

# The Deity of Christ

Finding Soul Rest in the Strangest Place—part 2

Matthew 1:18-23

December 6, 2020

1. When we think of the Christmas we usually think of Luke 2. Angels filled the sky while shepherds watched their flocks by night. We think about Mary, a manger, sheep, a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. But it's easy to forget another angel visitation. This one to Joseph.

## **DAY 1: The deity of Jesus, prophesied**

*Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

*<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit".<sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

*<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:<sup>23</sup> "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"--which means, "God with us."*

2. Our secular world dismisses Jesus as little more than an example to follow or a teacher. Of course, neither of those things is the most central characteristic of Jesus.

3. How does the angel explain the conception of the baby to be born? (v. 18, 20, 22).

4. The baby that would be born to Mary did not have a human father. The Lord would "overshadow" Mary. This is not something we can understand in a biological sense. A better understanding of this is a miracle of life-giving. Why do you think this is important?

5. Every human being following Adam and Eve was born with a sin nature. But because Jesus did not have a human father, he did not have a *sin* nature. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth tells us Jesus is fully divine and fully human but without a sin nature.

*Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

6. "Immanuel" is Hebrew for "God with us". And this is the point of the prophecy in Isaiah, and it is the point of the gospel. God became a human being.

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 2: The deity of Christ, claimed and taught.**

1. Jesus claimed to be God. He backed that claim with miracles, with a sinless life, references to prophesy, and then the unthinkable---predicting his resurrection from the dead *on the third day!*

Jesus was not just a bible teacher telling people how to find God.

He was God himself who came to find us.

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

2. What does John tell us about “the Word?” Look for five characteristics.

3. What do we learn about the deity of Christ in Col. 2:9?

*Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...*

4. What do we learn about the deity of Jesus in 2 Peter 1:1?

*2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:*

5. Jesus claimed to do things that are only the prerogative of God to perform.

a. He claimed to be able to forgive sin! This particular claim was clearly understood by the Pharisees. It made them livid. “He commits blasphemy, making himself equal with God”.

b. He claimed to be the one who would judge sin.

c. He claimed equality with God, quoting God’s use of the name “I am” when God talked to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3.

*John 8:58 Before Abraham was I am.*

6. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

### DAY 3: A demonstration of deity

Mark 2:1 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. <sup>2</sup> So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. <sup>3</sup> Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup> Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**"

<sup>6</sup> Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves,

<sup>7</sup> "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>8</sup> Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?"

<sup>10</sup> But that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....**" He said to the paralytic, <sup>11</sup> "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

<sup>12</sup> He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

1. Its one thing to claim to be God. Anyone can do that. When someone does claim to be God we assume that guy's a nutcase.

2. There is a difference between a *claim* of something and a *corroboration* of a claim.

3. What claim of deity does Jesus make about Himself in Mark 2?

4. Some "teachers of the law" were sitting there. What was their response to Jesus forgiving the man's sin? (vv. 6-7).

5. Jesus corroborated His claim to deity by a clear miracle of healing. But skeptics, instead of pondering events like this one ignore it. Why? Because in their mind, miracles do not happen in a cause-and-effect world. J.I. Packer addressed this issue of skepticism about miracles in his book, Knowing God.

"God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wiggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child....The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets."

7. The point is this. If one can accept the Incarnation, God becoming man, why would it not be surprising that this very person would not do miracles to authenticate Himself and His identity?

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 4: Jesus Christ, the Lord

*Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.*

*John 13:12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup> "You call me 'Teacher' and '**Lord**,' and rightly so, for **that is what I am**. <sup>14</sup> Now that I, **your Lord** and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.*

1. Another claim that Jesus is God is the phrase, "Jesus Christ, the Lord."
2. The claim of the lordship of Christ was made by Jesus, and the rest of the New Testament.
3. In our secular culture, skeptics are willing to admit that Jesus was a great man, a moral man, a great teacher and an example for us to follow, but that's it. He was a man, not God.
4. Unfortunately for skeptics, Jesus did not give us that choice in how we think about Him!
5. Read what C.S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*.  
"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse."
6. Josh McDowell lays out three alternatives regarding Jesus' claim to be Lord. Either He was a lunatic, a liar, or Lord.
  - a. Either the claims of Jesus were true or they were false.
  - b. If they were false, two options remain:
    - (1) He knew they were false, or,
    - (2) He didn't know they were false.
  - c. If He knew they were false and claimed divinity anyway, He is a liar, a hypocrite, and worse, a demon. Finally, because He willingly died for a lie He knew to be false He was a fool.
  - d. Suppose that He did not know His claim to deity was false. Then He was deluded, a lunatic.
  - e. The third alternative is that His claim of divinity was true and He knew it to be true.
7. Now the alternatives become yours! Either you will accept Him as Lord or reject Him as a lunatic or a liar. But what you can't do is take an alternative He never gave you.
8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 5: Living out the Lordship of Christ in our daily lives

1. The deity of Christ is not meant to be merely a theological discussion. The deity of Christ must find its reality in our daily lives. If we are not seeking to obey Jesus, then we can prattle all we want to about the deity of Christ, but we only delude ourselves. We cannot divorce ourselves from obedience to Christ by only hanging on to our theology.

### 3 applications of the Lordship of Christ in our lives:

a. **OBEDIENCE:** verses obeying our temptations.

One application of the Lordship of Christ in our lives is obedience, not just reciting the right theology.

*Luke 6:46 "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*

b. **DOING THE WILL OF GOD** verses doing our own will, what we want to do.

A second application of the Lordship of Christ is doing the will of God, not just relying on our religious deeds.

*Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

*<sup>22</sup> Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'*

c. **BUILDING OUR VERY LIVES ON HIS WORDS** versus building our lives on our desires.

*Matthew 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

*<sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.*

*<sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.*

*<sup>27</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*

2. The deity of Christ must affect how we live

a. in our daily lives: integrity, gratitude, faithfulness, honesty, ethics, morality, etc.

b. in our relationships: as husband and wife, father or mother, son or daughter, employee or employer, neighbor, relative, brother or sister in Christ, etc.

3. What strikes you from today's devotional? What area of obedience needs your immediate attention? Is there someone you should call for help, prayer, or accountability?