



Christology

from the Jesus of history to the Christ of faith

Who do you say?

- non-biblical sources: Roman writers Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger; Jewish historian Josephus
- Minimalist reduction: crucified under Pilate, under Tiberius; Jewish leaders involved; followers of the Way
- Driving force behind inquiry and official teaching: experience of salvation - forgiveness, filiation, fellowship. Who/What must he have been?
- 2 certainties: (1) He was truly human (2) he was truly divine.
- Goes from "how?" to "Did he know?"

The OT Connection

- critical: 1st Christians, JC, & their Scriptures
- Son of Man; Suffering Servant; Davidic; Mosaic; Adamic!
- God as "Father" to People; Kings also 'like a son'
- 'Messiah' = 'anointed'; 3 types: king, priest, prophet
- ALL 3 but in an unexpected way (nonmilitary; non-levitical; more than pronouncing the word)
- Lady Wisdom

NT: earthly life

- ◉ incarnation & other 'virgin births' (Romulus & Remus, Zeus); again not as expected
- ◉ authority: "But I say..."; forgiveness; Sabbath; purity rituals; sinners
- ◉ message: the Kingdom is here
- ◉ synoptics: implicit Christology; John explicit!
- ◉ letters - more soteriological than ontological

NT: Resurrection & Redemption

- Christological "ground zero"
- final Adam assuming all humanity; through one man; through one man
- pre-existence: redemption as new creation; He was there (Wisdom)
- 'This Jesus whom you crucified': made the Son? no - always the Son
- Vindictful punishment? Accepted obsessive sacrifice!
- 'Saved!' 'From what?' - original sin? Culpability? Not o!

Church Fathers & the 'Wonderful Exchange'

- Tatian - Diatessaron - harmonizing synoptics & John
- Irenaeus - Against the Heresies (not just the expanding Gnostics but the cutting Marcion!)
- Maintaining monotheism: Ebionites v. Docetists - JMJ & modal monarchianism mask (Sabellianism) → Tertullian 'double substance', 'Light from Light' - (Biblical symbolism to ontological terminology)
- Origen - Logos always was (Platonic souls on deck!); blood of Christ - ultimate price; devil's ransom
- G&G of N&N: fooling the devil & hating his 'ransom'!

Christological Councils

- ◉ Divinity of JC, then of HS, then the Trinity
- ◉ Nicaea (v Arianism): Father \neq Son? Christ is divine; "True God from true God. Begotten, not made"
- ◉ Constantinople (v Apollinarianism): Christ is also truly human; divinity of HS & the Trinity
- ◉ Ephesus (v Nestorius): 2 natures together, not separated (hence Theotokos ok)
- ◉ Chalcedon (v Eutychus' hybrid): 2 natures, 1 person 'consubstantial'; 'double generation': (a) of the Father before time & (b) of Mary in the fullness of time

Medieval Times

- ◉ Anselm, Abelard, & Aquinas respectively: 'satisfaction' - reparation, not ransom; mama hen; pushed his perfection to having the beatific vision since birth
- ◉ still penance-oriented → treasury of merit & indulgences (good & bad)
- ◉ Protestant reaction (& over-reaction): the sola's & the "war" of the Father on the Son! (so much for God is love)
- ◉ Luther reverts to two separate natures
- ◉ Melancthon says "to know Christ means to know his benefits, not to reflect upon his natures and the modes of his incarnation"
- ◉ Columbus' discovery of the new world: Christ must be their savior, but how? → Salvation outside the church?

Modern Times

- Pascal's Wager
- Descartes: 'ergo cogito sum' & God-consciousness
- "Enlightenment", "Reason", & the "Scientific Method" (& the double standards)
- Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle
- Darwin, evolution, & a cosmic Christ
- Hawking & the gravity of the situation
- Pagan Christ Theory persists ("Copy Cat Saviors")

Other Christs?

- Anthropologist James Frazer (early 1900s) popularized a comparison of Christ to pagan myths. "Copy Cat" criticism still thriving.
- Christian language to describe non-Christian aspects: "baptism", "Last Supper", "apostles", "virgin birth". Examples: Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Romulus, Pharaohs, Alexander, Caesars... all born of gods (in human form penetrating and) impregnating a woman. ie, not virgin births!
- Religious vocabulary: "way", "truth", "life", "son/child of god(s)", "light/dark";
- Religious symbols: sun, moon, stars, animals, shapes (cross);
- Religious items: holy books, candles, vestments, rituals, moral codes, artwork (Mother and child), etc. - too generic to distinguish one religion from another. A better comparison would include what makes them different.
- CSL: [They say] Christ is "the same sort of thing" as Adonis or Osiris except that they lived nobody knows where or when, while Jesus was executed by a Roman magistrate we know in a year which can be roughly dated.
- GK Chesterton and CS Lewis actually saw the dying and rising god myths as a good thing, "Pagan prophecies" that reflected the dying and rising crop patterns seen in nature, which foreshadowed the historical resurrection of Christ. (ie God giving "good dreams" or "hints" to Pagans).

By no other name...

- ◉ Son of Man
- ◉ Son of God ('Abba')
- ◉ Son / Branch / Shoot of David
- ◉ Lamb of God
- ◉ Second / New / Last Adam
(& by correlation - Mary!)
- ◉ Good Shepherd
- ◉ Bread of Life
- ◉ Messiah
- ◉ King of Kings
- ◉ King of the Jews
- ◉ Lord of Lords
- ◉ Alpha & Omega
- ◉ Prince of Peace
- ◉ Logos
- ◉ Christ
- ◉ etc etc etc etc

"A Friend in You"

Life has got you down
and there is nothing anyone can do to turn it around
You wanted to be free, but all you got was misery
cuz life don't love you when you're holding on or after you've let go
so what's it matter who you are or what you do?
Baby, I know you want to end it all, but please before you do...

MY FRIEND, I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH, BUT JESUS DIED FOR YOU!
SO KEEP IN MIND THAT ALTHOUGH YOUR HEART IS BLUE, LET IT BREAK IN TWO
AND YOU WILL FIND A FRIEND THAT LIVES IN YOU

Anything you want to know
your heavenly Father gives you things you need to help you to grow
and when you feel you can't go on no more
just wait for him to open the door
and He'll be with you when you're riding high or even when you're down
so what's it matter what you gain or what you lose?
Soon you'll learn that a gift from God
is an offer you can't refuse...