

Scripture Statements of Christ's Natures

- I. Introduction. While the study upon which we are about to embark could be a lifetime's worth, and has been for many Christian theologians of the past, we will condense it into several lessons. That means that we will, in many cases, be hitting only the wavetops, as it were. But much of what we will encounter is the distillation of those lifetimes of study done by our fathers in the faith of old times. So, we will seek to do justice in some degree to Scripture teaching in that what we will present is accurate, even though it won't be everything that can be said from Scripture about Christ—we haven't discovered all of that yet, let alone exhausted it. And we'll seek to do justice in some degree to the wonderful theological and doctrinal legacy handed down by our Christian forbears in many excellent statements, including the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the doctrinal standards of our denomination. As our recent study in the Attributes of God was intended to help us know God better, so this study is intended to help us know our Savior better, and in so doing, to stay on track with the Bible's gospel and true faith and teaching. Our belief as evangelical and Reformed Christians is that our Lord Jesus Christ is two natures in one Person—that He is fully God and fully man—and that He made an atonement for the sins of His elect people upon the cross by His suffering and death, and arose again from the dead bodily unto eternal life and glory. There are those who want to claim they are Christian, but disagree with those Biblical statements, claiming all the while that they are not Biblical at all. We beg to differ, and we presume to prove our statements from Scripture itself, understanding it to be the Word of God. Let's begin our study today with Scripture statements of Christ's natures.
- II. Old Testament Statements of Jesus Christ's Two Natures. They are anticipatory and prophetic, of course, since the Christ had not yet become incarnate. At the same time, since Christ the Second Person of the Trinity is eternal, He was God, even though not yet incarnate. But He was intended to be incarnate from before the foundation of the world, and what God intends is as good as done.

A. The Humanity of Christ: Christ Is Fully Human.

1. “Son of Man.” This term is used in Dan. 7:13-14 as a title for the One to whom God’s everlasting kingdom was to be given, and yet would be man. This title indicates true humanity, as well as a representative man to reveal God to men, save men, and rule men. Vs. 14 particularly shows Him to be a man who would have sovereignty and rule (cf. Ps. 2; Rev. 5). He is the God/Man who is Mediator, risen and authoritative over the entire creation.
2. “Seed of the woman.” The “protoevangelium” (first preaching of the gospel) shows that the promised Christ who would save His people by defeating the devil and his work was promised to be human, descended from Eve. This is confirmed in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. He is also said to be “Abraham’s Seed,” in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Paul confirms that this is an Old Testament preaching of the gospel, such that Abraham’s Seed, Christ, would bring those blessings by “redeem[ing] us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”” (Gal. 3:13).
3. Other references. There are many, including but not limited to, Isa. 11:1; 49:5; 50:4-6; 52:14; 53:1-12.
 - a. Gen. 49:8-10; Num. 24:17, 19 – Prophecies that Christ would be of the tribe of Judah, proving His humanity.
 - b. Lev. 16-17 – the atonement could only be made by shedding blood, and God could not make such an atonement unless He were also man.
 - c. The types of the Old Testament (those who foreshadowed Christ): Moses, the high priest, the prophets, the kings. All were human, and all foreshadowed important aspects of the Person and work of Christ. There were even a few who functioned in all three offices of prophet, priest, and king: Moses, Samuel, David.
 - d. 2 Sam. 7:16 required that the king who sat on David’s throne had to be a man, and

Christ was the ultimate king who would occupy David's throne eternally over all of God's elect and redeemed (see Ps. 2).

B. The Deity of Christ: Christ Is Fully God.

1. Ps. 2:11-12. Vs. 11 commands kings and judges of the earth to worship Yahweh, who alone is worthy of worship. And yet, vs. 12 commands them to do homage, which is an act of worship, to the Son, who is both wrathful Judge and saving Refuge.
2. Isa. 7:14. The son to be born to a virgin was to be called "Immanuel." That Son, whom we know to be Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, was identified by a title that literally means, in the Hebrew language, "God with us."
3. Isa. 9:6. The son whom God would give to us, who would bear the government of His people upon His shoulders (i.e., take the full weight of responsibility for governing them in and by godliness), would be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." He is identified as God in the terms "Mighty God" and "Eternal Father." There are those in a pseudo-Christian, false religion who try to evade the obvious by saying that it calls Him "Mighty God," but not "Almighty God." But that is a flimsy evasion indeed, in view of the parallel term, "Eternal Father," and the fact that the term "Mighty God" does refer to the omnipotence that only the one living and true God can have.
4. Jer. 23:5-6. The Branch of David, a title clearly applied to Christ the Son of God as descended from David, is plainly also called "Yahweh our Righteousness." This says Christ is Yahweh.

III. New Testament Statements of Jesus Christ's Two Natures.

A. The Humanity of Jesus Christ: Christ Is Fully Man.

1. The Witness of the Gospels.
 - a. John 8:40 (Jesus identifies Himself as "a man"); John 1:14 (the Word is said to have become "flesh"); Matt. 26: 26, 28, 38 (Jesus says He has a body and blood when He

figuratively represents them by bread and wine in the first Lord's Supper, and says He has a human soul in the Garden of Gethsemane): all of these indicate that Jesus has a true human body and a reasoning human soul.

- b. Luke 2:40, 52. These show that Jesus underwent normal human development from a child into an adult.
2. The Witness of the Epistles. Rom. 5:15 (identifies Jesus as "the one Man"); Heb. 5:7 (refers to "the days of His flesh"); 1 Pet. 2:24 (refers to His body on the cross); 1 John 4:2 (calls for the Christian to confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh); Heb. 2:14 (says that Jesus partook of the same kind of flesh and blood as His human "children"): all of these indicate that Jesus has a true human body and a reasonable soul, of exactly the same kind of body and soul as those He came to save.
3. Jesus' Sinlessness. John 8:46 (Jesus implied that there was no one who could convict Him of sin because He had done no moral wrong: cp. Isa. 53:9); Heb. 4:15 (though Jesus Christ was tempted, He was without sin—not just that He did not sin, but that He was without the capacity to sin). Sin is not inherent to the human nature; Adam and Eve were fully human before they fell into sin. Therefore, even though He was without sin, Jesus could have a fully human nature, lacking nothing that it takes to be classified and qualified as human: a physical body, and a soul with its own intellect, will, and emotions.

B. The Deity of Christ: Christ Is Fully God.

1. The Gospels.
 - a. Mark 2:5-7. Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic, which even the Jewish scribes knew only God could do. In the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), it is mainly the supernatural, miraculous works of Christ that bear out His claim to Deity.
 - b. John 1:1. The third clause of this verse plainly says that the Word, a title of the Christ, was God. This is the same Word that John 1:14 says became flesh and dwelt

among us, etc., so it does refer to Jesus Christ. There are those of the pseudo-Christian false religions known as the cults who attempt to evade the deity of Jesus Christ by translating the third clause of John 1:1 differently; e.g., “the Word was a god,” or some other form. However, Colwell’s Rule of Greek grammar shows that it can *only* be translated as “the Word was God.” In New Testament koine Greek, whenever a predicate nominative appears before a verb of being (*ein*: “was”) without a definite article before it (*theos*: “God”), the predicate nominative is usually qualitative (about 80% of the time), sometimes definite (about 20% of the time), and NEVER indefinite. Therefore, the third clause of John 1:1 CANNOT be translated “the Word was *a god*” because that form of the predicate nominative is indefinite. It is not translated “the Word was *the* God,” which is definite, and a possibility by Colwell’s Rule; but since there is only one God (Jer. 10:10), that is a redundancy. So, it must be translated “the Word was God,” and the point it is making is that the Word was always deity. Jesus Christ is God because He is Deity, and has always, throughout eternity, been with God as the Second Person of the Trinity and the eternally generated Son of God. “In the beginning” is the same phrase with which the Bible begins in Gen. 1:1. It refers to the condition that prevailed before God created anything—eternity. It means the same thing in John 1:1.

2. The Epistles. They are replete with statements of the Deity of Jesus Christ. To list just a few: Rom. 9:5 (refers to both the human nature and deity of Christ; He is that God who is blessed forever); 1 Cor. 2:8 (it calls Jesus Christ the Lord of glory); Phil. 2:6 (the Greek word translated “form” means that He had every quality that it took to be God, just as in vs. 7 it means that He took upon Himself every quality that was required to be a bond-servant; and only God can have all the qualities it takes to be God) ; Col. 2:9 (this is probably the most concise and plain-spoken statement of the divine/human Person of Jesus Christ, two natures

in one Person); Heb. 1:8 (it is of the Son of God that God says through the psalmist, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever”; it could not be clearer that this text says the Son is God; yet, the New World Translation of the Jehovah’s Witnesses butchers the translation to twist its meaning to their own destruction).

3. Jesus’ Self-Understanding. He knew Himself to be God in human flesh. One of the best indicators of this are His “I AM” statements recorded in John’s gospel. By them, He identified Himself with God who spoke to Moses at the burning bush and said to him, “I AM that I AM,” and to tell the Israelites when they asked who sent him that I AM sent him. Jesus was very emphatic in His I AM statements; they appear in the original Greek in emphatic grammar, as though He is saying, “I Myself AM” that same God.

IV. Applications.