

Systematic Theology session 26
Doctrine of Christ, Part 3

- The divine person of Christ with two natures.
 - The Westminster Larger Catechism question: “Who is the mediator of the covenant of grace?” Answer: “The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fulness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.”
 - Christ has divine nature, fully God, second person of the Trinity.
 - Christ has human nature, fully human, but without sin.
 - The two natures of Christ are not combined into a hybrid nature, as though He were a demigod.
- The divine nature of Christ.
 - The divine nature of Christ shown by Scripture’s *theos* passages, *theos* being Greek for God.
 - There were Old Testament divine appearances, known as theophanies. But those appearances did not reveal God in all His glory.
 - Even when Moses asked to see the glory of God, he saw only an afterglow of God’s glory, and that was with great precautions.
 - Jesus, in His divine nature, revealed God’s character in His own person (John 1:18, John 14:8-9).
 - The *theos* passages we covered this evening: John 1:1, John 1:18, John 20:28, 2 Peter 1:1, Hebrews 1:8.
 - The “culminating point of our Lord’s self-disclosure in the Synoptic gospels” (quote from theologian Geerhardus Vos) in Matthew 11:27.
 - “No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”
 - The parallel structure of the passage leading us to the conclusion that just as the Father’s knowledge of the Son is comprehensive, the Son’s knowledge of the Father is also comprehensive.
- Christological errors concerning the deity of Christ.
 - Arianism: Originally taught by Arius, a 4th century Alexandrian priest.
 - Taught that Christ was only the first and highest ranking creation of God.
 - Refuted by the Nicene Creed.
 - This heresy is still taught today by the Jehovah’s Witnesses.
 - Adoptionism: Taught that Jesus was an ordinary man, but God elevated him to deity by “adopting” him, either at his baptism, or at his resurrection.
 - Taught by Paul of Samosata, condemned by a council in Antioch in 268.
 - Theories of kenosis.
 - The word kenosis comes from the Greek for “to make empty.”
 - These theories hold that Christ, at His incarnation, emptied Himself of some or all of His divine attributes, or set aside His deity.
 - The theories come mainly from interpretations of Philippians 2:5-8.
 - But, what Christ actually did in the incarnation was to “make Himself of no reputation.” He was incarnated, and took the form of a servant, and veiled the glory appropriate to Himself as deity.