

The Hypostatic Union

“Following the holy fathers, we all with one consent teach and confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Deity, and the same perfect in humanity, truly God, and the same truly man, of reasonable soul and body, of the same substance with the Father as to His divinity, of the same substance with us as to His humanity; in all things like to us, except sin; before the ages begotten of the Father as to His Deity, but in the latter days for us, and for our redemption, begotten (the same) of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, as to His humanity; one and the same Christ, So, Lord, Only-begotten, manifested in two natures, without confusion, without conversion, indivisibly, inseparably. The distinction of natures being by no means abolished by the union, but rather the property of each preserved and combined into one person and one hypostasis; not one severed or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten, viz. God, Logos, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451

We can not take away from His humanity or His deity. He is both human and divine, but what does that mean. How are both linked?

One person with two natures and two wills?

ONE PERSON (“A nature + independent subsistence, individuality”).

1) Do the Scriptures present Christ as one personality in His relation to other men and the members of the trinity? Note especially in the discussions concerning His identity and origin. Is there an indication that He is one and the same person before and after the incarnation?

A) Speaks of Himself as a single person. Refers to Himself as, “I, Me, Mine,” addressed as “Thee, Thou, Thine,” and referred to as “He, Him, His.” No trace of “I” and a “Thou” as found in the inter communications of the trinity. Does not speak of Himself as a plural as God does - Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7.

John 8:18, 23, 58 (“I”)

John 16:7 (“I” / “Him” - Holy Spirit)

B) Those that knew Him spoke of Him as a single individual

C) Passages of Incarnation = One Christ who is God & Man

John 1:1-14

1 John 1:1-3; 4:2,3

Romans 1:2-5

1 Timothy 3:16

Phil. 2:6-11

Hebrews 2:14

TWO NATURES (Nature = “sum-total of all the essential qualities of a thing, that which makes it what it is.” Also - “Substance”)

A) Human qualities and characteristics ascribed to Christ under divine titles:

Luke 1:32

1 Cor 2:8

Acts 20:28

B) Divine qualities and characteristics ascribed to Christ under human names:

John 3:13

John 6:62

Romans 9:5

Eph 1:23 cf Matt 28:20 - The Christ that died is the Christ who “fills all in all.”

Acts 17:31 cf Mt 25:31f - The one by whom God will judge the world.

C) Divine Consciousness

John 10:30 (I and the Father are One)

D) Human Consciousness

John 19:28 (I thirst)

E) Did the natures of Christ remain distinct in the incarnation?

Philippians 2:7 (Deity in state of humility)

Romans 8:3 (Deity becoming humanity)

Hebrews 2:14, 17, 18 (Put on humanity, yet retains deity)

Hebrews 4:15 (Divinity - high priest: Humanity - in all points tempted)

Luke 22:43 (Strengthened by an angel, minister to humanity in a divine manner)

TWO Wills

Two natures = two wills, the human will always in subjection to the divine. (John 4:34)

Like Marriage Relationship? - NO! In marriage people become one flesh, but they are still two distinct persons.

Like indwelling of Christ in the believer? NO! If God indwelt Christ in that manner He would have been a man indwelt by God and not God Himself.

Did Logos occupy the place of the human mind? NO! That would have meant Christ would have united Himself with an imperfect humanity. (Apollinarianism)

Did human and divine nature combine to form a third? NO! That would exclude Christ from being a true man and change the nature of deity. (Eutychianism).

Did Christ gradually take on the divine nature? NO! For then the reality of His deity would have been dependent upon the conscious appropriation of it by the humanity. (Nestorianism)

His two natures, divine and human, were welded indivisibly into one person without confusion (He is still both) and without conversion (He did not become a third thing).

Ramification: Only a person who is both completely divine and completely human could fulfill all three roles of Prophet, priest and king.