

INTRODUCTION

1. We are currently in a study called *The Christ of Christmas*.
2. And in this study we have addressed *the incarnation of Christ* and *the offices of Christ*.
3. In *the incarnation of Christ*, we saw that Jesus was the God-man.
4. And as a man He possessed all the characteristics of a man.
5. For example, He was born, He grew physically and mentally, He became wearied, thirsty, angry, hungry, He slept, He became sad, He was tempted, He suffered, and He died.
6. In our study of *the offices of Christ*, we said that Jesus is presented in Scripture as Prophet, Priest, and King.
7. He is all three.
8. This morning, I want us to see that He is not only Prophet, Priest, and King but undiminished deity—God in human flesh.
9. In the incarnation we see Him become man, but this morning I want us to see that He has always been God.

10. In commenting on the phrase “(Christ) existed in the *form* of God” in Philippians 2:6, **B. B. Warfield** says, “He is declared, in the most express manner possible, to be all that God is, to possess the whole fullness of attributes which make God God.”²¹
11. **Colossians 2:9 (NASB)** says, For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.
12. Throughout history men have made some very insightful statements about Jesus.
13. One of them was Napoleon Bonaparte, who lived from 1769-1821.
14. He was a French military and political leader and made a huge impact on Europe.
15. He said, “I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison! Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist.... Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. He is truly a being by Himself. His ideas and sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner

²¹ 21. B. B. Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1950), p. 39.

¹Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989). 224.

of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things... The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me—everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers.... One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation or the example of His life... I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature, offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or explain it. Here everything is extraordinary.”²

16. Another man who had an impact on Europe and the rest of the world was a man named C.S. Lewis.

17. In his book, *Mere Christianity*, he said, “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 with any patronising nonsense about His being a

² Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Bonaparte

great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”³

18. As we consider the subject of Christ’s deity, we must understand that its acceptance is necessary to salvation.
19. Jesus said in **John 8:24 (NASB)** ²⁴ "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless **you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.**"
20. By His saying, “I am,” He was clearly indicating His deity.
21. He used this identification again in **verse 58**, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am.**”
22. The Jews understood what He was saying which is why John states in **verse 59**, Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.
23. Those Jews knew exactly what Jesus was claiming when He said, “I am.” They had read Exodus 3:14.
24. And Jesus said in John 8:24 that a person will die in his sins unless he believes in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.
25. So as we approach this subject, understand the warning.
26. There are many ways to approach the subject of Christ’s deity.

³ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, The MacMillan Company, 1960, pp. 40-41

27. One is to see first that *He performed divine activities.*

28. Notice John 1:3 where we see that *He created.*

I. Jesus Performed Divine Activities

A. He Created

1. **John 1:3 (NASB)** says, All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

The phrase “all things” (panta) is a “reference to the infinite detail of creation (Vincent), “each thing separately” (Morgan) rather than the whole.

So “all things” refers then to “organic and inorganic, animate and inanimate, material and spiritual, rational and irrational.”⁴

The phrase “came into being” (ginomai) “implies a creative act, not a process. Jesus spoke, and the universe sprang into existence.”⁵

The last phrase “apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being,” means “not one single thing existed apart from Him.”

The word “nothing” (oude) which is a “negative conjunction” (GING) means “not a single thing” (A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament).

⁴ David Thomas, *The Genius of the Fourth Gospel*, 11

⁵ Larry Richards, *The Bible Reader’s Companion*, 678

There can be no possible exception. If a thing was made, He made it. As Creator, He is, of course, superior to anything He has created.⁶

2. **Colossians 1:15-17 (NASB)** says, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

The word “Image” (eikon) means, “likeness, resemblance” (Strong)

The word “Firstborn” (prototokos) refers to “preeminence”

W.E. Vine says, “The word is used “in His relationship to the Father, expressing His priority to, and preeminence over, creation, not in the sense of being the first to be born.”

⁶William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Jn 1:3.

Warren Wiersbe adds, “The term *firstborn* does not refer to time, but to place or status. Jesus Christ was not the first being created, since He Himself is the Creator of all things. *Firstborn* simply means “of first importance, of first rank.” Solomon was certainly not born first of all of David’s sons, yet he was named the firstborn (Ps. 89:27). *Firstborn of all Creation* means “prior to all Creation.” Jesus Christ is not a created being; He is eternal God.”⁷

3. **Hebrews 1:1-2 (NASB)** ¹ God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us *in His Son*, whom He appointed heir of all things, *through whom also He made the world*.

4. In Hebrews 1:10-12 the writer applies Ps.102:25-27 to Jesus. Verse 8 begins the context when it says, “But to the Son He says” and continues through verse 12.

Hebrews 1:10-12 (NASB) ¹⁰ And, "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of Your hands; ¹¹ They will perish, but You remain; And they all will

⁷Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989). Col 1:15.

become old like a garment,¹² And like a mantle
You will roll them up; Like a garment they will
also be changed. But You are the same, And Your
years will not come to an end."

That Jesus is the Creator verifies His deity because
God is portrayed throughout the Bible as the Creator.

B. He Forgave Sin

1. **Matthew 9:1-8 (NASB)**¹ Getting into a boat,
Jesus crossed over *the sea* and came to His own
city.² And they brought to Him a paralytic lying
on a bed. Seeing their faith, **Jesus said to the
paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are
forgiven."**³ And some of the scribes said to
themselves, "This *fellow* blasphemes."⁴ And Jesus
knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you
thinking evil in your hearts?⁵ "Which is easier, to
say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up,
and walk'?"⁶ **"But so that you may know that the
Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive
sins"**—then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick
up your bed and go home."⁷ And he got up and
went home.⁸ But when the crowds saw *this*, they
were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given
such authority to men.

The word that Jesus uses in verse 2, "forgiven"
(aphiemi) means "to send away" (GING).

The sins are sent away from the sinner so completely that they shall never be found again, to the depth of the sea, and so far that no one “can possibly bring them back, as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103). Only God is able to send our sins away in this manner.⁸

2. **Luke 7:40-50 (NASB)**⁴⁰ And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher."⁴¹ "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty."⁴² "When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?"⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."⁴⁴ Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair."⁴⁵ "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet."⁴⁶ "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume."⁴⁷ "For this reason I say to you, **her sins, which are many, have been forgiven**, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves

⁸R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 356.

little." ⁴⁸ **Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."** ⁴⁹ Those who were reclining *at the table* with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this *man* who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰ And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

3. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached called the people to repent when he said in **Acts 2:38 (NASB)** ³⁸ Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
4. Later when they were standing before the Sanhedrin they said in **Acts 5:31 (NASB)** ³¹ "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and **forgiveness of sins**."
5. **Colossians 1:14 (NASB)** ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, **the forgiveness of sins**.

Not only did Jesus reveal His deity in creating and forgiving sin but...

C. He was Worshiped

1. By the Magi – **Matthew 2:11 (NASB)** ¹¹ After coming into the house they saw the Child with

Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

2. By His disciples – (After Jesus walked on water with Peter) **Matthew 14:32-33 (NASB)** ³² When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³ And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

3. By a blind man – **John 9:35-38 (NASB)** ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." ³⁸ And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

Jesus accepted worship that was rightfully refused by men (Acts 10:25-26) and angels (Rev.22:8-9). This shows that He must have been more than a man or an angel. He must have been God.

II. Jesus Had a Divine Conception

A. He was Born of a Virgin

1. Luke 1:26-34

2. **Isaiah 7:14 (NASB)** ¹⁴ "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, *a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.*

Since Ahaz refused to choose a sign (vv. 11,12), the Lord chose His own sign, whose implementation would occur far beyond Ahaz's lifetime.

The Hebrew word for "virgin" refers to an unmarried woman and means "virgin."⁹

Isaiah's choice of the rare word *almah* better signifies virginity than the more common term *bethulah*. While it is true that *almah* can be translated "young woman," it is never intended in the Hebrew language to deny the legitimacy of that young woman's virginity! Even the prominent Jewish scholar, Cyrus Gordon, notes that the LXX

⁹John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Is 7:14.

LXX Septuagint

translates *almah* by the Greek word *parthenos*, which always means “virgin.”¹⁰

3. **Matthew 1:23 (NASB)** ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, *and they shall call His name Immanuel, "which translated means, "God with us."*

B. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit

1. **Luke 1:35 (NASB)** ³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you,* and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

This was a creative act of the Holy Spirit, not the sort of divine-human cohabitation sometimes seen in pagan mythology.¹¹

The word “overshadow” (episkiazo) is used of God’s presence resting on the tabernacle in the cloud (Ex. 40:35 (29)) and metaphorically

¹⁰*KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994). 1313.

¹¹John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Lk 1:35.

protecting his people (Pss. 91:4 (90:4); 140:7 (139:8)).

God's powerful presence will rest upon Mary, so that she will bear a child who will be the Son of God. Nothing is said regarding how this will happen, and in particular there is no suggestion of divine begetting (Creed, 20).¹²

2. **Matthew 1:20 (NASB)** ²⁰ But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; *for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*

III. Jesus Had Divine Names or Titles

A. God

1. **Isaiah 9:6 (NASB)** ⁶ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, *Mighty God*, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

¹²I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke : A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New international Greek testament commentary (Exeter [Eng.: Paternoster Press, 1978). 70.

2. **Matthew 1:23 (NASB)** ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel , " which translated means, "God with us."
3. **Hebrews 1:8 (NASB)** ⁸ But of the Son *He says*, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.
4. **1 John 5:20 (NASB)** ²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son *Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.*
5. **John 20:28 (NASB)** ²⁸ Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

B. Son of God

1. When Jesus asked His disciples "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?", Matthew 16:14-17 records their answer and Jesus' response.

Matthew 16:14-17 (NASB) ¹⁴ And they said, "Some *say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said* to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, *the Son of the living God.*" ¹⁷ And Jesus said to him,

"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because *flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

2. **Mark 3:11-12 (NASB)** ¹¹ Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "*You are the Son of God!*" ¹² *And He earnestly warned them not to tell who He was.*

C. Lord

1. Peter, when describing Jesus to Cornelius said in **Acts 10:36 (NASB)** ³⁶ "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through *Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all).*
2. Paul said in **1 Corinthians 2:7-8 (NASB)** ⁷ but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory; ⁸ *the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified *the Lord of glory.*
3. He is referred to as the Lord Jesus 101 times and Lord Jesus Christ 63 times
4. Paul said in **Philippians 2:10-11 (NASB)** ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that

Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

D. Almighty

Revelation 1:8 (NASB) ⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, **the Almighty**."

E. Eternally Blessed God

Romans 9:1-5 (NASB) ¹ I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, *separated* from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises, ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

The NKJV says, "who is over all, the eternally blessed God."

IV. Jesus Has Divine Characteristics

A. He is Eternal

1. **John 1:1 (NASB)** ¹ **In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The verb “was” (Gk. imperfect *hen*) suggests His continuous existence in time past.¹³

2. **John 8:58 (NASB)** ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **before Abraham was born, I am.**"
3. **John 17:5 (NASB)** ⁵ "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, **with the glory which I had with You before the world was.**
4. **Hebrews 13:8 (NASB)** ⁸ Jesus Christ *is* the same **yesterday** and today and **forever.**

B. He is Omnipresent

1. Jesus promised His disciples in **Matthew 28:20 (NASB)** ²⁰ and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age."
2. Christ's indwelling of every believer demands that He is omnipresent

¹³Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989). 225.

John 14:23 (NASB) ²³ Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, **and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.**

C. He is Omniscient

1. Jesus knew what was in the heart of man and therefore did not entrust Himself to man according to **John 2:25 (NASB)** ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.
2. In John 4:18 He told the Samaritan woman her past history even though He had not met her previously

John 4:18 (NASB) ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."

3. Jesus' disciples recognized His omniscience according to their response in **John 16:30 (NASB)** ³⁰ "Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."
4. Jesus' numerous references to His death demonstrated His omniscience

Matthew 16:21 (NASB) ²¹ From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

D. He is Omnipotent

1. Jesus had all authority of heaven and earth

In the Great Commission He said to His disciples in **Matthew 28:18 (NASB)** ¹⁸ And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**

2. He had the power to forgive sins—something only God can do

Mark 2:10-11 (NASB) ¹⁰ "But so that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**"—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

E. He is Immutable

Christ does not change; He is forever the same.
Hebrews 13:8 (NASB) ⁸ Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever.

CONCLUSION

1. With what we have considered this morning, it is conclusive, Jesus is God as the Scriptures teach.
2. As Jesus said to His disciples, I say to you, “Who do you say that Jesus is?”
3. As I read to you earlier what C.S. Lewis wrote, “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.”
4. I want to invite you to bow your heads in prayer and consider this great subject this morning.
5. As we celebrate Christmas, let us remember that the baby in the manger is God—the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. And let us bow down to Him in worship.
7. If you would like to get on your knees this morning, I would like to invite you to come now as we pray.
8. If you have never repented and believed in Jesus as Lord, I want to urge you to do so now as we pray.