

CHRISTOLOGY

I. Biblical references to "Christology"

- A. There are no Biblical usages of the word "Christology" 1.
"Christology" is derived from two Greek words
- a. *Christos* meaning "Christ"
 - b. *logos* meaning "word, reason, study of"
2. "Christology" is the study of the Person of Jesus Christ
- a. distinct from "soteriology," which is the study of the work of Jesus Christ in redemption and salvation.
 - b. Christology addresses the issue of Jesus being both God and man, and becoming such in the incarnation
- (1) Scripture has abundant references both to the deity and humanity of Jesus
- (2) "Christology" attempts to correlate and explain how Jesus could be both God and man in the same person.
- B. Some references to Jesus' Deity
- 1. Pre-existence - Jn. 1:1,2; 17:5; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:17; Rev. 1:8
 - 2. Creator - Jn. 1:3,10; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16
 - 3. Sustainer - Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3
 - 4. Source of life - Jn. 5:26; 11:25; 14:6; 17:3; Rom. 6:23; I Jn. 5:12
 - 5. Revealer of God - Matt. 11:27; Jn. 1:18; 14:7; II Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3
 - 6. Son of God - Mk. 1:1; 9:7; Lk. 1:35; Jn. 1:34; 10:36; Rom. 1:4
 - 7. Identified as God - Jn. 5:18; 10:30; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:19; 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8; I Jn. 5:20
 - 8. I AM - Mk. 14:62; Lk. 22:70; Jn. 8:24,58; 11:25; 14:6; 18:5
 - 9. Trinity - Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 3:14-17
 - 10. Holy One - Mk. 1:24; John 6:69; Acts 2:27; 3:14
 - 11. Object of faith - Mk. 8:34-38; Jn. 6:29,40; I Jn. 5:13
 - 12. Forgives sin - Matt. 9:6; Mk. 2:7,10; Lk. 5:21,23; Acts 5:31
 - 13. Savior - Matt. 1:21; Lk. 2:30; Jn. 1:29; 4:42; Acts 4:12; 5:31; Heb. 5:9; II Pt. 1:1,11
 - 14. Lord - Lk. 2:11; John 20:28; Rom. 10:9,12; 14:9; I Cor. 12:3; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:5; Rev. 17:14
 - 15. Pre-eminent - Eph. 1:20-22; Col. 1:18; 2:10
 - 16. Judge - Matt. 7:21-23; 25:31-46; Jn. 5:22-30; II Cor. 5:10; II Tim. 4:1,8
 - 17. Worshipped - Acts 7:55,59; Phil. 2:8,9; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 3:21

C. Some references to Jesus' humanity

1. Genealogy - Matt. 1:1-17; Lk. 3:23-38
2. Birth as infant - Matt. 2:1; Lk. 2:7; Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4
3. Human flesh - Lk. 24:39; Jn. 1:14; Rom. 8:2; Heb. 2:14; I Jn. 4:2
4. Tangible - Col. 2:9; I Jn. 1:1-3
5. Development and growth - Lk. 2:40,46,51
6. Human senses - Matt. 4:2; Jn. 4:6; 11:34; 19:28
7. Emotion - Matt. 9:36; 26:37-40; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 10:21; Jn. 11:35; 12:27
8. Temptation - Matt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-3; 22:44; Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 5:7
9. Prayer - Matt. 14:23; Mk. 1:35; Lk. 5:16; 22:39,41
10. Derivative activity - Jn. 8:28; 14:10; Acts 2:22
11. Death - Jn. 19:30; Phil. 2:8
12. Son of Man - Mk. 8:31; 9:12; 10:33
13. Man - Acts 2:22; Rom. 5:15; I Cor. 15:21; Phil. 2:7,8; I Tim. 2:5

D. Particular references to God becoming man in the incarnation of Jesus

John 1:1,14 - "the Word was God...the Word became flesh..."

Rom. 1:3 - "His Son, who was born a descendant of David according to the flesh"

Rom. 8:3 - "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh... condemned sin in the flesh"

Rom. 9:5 - "the Christ according to the flesh"

Gal. 4:4 - "in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman"

Phil. 2:5-8 - "Christ Jesus...existed in the form of God..., but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, being made in the likeness of men...found in appearance as a man..."

I Tim. 3:16 - "He who was revealed in the flesh"

Heb. 2:14 - "He Himself likewise partook of the same (flesh and blood), that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death...the devil"

I Jn. 1:1,2 - "the Word of Life...was manifested"

II. A brief history of Christian discussion concerning the Christological incarnation

A. Greek Gnosticism suggested Jesus only "appeared" to be human - Docetism

B. Ebionites (Jewish Christians) asserted Jesus was fully human, and Holy Spirit descended upon Him at baptism - Adoptionism.

C. Arius (c. 250-336) argued that Jesus was subordinate to God the Father. "There was a time when the Son was not" - Subordinationism; denial of pre-existence.

D. Council of Nicea (325) affirmed that Jesus was fully God and fully man in *homoousion*.

E. Apollinarius (c. 310-380) posited that human rational soul of Jesus was replaced by divine *logos* in single nature - Monophysitism

F. Gregory of Nazianzus (330-389) stated, "the unassumed is the unhealed"

G. Nestorius (c. 380-451) suggested that there were two separate beings in Jesus Christ; no real union

H. Eutyches (c. 378-454) indicated that the human nature was absorbed into the divine in a synthesis - Absorption

I. *Tome* of Pope Leo (449), Council of Chalcedon (451) established orthodoxy as "two natures"

Chart of Historical Christological Heresies

Heresy	Date	Natures	Proponents	Heresy	Refuted by	Reply
Docetism	End C1	H- D+	Basilides, Valentinus, Patripassians, Sabellians	Jesus=God, therefore can't be human.	Irenaeus , Hippolytus , 1 John 4:1-3	If Christ were not fully human He could not redeem humanity (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 4:1-3)
Ebionitism	C2	H+ D-	Judaizers	The visible Jesus was only a hologram Jesus=human, therefore can't be God.	Irenaeus , Hippolytus , Origen , Eusebius	Jesus is fully divine; he is worthy of worship (John 1:1, 20:28; Heb. 13:8)
Gnosticism	C2	H- D-	Marcion	Christ got the Spirit at his baptism; he was not preexistent. Not God, Not human: in between	Irenaeus , Tertullian , Hippolytus , Justin Martyr , Apostles' Creed	1 John 4:2
Adoptionism	C3	H+ D-	Theodotus	Jesus is by nature human	Antioch 268	Jesus always God
Modalistic	C3	H- D+	Sabellius , Noetus of Smyrna	- A man adopted by God as a son God the Father incarnate in Jesus	Origen , Tertullian	Jesus separate from God but still God
Monarchicism	C3	H+ D-	Theodotus	The human Jesus was indwelt by varying degrees of divinity.	Antioch 268	See Adoptionism
Arianism	C4	H+ D-	Arius , presbyter of Alexandria, Origen	Homoioussios : Jesus has appearance of God, is of <i>similar</i> substance. He is the first and highest created being.	Athanasius , Ossius , Marcellus , Nicaea 325	Athanasius : Jesus homoioussios –one substance with God; Only a divine Christ can save (Phil. 2:6, Rev. 1:8)
Apollinarianism	C4	H- D+	Apollinarius , bishop of Laodicea, Justin Martyr	Human body, Divine mind/soul; the divine Logos took the place of the human mind. Opposed use of theotokos . Only human nature died.	Vitallis , Damascus , Basil , Theodosius , Gregory of Nazianzus , Gregory of Nyssa , Constantinople 381	Human mind & divine mind in human body
Nestorianism	C5	H+ D+	Nestorius , bishop of Constantinople	1 moral being	Cyril of Alexandria , Ephesus 431	2 natures in 1 person
(as accused by opponents)				2 people		Indivisible
Eutychianism	C5	H- D-	Eutychians, Theodosius II	schizophrenic 1 mixed nature after incarnation	Flavian of Constantinople; Pope Leo; Theodoret; Eusebius of Dorylaeum; Chalcedon 451	2 natures: communication between them
Monophysitism	Until C7	H- D+		New Hybrid: neither human or divine The human nature was swallowed by the divine nature to create a new third nature - a <i>tertium quid</i> .	Constantinople 680	2 Natures are separate

(1)=Human nature, D=Divine nature)

