

BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

Concerning Christ, the apostle Peter boldly proclaimed, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). However, those who "believe in Christ" do well to ask, "Is my Christ the Christ of the New Testament?" A false Christ cannot save. He exists only as the figment of someone's theological imagination. The Bible predicts the corruption of truth concerning the Savior. Understood properly, His three-fold title, the **Lord Jesus Christ**, beautifully portrays His person and work. Is it any wonder that these titles and their implications have come under attack?

1 Corinthians 8:5-7 alerts us to the perversion of **His Lordship**. "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge. . . ." **His identity as Jesus** would likewise be distorted. Paul warned, ". . . If he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, . . . ye might well bear with him" (2 Corinthians 11:4). **The Savior's identity as Christ** would also be twisted. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24).

How could such falsehood come about? "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures. . ." (Matthew 22:29). To avoid error we must do as Jesus said: "Search the scriptures. . . they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

1. THE SAVIOR IS LORD.

- a. Thomas addressed Jesus as, ". . . My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). What does this mean?
- b. As Lord, He is the uncreated, eternal I AM.
 - (1) "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).
 - (2) The significance of such a declaration is rooted in the Old Testament. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you" (Exodus 3:14).
 - (3) The Old Testament term "I AM" is equivalent to God's name, "Jehovah", and is regularly translated "LORD." Jesus did not hesitate to claim this title. He is Jehovah.

- (4) As the eternal "I AM," the Lord Jesus is not a created being. His life has not been derived. Instead, He is the uncreated, unchanging self-existent One.
- (5) This means His Sonship is eternal. He never became the Son. He is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).
- (6) As the eternal "I AM," the Lord Jesus has never experienced any progression. "For I am the Lord, I change not. . ." (Malachi 3:6).

c. As Lord, He is fully God.

- (1) He deserves honor equal to that given the Father. ". . .All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. . ." (John 5:23).
- (2) He was God even during the years of His mortality. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he. . .said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:18).
- (3) Jesus is not a god. He is God. Joseph was instructed, ". . .They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

d. As Lord, He is the Creator.

- (1) Speaking of the Lord Jesus, Paul wrote, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Colossians 1:16).
- (2) Since He is their Creator, He could not be the brother of men or angels.
- (3) Ezekiel 28:15 speaks of Lucifer, stating, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." It is clear, therefore, that Lucifer is a creature rather than a brother of our Lord.

e. As Lord, He is the Master.

- (1) By definition of the term "Lord," He is the One to whom we must submit as servants. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the

earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

- (2) ". . . Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him" (Matthew 28:9).
- (3) Those who accept the Savior accept a new Master.
 - (a) ". . . If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus [literally, Jesus as Lord], and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).
 - (b) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not [literally, does not obey] the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him" (John 3:36).

2. THE SAVIOR IS JESUS.

- a. ". . . Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- b. As Jesus, He possesses perfect humanity.

"Jesus" is the human name of the Savior. While never laying aside or diminishing His eternal Godhood, He became perfectly human. This miraculous event is known as the incarnation.

- c. He was born of a virgin.
 - (1) The true humanity of Christ cannot be understood apart from His Spirit conception and virgin birth. Any other explanation of His coming in flesh describes a false Savior.
 - (2) "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, . . . behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. . . . Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. . . . For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:26-35).

- (3) Jesus had no physical or bodily father.
 - (4) Mary's virginity was intact to the time of Jesus' birth.
- d. Jesus was absolutely sinless.
- (1) The Spirit conception and virgin birth protected Him from inheriting a sin nature.
 - (2) He was incapable of sin.
 - (a) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). The singular word "sin" refers to the absence of the very ability to sin.
 - (b) In reference to Christ, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 7:26).
 - (c) Christ is described as "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19).
 - (3) Because He was sinless, He could not marry since no sinless mate existed for Him. The command is, "Be ye not unequally yoked together. . ." (2 Corinthians 6:14). Furthermore, there was no need for posterity. As He said, ". . .I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. . ." (Revelation 1:11).
- e. Jesus is the only physical manifestation of God.
- (1) "For in him [Jesus, distinct from any other member of the Trinity] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).
 - (2) Note: God became a man; man did not become a God.
 - (3) Since He was God before coming to earth, His human life was not a probationary state leading to possible deification. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . ." (John 1:1,14).
- f. The humanity of Jesus is an essential element in God's plan of salvation.

- (1) His shed blood is the means by which our sins are forgiven.
 - (a) ". . .The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).
 - (b) "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28).
 - (c) "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).
 - (d) ". . .Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).
 - (e) "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18,19).
 - (f) He ". . .loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5).
- (2) He died bodily as a substitute for sinners.
 - (a) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).
 - (b) "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you. . .how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day. . ." (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
 - (c) "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - (d) "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. . ." (1 Peter 3:18).

3. THE SAVIOR IS CHRIST.

- a. He is anointed of God to fulfill three specific roles.

The literal meaning of the term "Christ" ("Messiah" in the Old Testament) is "the anointed one." Anciently, prophets, priests, and kings were set apart by being anointed. Each of these offices finds its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ.

b. He is God's Prophet.

- (1) Deuteronomy 18:15 prophesied, "I will raise up unto thee a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."
- (2) Jesus Christ is that Prophet. "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14).
- (3) Since God's Prophet has come, we need no other prophet. Christ is the ultimate revelator and revelation of God to man.
 - (a) ". . .Ye need not that any man teach you. . ." (1 John 2:27).
 - (b) "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . ." (Hebrews 1:1,2).
- (4) The Prophet, Christ, has spoken. Nothing can be true which contradicts what He has said.

c. He is God's Priest.

- (1) He is "Called of God an high Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:10).
- (2) The essence of priesthood is representation. A priest represents man to God and God to man. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).
- (3) A priest must offer a sacrifice. This our Great High Priest has done by giving Himself as the sacrificial Lamb of God.
 - (a) ". . .John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

(b) ". . . Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

(c) Nothing can be added to His all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. ". . . When he had by himself purged our sins, [Christ] sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3). "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:11,12).

(4) Since Christ is ". . . a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:6), other Melchizedek priests are totally unnecessary. He alone is our Priest. "But this man, because he continueth ever [He will never die], hath an unchangeable priesthood [literally, not passing from one to another]. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:24,25).

d. He is King.

(1) He reigns over all by virtue of His divine supremacy as God, ". . . Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15). While others look to human religious authorities, Biblical Christians have no less an authority than God in the flesh.

(2) Prophetically, the Lord Jesus Christ will reign in His Millennial Kingdom.

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. . . .and [His people] shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 19:16; 20:6).

(3) Because He is the Sovereign King, we are obligated to abandon all thoughts of personal exaltation and bow at His feet. Saul is a worthy model. ". . . And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth. . . . And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:3-6).

4. SALVATION IS ONLY IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST OF THE BIBLE.

- a. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- b. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

CONCLUSION

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 John 1:3,4).

". . . The whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (1 John 5:19-21).