

The Doctrine of Christ

The Doctrine of Christ is one of the most essential teachings in Christianity. Without Christ, there would be no Christianity at all. This presentation offers a general understanding of Jesus Christ's humanity and deity, as well as the unity of His person and His resurrection.

Jesus Christ is a Historical Person

According to apostle John and many eyewitnesses, Jesus Christ was and is a historical person with whom we can build our worldview and lives.

This is what we proclaim to you: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched (concerning the word of life

1 John 1:1.

However, the following 15 points are critically drawn from Sander's works, which emphasize that critical historians assert that Jesus Christ was a historical person. The statement that Jesus is a mythological figure is a minority view even among secular scholars.

- (1) Jesus was undeniably baptized by John the Baptist, a pivotal figure in Jewish eschatology.
- (2) Jesus primarily operated in Galilee, engaging unequivocally in preaching and healing activities.
- (3) Jesus actively gathered disciples, including the Twelve, who formed his core group.
- (4) Jesus' public ministry was heavily focused on Judea and Galilee.
- (5) He engaged in actions and teachings that directly challenged the established Temple authorities.
- (6) Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem by the Roman authorities, an undeniable historical event.
- (7) Following Jesus's death, His followers continued as a distinctly identifiable movement
- (8) Some Jews persecuted the nascent Christian movement, and this persecution undeniably persisted at least until the time of Paul's ministry.
- (9) Jesus had a final meal with his apostles.
- (10) Jesus was arrested and interrogated by Jewish authorities, specifically the high priest
- (11) Jesus was executed on the orders of the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate.
- (12) Jesus' disciples at first fled
- (13) Jesus' disciples saw him after his death
- (14) Because the disciples saw him, they believed that he would return to found a kingdom on the earth
- (15) Jesus' disciples formed a community to await his return and sought to win others to place faith in Him as God's Messiah.

Significant amounts of material about Jesus have been discovered within the scope of ancient history, and much of it dates back to an early period. Therefore, Jesus cannot be regarded as a myth or fictional figure based on written references.

Jesus Christ is a Real Human

“For this reason, the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign. Look, this young woman is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him Immanuel.”

Isaiah 7:14.

Jesus' incarnation was an essential step as the second person of godhead became human. The Bible expresses that Christ will bear the scars of crucifixion in His body throughout eternity.

The virgin birth indicates that God came to us and became like us. The Virgin Birth is a clear teaching in the Bible, and giving it up would undermine our faith in the authority of the Word. The prophecy was fulfilled in the Old Testament, but also supernaturally in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Matt 1:20-21.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and with people.

Luke 2:52.

The genealogies in the Gospels of Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38) differ in that Matthew begins with Abraham and ends with Jesus, while Luke starts with Joseph and ends with Adam. Both genealogies demonstrate that Christ was both a perfect man and a perfect God.

The New Testament texts present a comprehensive argument for the humanity of Jesus, supported by biblical evidence. They emphasize that Jesus had a fully human body, experienced basic human needs, and ultimately suffered and died.

The New Testament records that Jesus was fully human, including his psychological faculties and emotional range. He reacted to situations with appropriate emotions, demonstrating a deep capacity for human feelings, and exhibited limitations as evidenced by his questions and expressions of ignorance about certain matters.

There are several reasons why God sent Christ to the world:

- (1) Christ revealed humanity to God by becoming human, so humans can see the character of God by observing the life and teachings of Jesus.
- (2) God made a covenant with King David, promising that a descendant of David's line would rule forever. Jesus is identified in Scripture as the Son of David, and one day he will come back as king and establish his kingdom on earth.
- (3) Jesus's intercessory ministry as High Priest depends upon his humanity. He can empathize with us in our struggles as humans. What a friend we have in Jesus.
- (4) Christ's office as a prophet is found in Deuteronomy 18:15-19, where Moses foretells the coming of a Prophet like himself. In the New Testament, Jesus is repeatedly identified as the fulfillment of this prophecy,
- (5) Christ destroyed the evil deeds of the devil. Temptation and deception are real, but Jesus came to offer abundant life to believers, so they are no longer in eternal separation from God. Bondage and Fear: The devil's works enslave people to guilt, shame, and fear, but perfect love casts out fear

Jesus Christ is God

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. The Word was with God in the beginning. All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.

John 1:1–3

Jesus's self-awareness regarding his identity and claims of divinity is a powerful demonstration of his divine nature. He made numerous claims that are only appropriate

for someone who is God, and his authority over the Sabbath and his unique relationship with the Father emphasize his self-perception.

During his trial, Jesus affirmed his identity as the Son of God, and throughout his ministry, he accepted titles that ascribed deity to himself, including "Son of God". This suggests that Jesus believed himself to be equal to God, with divine rights and authority.

The evidence clearly indicates that Jesus believed he was God, and that he exhibited remarkable psychological stability, including compassion, self-control, and courage even under intense pressure, which contradicts the signs of mental instability. Therefore, the best possible explanation is that Jesus Christ is the Lord and the second person of the Trinity.

The doctrine of Christ's deity has several significant implications, including the fact that we can have real knowledge of God.

Hypostatic Union – The Unity of Person Jesus Christ

⁵ You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. ⁸ He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:5-8.

The Council of Chalcedon rejected teachings that overly emphasized either Christ's divinity or His humanity, and reaffirmed earlier creeds.

The Chalcedonian creed of the patristic time teaches that there is the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is perfect in Deity and also perfect in humanity, and is consubstantial with the Father according to the Deity and consubstantial with us according to his humanity.

But as for that day and hour, no one knows it - not even the angels in heaven - except the Father alone.

Matt 24:36.

The Logos is the second person of the Trinity in a non-material form. The Logos has human nature contingently, and God's nature is present in his immaterial aspect. The attributes of Jesus as God were mostly subconscious or unconscious until his resurrection. After his resurrection, His conscious mind gradually connected with His subconscious and unconscious minds, enabling the logos to slowly enter His conscious mind. Christ healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead, all seen as manifestations of the Spirit working through Him. So, Christ did not use his own divine omnipotence during his time on earth.

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus likely spoke Aramaic or Hebrew as a mother tongue. Aramaic is considered as a common spoken language among the Jews in Galilee, especially its Galilean dialect. Jesus was literate and possibly skilled in writing, as evidenced by when He read from the scroll in the synagogue at Nazareth. Greek was the predominant language spoken by the majority in Galilee, and Jesus likely navigated the world with proficiency in both Hebrew and Greek.

Jesus' formative years spent as a refugee in Egypt, where he fled from the persecution orchestrated by Herod, account for his fluency in Greek. In Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, the Jewish communities were vibrant and deeply interconnected, thriving in significant urban centers. Greek became the common language among the Egyptian Jewish population, particularly in bustling urban settings like Alexandria.

Christ is the Messiah, the Anointed One, who was predicted in the Old Testament. He was also a prophet. Christ fulfilled Moses' prediction of a prophet like himself, and His ministry

involved preaching and teaching in various contexts. He differed from Aaronic priests in that His sacrifice was once for all, providing eternal redemption.

Israel rejected the Messiah, which resulted in a temporary pause in the establishment of the promised kingdom. Jesus began teaching parables after this rejection and explained them only to his disciples. Christ will return literally and physically to reign as King over His people. This concept is called the "Messianic Kingdom", and it includes various aspects, such as spiritual, political, ecclesiastical, economic, physical, and moral dimensions. The rapture of the Church occurs before Jesus returns to earth, and is followed by seven years of tribulation, during which Israel will be gathered to the Promised Land.

Jesus' miracles revealed His identity as the Messiah, demonstrated His compassion for human suffering, and fulfilled prophecies, reinforcing that He was the one foretold by prophets like Isaiah. They were glimpses of the Kingdom of God breaking into the world.

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The Christians' proclamation of the crucified Messiah was extremely unfavorable, but there was also another side to the story. The crucified Jesus was said to have risen from the dead.

¹ Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you - unless you believed in vain. ³ For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received - that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, ⁴ and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

The message of Christians was clear from the outset - the crucified Christ had risen from the dead. The empty tomb is central to the evidence of Jesus' resurrection, as it determines how concretely the resurrection can be understood.

The four-line creed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 was likely well-known to the Corinthians and serves as a poignant reminder of their beliefs.

The creed has Hebrew or Aramaic roots. The early tradition of the creed shows that belief in the resurrection was widespread and confirmed by many eyewitnesses. The apostles proclaimed the resurrection precisely in Jerusalem, where the crucifixion and burial took place. The biblical authors reported what actually happened, even if it sounded unbelievable to their readers at the time. This is their greatest strength.

Women were among the first to witness the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus, and the Jews acknowledged that the tomb was empty because they accused the disciples of stealing the body.

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought aromatic spices so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, at sunrise, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the very large stone had been rolled back. ⁵ Then as they went into the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has been raised! He is not here. Look, there is the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples, even Peter, that he is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told

you.”⁸ Then they went out and ran from the tomb, for terror and bewilderment had seized them. And they said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Mark 16:1-8

After the resurrection, Jesus' brothers joined the Christian community in the upper room in Jerusalem, marking a significant change in their lives. They were active participants and leaders in ministry, serving alongside the apostles. The postmortem appearances of Jesus demonstrate that the resurrection was a historically credible event. The appearances are consistently described as physical, and the disciples weren't expecting a resurrection, so a single psychological explanation is unlikely.

The resurrection of Christ contributes to the understanding of the resurrection of believers. The Corinthians struggled with the idea of a general resurrection of the dead, but Paul refuted their beliefs, arguing that without the resurrection of the dead, Christ was not raised, which makes their faith pointless. Paul acknowledges the Corinthians' concerns about the body and resurrection, highlighting that the resurrection involves the entire person - body and spirit - not just the immaterial parts. The physical body plays a vital role in the promise of eternal life, highlighting the importance of the body in the resurrection process.

⁴² It is the same with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44