

Person of Christ (cont. - towards a Biblical Christology of dual natures)

Antiochian School (Word-Man model, influenced by Aristotelian dualism – immaterial mind inhabited by the material body, but the essence is still material - so strong link between Logos and the world that focused heavily on the literal humanity of Jesus which was inhabited by the divine Logos)

- Genealogies, Birth, early years of growing
- Jesus testifies to His own humanity - Matt 4:4, John 8:40
- Normal limitations - John 4:6, Matt 21:18, Luke 2:52
- Normal emotions - Luke 10:21, Matt 26:37
- Limited knowledge - Mark 5:30, Mark 13:32
- Tempted - Heb 4:15, Matt 4:1-11

Alexandrian School (Word-Flesh model, influenced by Platonic tradition of Forms – where the immaterial mind is imprisoned by the body and strives to leave it – focused on the deity of Jesus, with humanity being allegorical. Divine is infinite so cannot be contained in human limitation)

- John 1:18, 17:5, 20:28
- Rom 9:5, Titus 2:11-13, Heb 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:1
- 1 John 5:20

Historical Heresies

- Arianism - denied the full divinity of Christ (resurgence during Enlightenment deists)
- Docetism - denied the full humanity of Christ
- Adoptionism - Christ became divine at baptism when God dwelt within
- Modalism - Father, Son, HS are three names for same person
- Nestorianism - Logos dwelt within Jesus making him God bearer, rather than God-man. Accused of teaching two person in Christ instead of two natures

Towards a Biblical Christology

- Athanasius - from Alexandria, he articulated the response to Arianism by affirming Christ as "of one substance" with the Father during the first Council of Nicea in 325
- Nicene Creed (early form in 325, re-worded in Constantinople in 381)
 - Note the Christology portion of the creed as it blends the humanity and divinity of Christ

*I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.*

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.*

- Apostles Creed (390)
- Chalcedonian Creed (451)

Summary verse: Heb 1:2-3****

- The humanity of God is the hardest miracle to accept. All others are possible if this is!
- What does this say about humanity at a fundamental level?
- What does this teach us about ourselves, each other, and relation to God?

In class discussion and questions on the dual natures of Christ.

- Which of the two natures is the hardest for you to accept?
- Do you tend to see Christ and His “way” as unreachable in its divinity or the model for humanity? (His prayer life with the Father, holiness, miracles, etc.)

Assignment:

Read Matthew chs.1-2, Luke chs1-2, and John 1. Write a paper on what you think each gospel's main focus is regarding the incarnation/birth of Jesus. Where do you see signs of Jesus' humanity? Divinity? What is each gospel trying to convey regarding the nature and person of Christ?