeup and not your physical organ. Jesus Christ is right now abiding in your life.

This is the organic unity that all New Testament believers enjoy (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:1-5). We are in Him and He is in us.

Friend, all that He is, now resides in each of us fully. We have all that we need.

d. Jesus is Omniscient (John 2:24, 25; Matt. 17:24-27; Luke 5:22; John 4:16-19).

In Matt. 24:36 the Logos did not 'vouchsafe' this information to the human. The personality of Jesus resided in the Logos.

e. Jesus is Omnipotent (Philippians 3:20-21; John 5:19; Rev. 1:8).

What about Mark 6:5? Jesus could not work miracles because of unbelief. It was a self-limitation. Jesus had power over His power, He was not servient to His power.

This list is endless, however, suffice is to say that Jesus Christ possess all of the attributes that would be normally ascribed to deity (i.e. righteousness, love, holiness, mercy, truth, etc.).

Credo

Not what, but Whom, I do believe,
That, in my darkest hour of need,
Hath comfort that no mortal creed
To mortal man may give; --
Not what, but Whom!
For Christ is more than all the creeds,
And his full life of gentle deeds
Shall all the creeds outlive.
Not what I do believe, but Whom!
Who walks beside me in the gloom?
Who shares the burden wearisome?
Who all the dim way doth illumine,
And bids me look beyond the tomb

The larger life to life? --
Not what I do believe,
But Whom!
Not What
But Whom!
-- John Oxenham³²

5. His Deity Is Proven by His Titles.

a. The Son of God (Matt. 16:15-17; 26:63-65; Luke 1:35)

"The idea of 'son' stems from the Hebrew concept which means partaking of the qualities and characteristics of whatever a person or object is said to be a son. 'Son of God' means that Jesus has the qualities and characteristics (essence or substance) of God."³³

"That this name, as used of CHRIST, is a distinctly divine name appears from John 5:18, 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making himself equal with God.'³⁴

b. The Son of Man

This calls us directly to the Hebrew Scripture. Both Daniel and Ezekiel call the future anointed one, "The Son of Man."

c. The Lord (Luke 2:1; John 13:13; Rom. 10:9; Philippians 2:10)

"The name Lord (κύριος) is used to translate the OT name Yahweh, a name clearly denoting deity. The name Lord " (κύριος) is the NT counterpart of the OT name Adonai, a name denoting authority, sovereignty, ownership, etc. The word Adonai means Master, Ruler, Owner, Husband, etc."³⁵

d. The Word (Logos) (John 1:1,2)

"This name stem forms the Hebrew concept of the 'word' of God being His divine revelation and the efficacious expression of Himself."³⁶

e. The Holy One (Acts 3:14; Hosea 11:9; Isaiah 48:17)

"The Holy One of Israel' is Isaiah's favorite name for God. This name as applied to Jesus is a powerful argument and proof for His deity."³⁷

f. The Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last (Rev. 1:17,18; 2:8; 22:13,16; Isaiah 44:6; 48:12-16)

Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!

Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Sing aloud the Name;
Till it softly, slowly, Sets all hearts aflame.

Jesus! Name of cleansing, Washing all our stains;
Jesus! Name of healing, Balm for all our pains.

Jesus! Name of boldness, Making cowards brave;
Name! that in the battle, Certainly must save.

Jesus! Name of beauty, Beauty far too bright
For our earthborn fancy, For our mortal sight.

Jesus! be our joynote In this vale of tears;
Till we reach the homeland, And the eternal years.

--Music and words by Abbey Hymns

B. The Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ | The *Kenosis* or Humiliation of Our Lord Jesus

"Christ has come: it is for us to inquire after the reasons for the incarnation and the nature of it."³⁸

The Greek word *Kenosis* means "self-emptying" of Christ. The primary passage is Philippians 2:5-8. The **event** was the incarnation birth of Christ or "in flesh" (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7). The **process** is called the *Kenosis*. This is what happened when God became man.

The word "Kenosis" [κενωω] occurs five times in the New Testament. It means, "No reputation, to make empty." With reference to Christ, "He remains Himself, but changes his mode of being (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9)."³⁹

1. What Exactly Does The Kenosis Entail?

- a. The Traditional View states, "Christ voluntarily gave up the independent use of His divine attributes."

I would express the truth in a slightly different manner. "Christ voluntarily gave up the spontaneous revealing / expression of His divine attributes or prerogatives. "

Thus, **His exercising of the attributes was no longer spontaneous, but selective and volitional.** Prior to the incarnation Christ could do nothing but radiate deity, but now He would be restricted by human flesh.

There are three statements needed to qualify the definition.

- 1a. Christ Did Not Give Up His Divine Attributes (Col. 1:13-17; Heb. 1:3).
- 2b. It Was a Voluntary Act. He Did It To Himself (John 10:18; 19:30; Phil. 2:7).

According to Phil. 2:7, 8 "whatever the emptying involved, it was self-imposed."⁴⁰

- 3c. He Still Maintained His Self-Consciousness Through The Emptying (John 8:14).

The logos (Word of John 1:1ff) existed in conjunction with though unaffected by but not independent of His humanity. He knew who He was all along -- God, even as an infant.

- b. In The Self Emptying Of Jesus Christ, He Became (Totally) Subservient To The Father's Will (Matt. 26:39, 42; John 6:38; 4:34; 5:30; Heb. 10:7).

Letter's b and c speak of the economy within the Trinity. Both ideas are answerable in that category of study.

Was not the Son in submission to the Father before the incarnation? What of His eternal sonship? How does His submission differ from before and after the incarnation?

- c. He Submitted Himself to the Spirit's Ministry (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14, 18).

Part of this is the theocratic anointing which is the divine enablement for the office of king. Examples of this are Saul, David, Solomon, all the kings of Judah enjoyed it and all the kings of Israel were exempted. This is the significance of the dove descending at His baptism.

2. What Did He Empty Himself of?

It was not the subtraction of deity, but rather the addition of humanity. Deity was not diminished, but the addition of humanity restricted Him. Before His "in flesh," His deity radiated. His deity was unboxed on the Mt. of Transfiguration in Matt. 17.

"The self-emptying permitted the addition of humanity and did not involve in any way the subtraction of Deity or the use of the attributes of Deity. There was a change of form but not of content of the Divine Being. He did not give up Deity or the use of those attributes; He added humanity. [Why?] And this in order to be able to die."⁴¹

To describe the change both Matthew 17:2 and Mark 9:2 use the Greek word, metamorphosis [μεταμορφωσις]. It is the same word used to describe the believer's progressive manifestation of the Lord's life in their mortal bodies (Romans 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18 [2:14-16; 4:7-11]).

- a. "The incarnation was more a gaining of human attributes than a giving up of divine attributes [i.e., thirsting {the living water}, sleeping {the eternal one}, hungry {the living bread}, etc.]."⁴²
- b. "The union of the two natures meant that they did not function independently.

He was the God-man. There were two natures in one person. The two natures were never in conflict. There was never a blending nor confusion of the two natures to create a "new" nature. In theology, this is called the **HYPOSTATIC UNION**. In the hypostatic union, the relationship the two natures have with each other is explored.

Jesus did not exercise his deity at times and his humanity at other times. His actions were always those of divinity-humanity."⁴³

3. Why Did He Empty Himself?

This section expands on His work as humanities Savior. This idea is also noted under IV WHO HE IS IN HIS WORK; A. Jesus Christ is Our Savior. However, we will consider the following points as part of the Kenosis.

a. To Fulfill God's Promises

"He became man in order to confirm the promises made to the fathers and to show mercy to the Gentiles"⁴⁴

- Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

700 years later God fulfilled His promise.

- Matthew 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

b. To Impart Eternal Life (Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:11-13).

- Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Both Romans 6:23 and 1 John 5:11 use the small preposition $\epsilon\nu$. $\epsilon\nu$ can either be used in a locative sense or in an instrumental sense. One stresses the sphere within which an object is found and the other stresses the means by which an action is accomplished. Both meanings are suitable. In Christ eternal life is to be found and by means of Christ eternal life is secured.

- 1 John 5:12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.
- 1 John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

John continues his train of thought and makes it certain that without the Son there is no life. To believe in Christ grants the right to have eternal life. This is the positive side of the equation. His dealing with sin can be considered the negative side of redemption's event.

c. In Order That He May Partake Of Human Experience (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:14-16).

- Heb. 2:17, 18

¹⁷Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Verse seventeen first uses the word "behooved" meaning "to owe someone something, to become a debtor." It speaks of obligation. Our Lord was driven by an obligation to a debt. In becoming "like" us He fulfilled a purpose ($\iota\nu\alpha$). By taking upon Himself human flesh, He became a merciful and faithful high priest.

- Heb. 4:14 -16

¹⁴Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For 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. ¹⁶Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

"Our High Priest can feel our weaknesses because He was tested as we are. But God is never tested, so it was necessary for God to become man to be able to be tested in order to be a sympathetic Priest."⁴⁵

"He came in order to become qualified to act as a faithful High Priest. Christ came in order to enter into every human experience, apart from sin, that He might be fit as a High Priest."⁴⁶

d. In Order to Present Humanity with a Perfect Example (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 3:16).

- 1 Peter 2:21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.
- 1 John 3:16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

Have you ever wondered about the imperatives of Scripture? They are simply descriptions of our Lord Jesus. For us, **every imperative is a promise of what God is and will do in and through His people**. This is what He would do, this is how He responded when He walked among men and this is the image that we are called upon to bear in our mortal bodies.

"As man He experienced the vicissitudes (i.e. diversities) of life and furnishes for us an experienced example; as God **He offers us the power** [emphasis added] to follow His example."⁴⁷

"The most powerful incentive to holiness is not precept, but example, especially the example of one with whom we associate closely."⁴⁸

e. To Provide An Eternal Revelation Of The God-Head (John 14:7-9; 12:45; Col. 1:15; Phil 2:6; Heb. 1:3)

- John 14:7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.
- John 12:45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.
- Col. 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- Phil. 2:6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,
- Heb. 1:3 He 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,

"Only the incarnation revealed the essence of God, though veiled (John 1:18; 14:7-11). Because He became a man, the revelation of God was personalized; because He is God, that revelation is completely truthful."⁴⁹

f. To Destroy The Works Of The Devil (John 12:31; 16:11; Col. 2:15; 1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14, 15; Rev. 20:10).

- John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.
- John 16:11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.
- Col. 2: He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
- Heb. 2:14 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,
- 1 John 3:8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

"Notice that this was done by Christ's appearing. The focus is on His coming, not on His resurrection as might be expected. Why was the Incarnation necessary to defeat Satan? [Perhaps] Because Satan must be defeated in the arena he dominates, this world."⁵⁰

Have you ever considered the fact that the devil is a defeated foe? His power to affect us is always in submission to our Father's will. The devil has no claim on us.

g. To Fulfill The Davidic Covenant

"Gabriel announced to Mary that her Son would be given the throne of David (Luke 1:31-33). to have an occupant of David's throne requires a human being. Therefore, Messiah had to be a human being."⁵¹

h. To Deal With The Sin Of Mankind

1a. To Bear Sin

- Acts 13:39 and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.
- 1 Cor. 15: For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,
- 2 Cor. 5: For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Gal. 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
- Heb. 9:28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
- 1 Pet. 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
- 1 Pet. 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,
- 1 John 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
- 1 John 3:5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.
- 1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

2b. To Reconcile Enmity (Romans 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Heb. 2:17)

- Romans 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
- Eph. 2:16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

- Heb. 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

3c. To Appease Wrath (John 3:36)

- John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
- Rom. 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.
- Rom. 2:5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
- Rom. 5: Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.
- Eph. 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
- 1Thess. 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
- 1Thess. 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- Rev. 19:15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

4d. To Cleanse Defilement (Gal. 3:13; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:5)

- Gal. 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"
- Heb. 1:3 He 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,
- Rev. 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

5e. To Pay Debt (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14)

- Matt. 20:28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- 1Tim. 2:6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
- Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

"Without the Incarnation we would have no Savior. Sin requires death for its payment. God does not die. So the Savior must be human in order to be able to die. But the death of an ordinary man would not pay for sin eternally, so the Savior must also be God. We must have a God-man Savior and we do in our Lord (Heb. 10:1-10)."⁵²

Today, have you considered Jesus? Do you know the absolute and complete forgiveness of sin? Do you still carry about the burden of your sin? Are you still trying to bear your own sin, reconcile the enmity between you and God? Are you still trying to placate His wrath against sin, wash away your own sin, and pay off an infinite debt? Friend . . . it is finished!! Listen carefully to a song written by P.P. Bliss.

Man of Sorrows What a Name for the Son of God Who Came
Ruined Sinners to Reclaim Hallelujah, What a Savior

Bearing Shame and Scoffing Rude, in My Place Condemned He Stood
Sealed My Pardon with His Blood Hallelujah, What a Savior

Guilty, Vile and Helpless We: Spotless Lamb of God Was He
Full Atonement Can it Be Hallelujah, What a Savior

Lifted up Was He to Die, it Is Finished Was His Cry
Now in Heaven Exalted High Hallelujah, What a Savior

When He Comes Our Glorious King All His Ransomed Home to Bring
Then Anew this Song Will Sing Hallelujah, What a Savior

“Napoleon Bonaparte I, Lived from 1769-1821, Emperor of the French from 1804-1815, (Life, Vol. II, p. 612). “I know men, and I tell you Jesus Christ was not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and other religions the distance of infinity. Everything in Christ astonishes me. Here I see nothing human. The nearer I approach, everything is above me. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon love, and at this hour millions of men would die for him. Christ proved that he was the Son of the eternal.”⁵³

When referring to the gospel, we speak of His person [the above study] and His work [what follows]. We now turn our attention to His work.

IV. WHO HE IS IN HIS WORK

Jesus Christ functions in several roles. These roles are essential to the Christian.

A. Jesus Christ Is Our Savior

As noted in our study of the Kenosis, THE WHY OF THE KENOSIS is primarily redemptive and for humanity’s salvation. In this work, He is humanity’s SAVIOR.

Listen to the words of Karen Hall.

“Salvation. I don’t know what that means. The concept of atonement has never made sense to me, ... Here’s my bottom line on the whole issue: Any god who would send Gandhi (or, for that matter, George Burns) to hell for not having accepted Jesus as his personal savior is not someone I’d want to spend a day with, much less all of eternity.”⁵⁴

“This, regrettably, is the attitude of humanity at large. Just how shamelessly rebellious is the creature? We can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.”⁵⁵

Who is Jesus Christ? Listen carefully to the following passages. Take the time to examine them again: Luke 1:47; 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 1:1; 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Peter 1:1,11; 2:20; 3:2,18; and 1 John 4:14.

Remember that if Jesus had not become our Savior, we would still be helplessly lost in our sin and its exacting penalty. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our Savior; thus, He is also a Mediator, an Advocate and an Intercessor.

B. Jesus Christ Is Our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:3-6).

- ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and one **mediator** also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

In our passage, mediator is **mesites**. It means, “Go between.” The author of Hebrews uses the word to speak of our Lord’s role as mediator.

- Heb 8:6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he **mediates** is better, since it is enacted on better promises.
- Heb 9:15 Therefore he is the **mediator** of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
- Heb 12:24 and to Jesus, the **mediator** of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

When we speak of mediation in the Bible, it is primarily the role of the priest. Jesus is humanity’s “go between” God and humanity. He brings us before the Father.

C. Jesus Christ is Our Advocate (1 John 2:1).

An advocate appears to suggest some kind of legal counsel. And yet, in John’s Gospel the word occurs as a comforter, friend. It could be the advocacy of Jesus and the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the accused and “legally” weary. See also Revelation 12:10 as to why such “legal” counsel is necessary.

The word **advocate** is found five times in the New Testament. Only John uses the word. Four times it is found in his Gospel (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7) and all four times it refers to the Holy Spirit who is called the *Comforter*. However, Jesus is also seen as our advocate in 1 John 2:1.

- 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

The word literally means "to call to one's side or aid." It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant. Jesus Christ is our advocate. John says, "We have." It is a present active indicative. The supporting ministry of Jesus Christ is unconditional and spontaneous. It is something that is unsolicited by the recipient. He simply does this without hesitation. When do you need His aid? When you sin. Every time you sin Jesus stands as your advocate. His advocacy propitiates the Father's wrath against sin and thus you. The Father is pleased because He sees you in His Son. And it is His Son's death that appeases wrath.

When you compare this truth with that of Revelation 12:10 where Satan is described as the accuser of the brethren it becomes apparent why Jesus is indeed our Advocate. See also the case of Job in Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6 where Satan is accusing Job before God. It is also interesting to note that the word 'Devil' literally means "an accuser" and is used thirty-four times as a title for Satan. I often think of the devil's charges against me. He has every right to charge me with wrongdoing and without exception I am guilty as charged. Yet I have an advocate who pleads my case before the Father. And in my defense, He shows the blood.

How important is it to have our Lord as an advocate? Listen to the words of Romans 8:1, 31.

- 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Friend, because of His advocacy I am without condemnation and no one can bring a charge against me. This is one of Scriptures most comforting truths. His next ministry is that of an intercessor. His intercession flows from His office or position as advocate. As our advocate He intercedes in our behalf before the Father. It is impossible for me to separate His advocacy from His intercessory ministry.

D. Jesus Christ Is Our Intercessor

The same idea of an intercessor is one who pleads in our behalf. Each of His work as our Savior, Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor brings enormous comfort to the believer.

The idea behind an intercessor is one who meets with another for the purpose of defending, representing and advising (Isaiah 53:12; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25 [See also the role of the Holy Spirit in this same ministry, Romans 8:26, 27]). The Godhead is interceding in our behalf and benefit. What does it mean to have Jesus as my intercessor? First, He is sympathetic, identifies and understands. Second, His intercessory ministry is guaranteed, sure and certain. Third, if anyone understands, He does. If anyone can help, He can. And if anyone will listen, He will.

Listen to the words of A.T. Robertson concerning our Lord Jesus as the intercessor.

"It is a bold accuser who can face God with false charges or with true ones for that matter for we have an "Advocate" at God's Court. Our Advocate paid the debt for our sins with his blood. The

score is settled. We are free."⁵⁶

1. He is an eternal intercessor (Heb. 7:25).

- Heb 7:25 Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

2. He is an intelligent intercessor (Heb. 4:14-16).

- Heb. 4:14-16

¹⁴Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For 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. ¹⁶Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In our areas of greatest need our Lord Jesus Christ is interceding before the Father in our behalf.

APPLICATION: I Am Not Skilled to Understand

I am not skilled to understand What God hath willed, what God hath planned;
I only know at His right hand Is One who is my Savior!
I take Him at His word indeed: "Christ died for sinners," this I read;
For in my heart I find a need of Him to be my Savior!
That He should leave His place on high and come for sinful man to die,
You count it strange? So once did I, before I knew my Savior!
And oh, that He fulfilled may see the travail of His soul in me,
And with His work contented be, as I with my dear Savior!
Yes, living, dying, let me bring my strength, my solace from this Spring;
That He who lives to be my King Once died to be my Savior!

Satan's accusations, unfortunately, are all too true. Jesus is not our accuser, but our advocate. He is not our inquisitor, but our intercessor. The Holy Spirit by exalting Christ in our eyes, by comparing ourselves against the standard, reveals our non-conformity through blatant disobedience to His person. He is not our slanderer, but our Savior. Our Lord Jesus is in no way our enemy, but our friend.

V. WHO HE IS IN HIS OFFICES

A. As A Prophet, Christ Declares God to All Men.

"One of our Lord's principal activities while on earth was proclaiming God's message through preaching (Matt. 4:17) and teaching (7:29)."⁵⁷

1. It Was Predicted by Moses (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22; 7:37)

Deut. 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.

2. It Was Proclaimed By Christ (Notice the following the usage in the Gospel of John)

- John 1:21 They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "**Are you the Prophet?**" And he answered, "No."
- John 1:25 They asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, **if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?**"
- John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "**Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.**"
- John 6:14 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "**This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.**"
- John 7:40 Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "**This certainly is the Prophet.**"
- John 9:17 So they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "**He is a prophet.**"

B. As A Priest, Christ Brings Men to God (Heb. 5:6).

"The prophet spoke to men from God [revelation]; the priest speaks to God for men [mediation]."⁵⁸

1. Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The Historical Context

- Gen 14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.

Wisdom Literature [The Davidic Monarchy]

- Ps 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

The Book of Hebrews

- Heb 5:6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF **MELCHIZEDEK.**"
- Heb 5:10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of **Melchizedek.**
- Heb 6:20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of **Melchizedek.**
- Heb 7:1 For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,

- Heb 7:10 for he was still in the loins of his father when **Melchizedek** met him.
- Heb 7:11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to **the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?**
- Heb 7:15 And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of **Melchizedek**,
- Heb 7:17 For it is attested of Him, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

C. As A King, Christ Governs Over the Affairs Of Men (Matt. 1:1).

1. His Kingship Was Promised (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

God's gracious covenant with David promised that the right to rule would always remain with David's dynasty.

2. His Kingship Was Predicted (Isa. 9:7)

Isaiah predicted that the Child who would be born would establish and reign on the throne of David.

3. His Kingship Was Rejected [Crucified]

The Gadarenes repudiated His claims (Matt. 8:34). The scribes rejected His claim to be able to forgive sins (9:3). Many people in various cities rejected His credentials (11:20-30; 13:53-58). The Pharisees rejected Him (12; 15:1-20; 22:15-23).

4. His Kingship is Inaugurated (Rev. 5)

Currently, Jesus sits enthroned ruling over two realms [heaven and earth] which will one day be merged (Matt. 6:10).

Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned
Majestic sweetness sits enthroned Upon the Saviour's brow;
His head with radiant glories crowned, His lips with grace o'er-flow.

No mortal can with Him compare, Among the sons of men;
Fairer is He than all the fair Who fill the heavenly train.

To Him I owe my life and breath, and all the joys I have;
He makes me triumph over death, and saves me from the grave.

¹ https://www.worldhistory.org/Jesus_Christ/

² "What Color Is Your Jesus?" The Detroit News [April 13, 1995]: 12S.

³ Russell Watson, "A Lesser Child of God: A radical Jesus seminar sees a different Christ," NEWSWEEK [April 4, 1994]: 53.

⁴ Jon Murray, President of American Atheists as quoted in Josh Simon, "Who Was He?" LIFE [December 1994]: 68.

⁵ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Professor of Islamic Studies at George Washington University as quoted in Josh Simon, "Who Was He?" LIFE [December 1994]: 72.

⁶ Peter A Bien as quoted in Josh Simon, "Who Was He?" LIFE [December 1994]: 79.

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- ⁷ Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literary*, William Marrow, 2001, pp. 125, 126.
- ⁸ Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, Handbook of Today's Religions [San Bernardino, Calif.: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1983].
- ⁹ Charles C. Ryrie, Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth [Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1987], p. 237.
- ¹⁰ Brown, *Christian Theology in Outline*, p. 347 [liberal].
- ¹¹ Thiessen, ST, p. 140.
- ¹² C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1960, pp. 40-41.
- ¹³ Thiessen, ST, p. 143.
- ¹⁴ Strong's *Theology*, p. 311.
- ¹⁵ MacArthur, Jr., *The Ultimate Priority*, p. 14.
- ¹⁶ Allen & Borrer, *Worship*, p. 16.
- ¹⁷ Ryrie, BT, pp. 248,249.
- ¹⁸ Beasley-Murray, John, WBC, p. 139.
- ¹⁹ Beasley-Murray, John, WBC, p. 190.
- ²⁰ Beasley-Murray, John, WBC, p. 252.
- ²¹ Strong's *Theology*, p. xi.
- ²² Adams Brown, *Christian Theology in Outline*, p. 100.
- ²³ Ryrie, BT, p. 35.
- ²⁴ McCune, STII, p. 52.
- ²⁵ Ryrie, BT, p. 263.
- ²⁶ Nicene & Post-Nicene Father. S.2, v.07.
- ²⁷ N.B. Knorr, "Jehovah's Witnesses of Modern Times," in Religion in the Twentieth Century, ed. Vergilius Ferm (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1948), p. 388.
- ²⁸ Robertson, What The Cults Believe, p. 42.
- ²⁹ Robertson, What The Cults Believe, p. 87.
- ³⁰ Ryrie, BT, p. 237.
- ³¹ A.T. Robertson's *NT Word Pictures* on John 1:1.
- ³² Christ in Poetry, pp. 342,343.
- ³³ McCune, STII, p. 49.
- ³⁴ Torrey, *What The Bible Teaches*, p. 67.
- ³⁵ McCune, STII, p. 51.
- ³⁶ McCune, STII, p. 52.
- ³⁷ McCune, STII, p. 52.
- ³⁸ Thiessen, *Lectures in ST*, p. 289.
- ³⁹ TDNT, One vol., p. 427.
- ⁴⁰ Ryrie, BT, p. 261.
- ⁴¹ Ryrie, BT, p. 262.
- ⁴² Erickson, CT, p. 734.
- ⁴³ Erickson, CT, p. 735.
- ⁴⁴ Thiessen, *Lectures in ST*, p. 289.
- ⁴⁵ Ryrie, BT, p. 245.
- ⁴⁶ Thiessen, *Lectures in ST*, p. 291.
- ⁴⁷ Ryrie, BT, p. 244.
- ⁴⁸ Thiessen, *Lectures in ST*, p. 293.
- ⁴⁹ Ryrie, BT, p. 244.
- ⁵⁰ Ryrie, BT, p. 245.
- ⁵¹ Ryrie, BT, p. 245.
- ⁵² Ryrie, BT, p. 245.
- ⁵³ Philip Wollmer, The Modern Student's Life of Christ [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1912], p. 332).
- ⁵⁴ Karen Hall, p. 40 [Unfortunately, that is not a problem she will have to face].
- ⁵⁵ Paul Kurtz, ed., Humanist Manifestos I and II [Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1973], p. 16.
- ⁵⁶ A.T. Robertson's *NT Word Pictures* on Romans 8:34.
- ⁵⁷ Ryrie, BT, p. 254.
- ⁵⁸ Ryrie, BT, p. 257.