

MTC LITE Spring 2021 – Session 2 – THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Part 3: “Being found in appearance as man”

Previously:

Christ Jesus...

...being in very nature God

...took on the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness

ONE person in TWO natures

This week:

How does that help us speak clearly about Jesus?

How does that help us understand his experience as the God-man?

Language about Jesus

Why does language about Christ matter?

- We don't want to contradict Scripture
- We do want to appreciate the fullness of the incarnation

Anything that can be said about Jesus by virtue of either of his natures, is said about his person

This is what Scripture does!

- Jesus, the eternal Son of God, hungered, thirsted, died
(only possible because of his human nature)
- Jesus, the eternal Son of God, upheld the universe
(only possible because of his divine nature)

“Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies!”

This is an exercise in **clarifying the mystery** (not removing it!)

Did God die on the cross?

Yes. Everything Jesus does is an act of the one divine person, God the Son.

Though this is really shorthand for:

God (the Son) **died on the cross** (by virtue of having a human nature)

(See Acts 20:28!)

Similarly, Mary is the Mother of God

The Experience of Jesus

Jesus' Knowledge

- In his human consciousness, Jesus truly didn't know some things
- This is explicit in e.g. Mark 13:32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."
- This isn't a "special exception to omniscience" – that would be secret kenoticism!
- Rather, it's one of many things he did not know in his human consciousness

Not that Jesus *gave up* his divine attributes, but that *he chose not to exercise them* through his human nature

That is the emptying, the humbling of the incarnation

He knows all things in his divine nature, including the date of his return, but he chooses to restrict his own access to that knowledge in his human mind

Jesus' Faith

- Jesus is our example of faith (Hebrews 12:2)
- Liberal theology: this can't be so if he is truly God, as his divinity would remove the possibility of real struggle and faith
- But this is actually the "mashup" or "human/divine mixture" (wrong!) view of Christ!

Faith is knowing God through his word, accepting his will as good, trusting his promises, and enduring patiently through trials

Jesus trusted God for a future he did not see

Jesus continued to do God's will through genuine suffering and trials, not using his divine power to avoid them (Gethsemane)

Jesus' Temptations and Sinlessness

- Hebrews 4:15 : one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet *without sin*
- Never tempted from within, by his own sin or sinful desires

Impeccability

- Jesus had the capacity to sin, but it could not have been that he sinned
- He had to walk the path of perfect obedience, but the route was only through real fighting the hard battles of real temptation
- In fact, this means his temptations were even worse than ours

A final word on the glory of Christ!

Jonathan Edwards:

"The creation of the world seems to have been especially for this end, that the eternal Son of God might obtain a spouse, towards whom he might fully exercise the infinite benevolence of his nature, and to whom he might, as it were, open and pour forth all that immense fountain of condescension, love and grace that was in his heart, and that in this way God might be glorified."

Suggestions for reflection

- Get one book (even a small one!)
- Each day for one week, listen to one song that rejoices in Christ
- Each day for one week, have one element of prayer mediating on the beauty of his person

Reading Material

(available via: <https://www.10ofthose.com/uk/affiliates/swgp>)

Small

A Pocket Guide to Jesus Christ – Mark Jones

Christ Our Life – Mike Reeves

Medium

Knowing Christ – Mark Jones

The Person of Christ – Stephen Wellum

Large

The Person of Christ – Donald MacLeod

God the Son Incarnate – Stephen Wellum

Singing Material!

[Totally God, Totally Man](#) (Sov Grace Kids)

[The Glorious Christ](#) (Sov Grace Music)

[Christ our Hope in Life and Death](#) (Gettys)

Audio:

<https://www.uniontheology.org/resources/doctrine/jesus/how-do-i-pursue-joy-in-christ>

Videos:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/the-doctrine-of-christ/#christology>

Articles:

[The Emotional Life of our Lord](#)

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-incarnation-and-two-natures-of-christ/>

<https://www.uniontheology.org/resources/doctrine/jesus/the-excellency-of-christ>