

# Lecture Four--christology: Jesus Christ

by Greg Herrick

*This sermon explores the doctrine of Christology, examining the preexistence, humanity, deity, and incarnation of Jesus Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:30, John 1:1, Acts 2:33, 1 Corinthians 15:20, Philippians 2:6, Hebrews 1:8

**Topics:** "Christology", "Divine Nature"

## Description

Greg Herrick delves into the comprehensive study of Christ, known as 'christology,' covering various aspects such as the preexistence, prophecies, humanity, deity, incarnation, and states of Christ. The sermon explores the biblical foundations supporting the belief in Christ's preexistence, fulfillment of prophecies, true humanity, and divine nature, emphasizing the essential doctrines found in Scripture rather than later church councils. Additionally, it discusses the significance of Christ's death, resurrection, ascension, and return, highlighting the foundational role these events play in Christian faith and theology.

## Transcript

The term "christology" (from Greek *christos* meaning "anointed one" or "Christ") refers to the study of Christ. It often includes such topics as the preexistence and eternity of Christ, OT prophecies about Christ, Christ's humanity, deity, and incarnation, as well as the issue of his temptations and sinlessness, his death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation, return, three-fold office, and states.

IA. The Preexistence of Christ 1B. Definition and Importance 2B. Biblical Support 1C. John 1:1 2C. John 1:14 3C. John 17:5 4C. John 5:43; 6:38 5C. 1 Corinthians 15:45 6C. Colossians 1:17 7C. Philippians 2:6  
IIA. Prophecies About Christ 1B. His Birth--Gen 3;15; Gal 4:4 2B. His Lineage--Gen 49:10; Luke 3:33 3B. His Place of Birth--Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7 4B. His Galilean Ministry--Isa 9:1-2; Matt 4:14-16 5B. His Prophetic Ministry--Deut 18:15, 18-19; Acts 3:20, 22 6B. His Priestly Ministry--Psalm 110:4; Heb 5:5-6 7B.

His Betrayal--Psalm 41:9; Luke 22:47-48 8B. His Being Sold for Thirty Pieces of Silver--Zech 11:11-12; Matt 26:15; 27:1-10 9B. His Violent Death--Zech 12:10; John 20:27 10B. His Resurrection--Psalm 16:10; Luke 24:7; Acts 2:25-28 11B. His Exaltation to God's Right Hand--Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:33-34 12B. His Eternal Reign in Fulfillment of Davidic Promise--2 Sam 7:12-16; Psalm 110:1; Isa 55:3; Acts 2:33-34; 13:22-23, 32-34 IIIA. The Humanity of Christ 1B. Presupposition and Definition 2B.

Biblical Evidence for Jesus' True and Full Humanity 1C. Human Names--Jesus and Son of David 2C. Experienced as Human--John 9:16 3C. He Had a Human Body--1 John 1:1 4C. He Spoke Human

Languages (Hebrew/Aramaic/Greek) 5C. He Referred to Himself as a Man--John 8:40 6C. Those Who Knew Him Best Referred to Him as a Man--Acts 3:22 7C. He Experienced Stages in Life as Does Any Human Being--Luke 2:52 8C. He Experienced Normal Human Limitations/Needs/Emotions, etc. 1D. He Was Hungry--Matt 4:2 2D.

Thirsty--John 19:28 3D. Got Tired--John 4:6 4D. He Experienced Intense Sorrow and Distress--John 11:35; Luke 13:34-35 5D. He Expressed Ignorance on One Occasion--Mark 13:32 6D. He Had a Human Soul--Matt 23:46 7D. He Experienced Death--Hebrews 2:14-15 IVA. The Deity of Christ 1B. Presuppositions and Definition 2B. Key Ideas and Biblical Texts 1C. He Is Said To Be Divine 1D. John 1:1 (Heb 1:8) 2D. Philippians 2:6 3D. Titus 2:11-12 2C. Divine Titles/Names Are Ascribed to Him 1D.

Lord--Matt 2:43-45 2D. Yahweh--Romans 10:9, 13 and Joel 2:32 3D. King of Kings--A Title for God: Rev 19:16 3C. He Does the Works of God 1D. Creating--John 1:3; Col 1:15-20 2D. Sustaining Creation--Hebrews 1:3-4 3D. Saving People--Matt 1:23 4D. Raising the Dead--John 5:25 5D. Judging--John 5:27 6D. Sending the Spirit--John 14:26; 15:26 7D. He Builds His Church--Matt 16:18 8D. He Accepts Worship Due God 1E. From All Men--Matt 14:23 2E. From Angels--Hebrews 1:6 9D. Some Day All Will Bow To Him--Phil 2:10; cf.

Isa 45:23 So we see that the doctrine of the simultaneous deity and humanity of Christ is not the invention of some fourth or fifth century church council (e.g., Nicaea [AD 325] or Chalcedon [AD 451]), but is clearly taught in Scripture. The precise formulation (i.e., a working model) of how this could be so may have had to await a response to the Arian heresy and other Christological developments (and a borrowing of Greek metaphysical language), but the essential features of the doctrine are found in apostolic and early church confessions.

VA. The Incarnation & Kenosis

1B. Definition of the Incarnation

2B. The Purpose of the Incarnation: "And He Shall Reign"

1C. He Reveals God to Men--John 1:18

2C. He Saves Sinners--Galatians 1:4

3C. He Destroys the Work of the Devil--1 John 3:8

4C. He Will Judge All Men--Acts 17:31

5C. Brings All Things in Creation Back to God--1 Cor 15:20-28; Eph 1:10-11

3B. Certain Erroneous Models of the Incarnation

1C. Ebionitism

2C. Arianism

3C. Gnosticism (Docetism)

4C. Nestorianism

- 5C. Eutychianism (Monophysitism)
- 6C. Apollinarianism
- 4B. The Meaning of the Term "Kenosis" in Phil 2:7-14
- 1C. The Genre and Interpretation of Phil 2:7
- 2C. Meaning at the Exegetical Level
- 3C. Two Common Theological Explanations or Models
- 1D. The Clear Statements of Scripture and the Use of a "Model"
- 2D. A "Putting Aside" or "Giving Up" of Certain Divine Attributes
- 3D. The "Two Minds" Theory
- 4C. The Point of Philippians 2:6-11

#### VIA. The Impeccability of Christ

- 1B. Definition
- 2B. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Two Common Views
- 3B. The Result

#### VIIA. Death of Christ

All four gospels record the death of Christ (under Pontius Pilate) which is interpreted in advance by Christ himself as a death for the forgiveness of sins, the establishment of the new covenant, and the defeat of Satan (Luke 22:15-20; John 12:31; 16:11). The heart of Christ's teaching on this matter became the authoritative teaching of the apostles (in keeping with OT assertions to the same). We will talk more about the proper interpretation of the death of Christ when we discuss the doctrine of salvation. It is enough for now to realize that the evidence for his death by crucifixion is overwhelming.

#### VIIIA. The Resurrection of Christ

- 1B. Definition
- 2B. The Testimony of All Four Gospels--Matt 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20
- 3B. His Post-Mortem Appearances
  - 1C. Mary Magdalene--John 20:11-18
  - 2C. To Another Mary--Matt 28:1-2
  - 3C. To Cephas--1 Cor 15:5
  - 4C. To the Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus--Luke 24:13-35

5C. To James--1 Cor 15:7

6C. To Ten Disciples--Luke 24:36

7C. To Thomas and the Other Ten Disciples--John 20:26-29

8C. To Seven Disciples at the Sea of Tiberias--John 21:1-14

9C. To More Than 500 People--1 Cor 15:6

10C. To the Disciples Over a Period of Forty Days--Acts 1:3

11C. To the Eleven Disciples at His Ascension--Matt 28:16-20; Acts 1:11

12C. Finally, To Paul--1 Cor 15:8

4B. The Tradition of 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

1C. Exegesis of the Passage

2C. The Origin of the Tradition

5B. Theories To Account for Belief in the Resurrection

1C. The Criteria of Authenticity: History vs. Theology<sup>15</sup>

2C. Political Theory

3C. Swoon Theory

4C. The Myth Theory

5C. Subjective Vision Theory

6C. Objective Vision Theory

7C. Bodily Resurrection Theory

1D. The Teaching of Scripture

2D. The Best Explanation

6B. Apostolic Interpretation and the Resurrection

1C. It Was A Bodily Resurrection

2C. It Demonstrates that Jesus Is the Son of God--Romans 1:3-4

3C. It Forms the Basis for Universal Judgment--Acts 17:31

4C. It Is the Foundation of Our Regeneration and Spiritual Life--Rom 6:4-5; 1 Peter 1:2

5C. It Is the Foundation of Our Justification--Romans 4:25

6C. It Is the Foundation of Our Present Ministry for the Lord--1 Cor 15:58

7C. It Is the Foundation of Our Future Hope--1 Corinthians 15:12-28

IXA. The Ascension & Exaltation of Christ

1B. The Fact of the Ascension--Luke 24:50-52 and Acts 1:11

2B. The Theological Meaning of the Ascension

1C. He Is Exalted as Leader of the Universe--Ephesians 1:0-22a

2C. He Is Head over All Things to the Church--Eph 1:22b-23; 1 Pet 3:22

3C. As Exalted Lord He Has Sent the Holy Spirit--Acts 2:33

4C. He Receives Honor, Praise, and Glory--Revelation 5:12

5C. Every Knee Will Someday Bow to Him--Phil 2:9; cf. Isa 45:23

XA. The Return of Christ

The Bible predicts that someday Jesus Christ will return, suddenly, bodily and with great glory for all to see (Matt 24:30; Rev 19:11ff). At that time he will judge Satan and his angels, the living and the dead, and will establish his kingdom in its fullest sense. We will discuss the nature and timing of the rapture as well as the nature of the kingdom under Eschatology.

XIA. The States of Christ

1B. Definition<sup>16</sup>

2B. Four Phases of Humiliation

1C.

2C.

3C.

4C.

3B. Four Phases of Exaltation

1C.

2C.

3C.

4C.

XIIA. The Threefold Office of Christ

1B. Definition

2B. Prophet

1C. The Function of the Prophet in Israel

2C. Deuteronomy 18:18

3C. John 6:14; 7:40

4C. Acts 3:22-24

5C. Absent in the Epistles

3B. Priest

1C. The Function of the Priest in Israel

2C. Romans 8:34

3C. Hebrews 7:25

4B. King

1C. The Function of the King in Israel

2C. Psalm 2:8-9

3C. Ephesians 1:20-23

4C. Revelation 19:16

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14 See S. M. Smith, "Kenosis, Kenotic Theology," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 600-602. These speculative theories of the incarnation have little to do with the exegesis of Philippians 2:7. See also B. E. Foster, "Kenoticism," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, and J. I. Packer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 364.

15 No clearer affirmation of this situation can be found than that which comes from the pen of Norman Perrin, *The Resurrection according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 78, who says that, "none of the gospel writers is concerned to give us what we call historical information; they are evangelists, not historians."

16 See Wayne A. Grudem, "States of Jesus Christ," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 1052-54; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 2nd rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1941), 331-355.

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