

The Humanity of Christ

By Tom Hill

Bible Text: Philippians 2:5-8

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A critical problem exists today, namely erroneous beliefs about the humanity of Jesus Christ. We can easily identify it in the world of the godless, which describes Him as mere man, a great man, maybe, but mere man.

Sadly, the errors concerning Christ's nature have invaded the professing Church as well. For instance, some assert that Christ had a composite divine soul, human soul, and human body. Others state that He had distinct natures, divine and human, but without unity of person. The shortage of space limits the listing of many other fallacies.

The infusion of such fallacies into the life of the Church tramples upon the person and work of Jesus Christ and leads to severe consequences. The Church and believers suffer collectively and individually from a lack of spiritual power.

An offended God has withdrawn His glorious presence. A grieved and quenched Holy Spirit has departed. No wonder the Church of Jesus Christ faces the urgent need for spiritual revival today.

The Church's unbelief has put it at a crossroads. It can continue in its present downward spiral. Or it can correct its course and return to believe the truth.

This correction will come only from an examination of the Scriptures for the truth concerning God's Son, and turning from unbelief to believe the truth. In particular, Philippians 2.5-8 clearly presents certain truth concerning the humanity of Jesus Christ.

Evidence of human nature

In a literal translation, the text would state that Jesus took upon Himself the thing itself: the form of mankind. He did not merely look like a man, He became a man in human flesh. In numerous ways, Scripture confirms this vital truth.

First, Jesus had human descent. The Bible states specifically that He was of the seed of David according to the flesh (Romans 1.3). In other places, it describes Him as the seed of woman (Genesis 3.15; Galatians 4.4), seed of Abraham (Acts 3.25), son of David (Luke 1.32), and made flesh (John 1.14; Romans 9.5). Without question, Jesus had human lineage.

In addition, Jesus matured in the same fashion as humans develop. He grew as a person physically, intellectually, and socially, as well as growing in knowledge and favor with God (Luke 2.40, 46, 52). A phantom does not grow in this fashion. Jesus showed the signs of human development.

Third, Jesus Christ looked like a human being. In fact, many who had seen angels or spirit beings failed to describe Him in that fashion. Instead, they called Him a man, like other men. For example, one lengthy conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well confirms His identity as a man (John 4.4-30).

She spoke of Him as a man, recognized Him as a man with human abilities and limitations, and in no way hinted or spoke of Him as anything but a man. She even referred to Him as a man when relating her encounter to others in Samaria.

I know of no reference in the New Testament that refers to Christ as a spirit being. Everyone identified Him as a man.

In addition to His human body and life, Jesus possessed a human nature. He had a body and a spirit. Numerous Biblical texts point out His human body: He became flesh like unto His brothers (Matthew 26.12; John 1.14; Hebrews 2.11-17; Romans 5.12, 18; 8.3; 1 Peter 3.18).

Moreover, the Messiah revealed His human spirit and the feelings of His humanity. He groaned in sorrow, grew troubled, wept, and loved (Matthew 26.38; Luke 23.46; John 11.33-35; 13.23).

Further, Jesus experienced the infirmities of human flesh. His body went through normal human functions, e. g., eating, sleeping, hungering, and being weary (Matthew 4.2; John 4.6). He experienced the full extent of human limitations, yet was without sin (Hebrews 4.15).

Last, but not least, Jesus Christ bore human names. He was called man (1 Timothy 2.5). In more than 80 times, the Gospels record His title as the Son of Man.

In every respect, except sin, Jesus Christ revealed His human nature. He took upon Himself human flesh and became man.

Implications of Christ's humanity

These truths provide a clearer view and understanding of Jesus Christ. He provides for sinners a full salvation. His humanity reveals His transcendent wonder and glory. It evidences the extent of His love, grace, and mercy.

In contrast, Christ's humanity exposes the weakness of human nature. It is impotent and helpless to produce any aspect of Godliness. Jesus' humanity confirms the desperate ne-

cessity for sinners to trust Him for the full salvation that only He can provide.

Application in life

The awareness and understanding of these truths will comfort you, if you believe and trust them. They will encourage you, renew your faith, ground you in the truth, and eliminate doubt. The freedom of the truth will bring joy and peace.

Their very presence in God's word commands their application in life. They refute all false doctrines concerning the humanity of Christ. They require rejection of all human effort for salvation from sin and reconciliation with God. These truths call you and me to trust Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

They call for worship, honor, glory, praise, thanksgiving, and fear for the One Who took upon Himself human nature that He might become our complete Savior.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will open your mind to understand and bring you to believe these magnificent truths. May He glorify Christ in you by conforming your life to them.