

INTRODUCTION

1 Timothy 6:12-14 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (13) I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, (14) that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

In 1 Timothy, our Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as:

the one in whom we have faith

the one who is merciful to ignorant, unbelieving sinners

the one who came into the world to save sinners

the one who grants everlasting life to those who believe in Him

the one Mediator between God and man

the one who gave Himself a ransom for all

the one whom we serve

the one who sees everything we do

the one whose words are wholesome and authoritative

the one who set the example we follow in professing a good profession

the one to whose appearing we look forward in hope

Certainly our Lord Jesus Christ is all these things and more. Yet, it is quite possible for us, weak and sinful as we are, to hear all these things about our Lord Jesus Christ, yet not be quite sure who exactly He is. What we read in the Bible, what church history tells us, what we hear from each other, and what we have pondered in our own minds, make us sure that we may be very ignorant or mistaken about who our Lord Jesus Christ is.

So, upon coming to a place in 1 Timothy where He is specifically named, I am speaking to you these three weeks directly about who our Lord Jesus Christ is. In theological terms, we are engaging in some basic Christology. We are very interested in both the person and the work of Christ. Often we speak of the work of Christ; here we are concentrating on His person.

Who, exactly, our Lord Jesus Christ is, was highly controversial in the early centuries of the churches, and has been so often since then, at various times in various places.

Councils of pastors meeting during the 300s and 400s gave us carefully-crafted language to express what the Bible says about who our Lord Jesus Christ is. The Nicene Creed, and the follow-on Chalcedonian Definition stated the truth of who Jesus is, in language that has endured all the way to today.

The Lutheran and Calvinist reformation in Europe in the 1500s recognized this, and used the old Nicene and Chalcedonian language in such documents as the Augsburg Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism.

The Puritan reformation in Great Britain in the 1500s and 1600s adopted the same old terms in such works as the Irish Articles, the Westminster catechisms, and our own 1689 Confession. This week, I read the old classic theological statements defended and explained in James Ussher's *A Body of Divinity* from the early 1600s, and in David Dickson's *Truth's Victory over Error* from the later 1600s.

The old Nicene and Chalcedonian language used for so long to teach the truth about who our Lord Jesus Christ is crossed the Atlantic and became the expression of the Baptist congregations and others here in America, as the old 1689 Confession was republished in Boston in 1742, and in Charleston in 1812.

This week, I read the familiar old language in *An Abstract of Systematic Theology* by James Boyce, founder of Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, KY, published 1887.

Today, I am very happy to have the privilege to stand before you and declare to you who our Lord Jesus Christ is. I have put this sermon together especially for you, this congregation. But I am not innovating in this doctrine. God helping me, I have learned the sound old words, and am trying to pass them on to you correctly.

Two weeks ago, we considered together that our Lord Jesus Christ is very God.

Last week, we saw that our Lord Jesus Christ is very man.

Today, to conclude, I proclaim to you that

Our Lord Jesus Christ is both very God and very Man.

TEXT

Colossians 2:6-9 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, (7) rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. (8) Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. (9) For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

BODY

Our Lord Jesus Christ is both very God and very Man.

I. There Is Godhead and There Is Manhood

A. Consider the concept of Godhead

1. I describe to you a certain being. Here is a being who:
 - a) always is, with no beginning or ending, and no progression through time
 - b) has life in and of Himself, who can never die
 - c) was not Himself created, but who created everything else
 - d) never changes, neither changing Himself, nor being changed by anything else
 - e) who is a pure spirit, having no body or parts or passions
2. Obviously we call this being God. These few statements I have made about God are descriptions of what God is, of His nature or essence, which in the case of God we call his deity or divinity, or divine nature, or Godhead.
3. the term "Godhead"
 - a) Old English
 - b) has nothing to do with your noggin
 - c) like "childhood" or "maidenhood"
 - d) this form has died out in Modern English, except for this word, which persists because of this use

B. Consider the concept of Manhood

1. I describe to you another being. Here is a being who:
 - a) had a distinct beginning when he was conceived, and who progresses through time
 - b) has life because it was given to him, but who also can die
 - c) was created by a Creator; who can procreate, and can fashion things out of created matter, but who cannot create anything from nothing
 - d) who changes constantly, both by making changes to himself and by being changed by things around him
 - e) who has both a body and a soul
2. We call this being man. These few statements I have made about man are descriptions of what man is, of his nature or essence, which in the case of man we call his humanity, or human nature, or manhood.

C. Understand the use of the terms Godhead and manhood

1. we use these terms to describe what God is, and what man is
2. but sometimes when we use these terms, we speak figuratively, as if they are what God has, and what man has
 - a) We describe God as having deity or divinity, man as having humanity.
 - b) We describe God as having the divine nature, man as having human nature or man's nature.
 - c) We describe God as having Godhead, man as having manhood.

- II. Our Lord Jesus Christ Is Very God and Very Man In That He Has Both Godhead and Manhood
- A. The Son of God is very and eternal God, so He always is or has deity or divinity, the divine nature, Godhead
 - B. When our Lord Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, the Son of God took upon Him humanity, human nature, man's nature, manhood.
 1. in the language of John 1:14 the Word became flesh
 2. he became incarnate; "incarnation"
 - C. As a result, our Lord Jesus Christ is human nature united to the divine nature in the person of the Son. In Him, the two natures, human and divine, are inseparably joined together in one person. He is the Godhead and manhood joined in one person.
 - D. So we can say that our Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, true God and true man.
 - E. Sometimes we have to make the distinction between His two natures, to understand perfectly something about Him; but when we do that, do not think of Him as two persons, which He is not; He is one Person
 - F. Inseparably
 1. sometimes we say Jesus "was" both God and man
 2. better to remember He "was and continues to be God and man . . . forever"
(Baptist Catechism)

III. APPLICATION

- A. We do not study this together just so we can be right, just so we can know the right answer. If we did, it would be true of us, what the Bible warns, "Knowledge puffs up." What, then, is the usefulness of knowing that our Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, in that He has both Godhead and manhood in one Person?
 1. We are helped to give glory to our Lord Jesus Christ; the more we praise Him for who He really is, the more we glorify Him.
 2. We are strengthened, both in our own faith, and in our confidence to speak of our faith to others, when we know with certainty whom we believe.
 3. We are helped to keep our religion based in truth.
 4. We are kept from small errors leading off into big ones.
 5. We are kept from thinking and speaking as if true religion is unreasonable.
 - a) if anything the Bible says is unreasonable, we should not believe it
 - b) if Jesus being very God and very man were proven to be illogical, it should not be believed
- B. Use the terms you have been given
 1. very God and very man; true God and true man
 2. Son of God and Son of Man
 3. two natures united in one person
 - a) Godhead and manhood
 - b) deity or divinity and humanity
 - c) divine nature and human nature or man's nature

CONCLUSION

Chalcedonian Definition 451

...our Lord Jesus Christ is...perfect in Godhead...perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man; co-essential with the Father according to the Godhead...co-essential with us according to the manhood...acknowledged in two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the difference of the natures being in no way removed because of the union, but rather the properties of each nature being preserved, and concurring into one person and one hypostasis; not as though He were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the self-same...Lord, Jesus Christ...

Stephen - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Malachi 3:6

Thad - Scripture Reading - Matthew 1:18-23

Jeremiah - Congregational Prayer

Lord's Supper

Benediction - 2 Peter 3:18

Rita - Prelude

Rita - Trinity 151 "O Come, All Ye Faithful" - Andrew lead

Allison - Trinity 155 "All Praise to Thee, Eternal Lord" - Alex lead

Allison - Trinity 129 "Fairest Lord Jesus"

Morning Bible Study

1689.8.2 The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God...did...take upon him man's nature...so that two...natures were inseparably joined together in one person...

1828 Webster

noun [Latin hypostasis; Gr. to stand.] Properly, subsistence or substance. Hence it is used to denote distinct substance, or subsistence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the Godhead, called by the Greek christians, three hypostases. The Latins more generally used *persona* to express the sense of *hypostasis* and this is the modern practice. We say, the Godhead consists of three persons.

Latin *persona* pl. *personas* or *personae*

Greek *hypostasis* pl. *hypostases*

Hebrews 1:3

1689.8.2 The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God...did...take upon him man's nature...so that two...natures were inseparably joined together in one person...

1689.8.3 The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the Son...

I. Necessary Terms

A. Two natures

1. Godhead - Gal 2:9 *theotētos*
 - a) deity
 - b) divine nature
2. Manhood
 - a) humanity
 - b) human nature

B. Take

1. Nicea - became incarnate...was made human
2. Augsburg - did assume human nature
3. Heidelberg - took to himself...a truly human nature
4. Irish Articles - took man's nature...
5. Catechism - taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul

CONCLUSION

Doesn't His being very God prove that He isn't also very man?

Doesn't His being God and man produce some new hybrid?

Crossing a horse with a donkey produces a being that is neither horse nor donkey; it is a mule

1689.8.2 The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God...did...take upon him man's nature...so that two...natures were inseparably joined together in one person...

Baptist Catechism

Q. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ (1Ti 2:5-6); Who, being the eternal Son of God, became man (Joh 1:14; Gal 4:4), and so was and continueth to be God and man in two distinct natures, and one person forever (Rom 9:5; Luk 1:35; Col 2:9; Heb 7:24-25).

Q. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man? A. Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to Himself a true body (Heb 2:14, 17; 10:5) and a reasonable²¹ soul (Mat 26:38); being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her (Luk 1:27, 31, 34-35, 42; Gal 4:4), yet without sin (Heb 4:15; 7:26).²²

Westminster Larger Catechism

37. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man? Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin.

40. Why was it requisite that the mediator should be God and man in one person?

It was requisite that the mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person.

The Irish Articles of Religion 1615

29. The Son...,the true and eternal God...took man's nature in the womb of the...virgin...so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood were inseparably joined in one person, making one Christ very God and very man.

The Augsburg Confession 1530

III. Of the Son of God

...the Word, that is, the Son of God, did assume human nature in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably enjoined in one Person, one Christ, true God and true man...

The Heidelberg Catechism 1563

...the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself...a truly human nature...

Nicene Creed 325/381

...the only Son of God...true God...came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human.

Chalcedonian Definition 451

...our Lord Jesus Christ is...perfect in Godhead...perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man; co-essential with the Father according to the Godhead...co-essential with us according to the manhood...acknowledged in two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the difference of the natures being in no way removed because of the union, but rather the properties of each nature being preserved, and concurring into one person and one hypostasis; not as though He were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the self-same...Lord, Jesus Christ...

The divine nature can't

-change into the human nature

-mix with the human nature

But the divine nature can

-take to itself the human nature

-establish in the person of the Son a union with the human nature

This can be known; we know this; it is not beyond us to know this.

How this can be, we do not know; it is beyond us to know this.

Our Lord Jesus Christ as both God and Man is unique, but not impossible or unreasonable.

He is very God and very Man at the same time, but not in the same sense

Since we know that God cannot change, if God became man, then it must not be by any change in God.

-see Gill on Malachi 3:6 - he changed not in his divine nature and personality by becoming man; he took that into union with him he had not before, but remained the same he ever was

SKY:

It feels alien to me - Jesus as a man without sin seems very different from me

Dickson:

Quest. II. "Are there two whole, perfect, and distinct natures in Christ, the God-head, and the manhood, inseparably joined together in one person?"

Yes

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), (6) yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (6) one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Well then, do not the Nestorians err, who maintain, the union between the divine and human nature, not to be hypostatical, but only by way of assistance: And that, as there are two natures in Christ, so there are two persons, one proper to the divine nature, another proper to the human nature?

Yes.

By what reasons are they confuted?

1st, Because unless Christ-God-man were but one person, the merit of his death would not be of so great value, as to redeem the elect from infinite and eternal punishment; seeing hence cometh all the value and worth of his death, that the same person who was God, did suffer and die for us.

2d, Because otherwise, Christ had been swallowed up and devoured by the wrath of God, against the sins of the elect, which he himself undertook.

3d, Because Christ, if he had not been both God and man in one person, he could not have been a mediator: For a mediator must be one, 1 Tim. 2.5.

Quest. III. "Is the godhead and manhood in Christ united without conversion, composition or confusion?"

Yes;

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

Colossians 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

Romans 9:5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Well then, do not these old heretics, the Eutychiens err, who maintain, That as the person of Christ is one, so his nature is made one, by a composition, or confusion of the two natures together?

Yes.

By what reasons are they confuted?

1st, Because such a composition is impossible, seeing the divine nature is most perfect and cannot lose any of its own perfection, unless we would affirm the divine nature to be mutable and changeable.

2d, Because that same Christ, who according to the flesh descended of the Jews is over all, God blessed for ever, Rom. 6.5.

3d, Because this doctrine takes away all means of mediation; for, by taking away the distinction between the natures, they take away the natures themselves: And so neither could Christ have suffered in our place, because not man; neither could he have given any virtue, value, or worth, to his sufferings because not God.

- I. Our Difficulty In Grasping The Truth That Our Lord Jesus Is Both Very God and Very Man
 - A. This does not occur in our experience in this world
 1. loaf of bread is not a hammer
 2. mule is not a horse and is not a donkey
 - B. The scriptures point out repeatedly that God is not man, and man is not God
 1. men repeatedly want to worship something that is created; they are chastised by God's prophets on the grounds that created things are not God, and therefore must not be worshiped
 2. so in many ways the scriptures point out that to be man is not to be God; and to be God is not to be man
 - C. Our whole experience of being very man involves sin
 1. we read in the first couple pages of the Bible about our first parents, Adam and Eve, in a state of innocence, without any sin in them
 2. but besides that, what we know about being man is all wrapped up with being sinful
 3. so, it feels to us as if Jesus being very God, who is holy, holy, holy, means that He couldn't also be very man, since all of the men we know are sinful