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Section: Doctrine of Christ (Christology)

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Date Taught: April 17, 2024

**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q60. Does Jesus now have a divine nature or a human nature?**

At the incarnation, Jesus took on a human nature yet remained eternally, fully divine at the same time. Jesus Christ is one Person, fully God and fully man.

* **Intro/Review**
* **The Incarnation**

The incarnation is the very point in time when the eternal Son of God, Jesus, took on a human nature, as He was miraculously conceived in the womb of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit.

* **The Hypostatic Union**

**Hypostatic Union**: Jesus Christ’s eternal, fully divine nature being united to His fully human nature at His incarnation. These two natures are not mixed, confused, or changed but are united without loss of separate identity, and they are inseparable.

Because Jesus is one person, when He took on a human nature, we say that both His divine nature and human nature were united in His person.

These natures are inseparable because Christ Jesus will, from the incarnation onward, always possess both of them.

* **Jesus Is One Person**

As human beings, we possess the same nature that all other human beings possess; however, our personhood is distinct to us as individuals.

When it comes to personhood, there are attributes that all “persons” posses; however, there are many things that are very different from person to person because personhood is distinct according to each particular person.

* **Jesus Is Fully God**

The word of God declares Jesus to be divine--to be the second Person of the triune God. Jesus Himself proclaimed to be the “I am.” The very things He did proved that He is God.

His enemies knew that He was proclaiming to be God.

* **Jesus Is Fully Man**

Jesus, being eternally God, chose to take on a human nature in order to fulfill the Covenant of Redemption, which if you remember was a covenant of works to Jesus.

**Pastor Matt**: “All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.”

God had an eternal plan and set it in the Covenant of Redemption, through which God would, by sending the Son to take on flesh, redeem a particular people unto Himself. Jesus taking on a fully human nature does this work because of this covenant. It’s important that we remember these truths as we dig into this lesson.

* **Humiliation of Christ**

**Humiliation of Christ**: Jesus, in obedience to God the Father, took on human nature, came under the law, was tempted in this life, suffered the wrath of God by being cursed on the cross, and died a physical death.

**Philippians 2:5-11** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus emptied himself of His rightful display of the fullness of glory in His time here on earth in the flesh more than 2000 years ago. To be clear, He never lost His divine nature nor any attributes of His divine nature. Jesus taking on a human nature does not mean that Jesus’s divine nature was changed or that Jesus’s divine nature was put away, or paused, or modified.

Being eternally God, He deserved to display the fullness of divine glory and not to humbly take on a human nature that is weak and not divine. However, He willingly emptied Himself (He HUMBLED Himself) **IN** taking on a human nature.

**It is what Christ took to Himself (a true human nature) that humbled Him.** Jesus never stopped being God; rather, His humbling was the joining of a human nature to His person, which also possessed His divine nature.

God the Son emptied Himself by humbly adding to His person a nature that would allow Him to be a servant and experience humanly things, which as God He could not experience.

In all of this, Jesus did not give up His deity.

**Hypostatic Union**: Jesus Christ’s eternal, fully divine nature being united to His fully human nature at His incarnation. These two natures are not mixed, confused, or changed but are united without loss of separate identity, and they are inseparable.

Jesus’s human nature was real. In His human nature, He suffered as we do,

He grew in wisdom and stature, and He learned like we learn. Even though in His divine nature He had exhaustive knowledge of all things, by taking on a human nature and in His human nature, He went through a *human process* of growing and learning.

**Hebrews 2:9-18** But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying,

“I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.” And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Behold, I and the children God has given me.” 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, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 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. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Jesus had the fullness of the Holy Spirit at work in His human nature His entire human life. He had the Spirit without measure!

**John 3:34** (NIV) For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

* **The Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah spoke of a man**

**Isaiah 9:6** 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.

* **He was seen as a man, called Himself a man, and grew up as a human grows up**

**John 4:29** “Come, see a *man* who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”

**John 9:11** He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes …”

**John 10:33** The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”

**Matthew 13:53-56** And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this *man* get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s *son*? Is not his *mother* called Mary? And are not his *brothers* James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his *sisters* with us? Where then did this *man* get all these things?”

**John 8:40 “**but now you seek to kill me, a *man* who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.”

**Luke 2:52** And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

* **Jesus possesses a full human nature, which includes a human soul!**

Jesus taking on a fully human nature means He has a human body and soul just like we do.

**John 12:27** “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.”

**John 13:21** After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

Nothing troubles God. Jesus possesses a human soul in His human nature, and His human soul was troubled at what was happening.

* **Jesus had human emotions**

**Matthew 8:10** When Jesus heard this, he *marveled* and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith.”

**John 11:35** Jesus *wept.*

**Hebrews 5:7** In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with *loud cries and tears*, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

God is impassible. The divine does not have passions nor emotions. But we see here, that Jesus, *in His human nature* was passible.

**Matthew 24:35-36 “**Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”

Jesus’s divine nature knows the exact moment of this hour because God Himself has decreed this hour and Jesus is God. However, the human nature of Jesus can declare that He did not know this hour because in the flesh, God did not see fit to reveal this knowledge to the human nature of Jesus.

**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, 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.

* **Closing and Application**

**1689 Confession of Faith**: “Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture, attributed to the person denominated by the other nature (John 3:13; Acts 20:28).”

**1 Corinthians 2:8** None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the *Lord of glory*.

Jesus is one person; therefore, whatever His divine nature does can be ascribed to Himself as the “person,” and whatever His human nature does can be ascribed to Himself as the “person” who performed said action.

When a title of Jesus is referred to as having done something that the nature we often connect to the title cannot do, then the title is simply standing to draw your attention to the person of Jesus who did it!

We need to be careful not to intentionally ascribe to one of the natures of Jesus something it could not do.

Jesus did die for the sins of the elect, and Jesus is God; however, Jesus’s divine nature cannot die. Therefore, saying God died for your sins would be incorrect. Let’s aim to think and speak properly—by that I mean technically accurate.

The Scriptures are not required to declare in each and every circumstance which nature of Jesus acted.

**John 17:11-18 “**And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

There is nowhere, no space that exists, where God is not.

Anything Jesus does, whether by His divine nature or by His human nature, can be applied to the one person of Jesus, because He has done it.

**Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

One nature departed and is not with us presently; the other nature cannot depart, as He is everywhere at all times. However, both natures belong to the person of Jesus, and therefore whatever one nature does can be ascribed to the person who did it, namely, Jesus.

It is acceptable to discuss the difference of natures and what they can or cannot do; however, we must never divide the person of Christ. He is one person with two natures. The person of Christ cannot be divided.