

Christology – The Study of Christ

Jesus Christ is the second person in the God-head who is chosen, ordained, and sent to save the lost.

A. The Pre-incarnate Christ

1. What is the meaning of “The Pre-incarnation of Christ?”
 - a. It simply means that Christ existed before His Birth (His incarnation).
 - Christ was not created. Christ is the Creator.
 - b. If Christ only existed at the time of His birth, then Christ could not be part of the God-Head, because God is Eternal.
2. The Scriptures make it very clear regarding the pre-existence of Christ.

- a. Christ has a Heavenly Origin.

- Notice what Jesus said.

John 3:13 “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”

John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

John 6:62 “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?”

- Notice what John the Baptist said.

John 3:30-31 “He must increase, but I must decrease. (31) He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”

- Notice what Paul said.

1 Corinthians 15:47 “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.”

- b. Christ was with the Father before the world was ever created.
 - Christ existed even before the foundations of the world, let alone His birth.
 - Christ co-existed with God the Father.

John 1:1-2 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Vs 2 The same was in the beginning with God.”

John 17:5 “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

1 John 1:2 “(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)”

c. Christ was before Abraham.

John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

- Remember, “I AM” means the “Self-Existing One”

John 8:23-24 “And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. (24) I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”

Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

d. Christ created the world.

- If Christ created the world, this means He existed before Creation.

John 1:3 “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

Colossians 1:16 “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,”

Revelations 4:11 “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

e. Christ is eternal.

Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

- Jesus did not begin at Bethlehem; His goings forth is from eternity past.

Revelations 22:13 “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

- This means from the very beginning, Jesus was always there, and listen, He will always be!
- There was never a time when Jesus did not exist.

3. Christophany – The Pre-Incarnate Appearances of Christ.

- a. The Lord Jesus Christ appears/shows/manifests Himself in the O/T
- b. As an Angel of the Lord (Christ) appears to Abraham.

Genesis 22:11 “And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.”

- Contrast this with the N/T account. The Lord appearing to Saul/Paul:

Acts 9:3-5 “And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: (4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (5) And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

- c. The Captain of the LORD’s Host (Christ) appears to Joshua.

Joshua 5:13-15 “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? (14) And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? (15) And the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.”

- In this passage we see clear evidence that Joshua was in the presence of God, and knew it.
- Angels never accepted worship, but here the Angel of the Lord commands worship, which proves He is the divine nature of the Pre-Incarnate Christ.
- By the way, Joshua is learning firsthand what Moses learnt at the beginning of his ministry, which was practicing the presence of a HOLY GOD. The Great “I AM”.

- d. The Son of God appears in the midst of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Daniel 3:23-25 “And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. (24) Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. (25) He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

- **Note:** The footnotes or margins of the NKJV state that this could be rendered as “a son of the gods”. However, we believe that it was indeed the Son of God, no matter how the king viewed Him. However, the King did acknowledge the fourth person to be the Angel of the Lord – The God of Israel in verse 28.

Daniel 3:28 “Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.”

B. The Incarnation of Christ

1. The Incarnation of Christ means that Jesus Christ manifested in the flesh.

1 Timothy 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh** justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

Manifest = God appeared in the Flesh.

- It has been suggested that 1 Timothy 3:16 is in Chronological order. For instance:

“Manifested in the flesh refers to the incarnation;

Justified in the Spirit refers to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection;

Seen by angels describes His ascension into heaven;

Preached among the Gentiles and **believed on in the world** are the events that followed His ascension; and, finally,

received up in glory refers to a coming day when all His redeemed are gathered, raised from the dead, and received up with Him to glory.

Then, and only then, will **The mystery of godliness** be complete, according to this view.”

- It could be where this early Christian hymn was born. “One Day”

Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;

Buried, He carried my sins far away;

Rising, He justified freely forever:

One day He's coming—oh, glorious day!

—Charles H. Marsh

Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

John 1:14 “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*”

- Christ did not possess a physical body until His incarnation.
- Christ was born of virgin. (A miracle birth)
- Christ being born of a virgin is an essential part of the Christian dogma.

R Sargent: “*For the Creator of the Universe to appear in human flesh required a birth like no other birth.*”

2. Key Scriptures that teach the Virgin Birth of Christ:

a. PLANNED from the beginning.

Genesis 3:15 “*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*”

- This is the first mention of Christ, and He is referred to as the “seed of the woman”. Christ does not have a human Father.

b. PAUL confirms this to the Galatians.

Galatians 4:4 “*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law...*”

- The fact that God the Father sent Jesus into the world teaches His pre-existence as the eternal second part of the God-head.

c. PROPHET prophesied the virgin birth.

Isaiah 7:14 “*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*”

d. PROPHECY confirmed by the Angel.

1) Confirmed with Joseph.

Matthew 1:23 “*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*”

Matthew 1:20 “*...fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.*”

Matthew 1:18 “... before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”

2) Confirmed it with Mary

Luke 1:34-35 “Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man (35) And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

3. The importance of Christ coming in the flesh.

- Jesus had to be fully God for His sacrifice to atone for sin. But He also had to be fully man so that He could take upon Himself the penalty of sin. (Substitutionary Atonement)

1 John 1:1-2 “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (2) (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)”

- At the time John the Apostle wrote his letter, there was a group that were called “The Gnostics”.
- The Gnostics taught that physical-flesh was evil, and because Jesus came in the flesh, He could not be God. (Muslims and JW believe this)
- The Gnostics made a distinction between Jesus and the Christ. They said that “The Christ” was a divine appearance which came upon Jesus at His baptism and left before He died.
- According to Gnostics, Jesus did die, but the Christ did not die.
- In reality, they denied the Incarnation – that Jesus is the Christ and that Jesus Christ is both God and Man.
- So John makes it clear that these people were not true Christians, and he cautioned his readers against them by showing that Gnostics did not have the marks of a true child of God.
- **That’s why he writes:**

1 John 4:1-3 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (2) Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (3) And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

- **Note:** We have many cults today that undermine the deity of Christ.

2 John 1:7 *“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”*

Note: Jesus Christ is come in the flesh = this conveys the truth of the deity and humanity of Christ.

2 John 1:8-11 *“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. (9) Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. (10) If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: (11) For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”*

4. Four reasons Jesus manifested in the flesh.

<p>1) To <u>DELIVER</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To take away our sins. <p><i>1 John 3:5</i> “And ye know that he was <u>manifested to take away our sins</u>; and in him is no sin.”</p> <p><i>1 Peter 1:18-20</i> “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; (19) But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: (20) Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, <u>but was manifest in these last times for you.</u>”</p> <p><i>Galatians 1:3-4</i> “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, vs 4 <u>Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world</u>, according to the will of God and our Father:”</p>	<p><i>Matthew 1:21</i> “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall <u>save his people from their sins.</u>”</p> <p><i>Galatians 4:4-5</i> “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, vs 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”</p> <p><i>Luke 19:10</i> “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”</p> <p><i>1 Timothy 1:15</i> “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”</p>
<p>2) To <u>DESTROY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To destroy the works of the devil. <p><i>1 John 3:8</i> “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. <u>For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.</u>”</p> <p><i>Hebrews 2:14-15</i> “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; vs 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Book of Genesis (The Book of the Beginnings) is the first mention of the coming of the Messiah... The purpose and plan for His Coming. <p><i>Genesis 3:13-15</i> “And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Vs 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: vs 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”</p>

<p>Romans 16:20 “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”</p>	<p>Mark 1:24 “Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? <u>art thou come to destroy us?</u> I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.”</p>
<p>3) To <u>ABOLISH DEATH</u></p> <p>2 Timothy 1:10 “But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, <u>who hath abolished death</u>, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”</p> <p>John 11:25-26 Jesus said “...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: vs 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me <u>shall never die</u>. Believest thou this?”</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 15:55-57 “<u>O death, where is thy sting?</u> O grave, where is thy victory? Vs 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. Vs 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”</p> <p>Romans 6:8-9 “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: (9) Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; <u>death hath no more dominion over him.</u>”</p> <p>DL Moody once said regarding his Death: “Some day you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody of East Northfield, is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now; I shall have gone up higher, that is all, out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal—a body that death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint; a body fashioned like unto His glorious body. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1856. That which is born of the flesh may die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever.”</p>
<p>4) To Give <u>ABUNDANT LIFE</u></p> <p>1 John 4:9 “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, <u>that we might live through him</u> vs 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”</p>	<p>John 10:10-11 “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: <u>I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.</u> Vs 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”</p> <p>What is the more abundant life?</p> <p>The abundant life is more than just living or existing. 2 Corinthians 8:9</p>

