



NextStep 102: *Core Beliefs of the Christian Faith*



Week #4 – The substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection of Christ¹

Key Concepts:

The Person of Christ
The Atonement
The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ

The Person of Christ

1) The Humanity of Christ.

- a. **Virgin** Birth – Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb of his mother by a miraculous work of the **Holy Spirit** and without a human father (Matt 1:18-25).
 - i. The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full **deity** and full **humanity** in one person.
 - ii. The virgin birth made possible Christ's true humanity without inherited **sin** (Luke 1:35).
- b. Human Weaknesses and Limitations.
 - i. Jesus had a human **body** (Luke 2:7, 40; John 4:6, 19:28; Matt 4:2).
 - ii. Jesus had a human **mind** (Luke 2:52; Heb 5:8; Mark 13:32).
 - iii. Jesus had a human soul and human **emotions** (John 11:35; 12:27; 13:21; Matt 26:38; Heb 4:15 & James 1:13).
- c. Jesus Christ was without **sin** (John 8:12, 29; 15:10; 18:38; Rom 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15, 7:2; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 2:1, 3:5).

¹ Much of the material in these notes is taken directly from Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, 1994.

- i. Temptations were the culmination of a lifelong process of moral strengthening and **maturing** (Matt 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13).
 - ii. Temptations were Jesus' way to relate to us.
- d. The Necessity of Jesus Christ's Full Humanity.
 - i. For representative **obedience** (compare Luke 4:1-13 with Gen 2:15-3:7; Rom 5:18-19; 1 Cor 15:45, 47).
 - ii. To be a substitute **sacrifice** (Heb 2:16-17).
 - iii. To be the one mediator between God and **man** (1 Tim 2:5).
 - iv. To be our example and pattern in **life** (1 John 2:6; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:10).
- e. Jesus Christ Will Remain a Man Forever (John 20:25-27, Luke 24:29, 41-42; Acts 1:11; 7:56, 9:5; Rev 1:13-17).
 - i. Jesus' divine nature was permanently united to his **human** nature.
 - ii. He lives forever as the eternal son of God and the man who was born of Mary, and as Christ, the Messiah and Savior of his people.
- f. The New Testament teaches that Christ is Fully Human!

2) The Deity of Christ.

- a. Direct Scriptural Claims.
 - i. The word *Theos* (**God**) used of Christ (John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Rom 9:5; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:8 [Ps 45:6]; 2 Pet 1:1).
 - ii. The word *Kyrios* (**Lord**) used of Christ.

The word *Lord* is sometimes used as a polite address to a superior, as in *sir*. Other times it is used to refer to a slave's master. In the LXX it is used as a translation for the Hebrew proper name of God, LORD. In the NT "Lord" is often used with this strong OT usage in mind (Matt 3:3; Luke 1:43; 2:11;

1 Cor 8:6; Heb 1:10-12 [Ps 102]; Rev 19:16).

iii. Other strong claims to Deity.

1. "**I am**" statements (John 8:58, cf Ex 3:14).
2. Jesus as the beginning and the **end** (Rev 1:8; 22:13).
3. Jesus as the *Logos* (**Word**) (John 1:1, 14).
4. Jesus as "*the* Son of **man**."

Title is used 84 times in the four Gospels only by Jesus in reference to himself. (These verses refer to Dan 7:13-14 which speaks of someone with heavenly origin and who was given eternal rule over the whole world. Matt 26:64).

5. Jesus as "Son of **God**."

Title, when applied to Jesus, refers to the heavenly, eternal Son who is equal to God himself (Matt 11:25-30; 17:5; 1 Cor 15:28; Heb 1:1-3, 5, 8).

When this title is applied to Christ it strongly affirms his **deity** as the eternal Son in the Trinity, one equal to God the Father in all his attributes.

b. Evidence that Jesus Possessed Divine Attributes.

i. **Omnipotence**.

1. Calmed the storm at sea (Matt 8:26-27).
2. Multiplied the loaves and fish (Matt 14:19).
3. Turned water into wine (John 2:1-11).

ii. **Eternity** (John 8:58; Rev 22:13).

iii. **Omniscience** - Jesus knows peoples' thoughts (Mark 2:8; John 6:64; 16:30; 21:17).

- iv. **Sovereignty** - authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-7).
 - c. The New Testament teaches that Christ is Fully Divine!
- 3) The **Incarnation**: Deity and Humanity in the One Person of Christ.
- a. Christ is fully human and fully God.
 - b. Doctrine of the person of Christ was defined at the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451.

The Atonement

- 1) **Definition**: The atonement is the work Christ did in his **life** and **death** to earn our salvation.²
- 2) **The Cause of the Atonement.**
- a. The **love** of God (John 3:16).
 - b. The **justice** of God (Rom 3:25-26).
- God's justice (righteousness) required that God find a way that the penalty due to us for our sins would be paid. Without the payment of this penalty, God could not accept us into fellowship with himself.
- 3) **The Necessity of the Atonement.**
- a. Impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away **sins** (Heb 10:4).
 - b. Only the blood of Christ, his death, would take away **sins** (Heb 9:25-26).
 - c. No other way for God to save us than for Christ to **die** in our place.

² Ibid 568. This definition of *atonement* is broader than sometimes used.

4) The Nature of the Atonement.

- a. Christ's **obedience** for us ("active obedience").

Christ lived a perfect life of obedience to God in order to earn righteousness for us. He obeyed the law for his whole life on our behalf so that the positive merits of his perfect obedience would be counted for us.

- b. Christ's **sufferings** for us ("passive obedience").

Christ took on himself the sufferings necessary to pay the penalty for our sins.

- i. Suffering for his whole **life**. Christ lived in and endured routine suffering in a fallen world.

- ii. Suffering of the **cross**.

1. Physical pain and death: the crucifixion (Mark 15:24).
2. Pain of bearing sin: psychological pain (Isa 53:6; John 1:29; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24).
3. Abandonment: by his disciples (Matt 26:56) and his **Father** (Matt 27:46).
4. Bearing the **wrath** of God.

Christ as a "propitiation" – a sacrifice that bears God's wrath to the end and in so doing changes God's wrath toward us into favor (Rom 3:25-26; Heb 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

- c. Penal Substitution – Christ in his death bore the just penalty of God for our sins as a **substitute** for us.

The Resurrection and Accession of Christ

1) Evidence.

See the **Gospels** (Matt 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1-21:25).

2) The Nature of Christ's Resurrection.

- a. More than coming back to life; the resurrection was the **first fruits** of a new kind of human life, a life no longer subject to weakness, aging, or death, but to life eternal (1 Cor 15:20, 23).
- b. Physical body with **flesh** and **bones** (Luke 24:39).

Jesus' physical resurrection body affirms the goodness of God's original creation of man not as a spirit like the angels, but as a creature with a physical body that was "very good" (Gen 1:31).

3) Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection.

- a. Christ's resurrection insures our salvation.
 - i. Through his resurrection Christ earned for us the new kind of life we have when we are born again (1 Pet 1:3; Eph 2:5-6; Phil 3:10).
 - ii. Resurrection **power** is at work in believers (Rom 6:14; Acts 1:8).
 - iii. God's approval of Christ through his resurrection assures his **approval** of believers in Christ (Eph 2:6).
- b. Christ's resurrection insures we will be **raised** too (1 Cor 6:14; 1 Cor 15:12-58; 2 Cor 4:14).

4) Practical Significance of the Resurrection.

- a. Keep serving the Lord because one day we will be **raised** to live with Christ forever (1 Cor 15:58).
- b. Seek **eternal** rewards (Col 3:1-4).
- c. Do not give into sin; you have the new resurrection **power** to say "no" to sin (Rom 6:12-13).

5) Christ's Ascension into Heaven.

- a. Christ ascended to a **place** (Acts 1:3; Luke 24:50-51).
- b. Christ received glory and honor that had not been his before as the **God-man** (John 17:5; Acts 2:33; Phil 2:9; 1 Tim 3:16; Rev 5:12).
- c. Christ was seated at God's right hand (Ps 110:1; Heb 1:3; Eph 1:20-21; 1 Pet 3:22; Acts 2:33).
- d. Doctrinal significance of Christ's ascension.
 - i. We are united with Christ. We will one day **ascend** into heaven to be with him (1 Thess 4:17).
 - ii. Our final home will be with **Christ** (John 14:2-3).
- e. Because of our union with Christ, we are able to share now (in part) in Christ's authority over the universe (Eph 2:6; 6:12; 2 Cor 10:4; 1 Cor 6:3; Heb 2:5-8; Rev 2:26-27).

Key Terms:

Chalcedonian Definition
Incarnation
Virgin Birth

Active obedience
Atonement
Blood of Christ
Passive obedience
Penal substitution
Propitiation

Ascension
Resurrection

Key Verses:

John 1:14
2 Corinthians 5:21
1 Timothy 2:5
Hebrews 1:10-12
John 8:58
1 Corinthians 15:20-23
Romans 6:12-13

Scripture Memory:

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor 5:21, NASB).

Homework Assignment #1:

- 1) Know definitions for Key Terms on page 7.
- 2) Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- 3) Read the Chalcedonian Definition of A.D. 451 and underline or highlight key terms, then explain how those terms distinguish the Christian view of Jesus Christ from those who view Jesus Christ solely as a “good man.”
- 4) Compare and contrast Luke 4:1-13 with Gen 2:15-3:7. Who are the main characters? What is the problem? How do the characters respond to the problem?
- 5) Answer: What is the significance of Christ’s virgin birth?
- 6) Answer: Did Jesus Christ have to die in order for God to save people from his eternal wrath? Why or why not?
- 7) Answer: What is the significance of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ to your life?
- 8) Review nextstep 102 notes from classes 1 through 4.

Next Week: Salvation by faith alone in Christ alone.

The Chalcedonian Definition of A.D. 451

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

Dallas Theological Seminary, *Doctrinal Statement*

Article VI—THE FIRST ADVENT

We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature (Luke 1:30–35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15).

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine (Luke 2:40; John 1:1–2; Phil. 2:5–8).

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all (John 1:11; Acts 2:22–24; 1 Tim. 2:6).

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of

the world, bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was therefore substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death He became the Savior of the lost (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25–26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5–14; 1 Pet. 3:18).

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20–21).

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished (Heb. 1:3).

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved (Eph. 1:22–23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1). ³

³ <http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>

Topeka Bible Church, *What We Believe: Positional Papers*
TBC Elders 1/93

Topic: GOSPEL

Key Verses To Consider: 1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 1 Peter 3:18

What We Believe:

The word gospel means good news. We believe that the greatest good news is that God kept His promise to send the Messiah to His chosen people Israel, for as a result of Jesus¹ coming to earth to die and rise again, the way to God has been opened to all--Jew and Gentile, male and female, young and old, black and white.

To understand the good news, a person must understand that the death of Jesus Christ was substitutionary. That is to say, Jesus substituted for us when He died on the cross. He could do this because He was sinless. The point is important: Jesus, who did not sin at all, died in our place for our sins.

To believe in this Jesus who died in our place means to rely completely on His grace rather than my own effort for salvation. Anyone who believes receives eternal life at that instant, and is assured of going to Heaven. Anyone who rejects this good news rejects Christ and remains in a condemned state (John 3:36).

The gospel truth that God provided our salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus is of supreme importance. This is what sets Christianity apart from all other world religions, which are merely human schemes whereby man tries to earn salvation. Jesus himself said, ³I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me² (John 14:6).

This is definitely good news!