Christology
Part 1: The Person of Jesus Christ

Introduction: Thus far in our class, we have established what theology is, what our authority for theology is (Scripture), who the person of God is, we've built an understanding of the Holy Trinity, and now we get to Jesus Christ and what we believe about Him.

Christology: (χριστος + λόγος) The study of Jesus Christ in who He is and what He has done. His person and work.

Jesus is the God-man. He is truly God and truly man.

Hypostatic Union: Jesus is truly God and truly man. He is one in being (one person) and two in nature (divine nature & human nature).
- The Son has eternally existed as the 2nd person of the Trinity. He was incarnate and became man, and we will continue to eternally exist as the God-man.
- We will revisit the discussion of the hypostatic union.

<u>Jesus' Two Natures</u>

Divine Nature: Jesus is truly God.
- Jesus is the second person in the Trinity, thus, Jesus (God the Son) is equal to the Father and Spirit.
- Jesus has all the attributes of God in His divine nature.

What does the Bible say?
1. Jesus is called God.
    1. John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
    2. John 1:18 - "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."
    3. Romans 9:5 - "whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."
    4. Hebrews 1:18 - "But of the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.'"
2. Jesus is called Lord.
    1. Luke 2:11 - "for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."
    2. Revelation 19:16 - "And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'King of kings, and Lord of Lords.'"
3. Jesus is called the Son of God (Jn 3:16-17; Matt 16:15-17).

1. John 3:16-17 - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."
2. Matthew 16:15-17 - "He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.'"

4. Jesus had titles the only God would have (logos - Jn 1:1-18; I AM - Jn 8:58; Son of Man - Matt 26:64; Alpha & Omega - Rev 22:13).
5. Jesus is the Fullness of God (Col 1:19, 2:9).
   1. Colossians 1:19 - "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him."
   2. Colossians 2:9 - "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."
6. Jesus has attributes that only God could have.
   1. Eternality (John 1:1).
   2. Ultimate Authority (Matthew 28:18).
   3. Omnipotent (John 8:26; Matthew 14:19).
   4. Omniscient (Matthew 26:20).
   5. Omnipresent (Matthew 18:20; 28:20).
7. Jesus is credited with doing things that only God can do.
   1. Creating (Col 1:17-18; John 1).
   2. Forgives Sin (Mark 2:5-12).
   3. He Judges (John 5:22; Acts 17:31).
   4. Bestows Eternal Life (John 5:21).
   5. To be worshiped (Phil 2:11; Rev 5:12).

Heresies Dealing with Christ's Divinity:

- "Just a Myth": Some would say the incarnation was just a myth designed to help us understand profound ideas. Rudolf Bultmann, a liberal scholar was a major proponent of this.
- Arianism: Coined by Arius, he claimed that Jesus was created. He famously said, "there was a time when the Son was not." He argues that Jesus and the Father had a similar essence (homoiousios) rather than having the same essence (homoousios).
- Ebionism: Jesus was a special prophet and because Jesus fulfilled the Law, he was declared the anointed one, but not God. (Prevalent from 1st to 4th centuries).
- Kenoticism: (More modern). Jesus emptied Himself of Divine attributes when He became human.
  - Cites Philippians 2:6-7. This passage, however, is not talking about Jesus removing His divine attributes, but Him taking on flesh.

Three Reasons Christ's Divinity is Necessary:

1. Only someone Who is infinite, is able to save us.
2. Salvation is from the Lord.

3. Only someone who is truly God can be the mediator between God and man.

If Jesus is not God, then there is no salvation.

The Humanity of Christ:
People get uncomfortable when we discussed the fact that He is truly human. Jesus learned how to do stuff, He faced the basic things that every human usually faces. If we emphasize His divinity and not His humanity, we belittle the gospel.

- Jesus has a human body and was human even from conception (Lk 2:6-7; Gal 4:4).
- His body developed and matured (Lk 2:52).
- He had physical needs (Matt 4:2, 21:18; Jn 19:28, 4:6-7; Matt 8:24).
- He experienced Pain and Bled (Matt 27:27; Jn 19:1-5).
- He died (Matt 27:50; Lk 23:46; Jn 19:30).
- He had a human mind (Lk 2:52; Matt 24:6; Jn 11:33)
- Jesus experienced genuine human emotions.
  - Sorrow (Jn 11:35).
  - Joy (Jn 15:11).
  - Love (Jn 21:7).
  - Anger (Mk 10:13-14).
  - Compassion (Matt 9:36).
  - Distress (Jn 13:21).
  - Amazement (Matt 8:10).
- Jesus had a human will (Matt 26:39).

Heresies Dealing with Christ's Humanity:

- Docetism: Teaches that Jesus was not actually human but just appeared to be human.
- Apollinarianism: Jesus had an actual human body but did not have an actual human mind and spirit.

Why Christ's Humanity was Necessary:

1. If God wanted to redeem us, the incarnation is necessary.
2. Jesus had to live a perfect life to do what we could never do, so on the cross, Jesus takes our sin and gives us His righteousness.
3. Jesus had to pay the penalty we deserve to pay for our sin: death.
4. He uniquely modeled for us what it is to live a life pleasing to God.
5. In the flesh and as the God-man, Jesus serves as the perfect mediator for us.
6. In the flesh, He is able to sympathize with us in every temptation and sorrow.

Hypostatic Union: Although it is a super-rational mystery, we believe, based off what the Scriptures teach that Jesus is *one person* with *two natures*. He is truly God and truly man. (See Calcedonian Confession).

Sinlessness of Christ: Jesus is without sin (Jn 8:29; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 3:22; 2 Cor 5:21). He cannot sin because He is God (impeccability).

Virgin Birth: The virgin birth is absolutely necessary to orthodox Christianity. We affirm that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (Lk 1:35; Matt 1:20). We deny any liberal objections and the belief in the immaculate conception. We believe that Jesus was conceived and born of the virgin Mary.

Any Questions?
Let's Pray.