

FIRM FOUNDATION CLASS



How To Understand The Uniqueness Of Christ Lesson 6

www.Encouragement-Inc.com

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRIST

All cults error in regard to the Person of Jesus Christ, especially in regard to His deity. Spiritism asserts, "It is an absurd idea that Jesus was more divine than any other man." Christian Science claims, "Jesus Christ is not God, as Jesus Himself declared, but the Son, of God." Jehovah Witnesses boldly state, "Jesus was not God the Son."

For this reason we need to know what we believe about the Person of Jesus Christ. For this purpose we will study a few facets of His life in this lesson. He was the perfect God-Man, His humanity seen in sleeping, *Matthew 8:24*; hungering, *Mark 11:12*; weeping, *John 11:35*; etc., but we must not let His humanity hide His deity, The Bible calls the fact of His deity and humanity as a great mystery (*1 Timothy 3:16*). Yet, both His humanity and deity are necessary for salvation. Had Christ been only a man, His death would have meant no more than that of any other martyr who gave himself for others. Had He been only divine, He would have had no real link with humanity and would not be able to understand us in our hours of temptation.

WHAT DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACH CONCERNING THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRIST?

I. He was perfect in His character

- A. He was able to speak the truth, but always did it in love. *Matthew 23: 1-36* is His denunciation of the Pharisees, yet *Matthew 23:37-39* shows that He wept over them!
- B. He was as gentle and sympathetic as a Mother (*John 8: 1-11*), yet He was as rugged in the minds of the people as Elijah and John the Baptist (*Matthew 16: 14*).
Most men are known for one virtue. (Job - patience; Moses - meekness; John - love), but in Jesus all marks of virtue are seen.
- C. He was meek and lowly (*Luke 22:17*), yet He could blaze with majesty (*John 18:6*),
- D. He never sinned (*John 8:46*),

II. He was pre-existent. He existed as God before He came in the flesh

Jesus often spoke of His pre-existent state.

- A. Proverbs 8:22-31
- B. John 3: 13
- C. John 17:5
- D. John 17:24
- E. Colossians 1: 17

III. He was born of a virgin

- A. This is and will always be a mystery to men, but God has made a man in many mysterious ways:
 - 1. by the law of natural generation - a man and a woman
 - 2. without the agency of either man or woman - as Adam
 - 3. a woman without a woman - as Eve
 - 4. Through the divine empowering of a man and a woman both past age - as Abraham and Sarah.
If these are admitted - and they must be if Scripture is believed, it is just a step to believe that—
 - 5. Jesus was born of a woman without a man, that He was begotten of the Holy Spirit
Matthew 1:20

B. There are alternatives that face us if the virgin birth is not true:

1. The New Testament is not true. Therefore, it cannot be believed in other areas.
2. Mary, instead of being blessed among women must have been unfaithful to Joseph, for Joseph asserted that Jesus was not his son.
3. Jesus becomes the natural child of sinful parents which at once rules out His preexistence, with the result that there was no real incarnation (God come in the flesh).
4. We are deprived of any adequate explanation of His unique character and sinless life.
5. If He was begotten by a human Father, and that is the only alternative to virgin birth, He was not the Second Person of the Trinity as He claimed, and therefore, had no power to forgive sin.
6. If this miracle is denied where do we stop? Logically, we should deny all miracles.
The question really is: Are we willing to accept the supernatural claims of Scripture or not?

IV. He was and is God

If Jesus is not God, then there is no Christianity, and we who worship Him are nothing more than idolaters. Conversely, if He is God, those who say He was merely a good man, or even the best of men are blasphemers. More serious still, if He is not God, then He is a blasphemer in the fullest sense of the word. If He is not God, He is not even good.

The deity of Christ is the key doctrine of the Scripture. Reject it and the Bible becomes a confused jumble of words, devoid of any unifying theme. Accept it, and the Bible becomes an intelligible and ordered revelation of God, in the Person of Jesus Christ. The very basis of Christianity is that Jesus was God, manifest in the flesh (*1 Timothy 3:16*).

Why do we believe that Jesus was God?

A. Because of creditable testimony

Beginning at Peter's confession, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," the church has confessed Christ as God. (*Matthew 16:16*).

1. Apostles Creed -- dating back to 165 AD:

"I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, *His only Son our Lord* . . ."

2. Nicene Creed - A D. 325

"I believe . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God . . . being of *one substance with the Father*."

3. Westminster Confession

"The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father did, when the fullness of time was come, took upon Him man's nature..."

B. Because of personal testimony of unbelievers and believers

1. J. J. Rousseau, immoral atheist: "If the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God."
2. Napoleon, the ruthless conqueror: "I know men, and I tell you, Jesus was not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires and the gods of other religions. This resemblance does not exist. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love, and at this hour millions would die for Him. In every existence but that of Christ, how many imperfections."
3. Daniel Webster, Christian Statesman: "I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God."
4. William Shakespeare, immortal poet: "Jesus Christ, my Saviour."

C. Because of the witness of Scriptures

1. He laid claim to being all powerful (omnipotence); On occasions He exhibited this power over nature (*Matthew 8:27*); over angels (*Matthew 26:53*); All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (*Matthew 28:18*); and over death (*Mark 5:41, 42*); over demons (*Luke 4:36*); over disease (*Luke 4:40*).
2. He was all knowing (omniscience): Jesus did not trust Himself unto them for He knew what was in man (*John 2:24; John 4:29; 16:30; Colossians 2:3*).
3. He is now everywhere present (omnipresence): " And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (*Matthew 28:19,20*).
4. He does not depend upon anyone else for life. He is self-existent: As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given the Son to have life in Himself (*John 5:26*).
5. Actions are ascribed to Christ, which are possible to Deity alone: judgment (*John 5:27*), resurrection (*John 5:28,29*), creation (*Colossians 1: 16*).

In reviewing the claims Christ made, we are faced with three possibilities:

- a. He was a deceiver, and was not telling the truth. But this is contradicted by His whole life and work.
- b. He was self-deceived and thought such things of Himself, but they had no basis in fact. But the fact that He performed miracles and that He was raised from the dead contradict that.
- c. The third and only tenable possibility is that He was exactly what He claimed to be.

D. Because of the witness of the Spread of Christianity

Christianity is the greatest proof of Christ's deity, because He, as its head, measures up to the highest standard of deity. The growth and spread of other religions can be traced to natural causes, but Christianity can be accounted for only by supernatural. For example, to compare Christianity with Mohammedanism is inadmissible, for it made its tremendous advances by the sword, and continues to gain adherents by condoning sin instead of condemning it. Also, like its fellow-religions, it is mainly confined to the nations in or near to the region in which it had its birth.

How different it is with Christianity, which knows no distinction of race or creed, but claims the world for Christ. Christianity's messengers circle the globe. Where it comes and is faithfully practiced, sin, slavery and selfishness are banished. Holiness is enthroned!

Could this power to capture the hearts of men of every race and culture have come from a mere man? No! The transformed lives of Christians are an eloquent and ever present witness to the deity of the Person from whom the transforming power proceeds.