



Essential to understanding the person of Jesus Christ is that he possessed two natures, divine and human, in complete fullness and unity. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. Being fully God is how Christ lived a sinless life and served as the proper atonement for sin. Being fully man is also how Christ served as the proper atonement for sin, but it is also how God related to humanity in an ultimate way. Being fully human, Christ perfectly related to and experienced all it means to be human, and yet without sin.

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DISCUSSION #1: Jesus as Fully Divine

Essential to understanding the person of Jesus Christ is that he possessed two natures, divine and human, in complete fullness and unity. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. Being fully God is how Christ lived a sinless life and served as the proper atonement for sin. Being fully man is also how Christ served as the proper atonement for sin, but it is also how God related to humanity in an ultimate way. Being fully human, Christ perfectly related to and experienced all it means to be human, and yet without sin.

Christ having two natures (human and divine) has been discussed, defined, and debated for centuries. The historical and orthodox church came to the conclusion that Jesus was and is eternally and fully divine (fully God). This will be the point of discussion for today.

MY STORY | Starting Place

When you have read Genesis 1:26-27, how have you typically understood the “our?” What views have you encountered on who the pronoun represents?

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

Thinking across the board of your whole faith journey, how have you understood the existence of Jesus? Did he come to be when the Virgin Mary conceived? Explain.

“Word” in the Greek (logos) means “message” or “speech.” What this has been understood to mean in John 1:1 is the complete speech-act of God is revealed in Jesus Christ. In Genesis 1, all of creation is made through speech-acts. Thus, what we learn from John 1:1 is that Jesus was present and involved in the act of creation—he was there in the beginning.

Here is further clarification and affirmation from the Apostle Paul:

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16

“...the Word was God.” What have you understood this phrase to mean? In light of the brief commentary above, what should the phrase mean?

What consequences are there to how we understand atonement and salvation if Jesus Christ was not fully God?

Could Jesus have been fully God if he wasn't divine from the beginning? Explain your reasoning. humankind. Make a list of key details shared in this closer shot.

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

As mentioned in the introduction, the divinity of Christ has been a topic of discussion amongst Christians since the beginning of the Church. However, the divinity of Christ has also served as one of the strongest uniting beliefs among Christians for centuries. By affirming this belief, we step into a community filled with more people than we could imagine.

Take a moment to celebrate this same unity you now have with people sitting amongst you. Hold onto this truth. Is there anyone among you struggling with it? How can you rely on the community around you with the things you struggle to understand?

MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

Is there someone in your life who denies that Jesus is fully God? Schedule to have a conversation with them this week to share what you learned in this discussion. If you don't have a person like that in your life, practice with a friend or your spouse how you would explain how we know Jesus was and is fully God.

DISCUSSION #2: Jesus as Fully Human

Essential to understanding the person of Jesus Christ is that he possessed two natures, divine and human, in complete fullness and unity. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. Being fully God is how Christ lived a sinless life and served as the proper atonement for sin. Being fully man is also how Christ served as the proper atonement for sin, but it is also how God related to humanity in an ultimate way. Being fully human, Christ perfectly related to and experienced all it means to be human, and yet without sin.

There have been many suggestions in regard to explaining how Jesus lived a fully human life while being fully divine. Some of these theories and suggestions have led to concluding Jesus could not have been fully human at various points in his earthly life. In this discussion, the full humanity of Jesus in his life, death, and resurrection will be established.

MY STORY | Starting Place

Have you ever wished God understood something about your life or experience that you felt he didn't or couldn't understand? Explain why.

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Philip-
pians 2:4-8*

Examining the phrases, "taking the form of a servant," "born in the likeness of men," and "being found in human form," what is Paul saying about Jesus' human nature?

Why do you think it was important for Jesus to be fully human?

Read Hebrews 2:17 together. What reasons for Jesus being fully human does this verse offer?

"...to make propitiation for the sins of the people..." This phrase at the end of the verse makes a powerful statement. If Christ was not fully human, would he have been able to propitiate (the act of gaining or retaining favor or goodwill) for sinners? Why or why not?

Now, read 2 John 7: "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist." Based on this verse, how important is the belief that Jesus was and is fully human? Can we be flexible on this topic? Explain.

Circling back to personal experience, read Hebrews 2:18. What thoughts, emotions, and reactions does this verse bring up in you?

On a spectrum, have you historically thought of Jesus as more human or divine? What have been the positive or negative implications of where you land on this spectrum?

Had you, before now, considered a reason Christ was and is fully human has to do with his ability to relate to you? How does that impact you?

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

The humility of Christ is a major emphasis in the passage from Philippians 2. If it was so important that Christ humble himself, how can you demonstrate humility to one another and in your other immediate contexts?

MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

Is there someone in your life who needs to hear Hebrews 2:18? Make that call this week to share what you've learned about the nearness of Christ to us by coming in human form.

DISCUSSION #3: Jesus as Glorified

Essential to understanding the person of Jesus Christ is that he possessed two natures, divine and human, in complete fullness and unity. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. Being fully God is how Christ lived a sinless life and served as the proper atonement for sin. Being fully man is also how Christ served as the proper atonement for sin, but it is also how God related to humanity in an ultimate way. Being fully human, Christ perfectly related to and experienced all it means to be human, and yet without sin.

Where is Jesus now? This is an intriguing question, as well as what form he exists in post-resurrection. For today's discussion, you will study Jesus as presently seated at the right hand of God the Father in restored and fully glorified human form.

MY STORY | Starting Place

If you were to answer the question, "Where is Jesus today," what would you say? What has been your understanding of Jesus' location, post-resurrection and ascension?

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
Hebrews 1:3

What do you think it means that Jesus is seated at the "right hand" of God the Father? Is that significant? How so?

Knowing that Jesus is seated next to complete, perfect, radiating Majesty, what does that say about who is qualified (and why) to hold such a position?

"...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2

The author of Hebrews notes that a motivation for Jesus to go through with his gruesome death on the cross was joy. What do you think that joy was/is?

What reward is there in being seated at God's right hand? How would you describe this position to a new or non-believer?

Thinking of the shame of the cross and Jesus' position now, what contrast is the author of Hebrews trying to make? What does that say about the glory of Jesus' position now?

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

In your group, pause and set a timer for eight minutes. During this time, silently meditate on the glory of Christ as he is seated at the right hand of God. Meditation on this can look like silent prayer, journaling thoughts and insights, or sitting peacefully still, open to the Holy Spirit's revelation on the topic.

After the 8 minutes, take 5 minutes to share with one another what the Lord revealed or taught you during that exercise.

MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

When thinking of Christ fully glorified at the right hand of God the Father, how does that impact/inspire your worship of him?

Take time three days this week to spend a minimum of five minutes simply adoring the glorified Christ. Note how this practice impacts your days, attitude, requests, and prayers.