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NT 503: Reading the New Testament  
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African Theology and African Christology

### Precis

*I Article: Magezi, C. & Igba, J.T., 2018, 'African theology and African Christology: Difficulty and complexity in contemporary definitions and methodological frameworks'*

The argument here is that Christ is to be comprehensive by all. African Theology and African Christology by Magezi, Christopher, Igba, Jacob T. The article acknowledges African Christian theology as theology that should be derived from the interplay between Scripture, Christian tradition, and African cosmology. Regarding theology, the authors argued that African theology should be universal. As much I would like to indwell in this subject, I have to move on to Christology.

Let's address African's Christology. A writer by the name Taylor, he is an African Theologian. He stated that "If Christ was to appear as the answer to the questions that Africans are asking what would he look like?" (Taylor, p.49). Taylor's topic has sustained pertinence ever since. This issue has gained importance because there is a sense that Christ does not relate to the African people. The Gospel that is preached in Africa predominantly from a western perspective. The question maintains its relevance because of the conceptual modernity about the person and place of Christ in African religiosity. There is no doubt that the African people are familiar with God, however, they believe that Christ is no familiar to them. This notion worsens by the development of Christ with the early Western missionaries that presented Christ as a Western Savior who is more interested in the problem arise from the western world. It is evident that the African people are not aware of Christ that the church preaches approaches their existential objections that arise from their ancestral African worldview. This article also argued that those who shared his human existence and became witnesses to Christ's resurrection started the process of Christological discussion by interpreting Jesus in terms of the worldview and themes derived from their own cultural experience ( *Magezi, C. & Igba, J.T.*)

*II Article: "Timothy J. Geddert's article "The Implied YHWH Christology of Mark's Gospel: Mark's Challenge to the Reader to "Connect the Dots" (2015) juxtaposes Jesus to the YHWH in the Old Testament."*

Timothy's article reference the bible, especially the book of Mark, there are three things about who Jesus is. In this article, Timothy focuses on Jesus the Messiah, the Divine Son, and the son of Man. Christology appeared to be an easy subject for Christians. However, not many Christians know who Jesus is. There is no doubt that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah) because it is mention in scripture. It is important to note that, just because something is mention in scripture does not mean everybody will know about it. It has to be divine. Peter says, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by My Father in heaven" (Matthew 16:16). Timothy argued that the subject of Jesus been the Messiah was perceived much later without the proper understanding of what it means. The way the church used to function is not the same approach in the western world. The letters would read in the churches but people did not have a clear understanding of what it means. Timothy also argued that the same can be said about the identity of Jesus as the son of God (Mark 1:11). Timothy focused on Mark Christology. Jesus is the Son of God. An example is when the rich man called Jesus a good teacher. The argument here according to the article is that the gospel of mark gives two options. 1) Jesus is denying been good, 2) Jesus is implying that he is God (Timothy J. Gedder). I think he saying he is God. Tthere is a time when Jesus did not distinguish himself from the father. In one instance in Mark, Jesus claims to be "I am." Mark was not trying to tell people that Jesus is God, rather give his readers enough information to conclude that on their own. According to the Article, Mark argued that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah, and God. According to Timothy, Mark provided enough information for the reader to make his or her own conclusion about who Jesus is. This is something that needs our intention when preaching behind the pulpit about the Christology Jesus. We must give people enough information to make their own conclusion. We must not tell them what to believe, but rather allow the Holy Spirit to convince them of the truth. It is as important to practice what we believe. If we do not, the bible says "God's name is blasphemed among the gentiles because of us (Roman 2: 20-24).

III Article: Estella B. Horning “Who is Jesus? Christology’s in the New Testament” (1996).

Estella states that witnesses to his life, death, and resurrection attempt to answer the question stories, images from the past, metaphors, parables, hopes for the future, and blessings in the present (Estella Horning). She answered the question of who Jesus is according to scripture, from a futuristic view, and from a relationship view.

In the article, Estella argued that Judaism is familiar with the pre-existence language, along with the concept of incarnation. In scripture, Estella exclaims the pre-existent Logos became (John 1: 14), the one who makes God fully known (John 1: 18), Christ glorification is in his death, resurrection, and his ascension. however, the incarnation was later developed by our church father (Estella Horning). There is no doubt that Jesus is God in scripture. However, Christ Deity was only expressed in the later development of the creeds. According to Estella, Jesus for Paul is never the object of worship, but he is the theme of worship and praise to God. Estella argued that it was toward the end of the first century do we find expression of Jesus as divine or God.

The futuristic view in the New Testament has one Jesus and many Christ. the earliest Christology looks forward to the return of Jesus. A familiar saying in scripture says, “the coming of the Son of Man who will return to judge the whole world” (Matt. 10:32; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26). The early churches acknowledge Jesus as Lord and they prayed for his return. Estella argued in this article that the church in the New Testament views the second coming of the Lord Jesus as the final act of salvation. The Lord Jesus did not just create the world and left it alone. He is presently active. In Matthew, the name Emanuel means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). The Lord is with us in both good time and bad time. It is important to acknowledge that the word of God is bigger than our feelings and our circumstances. A fraction time in the midst of our suffering may feel like a long time, but God will not allow us to go through it alone. He is closer then we think. Estella argued that in the Gospel of John, 25 promises to send the Advocate, which is the presence of God and Christ in us. Last, it is clear in scripture that the Lord Jesus promises to be with us always (Matthew 28:10). God is not a man that he should lie (Number 23: 19). We can certainly rely on his word. One author said “God’s hear is closer to our mouth, he is ready to listen what we have to say.

In these articles and the essays written by the Jewish Annotated New Testament about Christology, the authors communicate on the nature of Christ and declaring the good news. The Africans believe that the Lord Jesus is unfamiliar to them because of the approach of the missionaries from the western world. Christ is not just the savior of the western world, he is the savior of the whole world, especially Africa. Christology is the study of Christ and the authors want to prove that Jesus was fully divine and fully human. Jesus did not stop being God when he became human. Instead, he stripped himself from his glory. Jesus is the image of God and the firstborn over all creation (Colossian 1:15). It means that Jesus is before all things and he holds all things together. The sun rises in the morning because of Christ. The Lord Jesus is the reason why things are still together. Jesus said the son cannot do a thing, only what he sees the father is doing (John 14:31). Jesus is not a shadow of God. He is God. It is important for Christians to thank Jesus for being obedient to the death of the cross. There is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of the blood (Hebrew 9: 12).

Jesus fulfilled God's promise through his death to reconcile humanity to the Father. The early church raised questions about the divine and the human Jesus. The nature of Christ was not clear to the early church but until the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed states that they believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Trinity). Jesus is not subordinate to the Father, but He is of one substance with the Father. The early church had to admit that Jesus had to be God, although this study was later developed. However, the early church did not have the information we have today. It is important to note that they knew only God can save and forgive people from sins. Jesus did a lot of miracles in the midst of his followers. I think one of the most important things to highlight about the Christology of Jesus is that God promises a savior in Genesis 3:15 after the fall of men. This prophecy fulfilled when Christ came. He is God with us. The Lord was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. God spoke at his baptism. Jesus agreed to die for sinners who did not know him. He is the Architect of the world and the heart of Christianity. Jesus is not just fully human and God. There is no salvation apart from him. Jesus did not come for only the western population, in fact, he came to the Jews, but they rejected him (John 1: 10-11). And we learn to those who receive and believe in his name, they have the power of becoming children of God (12). Jesus is the bridge, the door, and the only way to heaven.

## References

*Magezi, C. & Igba, J.T., 2018, 'African theology and African Christology: Difficulty and complexity in contemporary definitions and methodological frameworks', HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies 74(1), 4590. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.nyack.edu/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4590>*

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Estella B. Horning. "Who is Jesus? Christologies in the New Testament" (1996)