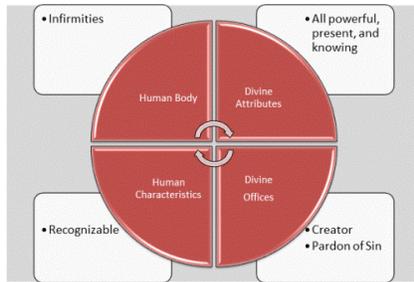


# Lesson 5: The Hypostatic Union

## Lesson Introduction



There are many things about God that it is just not possible for the finite human mind to comprehend – things such as the eternal existence of God and the Trinity. Another truth is that fact that Jesus was both God and man – 2 natures perfectly blended in one. This is often referred to as the Hypostatic Union.

In order to begin to try to understand this union, we must take a look at His 2 natures separately. In Topics 1 and 2 of this lesson, we will look at some Scripture that offers proof that Jesus was fully human – He had a body, soul, and spirit, and had human limitations and suffering. Then, in Topic 3, we will look at the Divine nature of Jesus, and see that as He had Divine attributes, names, and offices, He was God in the flesh. Finally in Topic 4, we will look at an illustration of the Hypostatic Union that involves the Tabernacle of Israel.

## Lesson Outline

### Topic 1: Who Is Christ?

The Testimony of the people

### Topic 2: The Humanity of Christ

The Human Infirmities of Christ

### Topic 3: The Deity of Christ

The Divine Attributes of Christ

The Unchangeable Holiness of Christ

### Topic 4: The Hypostatic Union

## Topic 1: Who Is Christ?

How is Jesus both God and man? It's one of those perplexing questions; it's one of those perplexing things. How is it that Jesus is both God and man at the same time? We're going to look at who is Jesus Christ. We're looking at Christology, the study of Jesus, the Christ the Messiah. When we look at this doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ what we want to start with is what do people say about him in the scriptures? There's testimony by several people at the time of Christ, and let's look at those testimonies John 1:29 we see the testimony of John the Baptist; who is Christ? (JOHN 1:29) So we find out something about Jesus Christ; John, the one that was preparing the way, that was his purpose in life, to prepare the way of Jesus Christ the Messiah, and as he saw him coming he said, Everybody look and behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. We find out a lot about Jesus Christ right there at the testimony of John the Baptist. Who is Jesus Christ? Well let's see what Andrew has to say in John 1:41 (JOHN 1:41). We found him! Isn't that interesting? He finds the messiah and immediately goes and finds someone else to tell about the messiah? I love the enthusiasm of the new Christian, and the excitement of the new Christian as they share their faith with other people. And then Philip, a few verses later, says this (John 1:45). Isn't that great that some recognized who Jesus was, and that this was the

predicted one, the promised one that Moses had written about? The One that the Law was all written and directed toward? Aren't you glad that we finally found the one that the prophets were writing about and predicting, this Jesus of Nazareth; his hometown, the town in which he grew up in, the son of Joseph. And then Peter has something interesting to say about who is Christ? In Matthew 16:16, (Matthew 16:16). We have some powerful testimony, setting up to who is Jesus Christ. The Pharisees were actually unwittingly giving testimony to Jesus when they said in Luke 5:21, (LUKE 5:21). They were testifying to the fact that only God can do what this man is doing and therefore testimony to his divinity. Then we see the blind man in John 9:17, and there's a whole story here but we're just going to look at this, what he said about Jesus, (JOHN 9:17) So we have these testimonies to who is Jesus, who is Jesus?

- Assignment:

Memorize John 1:45

### **QUESTION 1**

One way to learn more about who Jesus was is to study what the \_\_\_\_\_ of his day said about him.

### **QUESTION 2**

John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus would \_\_\_\_\_ the sins of the world.

### **QUESTION 3**

The testimony of Andrew was that, when they had seen Jesus, they had found the \_\_\_\_\_.

### **QUESTION 4**

The \_\_\_\_\_ unwittingly gave testimony to the divinity of Jesus.

### **QUESTION 5**

It was \_\_\_\_\_ to the people of the day that only God could do the things that Jesus was doing.

## **The Testimony of the People**

The people, John 7, were talking: (JOHN 7:40-43). You know where he was born, he was born in Bethlehem, of the seed of David. Both Mary and Joseph were of the lineage of David and he was born in the house of Bread, Bethlehem, but he was a boy in his boyhood home, he was from Nazareth. And so we need to know the word of God, don't we? But that was the testimony, that he was the prophet and that he was the Christ. Then we have the testimony of the people seeing the crucifixion. They said if you are the son of God, come down from the cross. All these people were talking about who Jesus was and who Jesus said he was. Some didn't believe but at least knew who he said he was. In first John, there was a passage which was written to combat a group called the Gnostics. The Gnostics believed that whatever was joined to matter was contaminated. So they believed that Jesus could not have had a physical body, this is why Paul was establishing the resurrection with the Corinthian Christians. In First John 4:1-3, it says (1 JOHN 4:1-3). no, Christ is fully God and fully man. Very God and very man, one other person said. And Christ's humanity is perfect and complete, is enduring as His deity.

## QUESTION 6

The topic of who Jesus was, where He was from, and what He was doing was a very \_\_\_\_\_ topic among the people of His day.

## QUESTION 7

Though Jesus was born in Bethlehem, his hometown was \_\_\_\_\_.

## QUESTION 8

The testimony of the people at the crucifixion showed that Jesus had made \_\_\_\_\_ claims to be God.

## Topic 2: The Humanity of Jesus Christ

We're going to focus now on the humanity of Christ. Some of the things we learn about Jesus Christ and his humanity, he had a physical body. His physical human body; it said that they poured ointment on his body for burial (Matthew 26:12). He had a body. He had a soul, he said my soul is now troubled (John 12:27) and he also had a spirit. "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit. (Luke 23:46). That's what we have, a body we have a soul, and we have a spirit. Jesus in his humanity had a human physical body. What did he look like? Well, no one knows. Someone painted a picture of some guy with long hair, and everyone thinks that's what Jesus looked like. I still haven't found that in my Bible, but I don't have a picture Bible so maybe that's why I haven't found it. No, that's just some artist's rendering; usually the ones you see are a very white-skinned guy with long flowing hair. The Bible does say it's a shame for a man to have long hair, so I would really doubt he had long hair like that. I would also rather doubt that he had white Caucasian skin, more probably of a darker skin tone, olive or something like that. But either way, what did he look like, we don't know. But the prophecies said that he would have no form or comeliness, he would not be some giant of a man that everyone would look at and say wow that's a special person by his outward appearance. He was kind of a normal man. But he was recognizable in his human appearance. How do we know that? Well the Samaritan woman recognized that he was a Jew. He hadn't said anything, but they had certain features that they could recognize. After the resurrection, Mary supposed that it was a gardener that she had seen; a physical body, human appearance that he had. He had a human parent; we have Mary, the mother of Jesus, it says in Galatians 4:4, (GALATIANS 4:4). So he had the human parent, he had the human development; he grew as children grow, and we love to see the growth of children. When I haven't seen someone for a year, and I see them again I say my how much you've grown, and that's normal and natural, and Jesus as human grew. It says in Luke 2:40, (LUKE 2:40). But you know he had a self-imposed limitation, a human limitation. He limited himself to the realm of human. We are limited, aren't we, in certain area? We don't have supernatural strength, we don't have certain powers, although they do in comics or cartoons. But we really don't, and he limited himself.

## QUESTION 9

Proof that Jesus was fully man, was that he had a \_\_\_\_\_ body.

### **QUESTION 10**

Two other human components that Jesus had were a \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.

### **QUESTION 11**

Having a human parent who was Jewish (Mary) gave Jesus physical features that made Him \_\_\_\_\_ as a Jewish human being.

### **QUESTION 12**

While He was both God and man, Jesus did \_\_\_\_\_ Himself in the realm of human strength.

## **The Human Infirmities of Christ**

We also see that he had human infirmities. We hunger, we thirst, we get weary. You know what? Jesus was hungry; remember the temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:2)? He was hungry, he fasted. He was weary (John 4:6). Remember the time he stopped by the well and he was tired. He was weary. In that same place we find out that he was thirsty (John 4:7). We also find out that he slept (Mark 4:38). He needed sleep like we need sleep. Jesus slept; he had a human name. His name will be Jesus (Matthew 1:21), a human name. He had suffering, he had death. If Jesus was not a man he could not have died. God cannot die. If Jesus was not man he did not need to be buried. Jesus rose from the dead and is still today man. He has a human body, even now, and for all eternity will. Jesus is the perfect human. He never sinned. He transcends all limitation of character. He's the most mature man that has ever been in history. And you know what, we are told that we are to be more and more like him. We can be like him, as we become more and more complete in him. He has all perfection, he is without sin. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, it not only says that he was sinless, but that he was righteous. Sinless and righteous; he never had a sin nature; we can't imagine what life would be like without the sin nature. I think most of us long for our perfected body, we long for the fact that we won't have a sin nature in glory. Well he didn't have one. Well you say what about his temptation? We mentioned the temptation in the wilderness. Well was the temptation to see if he would sin or not? No, the temptation of Christ was to prove that he was sinless. There wasn't even a chance that he would take up the devil on those temptations, not even a chance, but it showed that he was tempted in all ways like we are, yet without sin. Jesus not only transcends the limitations of character that we have but also the limitations of time. Isn't it amazing that we read about him and find that his teachings are still current today? I'm often quoting from his very words in the Gospels, and how many books we have in a year or two are outdated; textbooks are outdated in a couple years. Advances are being made in science, and even history is being re-written it seems like, but things are being outdated quickly. But this bible, the word of God, is still current. He's not limited by time, as most men are. He transcends all nationalities. Anywhere we go in the world, any culture, any language, any group of people, when men get saved, they become more like who? Jesus Christ. Transcends nationalities. As he's completely human, so he is completely divine, and Christ's divine nature is not lowered or degraded by him being truly human. That's the dilemma; how is it possible? Well that's something that we don't fully understand, but we try to.

### **QUESTION 13**

Jesus displayed His humanity by the fact that He had human \_\_\_\_\_.

### QUESTION 14

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness was to prove that He was \_\_\_\_\_.

### QUESTION 15

While Jesus' teaching was very timely for His day, they are still \_\_\_\_\_ and apply to us today.

### QUESTION 16

Christ's Divine \_\_\_\_\_ is not degraded or lowered by Him being truly human.

## Topic 3: The Deity of Christ

Then we have the deity of Christ, and now we'll look at the deity of Christ. We have some divine predictions, and the Bible pointed to the fact that Jesus would be divine. In Psalm 110:1, it says (PSALM 110:1). A prediction from the Lord unto the Lord; God the Father to the Son. Sit at my right hand; and you know what? Where is he today? At the right hand of God, and one day every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess. For some it will be too late, for some it will be a time of praise and worship to our Savior, but every enemy will be his footstool. That's a prediction, that Messiah would be divine. Jeremiah 23:6, it says, (JEREMIAH 23:6). Remember studying that in the names of God, the Lord our righteousness? This is Jesus, then of course Micah 5:2, a familiar text, (MICAH 5:2). In other words, it's a divine prediction. Jesus would come the Messiah, and be God, himself. God himself. Then we also know not only was he predicted to be divine, but he also had divine names. He's called God, he's called the son of God, he's called Lord, he is called the first and the last. We see divine equality. He has the very same glory as the Father. We see a divine relationship; Christ's name is coupled with the Father's. Christ is not God mutilated in the flesh, but manifested in the flesh, as it tells us in John Chapter 10. In every reference to Christ's deity it implies equality and oneness. There is great unity and union when we look at Jesus and his name and his relationship with the Father. It's that same unity that we should all strive for as brothers and sisters in Christ. We also see a great unity and oneness with the Father in his divine nature. He was willing to be obedient, the obedient one. The Father has committed all authority to Jesus Christ and there is a oneness there. Divine worship belongs only to God; we see several examples in Scripture of Jesus being divine, as people that came to worship him were the wise men. The Magi came and they bowed down and worshipped him, Matthew 2. They gave him gifts, they bowed down. We also find in Matthew 14 that Christ accepted worship, again showing that divine worship belongs only to God, then he must be God. And the Father commanded that Christ be worshipped. Wasn't that one of the verses we started off Hebrews with? 1:6? (HEBREWS 1:6) Only divine, only God, is worthy of worship, so therefore Jesus is God. How do we honor the Father? The Bible says we honor Jesus Christ.

- Assignment:

Memorize Psalms 110:1

### QUESTION 17

The Old Testament pointed to the fact that Jesus would be \_\_\_\_\_.

### QUESTION 18

The names of Jesus offer \_\_\_\_\_ that He was and is Divine.

### QUESTION 19

Every reference to Christ's deity implies \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with the Father.

### QUESTION 20

If Jesus was not divine, then He \_\_\_\_\_ by accepting worship, since the Bible clearly states that only God is worthy of worship.

## The Divine Attributes of Christ

We see the divine attributes of God, now we are going to see that the divine attributes of Jesus match up perfectly. He was omnipotent, which is he was all-powerful. In Philippians 3:21 it says that (Philippians 3:21). He has a power over death, all-powerful. He has been given all power, and he has a power over nature. How astonished and astounded were the disciples in the boat, when the wind was blowing and the sea was raging. Jesus just spoke and it was calm. Power over nature? All-powerful. He had power over the demons; he would say something to the demons and the demons would have to obey him. Not only was he all powerful, but he was all knowing, it said he was omniscient. He was an all-knowing God, Jesus knew who would not believe in Him. Jesus also knew who would betray him. Jesus also knew what is in man; isn't that a little scary? He knows what it in us. He also knew of his own death and resurrection. He told everyone around him that he would die and rise again. They didn't seem to be listening at the time, that's why we need to listen. He knows our sin, he knows where we are spiritually, he was never taught yet he could read. He never needed a teacher, yet he always had an answer. When his enemies tried to trap him, what did he do? He put them in confusion. All knowing. He taught with simplicity. The greatest teacher, the wisest teacher, the most knowledgeable teacher is not the one who spouts facts and figures to show how knowledgeable he is; the wisest and most intelligent teacher I've ever met is one that can make things simple and understandable. And that's how Jesus taught; he taught with simplicity, he used illustrations drawn from life to help us understand very complex things. He also was all wise. He was , In Him, it says in Colossians 2:3, (COLOSSIANS 2:3) Never had there been such a wise man ever in history; he would answer his critics and confound them. He was everywhere present; omnipresent. And I think there's no attribute more distinctly divine than this for us. It would be nice, we could get a lot done, we could be really watchful of our children, but we are only in one place at one time. We have a limitation there, don't we? We can't be present except in one place at one time, and he had the attribute, it says in Matthew 18:20, (Matthew 18:20). Isn't that interesting? He is more than one place at a time.

### QUESTION 21

God the Father has \_\_\_\_\_ the same Divine attributes that Jesus has.

### QUESTION 22

Jesus displayed His divine power by exercising \_\_\_\_\_ over all things:

### QUESTION 23

An example of Jesus that we can follow is how He used \_\_\_\_\_ from everyday life to help explain complex things.

## QUESTION 24

Only God could be \_\_\_\_\_, or in more than one place at a time.

## The Unchangeable Holiness of Christ

He is unchangeable, is also called immutable. In Hebrews 1:11 it talks about how there is no changing in him, and in Hebrews 7:24, it says he is going to continue forever, he has an unchangeable priesthood. Aren't you glad that God doesn't change his mind? He's unchangeable, what he says will happen. He doesn't say one thing one day, and another thing another day. Jesus Christ, he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is truly immutable, he's unchangeable. He's everlasting, he is one without beginning or end, and that is another thing for our human minds to comprehend. A finite mind has a hard time comprehending one who has no beginning and one who has no end. We're pretty linear, aren't we? You born, you die; you have a line between the two. We are linear in our thinking, but he is everlasting. He never had a beginning, and he'll never have an end. A couple of scriptures that verify that, Isaiah 9:6 and Micah 5:2 again, everlasting. Another characteristic of Jesus Christ proving his divinity, is his holiness. Separate from sin; (1 PETER 2:22) we also find that he is a God of Love. Love is a divine characteristic of his. Not that he is loving, that he loves us and that he loves people, but he is love. He is love. God's love is spontaneous, it's natural for him to love. God's love is eternal, it's never-ending love; aren't you glad about that? His love is infinite; he loves the world, God loves the world. His love is inexhaustible. Hebrews 12:2 (HEBREW 12:2). We also know that God's love is invincible. Nothing can overcome the love of Jesus. We also find another thing that proves his divinity were his offices. He held offices proving his deity, one was that he was the creator. Not only was he the creator of all things, but he was the sustainer of all things, the preserver of the things that he creates. He is able to pardon sin. Sin is an offense against God, and by acting directly in pardoning sin, Jesus asserted that he was God, and is God by the very fact that he pardons sin; one of his offices. He has the power to raise the dead. He has the power to transform you and me. These are all evidences of his divinity. Also that he is the judge of all, he's the savior of all who believe. He provides salvation to the world, and he has the right to be worshipped. (PSALM 95:6) No man, not even the apostles; remember when the apostles were being worshipped? They thought the apostles were divine beings because of miracles? They said no, get up, don't worship us, don't do that; only God is worthy of worship. Not even the angels should accept worship, and no unfallen angel will accept worship. Christ's disciples worshipped Jesus. All of these things, proving that he had divinity.

- Assignment

Memorize Hebrews 7:24

## QUESTION 25

Another characteristic of Jesus Christ proving his divinity, is his \_\_\_\_\_.

## QUESTION 26

Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of all things.

## QUESTION 27

Because of His deity, Jesus has the right to be \_\_\_\_\_.

## QUESTION 28

By acting directly in \_\_\_\_\_ sin, Jesus asserted that He was God. *True or False?*

## The Hypostatic Union

It's hard to understand how it's possible to have the blending of 2 natures in one person; there's a technical term that we use, it's called hypostatic union. The 2 natures, the humanity and divinity in one. He wasn't schizophrenic, one way one day, and another way another day, he had this incredible blending of 2 natures in one person. How is it that Jesus is both God and man? It is hard to understand but it is the truth. Christ possesses a complete human nature and a complete divine nature. Now there is an illustration of these 2 natures in one, represented in the Tabernacle. If you'll remember the tabernacle was built to exact specifications and there were very minute details of how this was to be built. And the people that were building the tabernacle, as they were establishing the presence of God among the children of Israel, the place where his presence would be seen and where they would sacrifice. This tabernacle had outer boards that were constructed, and these boards represented the blending of these 2 natures. Each board of this tabernacle, this was made of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, portrays the Lord Jesus Himself. The shittim wood is an incorruptible wood, being a shadow of the incorruptible truth that He partook of flesh and blood, the seed of the woman the second man from Heaven, yet the son of David, the fruit of his loins. At the same time, the son of the Highest, born of the virgin, the man Christ Jesus, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, though unlike any other man that ever lived on earth, incorrupt and incorruptible, having a body prepared by God that he might die, but without taint of death or mortality in him. Again, this is all hard to understand, but the wood itself represents these things. The gold presents the other truth, that he is the mighty God, the brightness of God's glory the only begotten of the Father, the Son from everlasting to everlasting. Each board of the tabernacle, each bar, each pillar, reiterates the great truths upon which salvation depends, on which the whole basis of Christianity rests, and on which the new Creation, with all its glories, subsists, by the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, made of a woman, God and man, one Christ. The boards are like ribs of truth; the massive framework without which no dwelling place of God could be created. No meeting place between God and man provided. If the wood could corrupt, or if the fine gold could become dim, if the taint of the mortality or the moldering of the flesh be connected by human theory or speculation with the glorious Immanuel, the tabernacle of God must tremble and totter. The great truths of salvation are shaken and mishap and ruin takes the place of the divinely ordered palace of the most high. In other words, it had to be divine and human. It had to be this perfect combination of the two, just as the tabernacle a perfect combination of the two, wood and gold. There are so many pictures and truths found in the tabernacle but I believe the very boards of the tabernacle are a perfect picture of the hypostatic union, the two natures, the flesh and the spirit of God in one Christ.

## QUESTION 29

Christ's 2 \_\_\_\_\_ – His humanity and His divinity – were perfectly blended.

## QUESTION 30

Christ possessed a complete \_\_\_\_\_ nature and a complete \_\_\_\_\_ nature.