

## The Person of Jesus Christ

Hebrews 2:14-18

**The deity of Jesus Christ** (John 10:30-31; Hebrews 1:4-12; Revelation 22:12-13)

- **John 10:30-31 HCSB** **The Father and I are one.** (31) Again the Jews picked up rocks to stone Him.

This is the clearest statement of Jesus' divinity He ever made. The Greek term here is neuter – “one thing” not “one person.” The two are one in essence or nature, but they are not identical persons. This great truth is what warrants Jesus' “I am” declarations.<sup>1</sup>

The audience understood what He was saying, that He was declaring His deity. They took His words as blasphemy and were, therefore, prepared to carry out the Law's requirements for this supposed crime.<sup>2</sup> However, they were not as assiduous as we may think because the Law also required due process and careful investigation before the execution of the judgment for a capital crime.

Thus, Jesus is not merely a good teacher – He is God. His claim to be God was unmistakable. The religious leaders had their minds made up. Nothing could convince them of the truth of His statement even though He had performed many miracles before them.

The question is: Do we have “ears to hear” and “eyes to see” the truth that lies apparent before us?

- **Hebrews 1:4-12 HCSB** So He became higher in rank than the angels, just as the name He inherited is superior to theirs. (5) For to which of the angels did He ever say, **You are My Son; today I have become Your Father**, or again, **I will be His Father, and He will be My Son?** (6) When He again brings His firstborn into the world, He says, **And all God's angels must worship Him.** (7) And about the angels He says: **He makes His angels winds, and His servants a fiery flame;** (8) but about the Son: **Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of justice.** (9) **You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; this is why God, Your God, has anointed You, rather than Your companions, with the oil of joy.** (10) And: **In the beginning, Lord, You established the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands;** (11) **they will perish, but You remain. They will all wear out like clothing;** (12) **You will roll them up like a cloak, and they will be changed like a robe. But You are the same, and Your years will never end.**

To most Jews, angels are exalted beings, especially to be revered because they were involved in giving the Torah at Mt. Sinai. In fact, the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal their expectation that the archangel Michael would be the supreme figure in the Messianic kingdom.

Christ's superiority to angels is in this passage documented by seven Old Covenant quotations, showing that He is God's Son, that He is worshipped by angels and that, though He is God, He is distinguished from the Father.

“All God's angels must worship Him” it says in verse 6. This is possibly quoted from Psalm 97. This statement, which in the Old Covenant refers to the Lord God (Yahweh), is here applied to Christ, giving clear indication of His full deity. The very beings with whom Christ is being compared are commanded to proclaim His superiority by worshipping Him.

False teachers in many of the early churches taught that God could be approached only through angels. Instead of worshipping God directly, followers of these heretics revered angels. Hebrews clearly denounces such teaching as false. Some thought of Jesus as the highest angel of God. However, though pre-incarnate Jesus is sometimes referred to as “the

---

<sup>1</sup> John 6:35; 8:24, 28, 58; 17:21-22

<sup>2</sup> Leviticus 24:16

Angel of the Lord, Jesus is not simply a superior angel. In any case, created angels are not to be worshipped<sup>3</sup> as the only begotten Son of God is.

We should not regard any intermediaries or authorities as greater than Christ. According to the book of Hebrews:

- Christ is greater than angels.
- Christ is greater than Moses.
- Christ is greater than the Old Covenant's priesthood.
- The New Covenant that He sealed with His blood is greater than the Old.

Jesus is God. He alone deserves our worship.

- **Revelation 22:12-13 HCSB** "Look! I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me to repay each person according to what he has done. (13) I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Judgment based on works is taught by Jesus<sup>4</sup> and Paul<sup>5</sup> as well as John.<sup>6</sup> The One who will be our Judge searches the heart and mind.<sup>7</sup> We need to be those described in verse 11.

- **Revelation 22:11 HCSB** Let the unrighteous go on in unrighteousness; let the filthy go on being made filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; and let the holy go on being made holy."

We need to wash our robes. Better yet, we need to put on Christ's robes of righteousness. We need to dress ourselves in holiness. We need to seek to purify ourselves from a sinful way of life. We must strive daily to remain faithful and ready for Christ our Divine Judge's return.

**The humanity of Jesus Christ** (John 1:14; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14-18)

- **John 1:14 HCSB** The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Became.** This indicates transition. The Word existed before He became Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed, He existed long before He became immanent theophany!

**Flesh.** This is a strong, almost crude, word that stresses the reality of His physical appearance. It's as if the apostle had said, "And God became *meat!*"

**Took up residence among us.** Here the Greek is connected with the word for "tent/tabernacle". The phrase would have reminded the Jewish readers of the Tent of meeting which had been filled with the glory of God.<sup>8</sup> By doing so, Christ became:

1. The perfect teacher. In Jesus' life we can see how God thinks and therefore how we should think.
2. The perfect example. As a model of what we are to become, He shows us how to live and gives us the power to live that way.<sup>9</sup>
3. The perfect sacrifice. Jesus came as a sacrifice for all sins, and His death satisfied God's requirements for the removal of sin.<sup>10</sup>

When Jesus was born, God became a man. He was not part man and part God; He was completely human and completely divine.<sup>11</sup> Before Christ came, people could only know God

<sup>3</sup> Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:1-10

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 16:27

<sup>5</sup> Romans 2:6

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 18:6; 20:12-13; 22:12

<sup>7</sup> Psalm 7:9; Proverbs 24:12; Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10; Revelation 22:23

<sup>8</sup> Exodus 40:34-35

<sup>9</sup> 1 Peter 2:21

<sup>10</sup> Colossians 1:15-23

partially. After Christ came, people could know God fully because He became visible and tangible in Christ. Christ is the perfect expression of God in human form. The two most common errors people make about Jesus are to minimize His humanity or to minimize His divinity. Jesus is both God and Man.

- **Philippians 2:7-8 HCSB** Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, (8) He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death--even to death on a cross.

Christ did this, not by giving up His divinity, but by laying aside the glorious rights and prerogatives that were His, and submitting to the humiliation of becoming a man.<sup>12</sup>

Often people excuse their sin by claiming their rights. They think,

- "I should be allowed to get away with this because I deserve good things in life."
- "I can leave my spouse because I deserve to be happy."
- "I can cheat on my test, I deserve a good grade."
- "I can spend all my money on myself, I worked hard for it."
- "I can have illicit sex or have an abortion because I have the rights to my own body."

Believers have a different attitude, one that enables us to lay aside our rights in order to serve others. If we say we follow Christ, we must also say we want to live as He lived.

Because He was willing to do this; because He was willing to be submissive to the will of the Father in all things, He never asks us to do something that He has not been willing to do Himself. Which leads us to:

- **Hebrews 2:14-18 HCSB** Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, He also shared in these, so that through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death--that is, the Devil-- (15) and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. (16) For it is clear that He does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham's offspring. (17) Therefore He had to be like His brothers in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (18) For since He Himself was tested and has suffered, He is able to help those who are tested.

Because Christ became one of us, He can represent us well before God the Father.

Because Christ became one of us, He can make atonement for our sins. In order for Christ to turn aside the wrath of God against guilty sinners, He became one with us and died as a substitute for us.

Because Christ became one of us, His death and resurrection set us free from the fear of death because death has already been defeated. We may die, but death is not the end for the believer. It is a doorway into a new life.

All who dread death should have the opportunity to know the hope that Christ's victory brings. How can you share this truth with those close to you?

---

<sup>11</sup> Colossians 2:9

<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 8:9