

The God-Man

“It was the Christians habit on a fixed day to assemble before daylight and recite by turns a form of words to Christ as God.” Pliny the Younger, *Letter 10*

Most of the book so far has been unpacking personal roles that could both develop the personal unity and productivity of Jesus Christ and the factuality of His humanity. However, this chapter especially examines the Deity of Christ, and how the personal unity and humanity fit together with this Divine Christ.

O.T. and Second Temple Jewish Hints Toward Divinity

No O.T. text, nor second Temple tradition develops a definitive statement of a divine Messiah or of Messiah’s pre-existence before incarnation. Hints occur from a range of texts (like Micah 5:2). However, the greatest possibilities emerge from Isaiah 9:6 Messianic name of “Mighty God,” and Daniel 7:13–14 “Son of Man” as the cloud rider.

Micah 5:2–5 predicts that there will be a child whose goings are from everlasting but that He would be born in Bethlehem as king of Israel. The “everlasting goings” hint at pre-existence and raises the possibility of divinity. Of course the rest of the prophecy speaks to the birth and reign of the Messianic King.

In Isaiah 9, this Messianic child will have throne names¹ that declare His glory as king and maybe even “*Immanuel*” (“*God with us*” in more than providence, Isa. 7:14; 8:8, 10). This child is named as “Wonderful Counselor,” a quality of the ideal wise statesman, which Isaiah develops of the Messianic branch and of God (Isa. 9:6; 11:2; 28:29). However, the name that might imply deity the most is His throne name “Mighty God,” He is the champion who can carry out those plans, a title used elsewhere only of Yahweh (Isa. 9:6; 10:21). Does this hint at “*Immanuel*” meaning “God incarnate among us”? As “Everlasting Father,” He is the enduring benefactor for His people, as God supremely is, maybe hinting of deity since elsewhere in Isaiah this refers to Yahweh (Isa. 9:6; 63:16). As “Prince of Peace,” He is the provider of universal peace (Isa. 9:5–7; which also points toward Yahweh, Judg. 6:24).

Jesus ties Daniel’s Son of Man (which hints at divinity) with the Davidic king image of Psalm 110:1 at His trial (Mt. 26:64; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 22:69). Daniel 7 concludes the vision of four beasts with the divine Ancient of Days in His throne room, to conquer all the Gentile nations which have stood against God. Entering into the midst of this throne room is the Son of Man riding on the clouds (Dan. 7:13–14). Some take this title to refer to the primordial man who will rule like Psalm 8:4 mentions, but most recognize that the cloud riding identifies the Son of Man as the king of the Gods,² like Marduk or Baal. Yet in Judaism’s monotheism the Ancient of Days is clearly the presentation of God. Thus in second Temple and rabbinic Judaism this cloud rider is reinterpreted as

¹ Some conjecture that these are also theophanic names to describe God, and grammatically they could be but the focus in Isaiah 9:6–7 is on the child not the power behind Him, so throne names are preferred by most exegetes. The concept of throne names identifies qualities which are describing the child King and not primarily the God behind this child King, as would be the case if they were theophanic names.

² L. Sabourin, “The Biblical Cloud,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 4(1974): 290–311, especially 304.

Messiah.³ Therefore, this quasi-divine Messiah comes up to God and receives His dominion to rule the Kingdom. This Danielic Son of Man is explicitly called “Messiah” in the *Similitudes of Enoch* 46.1; 47.3 and in *4 Ezra* 7.28–29; 12.11; 13.32. In fact, *1 Enoch* 62:7–9 describes the Son of Man as preexistent from the beginning,⁴ ready to come to judge and rule. Furthermore, the DSS manuscript *4Q246* refers to “the Son of God” (namely, the Messianic King) in profoundly Danielic language as before the throne of God, and then coming to earth to conquer his enemies and establish his everlasting Kingdom. Drawing upon the insights of John Collins (from *4Q246*) and N. T. Wright (from Mark 13), Marv Pate argues that the Danielic Son of Man is portrayed as fighting on behalf of the righteous (Essenes or the disciples of Jesus, respectively), whose enemies include the nation of Israel.⁵ However, the Jewish tradition generally regarded Daniel’s Son of Man to be the Messiah beneficial for Israel unto Kingdom.⁶ Additionally, this Son of Man title was tied by Jesus to refer to the Melchizedekian King-Priest of Psalm 110 (Mt. 26:64; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 22:69). This Melchizedek figure is described in Qumran as *elohim* in his role as eschatological judge.⁷ This might hint at divinity, or indicate He holds a place among the court of divinity, including angels. This King’s reign will be an everlasting dominion (Dan. 7:14; Ps. 110:4).

So the O.T. and second Temple Judaism hints toward a divine Messianic King but such lofty language is inconclusive and could be explained by honoring vocabulary. Likewise, in Graeco-Roman world human kings, such as the Caesars were referred to as God (θεός), Lord (κύριος), Son of God, and Savior of the world.⁸ However, at points the N.T. develops these concepts within a Jewish monotheism whose God creates and serves as eschatological Judge and has O.T. passages for יהוה /*Yahweh*, אֱלֹהִים /*’ēlōhîm* and אֲדֹנָי /*Adonai* applied to Jesus, such that the concepts are elevated as they refer to Jesus in comparison to their use for these earthly kings.

³ *4 Ezra* 13.1–9, 25–26, 35–36; *B. Sanh.* 96b–97a, 98a; *Targum to 1 Chr.* 3:24; *Pirke Mashiah*, *BhM* 3.70; Arthur Marmorstein, “Les Signes du Messie,” *Revue des Études Juives* 52(1906): 184.

⁴ Rabbinic works also speak of the Messiah emerging in the mind of God in the beginning before creation: *B. Pes.* 54a; *B. Ned.* 39a; *Gen. Rab.* 1.4; 2.4; *Pes. Rab.* ch. 35.

⁵ C. Marvin Pate, *Communities of the Last Days: The Dead Sea Scrolls, the New Testament & the Story of Israel* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 2000), pp. 127–132.

⁶ *1 En.* 37–71; *4 Ezra* 13; *Tg. 1 Chron.* 3.24; *b. Sanh.* 38b rabbi Akiva sees it as a messiah reference while rabbi Jose does not.

⁷ *11QMelch* 10–11, 13–14. This *elohim* view was interpreted late in the fourth century by Eliphanius of Salamis as indicative of divinity (*Panarion* 55.7.3) and some others have followed his view. Especially a fifth century A.D. Gnostic sect referred to as the Melchizedekians (cf. Fred Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition*, pp. 89–113; Birger A. Pearson, “The Figure of Melchizedek in Gnostic Literature” in *Gnosticism, Judaism, and Egyptian Christianity: Studies in Antiquity & Christianity* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990], pp. 108–123).

⁸ Kings as God and Savior of World: Adolf Deismann, *Light from the Ancient East: The NT Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of Graeco-Roman World*. Trans. by Lionel Strachan (New York: George Daron Co., 1927), pp. 344–69. Kings as Lord: H. Bietenhard, “Lord, Master.” in *DNTT*, 2:511; O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press 1963), pp. 197–99; e.g., Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum* 13.2; the title was also used to describe gods (e.g., 1 Cor. 8:5); Deismann, *Light*, pp. 352–3. God is Father to king as Son, ancient near East examples include from: Egypt: Pharaoh as son of Re, Ugarit and Mesopotamia: Keret is son of El, and Roman: Caesar as Son of God; cf. von Martitz, *TDNT* 8:336–40; M. Hengel, *The Son of God: The Origin of Christology and the History of Jewish-Hellenistic Religion* (London: SCM, 1976), p. 24; James Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), pp. 14–16; Deismann, *Light*, p. 346.

John's Christology from Above

John's writing often begins with Christological development. For example, John 1:1–18 unpacks the incarnation *from above*. Likewise, 1 John unpacks the relevant human side of Jesus for gospel *from below*. Both Christology *from above* and *below* fold in Christology *from before*, which unpacks the implications of these different presentations. Finally, the book of Revelation extends the theophany into a Christophany with many of the same traits. Additionally, John embeds other profound gems about Christ throughout his writing.

John one begins with the beginning of creation and the revelational Word as already present (rather than Hebrew personified Wisdom which is the first created thing or Platonic Form or Stoic empowerment).⁹ This Word was with the monotheistic Jewish God, so that God has a reality other than the Word (Jn. 1:1–2). However, Colwell's rule in this Johannine context argues that the Word was also this monotheistic Jewish God (Jn. 1:1 θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος). Or as Colwell argued that the word 'god' (θεὸς) "is indefinite in this position only when the context demands it. The context makes no such demand in the Gospel of John, for this statement can not be regarded as strange in the prologue of the gospel which reaches its climax in the confession of Thomas."¹⁰ That is, the article is absent before the verb but present after the verb identifying that both nouns are definite ("the Word was God"), after John's pattern (as in John 1:49 where John uses Colwell's rule again, "You are the King of Israel"). Furthermore, the continuing subject through the sentence is "the Word," which is further reinforced by it having the article. Likewise, the juxtapositioning of "God" close to each other (θεόν, καὶ θεὸς) would imply that they are both in the same divine nature, perhaps even emphasizing that "the Word was THE GOD," by placing θεὸς first in the phrase. The Jewish monotheistic divinity of the Word was further underscored by the Word being identified as doing the acts of God, like creating everything (Jn. 1:3, 10). In addition, Jesus as the Word is the life that sustains, resurrects, and revelationally enlightens humans (Jn. 1:4; 6: 35, 48; 11:25). The Word and the Light are clearly Jesus Christ in this context because He is who John the Baptist points people toward in the context (Jn. 1:6–8, 15, 19–34). However, even though the revelational Light shines in the darkness to enlighten every human, the darkened world did not comprehend it or receive Him (Jn. 1:5, 9; 8:12). Perhaps after a similar second Temple Jewish pattern with the *Community Rule* columns 3 and 4 this Light would also frame a mystical domain of light in contrast to darkness of Satan. With this mysticism, the text raises the issue of allegiance and mystical participation of those who are His with Him in the light. Even though many Jews did not receive this Light, to those who did by believing in His name, He involved them as children or family of God, because they were birthed anew by the will of God (Jn. 1:10–13).

⁹ The focus in John 1 is not that of Wisdom (Pr. 8; *Wisd. of Sol.* 2.23; 7.25–26; 10.3–19; 11.1; *Sir.* 1.1–6; 15.18), nor of Platonism (Philo, *Som.* 1.228–30; *Abr.* 119–23; *Vit. Mos.* 2.252–54; *Rer. Div. Her.* 203–205; 259), nor Stoicism (Seneca, *Nat. Quaest.* 1.pref.13; 3.29; *Diogenes Laertius* 7.134, 148; 8.134; Plutarch, *Moral* 1077d).

¹⁰ E. C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament." *JBL* 52(1933): 21; Murray Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), pp. 57–71, 310–13.

This very Word became (ἐγένετο) flesh, in that this Divine revelational Word expressed Himself in a visual way through embodiment so that we might behold His glory (Jn. 1:14–18). This taking on a body was a truly unique birthing in history so that the fullness of the divine glory, grace and truth, might be evident through Him. Which revelation of grace and truth is so compelling as to overshadow the previous revelation of the Law through Moses. So that while no one has ever seen God directly and personally, this uniquely born God explains God to us. The concept of “unique birth” (μονογενῆς) in non Johaininne instances simply means “unique child” as in an only child of a synagogue official or the only child of the covenant in the case of Isaac (Lk. 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; Heb. 11:17)¹¹, however in John it means “a unique birth” as in the revelational divine Word adding humanity so that He would reveal God to us (Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn. 4:9). That is, not an eternal generation but a historical birthing in time to incarnate a particular human Jesus as the bodily revelation of God.¹² The μονογενῆς is a historical birthing because it reflects the emphasis of the contexts, which in John 1 is describing that process of the divine Word becoming flesh. Furthermore, in the John 3 and 1 John 4 contexts, the Father’s love is shown in the giving of the uniquely born Son into the world to provide everlasting life through His becoming the visible object of faith (Jn. 3:16, 18;

¹¹ Tob. 3:15; Wis. Sol. 7:22; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.222; 20:20; *1 Clement* 25.2. Additionally, LXX renders “alone” (ἄνῃ) by μονογενῆς four times (Judg. 11:34; Pss. 21:21 [MT 22:21]; 24:16 [MT 25:16]; 34:17 [MT 35:17]).

¹² E.g., D. Moody, “God’s only Son: the translation of John 3:16 in the revised standard Version” *JBL* 72(1953): 213–19; G.R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (Waco: Word Publishers, 1987), pp. 14–16, 51; Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John i–xii*, vol. 29 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 13–14, 30–34, 129, 134; *The Epistles of John*. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982), pp. 516–17; Craig Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), pp. 412–16, 566–68; Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), pp. 95–6, 98–99, 159–160; Leon Morris *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), pp. 105–6, 113–14, 230–4; Stephen Smalley, *1,2,3 John* (Dallas: Word, 1984), CD disc commentary 1 Jn. 4:9; B. F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 10–14, 55. On rare occasions an individual suggests that the quotes of Psalm 2:7 in the N.T. can be taken in support of eternal generation. Psalm 2:7 “Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee” fits into the context of the day in which the Davidic king is installed as king in Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6). In Hebrews 1:5 this statement is already said to the Son and connected with the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:14 also quoted in Heb. 1:5). In Heb. 5:5 the *today* is identified with the earthly life of Jesus (Who was perfect and did not need a sacrifice [Heb. 5:1–3] and at Gethsemane cried out in effective prayer [Heb. 5:7–8]) in contrast with Psalm 110:4 quoted in Hebrews 5:6 perpetuity of Jesus as a Melchizedekian priest, once He began it in His humanity. Such a priesthood is not eternal because Jesus had to become incarnated before it could begin. In Acts 13:33 Paul’s sermon at Pisidian Antioch quote Psalm 2:7 connected with the resurrection of Jesus. Similar affirmations of the beloved Sonship of Jesus are also said in His baptism and transfiguration but none develop eternal generation (Mt. 3:17; 17:5; Mk. 1:11; Lk. 3:22). When D. A. Carson was asked about these uses of Psalm 2:7 at the Southeast ETS, 2003 meeting, he denied that they had anything to do with eternal generation and denied the concept attached to μονογενῆς as well. Then he responded with a text in John 6 that he claimed developed aseity, but I think that his text better teaches an economic ministry of sustenance. For example, in John 6:32–33 Jesus (the bread of God) is true bread given by the Father coming out of heaven revelationally for sustenance and thereby life to the world, in a time like manna had been given out in the wilderness (Jn. 6:31). Notice that this is not aseity for it would only be appropriate after creation had occurred, for He came to give life to the world. Additionally, this comment by Jesus would only be appropriate after Jesus’ incarnation, for in John 6:38 Jesus identifies that He had come down from heaven, sent by the Father to do His Father’s will. Therefore, these do not teach aseity, and I agree with Carson that they do not teach eternal generation.

1 Jn. 4:9). So these texts emphasize the incarnation as the realization of the μονογενῆς. This begetting is referred to in John 1:18 as a begetting of God (μονογενῆς θεός)¹³ in the sense that the passage has emphasized, that is, the divine Word incarnates as man for purposes of revealing God to man. This phrase “the uniquely begotten God” would further underscore that this Word does not lose His divinity while He simultaneously is born as human.¹⁴ Jesus’ incarnation showed the divine fullness of grace and truth, far surpassing the revelation of Moses. Through all this the Father is steadfast in love for Christ.¹⁵

The simultaneity of Jesus’ divine heavenly presence and human earthly presence is taught by Jesus to Nicodemus in their encounter. The narrative begins by Nicodemus realizing that God enables Jesus’ miracles, so he approaches Jesus with respect as to a rabbi (Jn. 3:1–21). This encounter occurs in the darkness of night probably because of Nicodemus’ fear (Jn. 3:2; 7:50–52), but John’s gospel plays off this real darkness in this account by metaphorically setting Jesus up as the light that shines in darkness (Jn. 3:19–21). Jesus responded that only those who are born “again” or “from above”¹⁶ will be able to see the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus was confused about how new birth could take place. Jesus identified that our first birth brought about our human flesh condition, but the new birth to spiritual being is created by the Spirit of God, and illustrated by baptism (which is the initiation rite unto Kingdom).¹⁷ Jesus was surprised that Nicodemus did not understand these earthly things. Jesus clarified that He referred to a spiritual (πνεύματος) birth brought about by the causality of the Spirit (πνεῦμα), like the causality of wind (τὸ πνεῦμα) functions; you can’t see the Spirit or wind but you can see

¹³ μονογενῆς θεός is the reading of the earliest and best manuscripts and it is the more likely reading because it is harder than the other options which soften it by scribal assimilation (Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [London: United Bible Societies, 1975], p. 198; Murray Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992], pp. 74–96; Craig Keener, *John*, pp. 425–426).

¹⁴ This meaning would be the case even more if John 3:13 is understood as a claim by Christ to be simultaneously in heaven and before Nicodemus as I develop in a page that it is likely to be. Thus both these texts would support a Chalcedonian view of Christ as the God-man.

¹⁵ The concept of “bosom” expresses “intimacy and affection” as in John 13:25 the disciple whom Jesus loved laying on His breast in table fellowship; Lk. 16:22–23; *Jub.* 23.2; Juvenal, *Sat.* 2.120; *T. Ab.* 20.14A.

¹⁶ ἄνωθεν can mean: 1) “from above” as from God or the Spirit, which is an emphasis in the context (Jn. 3:6, 13), or 2) “again” as either: 2a) born unto Kingdom, instead of into this world (Jn. 3–5, 16), or 2b) as a Spirit birth in contrast to a human flesh birth (Jn. 3:4–6).

¹⁷ “Born by water and the Spirit” could mean: 1a) Semen (as in born initially). 1b) Water sack (as in born initially). 2) Water as metaphor for the Spirit (e.g., Titus 3:5). 3) Born from above, with baptism as the initiation rite unto the Kingdom, which baptism in the context is associated with the Spirit (Jn. 1:26–33; proselyte baptism among the Jews; *m. Pesah* 8.8; *t. ‘Abod. Zar.* 3.11; *IQS* 2.25–3.12; Epict. *Diatr.* 2.9.20; probably *Juv. Sat.* 14.104; *Sib. Or.* 4.162–65; *Yeb.* 2.29). 4) Some also claim the water is Kingdom purifying immersion (with Jn. 2:6; *IQS* 4.21; *p. Qidd.* 3.12.8 *Num. Rab.* 7.10 reading Ezek. 36). Views 1a and 1b are unlikely since they have occurred and Jesus presents what is necessary to happen to enter Kingdom. View 2 is unlikely because there is already a closer metaphor for the Spirit in this context with that of wind. View 3 is the likely way to take this metaphor because of the near context use in John and in the culture, and the early church clearly embraced this view as well (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12; Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Pet. 3:21). View 4 is unlikely because it would occur as the Kingdom begins, so it would be redundant to entering Kingdom and thus not really a requirement to enter Kingdom as Jesus presents it to Nicodemus.

its effect. Jesus also clarified that He is simultaneously in heaven (Jn. 3:13)¹⁸ and present before Nicodemus (Jn. 3:3, 5, 10) as the Son of Man to become the healing object of faith, like the bronze serpent on a pole (Num. 21:9). Jesus' simultaneousness in heaven and earth argues strongly for the Chalcedonian Christological position, developed in the historical section. The majority of Bruce Metzger's United Bible Societies' editorial committee rejected this reading of "in heaven" as too advanced a development of Christology and let John 3:13 be parallel to John 1:18; 3:31; 6:38, 42, which teaches that Jesus "has come from heaven" to reveal God and implement the Son of Man's role into an already established mystical judgment and Kingdom. Such a meaning would be profound in its already mystical realization of the Son of man's judgment and Kingdom consequences. Metzger makes the claim that the "in heaven" reading is "supported almost exclusively by Egyptian witnesses," contrary to the case.¹⁹ Whereas in the second edition he acknowledges that his shorter reading is the reading almost exclusively supported by Egyptian sources.²⁰ The minority argue that "there is no discernable motive that would have prompted copyists to add the words 'who is in heaven,' resulting in a most difficult saying" and thus a likely original textual reading. Additionally, some of the support for the minority reading come from third and fourth century sources, before and not normally identified with Chalcedon (like Origin). I join the minority of the UBS editorial committee which sees Jesus' "presentness" in heaven as a more difficult textual statement to be preferred as the earlier text and as a reading it does have stronger and broader textual support than the other options. Thus, I conclude in this verse for a two-natures view of Christ that permits a simultaneous Jewish monotheistic divine presence in heaven while His earthly human presence is visually before Nicodemus. Such a meaning would still convey that the Son of Man has come for judgment and Kingdom, but simultaneous to that this view would also underscore the Chalcedonian position of Jesus as the God-man.

Jesus death and glorification are fused in John's gospel, as the Son of Man is lifted up,²¹ so that those who believe Him in this role do not perish but have everlasting life. Believers are mystically already included as everlasting life folks. The revelational light draws these practitioners of the truth to the light exposing their deeds as created by

¹⁸ The claim to be presently in heaven is a significant textual variant with strong and broad manuscript support (much more than the omission option that has a and B as support), and the simultaneous claim to be present in heaven while He is also present before Nicodemus is clearly the most difficult reading even if it is not the shortest. The other options of "coming from heaven" have significantly less textual support and other Johannine texts to explain why they might have been harmonized to soften this option. The omission option would also internally soften this issue. Cf. Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, pp. 203–204; David Alan Black sides with the minority that prefers the reading of Jesus presentness in heaven, *New Testament Textual Criticism: A Concise Guide* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), pp. 49–56.

¹⁹ Byzantine textual support for the "in heaven" reading: A, E, F, G, H, K, M, S, V, Γ, Λ, Π, *Byz. Lect.*, Basil, Chrysostom, Didymus Nonnus, Theodoret. Western textual support: Old Latin, Syriac (Harclean), Hippolytus Novation, Hillary. Alexandrian textual support: 892 Coptic (mss. of the Bohairic), Dionysius, Origin. Caesarean textual support: Θ, *fl*, *fl*3, 28, 565, Armenian Georgian. This reading "in heaven" is indicated in the margin for the *English Standard Version*.

²⁰ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: Second Edition* (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 2002), p. 174.

²¹ I explain the glorification meaning of "lifted up" in the chapter, "Jesus as Sacrifice," section "John's Imagery of the 'Lamb of God' and 'Lifted up' Glorification."

God. Jesus is presently the Light come into the world and simultaneously the heavenly Judge as Son of Man. The doers of evil hate this light already in the world, lest their deeds should be exposed (Jn. 3:19–20; 1 Jn. 2:15).²² Nicodemus later shows obvious allegiance to Jesus (Jn. 7:50–51; 19:39).

After Jesus healed the paralyzed man on the Sabbath, Jesus taught that He and His Father were working to bring life and judgment to the world, which the Jews interpreted to be a claim “making Himself equal with God” within their Jewish monotheism (Jn. 5:17–47). Jesus answers them with the Son following the Father in doing the deeds (like healing on the Sabbath) that the Father enables and does. So the giving of life and the raising of the dead is what the Father does and thus the Son also does these miracles. However, the Father has given the role of judging over to the Son of Man in order that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father. Thus this role of the Son is greater than an apprenticeship for it is consistent with the Father’s will and deeds but the judgment of people’s destiny is delegated to the Son of Man. The Son of Man has come into the world to separate people through judgment. Those who do not honor the Son, show themselves to not honor the Father and remain condemned under the Son of Man’s judgment. Those who do not have the Son do not have the Father God either (1 Jn. 2:22–23). Whereas, those who hear and believe the Son’s word as Son of Man sent from the Father, have passed from death into everlasting life and do not come into judgment. This eschatological judgment is coming in which those in the tombs shall hear the Son of Man’s voice and be judged, permitting the good to resurrection life and the evil to resurrection of judgment. This judgment of the Son of Man reflects the judgment of the Father’s will and is thus just.

Jesus identified that the crowds could know that he was as He claimed, because of the multiple witnesses to this fact that He is the provider of everlasting life and Judge (Jn. 5:31–47). First, John the Baptist testifies for Jesus and the Jews were willing to rejoice in his light, but he witnessed to the truth of Jesus. However, the Father also witnesses to Jesus through the miracles that the Son and Father simultaneously accomplish. Jesus accuses His audience of not believing this witness and thus not having the Father’s word within them. Furthermore, the Scriptures witness for Jesus identifying that it is He who has everlasting life, but the crowd does not believe this witness either. This identifies that His audience does not have the love of God within themselves. Instead their heads are turned by the glory of men, but that cuts them out of the everlasting life and the glory from the only God. Moses accuses them in their unbelief. And if they don’t believe Moses they won’t believe Jesus. His audience is thus already condemned by the judgment of the Son of Man. However, this Mosaic witness sets up John 6 and Jesus’ claim that one greater than Moses is here.

Jesus uses “I am” expressions to describe Himself, some in absolute form without an identifier (Jn. 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19), and others with the self-identification, “I am He” (Jn. 4:26; 6:20; 9:9; 18:5–8). The phrase Ἐγώ εἰμι can refer to a self designation referencing a previous discussion (the second use above), as the healed blind man identifies himself “I am he” (Jn. 9:9).²³ In this manner, Jesus refers to Himself as the Messiah, the bread of life, and the One for which the mob is looking to take into custody.

²² 1 En. 108.11–14; *Com. Rule* col. 3 and 4.

²³ Cf. 2 Sam 2:20 LXX; Mk. 14:62; *T. Job* 29.4; 31.6; *b. Ketub.* 63a.

However, Ἐγὼ εἰμι often does not serve as a mere recognition formula. For example, as Jesus walks on water the disciples recognize Him, so that when Jesus responds with Ἐγὼ εἰμι it is not primarily identifying His identity, but explaining why it is that He walks (within the Divine prerogative) on water, that is “I AM” indicates Deity, so they worship Him (Mt. 14:26–27, 33; Mk. 6:49–50; Jn. 6:20–21; Job 9:8; 38:16; Hab. 3:15). Such Divine self designations using Ἐγὼ εἰμι occur occasionally grounded in the pronouncement of YHWH²⁴ to Moses and Israel (LXX: Ἐγὼ εἰμι in: Ex. 3:14; Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10, 25; 45:18; 46:4, 9; 47:10; 48:12, 17; 51:12; 52:6).²⁵ These Divine statements attempt to foster faith; “so that you may know and believe and understand that I am (Ἐγὼ εἰμι)” (Isa. 43:10 LXX). So that, at times Jesus’ use of Ἐγὼ εἰμι, while answering a question, also identifies Jesus’ Deity. As in the instance above, when Jesus is recognized as walking on water and pronounces Ἐγὼ εἰμι as a Divine designation and the disciples and He are immediately at their destination, when a moment before they were still in the storm on the sea (Mk. 6:49–50; Jn. 6:20–21). The disciples recognize Jesus is God and worship Him (Mt. 14:33). In this same manner, Jesus identifies Himself as the Light of the world, which means that His followers will die in their sins, unless they believe Jesus to be I am (Ἐγὼ εἰμι) or God to whom they submit (Jn. 8:12, 24, 28). Jesus audience recognized that He was making lofty Divine claims and resisted Him as not greater or existing before Abraham. Jesus answered them with, “before Abraham was born, I am (Ἐγὼ εἰμι)” (Jn. 8:58). The Jews were incensed with this comment as a blasphemy of claiming to be God and tried to stone Him, but He eluded them and went out of the Temple. In a later setting of the upper room, Jesus prophesied that He would be betrayed, so that when it happened they would then believe “I am” (Ἐγὼ εἰμι, Jn. 13:19). Each of these Ἐγὼ εἰμι statements identifies Jesus as God. Now to examine a few others which are more contextually developed.

The crowd seeks to be fed again as an indication of Jesus’ Messiahship, however He indicates that He is already come from heaven as the Son of Man. Jesus refused the crowd’s comparison that he was like Moses and pointed out (as did Moses) that it was the Father who gave the manna (cf. Ex. 16:4, 6–8, 15, 29, 32; Ps. 78:19–20; Neh. 9:15; Jn. 6:32–33). Additionally, it is the Father who gives the true bread from heaven now, which coming down from heaven gives life to the world. The multitude asked for this bread. Jesus midrashically²⁶ explained to them, that He is the sustenance from heaven Whom

²⁴ In the Hebrew text of Ex. 3:14 אֶהְיֶה could either be a Qal imperfect emphasizing God’s presence as the unchanging One Who can be counted on as present help aid (as in the rescue of Israel from Egypt), or the Hiphil imperfect emphasizing that God will always be there to create and provide what is needed. There is no development of aseity or eternal existence of God in this verse. In the LXX, when this is retranslated as Ἐγὼ εἰμι, the meaning should have more the first option since the present active indicative in Greek is closer to the Qal in Hebrew.

²⁵ Cf. *Mekhila de Rabbi Ishmael* (Shirta 4, Babodesh 5, and Pisha 12), *b. Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b; Catrin Williams, “‘I Am’ or ‘I Am He’?: Self-Declaratory Pronouncements in the Fourth Gospel and Rabbinic Tradition” in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition*, edited by Robert Fortna and Tom Thatcher (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 343–52.

²⁶ Midrash shows evidence of Jewish style teaching; cf., Peder Borgen, “Observations on the Midrashic Character of John 6.” *ZNW* 54(1963): 232–40.

they must internalize so as to live within the New Covenantal order and wisdom. In such a rabbinic debate, Peder Borgen develops that such a phrase “I am” combines self predication with claims for Divinity and personifying wisdom.

The midrashic formula of “I am” receives in this context the force of the self predication of wisdom with overtones from God’s theophanic presentation of Himself. By combining ideas about the Torah, the theophany at Sinai and the wisdom, John 6:31–58 follows the lines suggested by the prologue (1:1–18) where the same combination has been made.²⁷

Thus Jesus claims to be the sustenance of everlasting life and resurrection.

I am the bread of life;²⁸ he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.²⁹ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have everlasting life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day (Jn. 6:35–39).

Not that Jesus is offering eucharistic mysticism for salvation but that the disciples need to internalize Him as their deep internal sustenance to identify themselves within everlasting life and resurrection. That is, God has a sovereign program to: 1) send Jesus as the true sustenance in life, 2) elect a people to ongoing faith in Him, and 3) that Jesus will keep all who are His in faith and everlasting life, resulting in their resurrection on the last day. The repetition of “raised on the last day” is emphatic to underscore the hope that Jesus is offering (Jn. 6:39, 40). In response, the multitude grumbled about Jesus’ claim that He came down from heaven, since they knew his parents to be Joseph and Mary. Jesus urged them not to grumble, because “If you are not elect and taught of the Father (like Jeremiah 31:34 New Covenant prophecy said), you will not come to Me, and those who come I will raise up on the last day” (Jn. 6:44). Then Jesus addressed their concern about where He came from, “Not that any man has seen the Father, except the One who is from God, He has seen the Father” (Jn. 6:46). That is, the multitude needs to see Jesus as come from God. To believe Jesus’ divine origination (from the Father) identifies them as having everlasting life. In contrast to the manna that their fathers received and died, and this multitude seeks, *Jesus is the bread of life, come from heaven* so that those who internalize Him will not die but have everlasting life already. At this point the multitude

²⁷ Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (Leiden: Brill, 1965). The theophanic presentation is especially reflective of: 1) God as “I am Who I am” (Ex. 3:14), 2) the Law (Deut. 8:3; *Sir.* 24.23; *Pesiq Rab Kah.* Sup. 3.2 [School of R. Ishmael]; *Gen. Rab.* 43.6; 54.1; 70.5; *Ex. Rab.* 47.5; *Lev. Rab.* 30.1; *Sipre Deut.* 48.5b.2), and 3) a wisdom perspective (*Sir.* 15.3; 24.21 and *Wis.* 9.10).

²⁸ Echoing the Samaritan woman account, “living” bread like “living” water, which theme continues in His teaching at the feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 4:11, 14; 6:35, 41, 48, 51; 7:38).

²⁹ Also echoing the Samaritan woman account, Jesus food is to do the will of the Father (Jn. 4:32–34; 6:38–40).

grumbled even more about the cannibalistic metaphor of eating Jesus' flesh.³⁰ Jesus made the difficult statement acute.

Listen up, this is important, unless you munch on the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who munches My flesh and drinks My blood has everlasting life; and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him (Jn. 6:53–56).

That is, to internalize Jesus as the mystical sustenance from God, transforms the person into a mystically interpenetrated covenantal relationship with the Son. “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father; so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the manna the fathers ate, and died; he who eats this bread shall live forever” (Jn. 6:57–58). Many of the disciples who heard this cannibalistic statement grumbled at the revolting description. Conscious of the disciples grumbling, Jesus asked them, “Does this cause you to stumble into damnation?” Pressing the origination issue acutely, Jesus said, “What if you should see the Son of Man ascending to heaven where He was before?” This raises the Daniel 7:13 vision and identifies that Jesus is this divinely pictured Son of Man come to judge the wicked and establish His Kingdom.³¹ Life is sourced in the Spirit and Jesus words, which when believed include His New Covenant people in the Spirit and everlasting life. Jesus said these difficult words because He knew some of the people there did not believe and also the one who would betray Him. So He said, “No one can come to Me, unless the Father chooses him.” These issues (of: divine origination of Jesus, the cannibalistic internalistic metaphors and strong sovereign election) caused many who were Jesus' disciples to withdraw from Him and not continue to walk with Him any more.

An exchange occurs between the Jews and Jesus at the Feast of Dedication (i.e. Hanukkah³²) that continues to show their resistance and rejection of Jesus (Jn. 10:22–39). The Jews asked Jesus to tell them plainly whether He is the Christ. To this question about the Messianic secret, Jesus responded that, “I told you and you do not believe.” So it was not Jesus' lack but the people's dullness that kept this message a secret.³³ Then Jesus pointed to His works done in the Father's name which bear witness of Him in this role, but that they don't believe this witness because they are not Jesus' sheep. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give everlasting life to them; they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.” The intimate relationship that Jesus' people have with Jesus means that they are responsive to Jesus' message and leadership. Likewise, these known by Jesus are protected by Jesus unto the everlasting life that they have already begun. Jesus further confirms the

³⁰ This metaphor should not be taken as encouraging the Jews to bring Jesus to His death on the basis of parallels with *1 En.* 90.2–4, the nations as wild animals devouring sheep, since those involved in Jesus' metaphoric cannibalism are gaining everlasting life in contrast to those involved in the killing of Christ who instead are judged (cf. chapter, “Jesus as Judge”).

³¹ Cf. chapter on Jesus as King.

³² Judas Maccabeus instituted the feast of dedication (ἐγκαίνια [renewal], which as a word sounds similar to “Hanukkah”) is in commemoration of the cleansing and reopening of the temple after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanies in 168 B.C. when he claimed to be deity (Dan. 11:31; *1 Macc.* 4.52–59).

³³ Remember Nathanael got this issue answered right away in John 1:48–49.

protection of His sheep, because no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand (Jn. 10:29; maybe alluding to Ps. 95[LXX 94]:7). The comparison of Father's and Son's hand keeping Jesus' disciples safe within everlasting life implies both Son as well as Father are divine and able to keep them safe. So the disciple of Jesus is strongly protected within the privilege of everlasting life. Jesus then climaxes this divine comparison with "I and the Father are one." Which final statement the Jews responded to getting ready to stone Him because as they understood His comment to be blasphemy,³⁴ "You being a man, make Yourself out to be God." Jesus' embodiedness before them convinced them that He was human. They were inclined to reject Him already not heeding the evidence, so now they reject Jesus, realizing He identified Himself to be God. While not denying their awareness of Jesus' self designation to be God, Jesus tries to help them think through these issues to diminish their attempts to stone Him for blasphemy. So Jesus raises the issue of His works as evidence, but as before they reject these works and identify that Jesus had claimed to be God. Jesus then tries a textual appeal to the infallible Scripture (which text some Jews saw as referring to Israel)³⁵ in Psalm 82:6 "You are gods." In the royal psalm "You are gods" is synonymously parallel with "sons of the Most High God."³⁶ Then Jesus asked them a question about Himself on the basis of the second parallel line, "Why do you press the One sanctified and sent by the Father with the charge of blasphemy because I said I am the Son of God?" Such a relational description while a little more ambiguous still retains Jesus as God. So He appealed to His Father's works through Him as evidence of His claim; Jesus deity is evident through the Kingdom miracles around Him. These very works the disciples were already granting but these Jews were rejecting. These miracles show that the Father and the Son are uniquely interpenetrated, "the Father is in Me and I in the Father."³⁷ Again the Jews tried to grab Jesus to throw Him out of the Temple to stone Him (and not render the Temple unclean by killing Him in it) but He eluded their grasp.

When Jesus presented Himself to the disciples and especially Thomas addressing him after His resurrection, Thomas exclaimed in a parallel vocative address to Jesus, "My Lord and My God!" (Jn. 20:28).³⁸ John specifically says that Thomas' words are addressed to Jesus (αὐτῷ). The article is used with θεός because when a possessive pronoun follows a vocative nominative, the noun is always articular.³⁹ The historicity of

³⁴ Blaspheming in the first century appears to be broader than the Mishnah's narrow definition that requires the name of God to be used (*m. Sanh.* 7.5), and other texts speak of three ways to blaspheme: 1) speaking ill of Torah (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:30 [=J. Neusner, *Sifre to Numbers: An American Translation and Explanation*. 2 vols. *Brown Judaic Studies* 118 and 119. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986): 2.168–70]), 2) engaging in idolatry (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:31 [=Neusner (1986): 2.170]), or 3) bringing shame on Yahweh's name (*b. Pesah.* 93b); cf. Darrell Bock, *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism: The Charge Against Jesus in Mark 14:53–65* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000).

³⁵ *Sipre Deut.* 306.28.2; *Lev. Rab.* 4.1; *Num. Rab.* 16.24; *Song Rab.* 1.2.5; *Pesiq. Rab.* 1.2; 14.10.

³⁶ Similar arguments could have been explored off Moses becoming a God to Pharaoh (Ex. 7:1), or Melchizedek within the *elohim* in *11QMelchizedek* 2.10, or more loosely those who follow God's way as "sons of God" (Philo, *Conf.* 145).

³⁷ This is not an allusion to Orphic spark of divinity within all but Johannine incarnational divinity of the Son within monotheistic Judaism and the mystical interpenetration that is even more explicit in John 17.

³⁸ Murray Harris (*Jesus as God*, pp. 105–129) nicely summarizes and critiques the various views concluding for this option.

³⁹ C. F. D. Moule, *Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 116.

the event is further underscored by Jesus' reproof of Thomas (which would be unlikely to originate as a church critique of an apostle). In contrast, Jesus blesses John's readership who believe Jesus' resurrection without such empirical evidence.

The John 17 Lord's prayer develops the intimacy and interpenetration (*perichorēsis*) of the Father and the Son, as was mentioned by John 10:38 above, "the Father is in Me and I in the Father." This interpenetration is not the incarnational issue of the divine within the human Jesus but the Trinitarian issue of the divine Father within the divine Son. Jesus prays to the Father to glorify the Son, something that would only really be appropriate for God. This glorification in John is identified at Jesus' death-ascension event. It opens up the opportunity for Jesus to return glory to the Father as He has on earth already by completing the task of revealing the Father and providing everlasting life, in which Christ is the object of faith. Neither Father, nor Son is kept essentially hidden for Jesus reveals the divinity of the Father and Himself in what He says and does. Jesus has maintained a mutually giving relationship with the Father and has included the disciples as beneficiaries of revelation from the Father and Son such that the disciples realizes that Jesus was sent from the Father with divine authority so that these disciples became obedient to Them, which further glorifies the Father as well. All the Father has (such as these disciples) are Christ's and all that Christ has is also the Father's. The context in which this prayer is expressed finds Jesus about to leave from being visibly present among the disciples, so He prays that the Father would carry on protecting the disciples in His visible absence of His humanity among them when He leaves. Jesus prays for His disciples throughout every generation so that we would be protected by the Father, set apart by the Father's word, and that our love would emulate that of the Father and the Son and the Son for the Father. This form of love includes an intimacy of knowledge of each for the other and a mutual interpenetrating of each omnipresently throughout the other, which funds the oneness of purpose to love the other immutably from before the creation to beyond glory. This Trinitarian intimate interpenetration (*perichorēsis*) extends to us mystically as we the disciples are indwelt by all the persons of the Godhead so that we too would intimately know God through His Word and be drawn into an intimate unity of purpose in loving others. This love relationship begins with loving the persons of God Who penetrate us and then extends to loving fellow humans as evidence of the divine love in us, so that they will know that we are Christians by our love.

First John begins with an ample demonstration of Jesus humanness and then ends with His revealing divinity. Jesus Christ, the Word of life, was from the beginning of Christianity, seen, heard, and handled by John (1 Jn. 1:1–2). The confidence that John has of Christ as come in the flesh is grounded upon his tactile visible witness of the incarnation to which he testifies for his readership (1 Jn. 1:1–3; 4:2).

1 John 5:20 might refer the Son Jesus Christ to be the true God and everlasting life but it does not have to.⁴⁰ In the context, the Son has come to reveal the truth, presumably God the Father. In the second line the οὗτός ("this") points backward. It could refer to the previous subject and nearest antecedent (the Son of God). The Son is elsewhere referred to as true (Jn. 1:9; 6:32; 15:1; 1 Jn. 2:8; Rev. 3:14). Additionally, John has developed the Son's deity (Jn. 1:1, 18; 20:28). Likewise, the Son is the life, and

⁴⁰ Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 239–53.

everlasting life is in Him (Jn. 11:25; 14:6; 1 Jn. 1:2, 4; 5:11). However, the οὐτός could also refer to the previous object, the divine Father, the Son has come to explain. In this context the Father is identified as the truth (1 Jn. 5:20) and God (1 Jn. 5:16, 18–19). Likewise, the Father is the source of everlasting life (Jn. 5:26; 10:28).

Revelation 1 presents a theophany that blends into a Christophany revealing Christ within the Daniel 7 framework with some of the same divine imagery as John had used of God. God the Father is presented as the One of glory and dominion forever and ever (Rev. 1:6). This Lord God declares that He is the Alpha and Omega, who is and who was and who is to come (Rev. 1:8). As such, God is the Almighty (ὁ παντοκράτωρ, Rev. 1:8). Woven through these statements is a description of Christ (the pierced One) as Son of Man, coming on the clouds as the divine cloud rider (Rev. 1:7, 13). Then John shares his vision of the brilliant glowing Son of Man in the midst of the lampstands, with thunderous voice and holding the seven stars or messengers to the churches of God (Rev. 1:12–16).⁴¹ When John fell to Christ's feet, He reassured John to not be afraid because Christ claimed, "I am the first and the last" which is restated as the Alpha and Omega later referring to Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:8 [God], 17 [Christ]; 2:8 [Christ]; 21:6 [God]; 22:13, 16 [Christ]). The striking absolute formula (without a predicate), so common in the Gospel of John (6:20; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8) undergirds these references of first and last, alpha and omega (1:8, 17; 2:23; 21:6; 22:16), perhaps hinting further that both Father and Christ are *Yahweh* (reflective of Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12).⁴² In this divine affirmation, Christ acknowledges that He is the living One who was dead but that He lives forevermore possessing the keys of death (perhaps the Davidic keys for the Kingdom or more) to release others in resurrection (Rev. 1:18; 3:7). Additionally, as Christ returns to earth to judge the world with the fierce wrath of God, He comes as the Almighty (Rev. 19:11–16 and 15 likely describes Christ as τοῦ παντοκράτορος). Elsewhere in Revelation, God the Father had been described as the Almighty (Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6; 21:22). However, in Revelation 19:15 a long string of genitives describe Christ as executing the fierce judging wrath of God, which string ends with "the Almighty." While it is possible that this last genitive refers to the Father as the Almighty, all the other descriptions throughout the context are of the Son Who is bringing about the judgment, so that it would be consistent to view the Son as the Almighty in His fierce judgment on the earth.⁴³

⁴¹ Nero minted a Roman coin in which he was presented in the place of Apollo riding in a chariot in the sky, with the constellation of the Pleiades (containing seven stars) held in his hand as a symbol of authority. It is unlikely that Rev. 1:20 alludes or polemics this coin on the basis of the other described content not present on the coin. Hadrian also has similar coins. John specifically explains the stars to be the messengers rather than a symbol of authority, so this significant difference on the one similarity means that they are addressing separate issues.

⁴² David Aune, *Revelation 1–5. Word Biblical Commentary*. volume 52 (Dallas: Word Books, 1997), p. 101.

⁴³ David Aune, *Revelation 17–22. Word Biblical Commentary*. volume 52c (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), pp. 1061–2.

Synoptic Hints

Unlike the Johanne emphasis, the synoptic Gospels don't emphasize the divinity of Christ, but they do have an occasional opening through which the "more than human" of Jesus' divinity shows through.

For example, John the Baptist pointed toward Jesus as the Son of God, the chosen One,⁴⁴ greater than John was in rank⁴⁵ and pre-existing before John's birth.⁴⁶ Perhaps the pre-existence hints at deity, since Jesus was born after John had been. Furthermore, Jesus had a distinctive baptism which will immerse the Kingdom bound people in Spirit, while immersing the unrepentant in judgment fire of damnation⁴⁷ (Mt. 3:10–12; Lk. 3:9, 16–17; Jn. 1:6–8, 30–34; 5:33; 10:41). Thus Jesus' baptism will effect the outcome in both of the two ways like Daniel's Son of Man will. As Jesus submitted to John's baptism, the Spirit of God descended upon Him empowering His ministry, and a voice came out of heaven saying "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt. 3:17; Mk. 1:11; Lk. 3:22). Through this, God indicated His approval for Jesus in a series of ways that could be broadly recognized: Scripture affirmed (Isa. 40:3; Mt. 3:3; Mk. 1:2–3; Lk. 3:4–6), the prophet John affirmed (as developed above, Mt. 3:10–12; Lk. 3:9, 16–17; Jn. 1:6–8, 30–34; 5:33; 10:41), heavens opened, Spirit descended and the heavenly voice approved (Mt. 3:16–17; Mk. 1:10–11; Lk. 3:21–22). The description of the heavens opening reflects Biblical language of God's revelation and eschatological deliverance which then affirms Jesus as the divinely approved (Isa. 64:1 [LXX 63:19]; Ezek. 1:1; Hag. 2:6, 21; Job 14:12 LXX; Ps. 102:26).⁴⁸ The distinctive Spirit's presence upon Jesus empowers His ministry for prophecy and Kingship (Isa. 11:1–5; Lk. 1:15; 4:1). Incidentally, the Spirit's presence and the Father's voice indicate two divine Enablers Who are not each other, nor are they Jesus. Finally, the heavenly voice, the *bath qol* (daughter of a voice), which in second Temple Judaism serves as a secondary substitute for the Spirit of prophecy, in this instance joins with John's and Jesus' prophetic voice to affirm the intimate relationship that Jesus has with God and the divine approval as well.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Such a description in John 1:34 is similar to that of 4Q534 but there is no messianic development in the Qumran text, as there is in John.

⁴⁵ John identified that he was not even worthy to perform the Gentile slave's task of loosing Jesus' sandal (*b. Ketub.* 96a; *b. Qidd.* 22b; *b. Pesah.* 4a; *Sipre* on Num. 15:41; Plautus, *Trin.* 2.1; Eusebius, *H.E.* 4.15.30).

⁴⁶ That is, though Jesus was born after John, Jesus existed before John (Jn. 1:30 and implied in Jn. 1:6–8).

⁴⁷ Notice that in the context, fire is clearly that of judgment (not an allusion to Pentecost "tongues of fire"), so that Jesus baptism brings about the two ways outcomes (Mt. 3:10–12; Lk. 3:9, 16–17). Fire was the traditional Jewish instrument of eschatological judgment (Isa. 66:24; Joel 2:30; Mal. 4:1; *Jdt.* 16.17; *4 Macc.* 9.9; *Jub.* 9.15; *1QpHab.* 10.5, 13; *1 En.* 10.6; 54.1–2; 90.24–25; 100.9; *Ps. Sol.* 15.4–5; *Sib. Or.* 3.53–54; *4 Ezra* 7.36–38; 13.10–11; *2 Bar.* 37.1; 44.15; 59.2; *T. Zeb.* 10.3; *Apoc. Abr.* 31). In fact, fire and water combine in Jewish literature to become an eschatological flood of fire (Ps. 66:10–12; Isa. 30:27–28; 43:2; 66:15–16; Dan. 7:10; Rev. 20:10–15; *Sib. Or.* 2.196–205, 252–254; 3.54, 84–87, 689–92; *1 En.* 17.5; *2 En.* 10.2; *4 Ezra* 13.10–11; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.70; *T. Isaac* 5.21).

⁴⁸ *Sib. Or.* 3.82; 8.233, 413; *2 Bar.* 22.1; *T. Abr.* 7; *Herm.* 5.1.1.4; *Apocr. Jn.* 1; *Asen.* 14.2/3; *Virg. Aen.* 9.20–21.

⁴⁹ On the concept and instance of divine voice (*bath qol*): Dan. 4:31; Jos. *Ant.* 13.282–83; *Song Rab.* 8.9.3; *b. 'Abot* 6.2; *B. Bat.* 73b; 85b; *Mak.* 23b; *'Erub.* 54b; *Shab.* 33b; 88a; *Sota* 33a; *p. Sota* 7.5.5; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 11.16; 15.5; *Lev. Rab.* 19.5–6; *Deut. Rab.* 11.10; *Lam. Rab. Proem* 2, 23; *Lam. Rab.* 1.16.50; *Ruth Rab.* 6.4; *Qoh. Rab.* 7.12.1; *Sib. Or.* 1.127, 267, 275; Artapanus in Euseb. *P.E.* 9.27.36; Dion. *Hal.* 1.56.3;

The Sonship of Jesus here probably especially indicates Jesus' role as King (as was developed in that chapter). Possibly, there may be a hint at more than this since few kings and "sons of a god" had the additional experience of such a divine oral affirmation.

Not long after this in Capernaum the crowd had so filled probably Peter's house (Mk. 1:29–31; 2:1) that four friends carrying a paralytic could not get to Jesus (Mt. 9:2–8; Mk. 2:1–12; Lk. 5:18–26).⁵⁰ So these friends removed part of the roof and dug an opening through the clay, and branches so that they could let the paralytic's pallet down in front of Jesus.⁵¹ When Jesus saw the faith of those who brought him, He said, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Some of the Pharisees and scribes sitting there reasoned that Jesus was blaspheming,⁵² because forgiveness was reserved for the role of God alone.⁵³ So this claim is taken by these in the crowd to be that Jesus has this divine ability, and they do not believe Him. Jesus asks them, "which is easier to say: 1) your sins are forgiven or 2) rise and walk?" Each would be difficult because both forgiveness and healing are from the realm of God, though each were expected in the Messianic age⁵⁴ and both are related since second Temple Judaism often saw paralysis as a product of sin.⁵⁵ However, in order to show that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins, Jesus said, "Rise, take up your pallet and go home." The paralytic got off the stretcher, gathered up his things and walked home. Those gathered were amazed at the wonderful act beyond explanation,⁵⁶ feared the power, and glorified God who had given Jesus this authority.

On another occasion Jesus got into a boat with His disciples and fell asleep in the stern upon the cushion until the experienced fishermen of His disciples woke Him and He stilled the storm (Mt. 8:18, 23–27; Mk. 4:35–41; Lk. 8:22–25).⁵⁷ A fierce gale wind churned up a great shaking⁵⁸ storm that caused these experienced fishermen to fear for

5.16.2–3; 8.56.2–3; Arrian, *Alex.* 3.3.5; Lucian, *C.W.* 1.569–70; Plutarch, *Isis* 12; *Mor.* 355E; *Mart. Pol.* 9. The *bath qol* was present in Israel before the spirit of prophecy departed (*b. Pesah.* 94a; *Hag.* 13a; *Sanh.* 39b) and a few sources give it future ramifications as well (*Lev. Rab.* 27.2; *Pesiq. Rab. Kah.* 17.5).

⁵⁰ Multiple attestation supports the authenticity of this miracle.

⁵¹ There is no evidence that this healing coming through the roof was an attempt to confuse the demons as to where the door is (contra. Hedwig Jahnow, "Das Abdecken des Daches [Mc 2,4/Lc 5,19]," *ZNW* 24 (1925): 155–58), since the demoniac did not live in the house, and the text explains it was because of the crowd that they came through the roof, and then the healed man walked out the door carrying his pallet.

⁵² Blaspheming in the first century appears to be broader than the Mishnah's narrow definition that requires the name of God to be used (*m. Sanh.* 7.5), and other texts speak of three ways to blaspheme: 1) speaking ill of Torah (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:30 [=J. Neusner, *Sifre to Numbers.* 2.168–70]), 2) engaging in idolatry (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:31 [=Neusner. 2.170]), or 3) bringing shame on Yahweh's name (*b. Pesah.* 93b); cf. Darrell Bock, *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism*.

⁵³ Forgiveness is a divine prerogative (Ex. 34:6–7; 2 Sam. 12:13; Pss. 32:1–5; 51:1–2; 7–9; 103:3; 130:4; Isa. 43:25; 44:22; Dan. 9:9; Zech. 3:4; *IQS* 2.9; *CD* 3.18; 20.34) and Matthew and Mark hint that the Messiah is included within this privilege (Mt. 6:12, 14–15; 9:9–13; 18:19–35; Mk. 2:10–12) but Luke emphasizes this claim (Lk. 5:29–32; 7:34, 36–50; 15:3–7, 11–32; 18:10–14; 19:8–10; 23:40–43).

⁵⁴ Forgiveness is expected in the Messianic age (*CD* 14.19; *11QMelch.* 4–9), and asked for in prayer (*4QPrNab.*; LXX 2 Chr. 30:18–19). Healing is also expected as the first section of this chapter demonstrates.

⁵⁵ *1 Macc.* 9:55; *2 Macc.* 3:22–28; *3 Macc.* 2:22; Jn. 9:2–3; C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke.* Trinity Press International New Testament Commentaries (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1990), p. 301.

⁵⁶ Luke 5:26 describes this miracle as beyond explanation (παράδοξα), the only instance of this word in the N.T.

⁵⁷ This is a real miracle, not an allegory of the persecution tossed church (contra Tertullian, *De bapt.* 12).

⁵⁸ The word σεισμός indicates the shaking as in an earthquake.

their lives. The boat was swamping in the waves. The disciples woke Him, crying out, “Save us, Master;⁵⁹ we are perishing!” Jesus responded to them, “Why are you timid, you men of little faith?” Then Jesus arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm. The disciples fearfully marveled, saying, “What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?” Such reflection goes beyond that of a prophet, like Jonah,⁶⁰ since he was dominated by the elements and the sovereign merciful God Who controlled them. Here Jesus takes on the sovereign role of Yahweh, controlling the storm to become as calm as glass (Pss. 65:7; 89:8–9; 93:3–4; 106:8–9; 107:23–32; Isa. 51:9–10).⁶¹

In a later instance, Jesus sent the disciples to the other side of the Sea of Galilee without Him and He came to them in the midst of another storm walking on water (Mt. 14:24–33; Mk. 6:45–52; Jn. 6:16–21). When it was dark Jesus saw that the boat was in the middle of the sea (about three or four miles out), being battered by waves and straining on the oars with a wind contrary to them. In the fourth watch of the night (3–6 a.m.), Jesus was walking on the water, intending to walk past them. But when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea they became frightened and cried out in fear, “It’s a ghost!” Immediately Jesus spoke to them, “Take courage, it is I (Ἐγώ εἰμι)⁶²; do not be afraid.” Jewish tradition had it that God was the One Who walked on water (LXX: Job 9:8; 38:16; Hab. 3:15), and Jesus was identifying Himself with that role as God. Peter blurted out, “Lord if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” When Jesus said “Come,” Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind he became afraid and began to sink, calling out, “Lord save me!” Immediately Jesus grabbed him, saying, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” In Jewish tradition it is God alone Who can rescue from the sea (Ex. 14:10–15:21; Ps. 107:23–32; Jonah 1:1–16).⁶³ When they got into the boat, the wind stopped and they were greatly astonished. They were then immediately on the other side, showing Divine activity. Those who were in the boat worshipped Jesus, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!” While the word προσεκύνησαν can mean merely honoring and obeisance as to a king (Mt. 2:8, 11), in this setting it more appropriately refers to worshipping Christ’s Deity (Mt. 14:33).

In the synoptics, Jesus shows evidence of His awareness of His Deity in His clarification of His meaning of Son of Man (in the Olivet discourse and at His trial) and in His haggadic or contrary question to defend His scribal ability. First, Jesus clarified

⁵⁹ Master (ἐπιστάτα) is a unique Lukan term parallel to lord (κύριος) and teacher (διδάσκαλε), but especially shows His authority and their submission to Him (Lk. 5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49; 17:13).

⁶⁰ Davies and Allison (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991], vol. 2, p. 70) draw parallels with the Jonah account. Antiochus IV Epiphanes claimed that the sea would obey him but never demonstrated this ability like Jesus did here (2 Macc. 9:8). A couple of second Temple Jewish accounts and Greek narratives describe how storms were eased by prayer (y. Ber. 9.1; b. B. Meṣ. 59b; Homer, *Hymns* 33.12; Aristides, *Hymn to Serapis* 33), which shows the disciples culpability for lack of faith in praying about the storm. Likewise, b. B. Bat. 73a indicates a tradition that clubs engraved with “I am that I am, Yah, the Lord of Hosts, Amen, Amen Selah” will subdue waves that would otherwise sink a ship. Such rescues are the work of the deity, thus implying Jesus is God.

⁶¹ 2 Macc. 9:8; 4Q381.

⁶² Cf. earlier discussion of Ἐγώ εἰμι in this chapter within section of: “John’s Christology from Above.”

⁶³ Wisd. 14.2–4; IQH 6.22–5; T. Naph. 6.1–10.

His meaning of the Son of Man to His disciples in the Olivet discourse. The coming of the Son of Man is not hidden in houses or the wilderness but visible for all to see like lightening flashing across the sky (Dan. 7:13–14; Mt. 24:27, 30; Mk. 13:26; Lk. 21:27).⁶⁴ Daniel's presentation of the Son of Man as cloud rider coming up to the Ancient of Days to receive His everlasting dominion, is shifted here as in the New Testament to now describe the Son of Man's cloud riding from the Ancient of Days to come to earth to enforce His Kingdom onto the willing and unwilling on earth. Thus Jesus' coming as the Son of Man is a very real visible coming. This is not to be confused with a spiritual or personal coming like the coming of the Holy Spirit⁶⁵ nor a vision at one's death (Acts 1:11; 7:56; 9:4–7). Jesus will return bodily from the heavens riding on the clouds, visible for all, conquering to establish His Kingdom (Dan. 7:13; Mt. 24:30; Mk. 13:26; Lk. 21:27; Rev. 19:11–16)⁶⁶ so that no one need be deceived. It is recognizable as the coming of the Son of Man like the location of a dead animal in the desert can be recognized by the vultures flying over it (Mt. 24:28).⁶⁷ Luke especially recognized that the Jewish people had ability to analyzing the weather, which makes them even more culpable in analyzing the age (Lk. 12:54–59). It is like a farmer reading the coming of summer by noticing the signs in the leafing out of a fig tree (Mt. 24:32–33). This generation that experiences these evidences will not pass away until all is accomplished (Mt. 24:34). It is guaranteed to happen because Jesus words will not pass away (Mt. 24:35; Lk. 21:33). This certainty of Jesus' words is described in the same manner as that of the divine word (Ps. 119: 89, 160; Isa. 40:8; 55:10–11).⁶⁸ That is, these events will take place. Christ's coming is eminent, and thus the disciple needs to watch the signs and be alert.

The sermon closes emphasizing through a parable that the coming of Jesus as the Son of Man brings judgment in the Jewish pattern (Mt. 25:31–46).⁶⁹ When the Son of Man comes in glory, and all the angels with Him then the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne. This statement reminds the reader of the previous statement of the coming of the Son of Man with His angels sent out to collect the elect (Mt. 24:30–31; 25:31). All the ethnic groups (ἐθνῶν) will be gathered before Him and He will separate them into two groups like a shepherd separates sheep from goats. These two groups have essential defining characteristics that mark them out as two distinct animal groups with their distinct ways of life. This is reflective of the two ways, two houses, good crop versus bad, faithful and unfaithful servants (Mt. 7:13–27; 13:24–50; 25:14–32). The Son of Man is the King in judgment from His glorious throne. He will say to those on His right, the righteous, "Come you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom

⁶⁴ *Ep. Jer.* 61; *4Q246* 2.1–2; *2 Bar.* 53.9. Lightening also occurs with divine theophanies and judgment (Ex. 19:16; Pss. 18:14; 144:6; Zech. 9:14; Philo, *Vit. Mos.* 2.56; *LAB* 11.4).

⁶⁵ Though the arrival of the Holy Spirit is an obvious eschatological phenomenon: Joel 2:28–29; Acts 1:6, 8; 2:1–21; *IQS* 4.3–4; 8.12–16; *Sib. Or.* 4.46, 189; *2 Macc.* 7.23; 14.46.

⁶⁶ *Jub.* 1.28; *1 En.* 62.3; *T. Mos.* 10.7.

⁶⁷ Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1997), vol. 3, pp. 355–6 surveys eight views and concludes that this is the consensus of recent commentators and is also supported by *Apoc. Pet.* E 1.

⁶⁸ *Bar.* 4.1; *Wis.* 18.4; *4 Ezra* 9.36–37.

⁶⁹ Dan. 7:9–10, 18, 26; Rev. 20:11–15; *1 En.* 62.2–16; 63:1–12; 90:20–36; *11Q Melch.* 2.132 *Bar.* 72. 2, 6; 73–74.4; *Ps. of Sol.* 17; *4Q246* col. 2; *T. Abr.* A 11.11; 12.1–18; 13.12; *Sib. Or.* 2.239–54, 283–338. Much of this material is nicely laid out in chart form in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. 3, pp. 419.

prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Their preparation identifies that they are the elect from the foundation of the world. The righteous will be recognized by King Jesus for their works, benefiting Jesus Himself. “For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” These are classic Jewish expressions of righteousness in many judgment texts.⁷⁰ The righteous may not even remember when they did these deeds, for they were not doing them to Jesus to gain His favor, they are merely consistent deeds with their character. Perhaps, Jesus develops an early expression of the body of Christ imagery in His substitutionary good deeds imagery. King Jesus points out “to the extent that you did these deeds to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.” Then He will say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” That is, this everlasting punishment was designed primarily for the devil and his angels but these unrighteous condemn themselves to this fate by identifying with the devil’s side, by neglecting good deeds. “For I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” The unrighteous may not even remember these neglected opportunities for good deeds because it is their very character to neglect them, but the same substitutionary principle for good deeds applies. King Jesus will answer them, “To the extent that you did not do these good deeds to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.” The unrighteous group is banished by Christ to everlasting punishment without end or annihilation, but the righteous enter into everlasting life, without end. The everlasting quality evident in αἰώνιον guarantees the same everlasting without end for everlasting punishment as for everlasting life (Mt. 25:41, 46).⁷¹ The extent of everlasting destiny further indicates that Jesus’ Son of Man coming is the eschatological divine judgment and establishment of Kingdom.

At Jesus’ trial He clarified that He meant this same eschatological Son of Man coming into the religious leader’s lives to judge them, who were in the process of passing sentence upon Him (Mt. 26:64–64; Mk. 14:62–64; Lk. 22:69–70). Thus these religious leaders will see Him as the Son of Man, pass sentence condemning them. The religious leaders take Jesus’ claim to be blasphemy which they take to dishonor God or replace

⁷⁰ Cf. Job. 22:7; Isa. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7, 16; *T. Jos.* 1.5–7; *T. Jacob* 2.23; 7.24–25; 2 *En.* 9.1; 10.5; 42.8; 63.1; *Mek.* on Ex. 14.19; *b. Sota* 14a; *m. Qidd.* 1.10; *t. Qidd.* 1.13; *Tg. Ps.—Jn.* on Deut. 34:6; *Eccles. Rab.* on 11.1; Justin, *1 Apol.* 67. Much of this material is nicely laid out in chart form in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. 3, pp. 426.

⁷¹ This everlasting feature contrasts to the normal second Temple view of temporality in hell then released (*Num. Rab.* 18.20; some are often taken this way but are unclear: *Sir.* 7.16; *Sipre Num.* 40.1.9; *Sipre Deut.* 311.3.1; 357.6.7; *’Abot R. Nat.* 16 A; 32.69 B; 37.95 B; 12 months is a familiar duration [*b. Šabb.* 33b; *Lam. Rab.* 1.11–12]) or destroyed (2 *Macc.* 12.43–45; *IQS* 4.13–14; *Gen. Rab.* 6.6t. *Sanh.* 13.3–4; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 10.4; *Pesiq. Rab.* 11.5). In the Biblical text there is no dwelling on the punishment like the kind of sadism one finds in: *Apocalypse of Peter*; *Acts of Thomas* act 6; *Sib. Or.* 2.252–312; Tertullian, *De spect.* 30; Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, section 1 “Hell,” cantos 1–34.

God.⁷² Jesus openly defined Himself in Daniel's Son of man role, which is a divine like role.

Furthermore, the religious leaders tried to test Jesus' scribal ability and entrap Him but He demonstrated superior scribal ability. So Jesus turned the tables on the Pharisees gathered there and asked a haggadic⁷³ or contrary question (Mt. 22:41–46; Mk. 12:35–37; Lk. 20:41–44). He did not wait for them to approve Him as in an ordination exam; He had demonstrated His authority in the previous questions, so that He used their own tools to further question their authority and show His scribal proficiency by asking them the final kind of rabbinic question. His question raised the real issue, the authority of the Messiah. "Whose son is the Christ?" The religious leaders answered "The son of David." While not denying their answer, Jesus then asked the contrary question, "Then how does David in the Spirit call him 'Lord,' saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet?' If David calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" This contrary question pressed the authority of Christ consistent with rabbinical reasoning⁷⁴ beyond the Davidic king idea to a One, Who was more, possibly God in a Jewish monotheistic sense, Jesus Himself. No one was able to answer Him and dishonored as they were, none tried.

Christology from Above in the N.T.

In Hebrews, Peter, Paul, and Acts the Deity of Christ is clearly delineated in a Jewish monotheistic manner.

The author of Hebrews declares the Son as the divine Davidic King. With the recipients tempted to leave Christianity and to return to Judaism, the Son is shown to be superior. In the Hebrews 1 context, Jesus' Sonship over the house is the divine Davidic kingship that shows Christ to be superior to angels (the avenue through whom the Law was given, Heb. 2:2). No angel has ever had the divine declarations which Jesus Christ has *already had declared of Him*. That is, the royal Psalm 2:7 identifies that "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee" (Heb. 1:5). This "today" of announcing this Davidic Covenantal authority has already been realized for Jesus Christ. This pronouncement identifies Jesus as the divinely authorized Davidic king or Son. This begetting includes the adoption right and possibly incarnation right by which He reigns already. This Sonship is informed by quoting 2 Samuel 7:14 which identifies Jesus as already the Davidic covenant King-Son of God. As metaphorically first born, (meaning:

⁷² Blaspheming in the first century appears to be broader than the Mishnah's narrow definition that requires the name of God to be used (*m. Sanh. 7.5*), and other texts speak of three ways to blaspheme: 1) speaking ill of Torah (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:30 [=J. Neusner, *Sifre to Numbers: An American Translation and Explanation*. 2 vols. *Brown Judaic Studies* 118 and 119. 2:168–70]), 2) engaging in idolatry (*Sipre* 112 on Num. 15:31 [=Neusner (1986): 2.170]), or 3) bringing shame on Yahweh's name (*b. Pesah. 93b*); cf. Darrell Bock, *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism: The Charge Against Jesus in Mark 14:53–65*.

⁷³ David Owen-Ball, "Rabbinic Rhetoric and the Tribute Passage (Mt. 22:15–22; Mk. 12:13–17; Lk. 20:20–26)," *Nov. Test.* 35(1993): 4; Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 532.

⁷⁴ None of the following sources is pre-Christian but they show Jesus to probably be unoriginal about the application of Psalm 110 to Messiah (Akiba, *b. Sanh. 38b*; *Gen. Rab.* 85.9; *Num. Rab.* 18.23; *Tg. on Ps.* 110 cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. 3, p. 253–4).

supreme King)⁷⁵ He has the right to reign and He reigns as God to be worshipped (Heb. 1:6, 8). In a contrast of things already declared, Psalm 45:6–7 leaves the marriage feast context to declare some of the extent to which Christ reigns already as Davidic King. He has the throne which should be seen as the Davidic throne following this Davidic covenant statement by a mere three verses (Heb. 1:5, 8).

Jesus is addressed as God on that Davidic throne in contrast to what is said in the address to angels (Heb. 1:7–8). In the MT the vocative address calls the King to be God (based on the second person pronominal suffixes leading up to אֱלֹהִים/’ēlōhîm, Ps. 45:7MT, verse 6 in English).⁷⁶ However, the King as God is also One who as co-regent has God over His reign as well (אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה, Ps. 45:8, verse 7 in English: “God, Thy God”). In this second instance אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה “God, Thy God” should be taken nominatively as the subject of the sentence rather than vocatively addressed because rarely is the vocative found between the subject and the verb. In translation, the LXX Psalm 44 is consistent with the MT Psalm 45, handling verse seven address of the King as God in a vocative (ὁ θεός) and verse eight as a nominative subject “God, Thy God” (ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός σου, additionally parallel to LXX Ps. 44:3c which is also in the nominative) to anoint the King. This is one of the rare LXX texts cited in the N.T. applying ὁ θεός (God) to refer to Christ (LXX Ps. 44:7–8; MT Ps. 45:8–9; Heb. 1:8–9).⁷⁷ Hebrews 1:8b adds καὶ to the LXX text, which could join quotations as in Hebrews 1:10a but here marks a division within a single quotation as in 2:13; 10:30, 37–38. Then Hebrews moves the article from the second to the first ῥάβδος (scepter) inverting the subject and predicate to make two parallel lines. Throughout these changes it is best to keep the first ὁ θεός (God) as a vocative address of Christ parallel to the address of angels in verse seven, in which the πρὸς before both clauses is interpreted as “to” the angels and “to” the Son respectively, indicating “to” whom the following is said by the Father. This is consistent in identifying the Son as the Jewish monotheistic God, since Christ has an everlasting reign (Heb. 1:5, 8–9) and Christ is the Creator (Heb. 1:10–12). The extraordinary feature of this vocative address is that God the Father addresses the Son as God. It is in that spirit that the Father calls all His angels to worship the Son (Heb. 1:6).⁷⁸

The Son’s throne will last forever so the everlasting continuance of His reign has already begun. He has the Davidic covenant kingship motifs which began at His coronation (Heb. 1:8–9). He is anointed (Christed or ἐχρίσεν) by God to be King. The anointing includes the oil of gladness identifying His as above His co-sharers. Along with having the Davidic throne already, He has the Davidic scepter of His own righteous

⁷⁵ In Psalm 89:27 “firstborn” is defined as highest king consistent with the ancient near East pattern. For example, Marduk is called firstborn of gods to identify his supreme kingship (*ANET, Babylonian Creation Epic* 4:20). In the same manner, 4Q458 frag. 15 refers to the messianic Davidic king as apocalyptically, God’s “first born.”

⁷⁶ Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 187–204; אֱלֹהִים/’ēlōhîm as a vocative does not normally take an article even though vocatives normally take an article.

⁷⁷ Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 205–228.

⁷⁸ While προσκυνήσασσαν can be honoring, the term is best taken as “worship” in Hebrews use elsewhere (Heb. 1:11:21) and this context with the Son identified as God.

kingdom. This imagery of the scepter is even a Messianic title in Qumran.⁷⁹ These motifs already possessed identify that He has already begun to reign. And of course Christ has perfect right to reign since He created everything (Heb. 1:10–12). Psalm 110:1 already declares from God that Christ is to “sit at My right hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for thy feet” (Heb. 1:13). The footstool metaphor is the ancient near East way of indicating that though Jesus is already the Davidic King there will be a time in the future when He will put His foot on their necks as evidence of their utter defeat. So the Kingdom has begun already, but there will be a greater era of eschatological Kingdom. The place of seating in this context is the Davidic throne which Christ already has (Heb. 1:5, 8). Christ is already sitting on this throne at the right hand of God (Heb. 1:3), showing He has already begun to reign. The fact that Christ awaits God’s climactic judgment to subdue His enemies shows that there is a grander phase of Christ’s kingdom yet to occur when no opponent will try to thwart His reign. This Davidic kingly reign realizes the aspirations of God for all mankind ruling over the creation, for Christ as King (appointed by God) rules over all the creation already (Ps. 8:4–6; Heb. 2:6–8). God has already subjected everything to Christ in His reign. Part of the effectiveness in His kingly reign identifies Him in the fused King-priest role (Pss. 2:7; 110:1–4; Heb. 1:5, 13; 5:5–6; 7:17, 21). That is, in the begetting of Christ as King, He is simultaneously begotten as Priest. The extensive priestly ministry developed in Hebrews as before, during and after His death shows Him to be King as well. And since the kingly and priestly ministries are fused into One begetting and role, He has effectively functioned as King-Priest in an extended Davidic Covenant manner to provide atonement for His brethren.

In contrast to such a divine Christ, angels are to render service under Him to those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14). With salvation conceived of as the future eschatological goal the readers are warned to keep believing in this sign attested salvation message of Christ (Heb. 2:1–4).

This message includes that Jesus is the human who has the world to come subjected to Him (Heb. 2:5). Extrapolating Psalm 8:4–6 beyond humanity in our miniature sovereign role, Hebrews uses this text to affirm Christ’s Kingship as a human Davidic King who for this ministry role is subsumed for a little while lower than angels (Heb. 2:6–9). This role of being for a little while lower than angels shows itself especially in Christ experiencing death for every one (Heb. 2:9). However, even in His suffering the passage identifies Him as “crowned with glory and honor.” That is, Christ does not diminish His deity while He experiences the most servile experience of His human suffering. Everything is for Christ and He created all things (Heb. 2:10). His death experience is used by Him to bring many sons to glory, in being the author of their salvation. As such, God subjected all things to Christ even though we do not yet see all things subjected to Him (Heb. 2:8).

Second Peter shows how the N.T. authors use letter form to indicate issues of divinity in Christology. He begins by indicating that the recipients of the letter had received the same kind of faith by the righteousness as the apostles had. In describing the recipients, Peter claims salvation comes from “our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The article controls both coordinate nouns

⁷⁹ CD 7.19–20=4Q266 frag. 3.iv.9; 1QSb 5.27–28; 4Q161 frags. 2–6.ii.17.

referring to the same person, identifying that Savior Jesus *is* God.⁸⁰ This is followed by a formal letter blessing of grace and peace from “God and Jesus our Lord” (τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). Here both God and Lord retain an article permitting there to be two separate persons who source this blessing. However, the optative “multiplied” (πληθυνθείη) blessing is singular passive, further identifying Savior Jesus to one with God, perhaps hinting at Unity among plurality within Trinity. Furthermore, in the first century letter blessings across the Mediterranean one would expect that the source of these letter blessings if referred to as by God (θεοῦ) or Lord (κυρίου) to be identified as the divine.⁸¹ Such a formal feature would also have implications for the Divinity of Christ in letter blessings across the N.T. letters, namely: Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2 John 1:3; and perhaps Rev. 1:3-6 (where Father, Spirit and Son all source the longer blessing). The same point could be made of all first century wish prayers as affirming the recipient as the divine. Which means that Biblical wish prayers like Ephesians 6:23; 1 Thessalonians 3:11; and 2 Thessalonians 2:16 make the same point for the divinity of Christ. In these blessings and wish prayers, instances of connection of κυρίου with Christ and θεοῦ with the Father does not diminish the deity of the Son. In such letter form blessings and wish prayers, the one who would be called Lord (κυρίου) would also be thought to be divine. Furthermore, the N.T. doxologies regularly are addressed to God.⁸² However, the doxology in 2 Peter 3:18 is addressed to Christ. The second line addresses the doxology to Him (αὐτῷ) referring to the nearest referent, “our Lord and Savior⁸³ Jesus Christ.” Thus this Christ has “the glory, both now and the everlasting day.” Such a reference to glory in a doxology would most appropriately identify Christ as God for in doxologies “glory” is referred to God (e.g., of Father: Lk. 2:14; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 3:21; Phil 4:20; Jude 25; Rev. 7:12; could be either Father or Christ: Gal. 1:4-5; 1 Tim. 1:17; to both: Rev. 5:13). Among these doxologies Revelation 5:13 includes Jesus, as the Lamb, along with the Father Who both receive glory and dominion forever. Likewise, Romans 9:5 presents a doxology which naturally identifies Christ as the subject of the participle and nearest referent described as “sovereign over all.”⁸⁴ Thus, Christ is the “God blessed forever.”

⁸⁰ A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), p. 127, 785-86; “Article” 184-85, 187. Thus, another argument more for the Trinity and by implication for the deity of the Son could be made off the tri-personal description of divine roles performed for the recipients of 1 Peter in 1:2 and again in the longer blessing 1:3-12. The fact that the author uses the formal features of the letter to accentuate the threeness expresses authorial thrust for the Trinity in the N.T.

⁸¹ P. T. O’Brien, “Letters, Letter Forms,” *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Gerald Hawthorne, Ralph Martin, Daniel Reid (Downer Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), p. 551; Adolf Deismann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 214; Fred Francis, “The Form and Function of the Opening and Closing Paragraphs of James and 1 John,” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde des Urchristentums* 61(1970): 117.

⁸² Lk. 2:14; Rom. 11:36; 2 Cor. 11:31; Gal. 1:4-5; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Pet. 5:11; Jude 24-25; Rev. 5:13; 7:12.

⁸³ Savior is a favorite title of gods and kings in the Hellenistic world (Charles Scobie, *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 461.

⁸⁴ Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 144-72.

Paul clarifies that Jesus' Deity is to be understood within Jewish monotheism, so there is need to maintain the unity of the church (1 Cor. 8:4–6).⁸⁵ Pagan idols and gods are nothing, so there is no problem if a Christian eats meat that has been offered to them. Instead, Paul points out that the only God is the One of the center of Judaism; “there is no God but one” (1 Cor. 8:4), which is reminiscent of the Jewish *shema* “the Lord is our God, the Lord is one!” (Deut. 6:4, יהוה יהוה יי אלֵינוּ יהוה, LXX: κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν). Paul unpacks this thought by polemicizing the many so-called “gods” and “lords” of paganism (θεοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ κύριοι πολλοί), which are thought by the pagans to be divine. Instead, Paul expounds creation based salvific aspects of these terms which identify both Father and Jesus Christ as Divine, in a Jewish monotheistic sense. Paul directly identifies the Father as God (θεὸς); “There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him” (1 Cor. 8:6). Next, Paul identifies the Son as Divine, through the term most used of God in the *shema*, that of “Lord” (κύριος), which is parallel to θεὸς in the context (1 Cor. 8:5–6). In this *shema* informed context κύριος should not be reduced to lord as in the case of Caesar or a master of a house or a pagan god, but should carry the Jewish monotheistic sense of *Yahweh* (יהוה), which κύριος twice translates in Deuteronomy 6:4. That is, κύριος is more emphasized in the *shema* than θεὸς, thus Paul strongly emphasizes the Deity of Christ by calling Him Lord. Jesus Christ is then the means (δι’) by which creation is accomplished, which in Jewish thought forms would still identify Jesus as Divine (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16),⁸⁶ rather than a lesser deity as might be the case if Paul was working within a pagan polytheism, which he has here polemicized. So here benevolently, Jesus Christ as Divine Lord twice is expressed to be the Creator, both generically and then personally of our existence (1 Cor. 8:6).

The primary textual reason for a *kenosis* or emptying is grounded in Philippians 2, but this text does not support such versions of kenotic Christology. Contextually, Paul underscores the need for Christians to be unified in love, mind and soul (Phil. 1:27; 2:1–2). This unity is obtainable by Christians only as they are intent on the purpose of being humble, regarding the other as more important than oneself. We evangelicals who are often enamored with our own personal interests can benefit from this reminder to embrace humility and unity. It is in this context that Jesus’ incarnation wonderfully displays humility as an example for us to follow (Phil. 2:5). Jesus Christ existed in the form (μορφῇ) of God with regard to His divine nature (Phil. 2:6). The word μορφῇ has to do with “form” or shape which in this instance is Christ’s preincarnate Divinity, which had no lack, like the form (μορφῇν) of His servant role had no lack (Phil. 2:6–7). So that Christ did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped, grabbed or held onto like a snatch and grab artist that would grab something not his and run; Christ fully possessed

⁸⁵ N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp. 66–67.

⁸⁶ *IQS* 11.18. Notice that the context is not treating Christ as Wisdom by who’s counsel God creates, which would also have second Temple support for the use of δι’ as means in creation, but here the focus is that Jesus is κύριος, which would exclude wisdom as a model for Christ from being considered as the creation means here.

the Divine nature without diminishment. Within this context of strength, Christ empties (ἐκένωσεν) Himself in some way appropriate to the emphasis of the passage (Phil. 2:7). However, the passage never says that Christ self-limited divine attributes, rather what is being developed is the human need for humility which Christ exemplifies wonderfully in His humanity (Phil. 2:3–5, 7–8). So the emptying (ἐκένωσεν) needs to be seen in light of Jesus' human nature, the form (μορφήν) of a servant in the likeness (ὁμοιώματι) of men (ἀνθρώπων, Phil. 2:7). It is the person Christ in His human nature that is humble; humility (ἐταπείνωσεν) has to do with this human condition (ἄνθρωπος, Phil. 2:8 English, 2:7 Greek). That is, instead of demanding the honor due His Deity, His humanity became obedient even to a dishonoring death on the cross. That this humility is working in this humanity is further evidenced by death (which humans experience), whereas God cannot die. In response to Christ's obedient human pursuit of dishonor, God highly exalted Jesus' humanity in His ascension (Phil. 2:9–11). The exalted human Christ has a Name which is above every name. Eschatologically everyone will submit to Christ and praise Christ as Lord to God's glory. There is no self-limiting of any divine attribute here, rather, while Christ in His Deity has every right to demand honor, Christ in His humanity demonstrates humility obediently pursuing a course of dishonor, which is rewarded by God's exalting Jesus as man to high honors in which God insists that others will also highly honor Him.

Titus 2:13 identifies Jesus Christ to be “our great God and Savior.”⁸⁷ The phrase of “God and Savior” is common in the Diaspora and among Jews with reference to the monotheistic God Yahweh, rather than two separate referents (Tit. 1:10).⁸⁸ The addition of “great” is also a divine epithet especially in the LXX.⁸⁹ In Titus 2:13 text there is a significant parallelism (each phrase has: article-adjective-noun-καὶ-anarthrous genitive noun). Thus the first line indicates that we wait for a hope *that brings* the blessing of glory. Likewise, the second line indicates that the great God *is* our savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself to redeem us.

Acts does not usually make it clear that Christ is God, but the gospel presentations do present Him as Lord, above David (Acts 2:34–36). While in this context “Lord” (κύριος) stands for Davidic king (Acts 2:30), and thus a rival to others who appropriate the term, namely the Caesars (Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Nero and Domitian) and the Jewish rulers (Herod the Great, Agrippa I and Agrippa II).⁹⁰ In this context, “Lord” (κύριος) could also indicate deity (Acts 2:34 where the κύριος translates both יהוה /Yahweh referring to the Jewish God and אדוני /Adonai, referring to Jesus from Ps.

⁸⁷ The one article governs both substantives connected by the καὶ, which compound substantives describe by apposition Jesus Christ; Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 173–85. Harris identifies many who agree with this interpretation; cf. Blass, Debrunner, Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), # 276 (3), p. 145.

⁸⁸ M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. 100–102.

⁸⁹ Deut. 10:17; 2 Esdras 14.8 [Neh. 4:14]; 18.6 [Neh. 18:6]; 19.32 [Neh. 9:32]; Ps. 47:2 [Eng. 48:1]; 76:14 [Eng. 77:13]; 85:10 [Eng. 86:10]; Isa. 26:4; Jer. 39:19 [Eng. 32:19]; Dan. 2:45; 9:4; Mal. 1:14.

⁹⁰ H. Bietenhard, “Lord, Master.” in *DNTT*, 2:511; O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press 1963), pp. 197–99; e.g., Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum* 13.2; the title was also used to describe gods (e.g., 1 Cor. 8:5).

110:1).⁹¹ Many other gospel presentations have Jesus in lofty roles of Kingship or universal Judge but these aren't necessarily an indication of divinity.

In Acts the disciples often pray to the Lord (κύριος) Jesus Christ and prayer especially is to be said to God. For example, Stephen and Paul address the Lord Jesus in prayer (Acts 7:59; 9:5, 10, 13, 17).⁹² Additionally, the eleven disciples pray to the Lord for direction in adding another to their apostle band, and in the context Jesus has been identified as this Lord (κύριος, Acts 1:21, 24). It was the Lord Jesus Christ Who appointed the twelve originally so it might seem appropriate for Him to appoint a successor to Judas.

Acts 20:28 presents Paul warning the elders of the church of Ephesus, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God,”⁹³ which He purchased with the blood of His own.⁹⁴ The last phrase could mean that Jesus own blood purchased His church, identifying Him to be God or that the Father's church was purchased by the blood of His own (namely, God's own is Jesus who dies). So this text is inconclusive in deciding between these options. Of course there are other N.T. texts from which some claim to teach the deity of the Son, however they too are inconclusive, some of them permitting such an affirmation but not requiring it. So apart from this last text (which shows how an inconclusive text works), I prefer to develop Christ's divinity with the higher plausible texts as I have above.

A Few Highlights of Historical Development

Ignatius declares that “there is one God, Who has revealed Himself through His Son Jesus Christ, Who is His Word emerging from silence,” and that Christ is the Father's “thought, the unlying mouth by which the Father spoke.”⁹⁵ This very Christ is “God incarnate” and “God made manifest as man.”⁹⁶ J. N. D. Kelly summarizes his view as, Christ “was the timeless, invisible, impalpable, impassible one Who for our sakes entered time and became visible, palpable and passible. His divine Sonship dates from the incarnation.”⁹⁷ He proposed a Logos Christology “in which God broke the silence” with Jesus being the personal revelation from God.⁹⁸ This revelational approach has prompted Brunner's economic approach to Jesus Christ though he fuses it with a modern existentialism that denies the virgin birth in order for Christ to assume a whole humanity

⁹¹ *Pss. Sol.* 17.36.

⁹² Some of the prayers of the early church are prayed to an unspecified Lord (κύριος), Who might also be Jesus Christ (Acts 10:14; 12:7, 11).

⁹³ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, pp. 480–1 and Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 134–6 explain that the text should read “church of God” rather than “of the Lord” or a number of lesser and conflated readings.

⁹⁴ ⁹⁴ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, pp. 482 and Murray Harris, *Jesus as God*, pp. 136–37 explain the best and broader based textual reading to be τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου (the blood of His own).

⁹⁵ Ignatius, *Eph.* 3.2; *Rom.* 8.2.

⁹⁶ Ignatius, *Eph.* inscr.; 18.2; *Trall.* 7.1; *Rom.* inscr.; *Smyrn.* 3.3.

⁹⁷ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978), p. 92 reflecting Ignatius, *Eph.* 7.2; *Polyc.* 3.2; *Smyrn.* 1.1.

⁹⁸ Ignatius, *Magn.* 8.2.

including that through a father.⁹⁹ Perhaps further issues in modernity (like: artificial insemination, *in vitro* fertilization, and cloning) show Brunner to artificially reflect his stage of cultural development.¹⁰⁰

Some early expressions diminished aspects of Christ in order to guarantee the affirmation of other aspects. Ebionites (now Unitarian) rejected Christ's deity, trying to maintain a Jewish monotheism as a dynamic Monarch, Who adopted the unusual human Jesus to be His Prophet and Messiah. Docetists affirmed that Christ was impassibly divine but only merely seemed to be human (since He could not corrupt Himself with flesh), and thus His sufferings were unreal, phantasmal. Gnostic systems saw Christ as a lower Aeon (the Demiurge) sufficiently tainted with the creation process that He could lead His disciples into the special knowledge appropriate to their salvation to mystically unite them with the One. Spirit Christology conceived of the Holy Spirit merging with (or becoming) human Jesus.

Christianity utilized Stoic concepts to provide some basic connections in making sense of trinity, as when Tertullian appropriated the concept of *procession* from the Stoic belief system to help Christianity express that Jesus was God and an extension of God also. The stoic concept of *procession* meant "an extension" as in the economic divine Being extends Himself from the dominant expression of Father to the *persona* of the Son and Holy Spirit.¹⁰¹ This connection did not impose the Stoic concept of *logos* or *spirit* as a divine impersonal grand metaphysical principle, for Christianity's God concept involved three persons within it. However, the fact that such concepts as *logos* and *spirit* were already seen in Stocism as "divine" encouraged using other stoic concepts for describing the Christian's Trinitarian God. Furthermore, the clarity of the revelational "Word" as Christ, resisted being interpreted in a non-personal Stoic manner (as essential metaphysical Truth) within the church. So on the whole, the early church comes out strongly against embracing a Stoic world view,¹⁰² even though a few Stoic concepts contributed to Christology. Tertullian identified this Savior as composed of "two substances:"¹⁰³ 1) the Logos as eternal Spirit (distinct from the Father by generation) took to Himself humanity and mingled it with Himself and 2) human, born from Mary, not merely through her.¹⁰⁴

In *Logos* Christology, which Orthodoxy embraced, the divine reason and eternal thought proceeded from the Divine Father, meaning that the Logos Christ is authentically divine, with the same divine essence and mind with the Father, yet a distinct referent from the Father.¹⁰⁵ Such a Logos Christology could completely develop Christ's divinity without saying anything at all about Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁶ However, Justin concluded that Christ pre-existed as God and was made flesh of the Virgin, being born as a human with flesh and blood.¹⁰⁷ Thus Christ did not cease to be Logos, being at once "God and

⁹⁹ E. Brunner, *The Mediator* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1934 and Philadelphia: Westminster, 1947), p. 325; Wolfhardt Pannenberg agrees (*Jesus-God and Man* [London: SCM Press, 1968], p. 35).

¹⁰⁰ Emil Brunner, *The Mediator*, pp. 177, 201ff.

¹⁰¹ Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 4, 5, 7, 8, 11.

¹⁰² E.g., Origen, *Contra Celsus* 4.11-13; Ireneaus, *Adv. Haer.* 1.7.1.

¹⁰³ Tertullian, *De Trin.* 15.

¹⁰⁴ Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 26; *De carn.* 1; 5; 9; 20; 23; c. Marc. 2.27.

¹⁰⁵ E.g., Justin, *Dial.* 56.11; 128.4.

¹⁰⁶ E.g., Tatian's development of the Logos doctrine.

¹⁰⁷ Justin, *Dial.* 87.2; *1 Apol.* 46.5; 66.2.

man.”¹⁰⁸ Later, Athanasius would write that “*hypostasis* is the same as *ousia*, signifying nothing other than being itself.”¹⁰⁹ Thus, the procession that fosters the *hypostasis* is indicating *the extension of the divine essence*. In the Stoic and Platonic forms syncratized here, the procession occurred at creation, implying Christ was not an independent person from the Father until after the creation. This perspective, Arius owned to claim that Christ was the greatest creature, begotten and thus made by God as the first born of all creation.¹¹⁰ Thus for Arius, Christ’s finiteness as a creation subordinates Him to God and limits His ability to comprehend and have fellowship with God.¹¹¹

Under the influence of neo-platonism’s commitment that all truth is eternal truth, and Biblical trinity statements, Origen proposed that the three persons were distinct *hypostasis* from all eternity. To explain this fact and to combat modalism¹¹² and Arian subordinationism, he proposed that the Son was *eternally generated* by the Father.¹¹³ Such a view left Christ as a created subordinated God.¹¹⁴ This eternal generation is reflected at Nicea by Eusebius of Caesarea’s suggestion of his own *Creed of Caesarea* with the statement “Son only-begotten ... begotten of the Father before the ages.” He reasoned that the Son must be begotten before creation because the Son creates everything, but this language did not make it into the *Nicene Creed* (325 A.D.) statement.

We believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to heaven, and will come to judge the living and the dead.

This eternal begetting language finally made it into the 381 A.D. Constantinople (second catholic church council) revised a version of the *Nicene Creed* (which adds the following replacing the above “that is” with, “begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made”) and the second canon of *The Canons of the Second Council of Constantinople* (553 A. D.), the fifth catholic council reads:

If anyone does not confess that the two begettings of God the Word, one before ages, from the Father, timelessly and incorporeally, the other in the last days, the begetting of the same person, who came down from heaven and was made flesh

¹⁰⁸ Justin, *Dial.* 34.2; 36.1; 39.7; 41.1; 49.2.

¹⁰⁹ Athanasius, *Ep. Ad Afr.* 4; *De decret.* 27; *de syn.* 41.

¹¹⁰ Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 1.5; 1.9. Christ as created was defended from: Prov. 8:22; Acts 2:36; Remember “first born” in texts like Hebrews 1:6; Romans 8:29 and Colossians 1:15 are not a comment about origination but a semitic expression about rank for the highest of the kings (Ps. 89:27).

¹¹¹ Athanasius, *ep. ad epics. Aeg. et Lib.* 12; *de syn.* 15. Arius’ argument was from John 14:28 and texts about “the Father as greater than I”.

¹¹² “Modalism” is Sabellius’ model that the Father was the monotheistic God in a heavenly throne room role, and then He took up an incarnate role (so the Father suffered the cross in the role of the Son, i.e. patripassionism), finally coming again in a different role as the enabling Spirit.

¹¹³ Origen, *Ioh.* 2.10.75; 20.22.182f; 32.16.192f; *De Princ.* 1.2.4 .

¹¹⁴ Origen, *De Princ.* 4.4.1; *Contra Celsum* 5.39.

of the Holy and Glorious God-bearer and ever-virgin Mary, and was born of her, let him be anathema.¹¹⁵

Origin proposes that the two natures of Christ were unified mystically as One in a commingling, resulting in the deification of the humanity, and not merely their fellowship.¹¹⁶ In this approach, the Logos had in effect replaced any mental and spiritual humanity of Christ with the divine. Eustathius even permitted this deification of Christ's human spirit by the Logos to render His body holy, such that His divinity was reflected in His countenance.¹¹⁷

Arius resisted Christ being described as the "same essence" (*homoousios*) with the Father.¹¹⁸ Basil of Ancyra proposed a compromise formula "of like substance" (*homoiousios*), trying to identify a distinct personal identity of Christ from the Father. However, *ousia* was defended to not be describing person, but rather nature. Thus there could be only one same essence (*homoousios*) as an affirmation of monotheism, that there is only one God, and the Father, Christ, and the Spirit are this same God. Athanasius defends that the Father and Son are really distinct persons and yet share the same nature.¹¹⁹ So in the incarnation, Athanasius defends that the Word becomes human, not merely by entering and empowering a human prophet (Jn. 1:14).¹²⁰ So the Logos remains the governing principle of Christ throughout His incarnation. Athanasius took instruction from the Synod of Alexandria in 362 A.D., which he chaired, for they concluded that the Logos did not exclude or supersede Jesus from having a human soul (which as Apollinarius view was then condemned at Alexandria 378, Antioch 379 and the catholic council of Constantinople, 381 A.D.).

Under the influence of Aristotelian *Categories* the meaning of "nature" referred to *what* (described by attributes) and "person" referred to *who* (described by relations). For example, Gregory of Nyssa makes this point as he corrects trinity descriptions to be one substance (or what) and three persons (or whos), and Christology to be two substances (or whats) and one person (or who).¹²¹ He points out that *ousia* (what or essence or species) should not be used interchangeably with *hypostasis* (person or who). However, he transcends Aristotle's *Categories* when he develops that God's unity is identical with the unity between the persons. That is, Aristotle had left the unity of persons to be like the species of "humanity;" the kind of understanding that would fund social trinity. However, Gregory points out that the *ousia* of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not a secondary substance. That is, they do not *have* the same *ousia*, they *are* the same *ousia*. That is, not that there is a species of God with three occupants but that there is only one God.

¹¹⁵ Henry Bettenson *Documents of the Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 92.

¹¹⁶ Origen, *C. Cels.* 2.9; 6.47; *De Princ.* 2.6.4; 4.4.4.

¹¹⁷ Athanasius, *De engast.* 10; 17; frg. 74.

¹¹⁸ Arius, *ep. ad Alex.*; Athanasius, *c. Ar.* 1.6.

¹¹⁹ Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 1.58; 3.4; *de decret.* 23; *de syn.* 53; *Serap.* 2.6.

¹²⁰ Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 2.8; 3.30; *De incar.* 4; 8; 16; 54; *Ep. ad Epict.* 8.

¹²¹ Gregory of Nyssa, "Letter 38" in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd ser., ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, trans. Blomfield (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 8:137-38. There is also a nice discussion of this influence of Aristotle on the theologians in Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), pp. 93-144.

In response to the Arian controversy the Cappadocians (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa) tried to distinguish the mode of origination of the Son. For example, Basil employed the Orthodox framework that the Son's generation is breathed out of God's mouth is ineffable but true.¹²² He further teaches that the one Spirit "is linked with the one Father through the one Son;" it is through the Son that the divine qualities reach the Spirit from the Father.¹²³ On the basis of John 15:26 in contrast to John 1:14, 18, Gregory of Nazianzus maintained that the Spirit proceeded from the Father whereas the Son is generated by the Father.¹²⁴ However, Gregory of Nyssa provided the definitive statement; the Spirit "is out of God and is of Christ; He proceeds out of the Father and receives from the Son; He cannot be separated from the Word."¹²⁵ This Orthodox procession view is a short step from the double procession view which was accepted in the West. The Capadocians claim that there is one Godhead (*ousia*) and three *hypostasis*, likewise, in Christology there are two natures (*ousia*) and one person (*hypostasis*).¹²⁶ They conceived of Christ's divine and human natures in unity as a mixture through a mutual interpenetration (*perichorēsis*), which as a term prevailed because it suggested less strongly the notion of blending.¹²⁷ The two natures were maintained but the figurative illustrations mixed them: the divinity saturates Jesus' humanity as fire makes iron glow, and the humanity dissolves into His divinity as a drop of vinegar in the infinite sea.¹²⁸ Later, Luther taught this real mutual interpenetration of Christ's two natures and utilized these figures to inform the real presence of Christ in the eucharist.¹²⁹ Zwingli saw this communication of attributes as merely figures of speech and resisted such co-mingling to maintain the distinctiveness of Christ's natures and the symbolic nature of the Lord's Supper.¹³⁰ Calvin and Melanchthon agreed that such communication was merely figures of speech but the attributes of both natures were transferred to the Person without mixing the natures, so the divinity of Christ maintained a spiritual omnipresence.¹³¹ This Reformation Christological debate underlay the Eucharistic controversy.

¹²² Basil, *De spir. Sanct.* 46.

¹²³ Basil, *De spir. Sanct.* 45 and 47.

¹²⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 31.7-8.

¹²⁵ J.N.D. Kelly *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 262, referring to Gregory's statement in *C. Maced.* 2; 10; 12; 24 and *Ib.* 2-4.

¹²⁶ Basil, *Ep.* 8.3; 38.8; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 21.14; 42.15; also Didymus, *de trin.* 1.16 (*MPG* 39, p. 336).

¹²⁷ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ep.* 101 (J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completes, series Graeca*, 161 vols. [Paris: Migne, 1856-1866] subsequently referred to as *MPG* which in this case is vol. 37, p. 181C); *ad Cledon* (*MPG* 37, p. 180A); Gregory of Nyssa, *MPG* 45, p. 1276C; John of Damascus, *De fide orth.* 3.3f (*MPG* 94, pp. 993-1000); cf. Wolfhard Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 296-307.

¹²⁸ Origen, *De princ.* 2.6.6 (*MPG* 11, pp. 213f.); Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. cat.* 10; *Adv. Apoll.* 42 (*MPG* 45, p. 1224); Pseudo-Basil, *Homil. in sanctam Christi generat.* 2 (*MPG* 31, p. 1460C).

¹²⁹ Martin Luther, *Wewrke: Kristische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimer: Herman Böhlau & Nachfolger, 1883), vol. 7, p. 53 and vol. 6, p. 510; Karl Barth follows Luther here (*Church Dogmatics* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956] 4/2, pp. 91-115).

¹³⁰ Ulrich Zwingli, *Opera* (Tiguri: Apud C. Froschoverum, 2nd ed., 1581), vol. 2/1, p. 449; Formula of Concord, *SD* 8, 45.

¹³¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.14.2; Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, translated by Harold Knight (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 115-6; Melanchthon, *Corpus Reformtorum* v. 21, pp. 626f. (*Loci communes* [1559], *De Filio*, cf. version from 1535, *Corpus Reformtorum* v. 21, p. 363).

In the West, Victorinus, the Neo-Platonic philosopher took up the defense of the *homoousion* (same essence) view against the Arians. He held that God is eternally in motion; His essence is equivalent to that of a perpetual mover. So, eternal generation shows the perpetuity of the movement of the Son and the potency of the Father to move the Son.¹³² This perspective of Victorinus was very influential on Augustine's view as he formulated what became the mature standard view for the Western church in his volume *De trinitate*. Augustine looked to primary substance, in particular the mind of a human for an analogy of this unity and diversity within God.¹³³ Thus, the will of God is located as a single sovereign will in God's nature, and thus all the persons of God operate inseparably.¹³⁴ Augustine recognized trinity in: 1) the human mind, 2) its power to know and love, and 3) the object of such knowledge and love. In Augustine, the first Who usually stands for the Father, while the second Who (the Spirit) as the medium in the expression of knowledge and love to the third Who (the Son). Augustine sees that the distinction of the persons is grounded in mutual relations within the Godhead. This concept of relation clarifies that it is not three essences or three accidents in the Aristotelian philosophical categories but three real eternal relations (*aliquid relation*).¹³⁵ Therefore, the relations within the Godhead are: the Father is eternally begetting, the Son is eternally begotten, and the Spirit is eternally proceeding or being bestowed within the Godhead. Of course, Augustine brings much more to the trinity than this, but the critical move from conceiving of the *persons as extensions of the Divine* (Orthodoxy) to conceiving the *persons as equal related Ones* within the Divine (Western) had been made.

The Alexandrian school widely accepted describing Mary as "God-bearing," Nestorius (the Constantinople patriarch) resisted the interpenetration (*perichorēsis*) and argued "Christ-bearing" would be better (focusing on the person Christ), but if one nature was referred to then the other should as well (Mary as God and man bearing).¹³⁶ Nestorius clarified that he held "the natures apart," but that they unite in worship, because the divine existed "in the human" and the human in the divine without mixture or confusion.¹³⁷ Nestorian perspective was viewed as not fully appreciating the unity of Christ's person, but rather seeing Him as a conjunction of natures, as though he was teaching Christ to be "two sons." This was perhaps because a poor choice of terms, in which he claimed that the humanity of Christ was a *hypostasis* or *prosopon*, which terms normally were reserved for describing "person" or the Antioch side had no problem letting the Alexandrian side describe "divine person." However, to let such terms describe the human nature as human person implied an independence and completeness of Christ's humanity from His divinity. Perhaps a twentieth century version is the tendency to call the divine-human unity *paradoxical* as Paul Althaus and Otto Weber

¹³² Victorinus, *Adv. Ar.* 1.43; 3.7; 4.20–21; *De gen. Verb.* 2; 29–30; *Ib.* 1.31; 1.41; 4.20.

¹³³ Augustine, *De trin.* 5–7.

¹³⁴ Augustine, *De trin.* 1.7; 2.3, 9; 5.15; *c. serm. Ar.* 4; *enchir.* 38.

¹³⁵ Augustine, *de trin.* Bks. 5–7; *Ioh. Tract.* 39; *enar. In ps.* 68.1.5; *ep.* 170; 238–41; *de civ. Dei* 11.10. I critique this development of eternal generation in Douglas Kennard, *The Classical Christian God* (Lewiston: Mellen, 2002), pp. 82–85, and "The Role of Tradition in Theology" earlier presented as a paper at ETS, 2003.

¹³⁶ Nestorius, *Ep. ad Joh. Antioch.*

¹³⁷ Nestorius, *serm. 1; Nulla Deterior.*

do.¹³⁸ All traditions appeal that there is mystery here but the paradox option refuses to accept some level of resolution that other options like Chalcedon attempt to make.

Eutyches proposed a view that became known as monophysitism. That is, before the incarnational union Christ was two natures, but at some point after birth (often identified at baptism) Christ moved “out of two natures” into a fused single nature associated with His person. This view was condemned at Chalcedon (451 A.D.).

Irenaeus expressed the salvific reason for divinity and humanity being united in Christ.

If a human being had not overcome the enemy of humanity, the enemy would not have been rightly overcome. On the other side, if it had not been God to give us salvation, we would not have received it permanently. If the human being had not been united to God, it would not have been possible to share in incorruptibility. In fact, the Mediator between God and human beings, thanks to his relationship with both, had to bring both to friendship and concord, and bring it about that God should assume humanity and human beings offer themselves to God.¹³⁹

Basil of Caesara rendered this explicit in his comment, “For if the Lord did not assume that over which death reigned [i.e. our flesh] death would not have been stopped...but we are restored in Christ.”¹⁴⁰ Leo the Great argued that Christ must have assumed our Adamic sinful humanity through Mary as Luke 3:38 portrays, or the mystical redemptive battle would not be able to benefit us in our sinful nature.¹⁴¹ Many consider that a sinful human nature was unnecessary to accomplish this redemption provided it was authentic humanity. Of course, in all these statements, Jesus then lived an impeccable life, as was developed in the chapter of “Jesus as Priest.”

With the death of the emperor and the consolidation of Marcian’s reign these issues were resolved for the West at the Council at Chalcedon in 451 A.D., which reads:

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in God-head and the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same [consisting] of a rational soul and body, consubstantial (*homoousios*) with the Father in Godhead, and the same consubstantial (*homoousios*) with us in manhood, like us in all things except sin; begotten from the Father before the ages as regards His Godhead, and in the last days, the same, because of us and because of our salvation begotten from the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer (*Theotokos*), as regards His manhood; one and the same Christ, the Son, Lord, only-begotten, made known in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and

¹³⁸ Paul Althaus, *Die christliche Wahrheit* (Gutersloh: C Bertelsman, 1949), pp. 448f.; O. Weber, *Grundlagen der Dogmatik* (Neukirchen: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1962) vol. 2, p. 136.

¹³⁹ Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 3.18.7; cf. 3.19.1.

¹⁴⁰ St. Basil of Caesarea, *Epistola* 261.2.

¹⁴¹ Leo the Great, *Epistola* 31.2.

coalescing in one Person (*prospon*) and one *hypostasis*- not parted or divided into two persons (*prosopa*), but one and the same Son, only begotten, divine Word, the Logos Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old and Jesus Christ Himself have taught us about Him and the creed of our fathers has handed down.

This “two-natures” preserving statement settled the issue for the Western church, while the Eastern church often continued with a more unifying Antiochian Logos view, which eventually caused a schism in the Eastern church in 553 A.D.¹⁴² To maintain the Chalcedonian perspective, Jesus’ humanity would have finite growing knowledge from His bodily perspective, and simultaneously omniscience within His Deity, all unified and able to be thought from the unity of His person. Likewise, Jesus is finitely present as embodied human and simultaneously omnipresent as Divine, and the unified Christ could know or speak from either or both vantage points. Thomas Morris develops this two-minds view.

In the case of God Incarnate we must recognize something like two distinct minds or systems of mentality. There is first what we can call the eternal mind of God the Son, with its distinctively divine consciousness, whatever that might be like, encompassing the full scope of omniscience, empowered by the resources of omnipotence, and present in power and knowledge throughout the entirety of creation. And in addition to this divine mind, there is the distinctly earthly mind with its consciousness that came into existence and developed with the conception, human birth and growth of Christ’s earthly form of existence. The human mind drew its visual imagery from what the eyes of Jesus saw, and its concepts from the languages he learned. This earthly mind, with its range of consciousness and self-consciousness, was thoroughly human, Jewish and first-century Palestinian in nature. By living out his earthly life from only the resources of his human body and mind, he took on the form of our existence and shared in the plight of our condition.¹⁴³

The relationship between these minds would reflect the abilities of each nature, thus in an asymmetric accessing relation.

The two minds of Christ should be thought of as standing in something like an asymmetric accessing relation: the human mind was contained by but did not itself contain the divine mind, or, to portray it from the other side, the divine mind contained, but was not contained by, the human mind. Everything present to the

¹⁴² The historical discussion through Chalcedon is nicely accessible through: Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition, Volume one, From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), and J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*. This is a meaningful delineation contrary to John Hick, *The Myth of God Incarnate* (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 178.

¹⁴³ Thomas Morris, *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), p. 169; cf. *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 102–7 and 149–62.

human mind of Christ was thereby present to the divine mind as well, but not vice versa.¹⁴⁴

Such an asymmetric relation between Christ's two minds would result in a full orb'd statement of His impeccability as follows: as human Jesus could sin (thus permitting authentic temptation) and yet as God, Christ could not sin (because God can not sin), and as a unified person He did not sin.

The medieval church largely explored the implications of this Chalcedonian formula.¹⁴⁵ In 634 A.D., Scogius proposed and prohibited the view (of Monergism) that Christ's unity into a single *hypostasis* to which all the attitudes of the Savior were to be referred, there must have been a single principle of activity ("a single hypostatic energy"). In response, Heraclius proposed that the unity of Christ in one person meant that He had only a single will (Monothelism), not two different wills, each appropriate to their respective nature. Such Monothelism was condemned at Constantinople in 681 A.D. The strength of the Antiochian region of Monophysitism, Monoergism and Monothelism was lost to Islam, so these issues for the West were resolved after the Chalcedonian pattern.

Anselm lays out a classic soteriological defense for the Chalcedonian formula in his work *Why the God-Man*.¹⁴⁶ The framework is a recognition in a context of chivalry that God has been dishonored by Adam's and other human's sin but no human has sufficient reserve to resolve this situation to sufficiently honor God again. Jesus must be God because God alone can save because all beings are either in sin or God's servants. Likewise, Jesus must be a perfect man, to live a perfect life to show it was possible in God's design and gain victory over Satan. To preserve God's justice it would be improper to justify sinners without a just payment proportional to their guilt. Jesus deity amply over pays this amount, which is honorable in a chivalry framework. Evangelicals might wish today to add that Jesus humanity renders Him an appropriate substitution for us, but within chivalry that is not so acutely felt provided the substitute is accepted in that role and amply regains the honor lost. Jesus excels at this.

Aquinas accepted this Chalcedonian framework and viewed Christ as Mediator because He had a human nature that could be other than God and thus function as the go between,¹⁴⁷ not as the Reformer's view, that of Christ's divine-human person bridging the gap between God and we humans.¹⁴⁸ Aquinas additionally unpacks the issues of the "means of assumption" inherent in the Chalcedonian Formula.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Thomas Morris, "The Metaphysics of God Incarnate" in *Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement: Philosophical and Theological Essays*. Edited by Ronald Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), pp. 121–22.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Aloys Grillmeier and Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition, Volume two, From Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1989), which era is briefly summarized in Wolfhard Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 293–6; e.g., Boethius, *The Theological Tractates*. trans. by H. F. Steward, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 117.

¹⁴⁶ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* as contained in *St Anselm Basic Writings*, trans. S. N. Deane (La Salle: Open Court Publishing Co., 1962).

¹⁴⁷ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III. q. 2, a. 3; q. 26, a. 2.

¹⁴⁸ E.g., *The Formula of Concord* VIII.47.s

¹⁴⁹ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III. q. 6, a. 1–6.

The eternal relatedness of equal person within the Trinity that sets up the West for the next move in appropriating the *filioque* clause, that the Spirit proceeds also from the Son, and not just from the Father. This clause had been floated at the Council of Toledo (447 A.D.), but first emerged in a creed of the Church in the rewording of the Creed of Constantinople recited at the third Council of Toledo (589 A.D.).¹⁵⁰ This clause gained popularity in the West as explaining the eternal relationships of Son and Spirit and thus clarifying a distinction from each other. It was inserted in most versions of the creed except when Leo III refused it in 809 A.D. As political tensions of the Eastern and Western church rose over Papal authority, Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, charged the West and Nicholas I with innovation in an attempt to discredit the Pope. In 867 A.D., as the Latin rites with its “double procession of the Spirit” were introduced into the Church of Bulgaria, Photius attacked them. That same year the Council of Constantinople declared the Roman Church as heretical and excommunicated Pope Nicholas. This breach was patched up for a time around 920 A.D. but as the emperor began to side more closely to the Roman pontif, Pope Leo IX, the metropolitan from Constantinople Michael Cerularius decided for schism (the Eastern church left the West over the West’s innovative heresy) and anathematized them, making the schism complete.¹⁵¹

Few of the Reformers deviate from the Western Church tradition on these Christological issues, but Calvin is one who dismisses the Nicene Fathers speculations. Warfield summarizes Calvin’s view to be, “It is enough, he says in effect, to believe that the Son derives from the Father, the Spirit from the Father and the Son, without encumbering ourselves with a speculation upon the nature of the eternally generating act to which these hypostases are referred.”¹⁵² Calvin does not develop these speculations in *The Institutes*, considering eternal generation and eternal procession as non-Biblical.

The passages to which appeals are made to teach eternal generation are: John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18 and 1 John 4:9. Each of these passages has within it the critical word *μονογενής*. This word *μονογενής* elsewhere in the Bible means “unique child” as the case of the only child of a synagogue official that needs Jesus healing or Abraham’s unique child of the covenant, Isaac, whom God has commanded to be sacrificed (Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; Heb. 11:17). However, in John the word is used exclusively of Jesus Christ with reference to His unique historical birth as the revelatory Word, to reveal God through the flesh. For example, John 1:14 describes the unique birthing process as the incarnation of Christ’s humanity in flesh so that He as the Word could reveal the divine glory historically through His humanity. The fact that the Word is God (Jn. 1:1) means that the uniquely born God (divine One adding humanity in his birth) is uniquely enabled to explain the Father, which explanation took place in the historical incarnation prior to John’s writing his gospel (the aorist *ἐξηγήσατο*; Jn. 1:18). This uniquely born Word (incarnated or born for the purpose of revealing the Father) has revealed God and after

¹⁵⁰ Bettenson, *Documents of the Church*, p. 25, note 6.

¹⁵¹ Michael Cerularius, *terra pax hominibus*, in Sept. 1053, cf. Bettenson, pp. 96-7.

¹⁵² Benjamin B. Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974), p. 250.

the ascension (as John is writing¹⁵³), the divine Word interpenetrated the anthropomorphic breast (κόλπον) of the Father. The Father gives the uniquely born (μονογενῆς) Son of God (in His incarnation coming into the world) for men to believe in Him and thereby obtain everlasting life (Jn. 3:16,18; 1 Jn. 4:9). Since the Biblical texts used to defend the doctrine of generation emphasize μονογενῆς to be the historical birthing of Jesus' humanity in incarnation, it is best to reject the ancient tradition, that Jesus Christ was generated before all ages in eternity. As a historical oddity eternal generation does not reflect the Bible. At this point, the unanimous voice of scholarly commentators agree,¹⁵⁴ further confirming the exegetical view that the generation of the Son should be Biblically understood as an initiation of an economic ministry of the divine Word incarnating to reveal the Father through His humanity.

Likewise, the procession of the Spirit is best seen as a historical process that occurs after Jesus ascends, rather than an eternal procession as argued by the traditions of the church, as they appeal especially to John 14:25–26, 15:26 and 16:5. However, these Biblical texts indicate that this procession happens historically, when the Holy Spirit is economically sent to continue Jesus' ministry. For example, John 14:17–18 indicates that the disciples with Jesus in the upper room have the Holy Spirit with them but there will be a change as Jesus leaves, for then the Holy Spirit will be in them. After Jesus leaves the Father will send (πέμψει) the Holy Spirit to the disciples to remind these disciples about the things Jesus said to them when He was in fact with them (Jn. 14:25–26). The Holy Spirit will come after Jesus leaves, sent (πέμψω) by Christ and going out (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father (Jn. 15:26). However, the Son must leave first and return to the Father who sent the Son and thus the disciples will have an advantage as Christ leaves, for the Son will send (πέμψω) the Holy Spirit to them so that the Spirit might convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment (Jn. 16:5, 7–8). The same economic relationship of being sent that the Son had, the Holy Spirit will have, and thus the Holy Spirit is another comforter like Christ. In Acts 1:8 the Holy Spirit had not been received by the disciples yet in this manner, so that they awaited His empowerment in their future. Christ finally ascends in Acts 1:9 leaving His disciples. On the feast of Pentecost the Holy Spirit fills the disciples and they have a dramatic empowerment to proclaim the gospel (Acts 2:2–4). God declares that in the last days He will pour forth (ἐκχεῶ) the Spirit on all mankind (Acts 2:17). Jesus Christ in His exaltation receives (λαβὼν) the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and so Christ pours forth (ἐξέχεεν) this Holy spirit phenomenon which the Jews present can see and hear (Acts 2:33). In the wake of this historical procession which happened at Pentecost, the father sends (ἐξαπέστειλεν) the Spirit into believers' hearts prompting them to intimate prayer by which we cry out, "Daddy, Father" (Gal. 4:6). This condition of the indwelling Spirit who prompts believers to intimate prayer happens for all who belong to Christ, are

¹⁵³ w]n the present tense of ei]jmi, indicates a present relationship, but not a continued enwombment that would indicate that the unique birth in this context had not happened because, in fact, with the incarnation the unique birth occurs.

¹⁵⁴ E.g., D. Moody, "God's only Son: the translation of John 3:16 in the revised standard Version" *JBL* 72(1953): 213–19; G.R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 14–16, 51; Raymond Brown, *John i–xii*, vol. 29, pp. 13–14, 30–34, 129, 134; *The Epistles of John*, pp. 516–17; Barnabas Lindars, *John*, pp. 95–6, 98–99, 159–160; Leon Morris, *John*, pp. 105–6, 113–14, 230–4; Stephen Smalley, *1,2,3 John*, CD disc commentary 1 Jn. 4:9; B. F. Westcott, *John*, pp. 10–14, 55.

adopted as sons by the Father and are co-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:9, 15, 17). Since the Biblical text emphasizes procession to be an economic historical coming of the Spirit at Pentecost with continued economic affect in believers, it is best to reject the ancient traditions that the Spirit is from an eternal procession. Likewise, it is best to see that this procession is economically from the Father and the Son by comparing that the same Greek words describe the Father's sending of the Spirit (πέμψει, ἐκχεῶ) also describe the Son's sending of the Spirit (πέμψω, ἐξέχεεν). The unanimous voice of scholarly commentators¹⁵⁵ at this point agree further confirming the exegetical view that the sending of the Spirit is an economic historical coming to perform certain ministries beginning at Pentecost.

Philosophically we can be critical of these eternal sendings, utilizing the clarity of language evident in the meaning of words.¹⁵⁶ This criticism here includes that these concepts are themselves contradictory and thus not worthy to be believed.¹⁵⁷ For example, in the patristic context eternal means "outside of time, without change, and perpetual" and γεννάω means "birth as a historical instance," so what would "eternal generation" combining these ideas mean? That is, what would a "perpetual beyond history birth as a historical instance" mean, but a contradiction? Likewise, sending or procession happens historically in time, as we developed above, so what would eternal procession mean? That is, what would a "perpetual beyond history sending as a historical instance" mean, but a contradiction? As contradiction, they are not worthy to be believed.

With the rise of modern philosophy and theology, the view of person becomes reframed as subjective self-awareness. For example, Jonathan Edwards agrees with John Locke concerning the mind and personhood; "Well might Mr. Locke say that identity of person consisted in identity of consciousness."¹⁵⁸ That is, a person is a continuing self-identical consciousness, a continuity of memory. However, Edwards rejected Locke's view that human spirit was a separate substance and instead claimed that it is this same consciousness of the mind.¹⁵⁹

Post enlightenment theologians, like Schleiermacher shifted the focus of this Christology upon the internal effect that Christ had upon humans, prompting them by exhortation and example to deeply depend upon the transcendent God beyond them. This anthropological turn placed the emphasis on Jesus' subjectivity of His "God-consciousness." While classical liberalism was more skeptical about such awareness, the more recent theological scene has become more nuanced with regard to Jesus' awareness of His eternal pre-existence. For example, James Dunn argued that there was no notion

¹⁵⁵ E.g., G.R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 261, 286–7; Raymond Brown, *John xiii–xxi*, vol. 29, pp. 650–1, 699–700; Craig Keener, *John*, vol. 2, pp. 977–982, 1035–43; Barnabas Lindars, *John*, pp. 484, 496; Leon Morris, *John*, pp. 656–7, 683–4; B. F. Westcott, *John*, pp. 208–9, 224–225.

¹⁵⁶ E.g., John Langshaw Austin, *How to do things With Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962) and *Sense and Sensibilia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

¹⁵⁷ Doug Kennard, *The Classical Christian God*, pp. 82–85.

¹⁵⁸ Edwards quoted by Robert Jenson, *America's Theologian*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁹ YE6: 342-3 and *Miscellanies*, number 267 cited in Jenson, *America's Theologian*, p. 30; this is a point on which I agree based on the overlap of νοον" and pneu`ma, though I use the Tillichian concept of different dimensions to explain this, cf. chapter by Doug Kennard and Paul Holmes "The Nature of Man: A Biblical Theology Approach."

of a *pre-existent* Messiah, nor Son of Man in pre-Christian Judaism.¹⁶⁰ Dunn points out that much of the broader discussion of N.T. studies moved beyond the Liberal self-awareness model to a diminished concept of ‘divine man’ from classical Greek or Roman mythology, where it means a human related to by the gods in some unique way (like Hercules or Caesar).¹⁶¹ Furthermore, Biblically and historically God had visited the world as a human,¹⁶² but Jesus’ incarnation would be unusually long for such visits. However, Dunn presents John as the Christian author who develops Jesus’ pre-existence awareness (as in Jn. 8:58).¹⁶³ As we have seen, John clearly advances the issue but Biblical Christianity pioneers the topic before John’s writing (e.g., 1 Cor. 8:5–6). The Catholic International Theological Commission asserts that “in an indirect fashion” Jesus showed that He was conscious of His “eternal existence as Son of the Father” and “the consciousness Jesus has of his mission also involves...the consciousness of his ‘pre-existence.’”¹⁶⁴ Pannenberg adds that Jesus’ self-consciousness includes that of speaking for God with divine authority and the oneness with God that actualizes the future reality of the Kingdom of God.¹⁶⁵

In 1831, following Philippians 2:7, Sartori proposed *Kenotic* Christology, conceiving of Christ self-limiting His divinity to unify with His humanity in the incarnation. The issue extends Chemnitz’s position (from Giessen) against Brenz (from Tübingen) during the seventeenth century, that Jesus had divine attributes in His human nature, but that He at times refused to use these divine attributes.¹⁶⁶ These kenotic models are trying to preserve Jesus’ human self consciousness within a liberalism. Whereas, evangelical advocates of kenosis seem more driven by presenting a gospels Christology to reflect Jesus subservience to the Father as real human. Thomasius developed the idea more fully into Christ abandoning His divinity (especially the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence), thus He became apparently human (“not a real man”) as He transformed the Logos into a human soul, and then returned to divinity after glorification.¹⁶⁷ Isaak Dorner led the rebuttal in his day by pointing out that such a mutable divinity is not really God, and thus relinquishment of the “relative” divine attributes results in a “relative de-deification” of Christ, diminishing any

¹⁶⁰ James Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/London: SCM Press, 1989), pp. 168–76, 215–30.

¹⁶¹ James Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, pp. 16, 22.

¹⁶² James Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, p. 20; e.g., Gen. 15; legend of Baucis and Philemon, Ovid, *Metam.* 8.626–721 and thought to be duplicated in Acts 14:8–18; or wrongly thought of Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:20–23; Josephus, *Ant.* 19.343–50).

¹⁶³ James Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, p. 23.

¹⁶⁴ M. Sharkey, editor. *International Theological Commission: Texts and Documents 1969–85* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), pp. 217, 310; Gerald O’Collins evaluates these developments in *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

¹⁶⁵ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 328, 334.

¹⁶⁶ Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 308–10.

¹⁶⁷ Gottfried Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk* (Erlangen, A. Deichert, 3rd ed., 1886–8), vol. 1, pp. 412, 444, 471–3, 608; part of which is translated by Claude Welch as “Christ’s Person and Work,” in *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965); Ronald Feenstra, “Reconsidering Kenotic Christology” in *Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement*, pp. 128–152.

salvation which He brings.¹⁶⁸ Heinrich Vogel avoids the problem of kenosis by proposing a mystical substitution,¹⁶⁹ which makes the deity only perceived as hidden under his real humanity. However, his view that the divine when revealed ceases to be God,¹⁷⁰ confuses the issue rather than helping.

Karl Rahner sees the unchangeable God's self-giving as a self-emptying in the other, the humanity of Jesus.¹⁷¹ For him, the human exemplar, Jesus shows His open transcendence (common among humans) to receive God's absolute Being and thus structures the incarnation of God in man. This move is a Hegelian dialectic of self-differentiation, including at the same time difference and unity with the difference, thus not really a diminishing *kenotic* model. For example, deity remains eternal, but with the incarnation, becoming is added. Contrary to Pannenberg's affirmation of this approach,¹⁷² normally such Hegelian dialectics either contradict or do not engage the contrary elements in the same way and thus do not in fact constitute a dialectical tension. This last instance appears to be Pannenberg's condition here.

Karl Barth brings an economic unity of the divinity and humanity of Christ in the event of incarnation, by which He goes through humble condescension determining the humanity of Jesus, and thereby humanity in general.¹⁷³ Such an approach fails to face the issue on a level of ontological person and nature, in emphasizing the Biblically economic terms significant for salvation. Barth also embraced a form of Edward Irving's view¹⁷⁴ that Jesus' incarnate humanity was tainted with original sin of Adam ("in the likeness of sinful flesh," Rom. 8:3).¹⁷⁵ T. B. Torrance embraced this view more explicitly, "that Christ assumed 'fallen humanity' that our humanity might be turned back to God in him by his sinless life in the Spirit, and through him, in us."¹⁷⁶ However, these approaches are a bit Nestorian, separating humanity's sinfulness off from the unity of the person and His divine nature. Additionally, such a 'fallen humanity' renders us culpable of the commercial imputation from Adam's sin, even without doing any deed (Rom. 5:12–13). Instead Jesus is the rival, as the 'New Adam' to bring about righteousness for and in us through His sinless choice for gracious righteousness (Rom. 5:15–21). Instead of seeing "the likeness of sinful flesh" as "fallen humanity" in the incarnation, it is better to see it as a salvific substitution for our "fallen humanity" while He remained utterly impeccable (2 Cor. 5:21).

Barth, Bultmann and Tillich surfaced the existentially paradoxical tension in theology, yet still held to by a group is the goal of that which is universally concrete and absolutely universal. Examples of this kind of tension force us into the trinity issues, like "divine Logos become flesh," or "incarnation is a self-emptying of God," or "being in

¹⁶⁸ Isaak August Dorner, "Über die richtige Fassung des dogmatischen Begriffs der Unveränderlichkeit Gottes," *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1856–58, now in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1883), pp. 188–377.

¹⁶⁹ Heinrich Vogel, *Christologie*, 1 (München: C. Kaiser, 1949), pp. 652–720.

¹⁷⁰ Vogel, *Christologie*, 1, p. 719.

¹⁷¹ Karl Rahner, "Jesus Christus," *LThK* 5(1960): 956 and "Zur Theologie der Menschwerdung," *Schriften zur Theologie* 4(1960): 137–155, especially p. 147.

¹⁷² Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 317–320.

¹⁷³ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956), 4/2, pp. 51–79.

¹⁷⁴ *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving*, vol. 5 (London: 1865, pp. 116, 126, 128, 170).

¹⁷⁵ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ½, pp. 153–4

¹⁷⁶ T. B. Torrance, *The Incarnation* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1981), p. 141.

Christ.” Barth connects this tension with the personal crises a person might have in the “Christ-event,” a personal owning of an existential relationship before Christ. Tillich takes this more amorphously upon the “ground of Being.” Whereas, Bultmann separates the Jesus from below off from the “Christ of Faith,” which the early Christian community progressively reinterpreted Jesus to now mean for them. Pannenberg resolves these paradoxical tensions through the unity of tradition, “The unity of the tradition is grounded in the common relation of different theologians of different ages to the norm of the one and the same Christ-event.”¹⁷⁷ Pannenberg also sees the full revelation of God in the end of history, which has begun with the resurrection of Christ. Thus God is ultimately revealed in Jesus, the resurrected One.¹⁷⁸

Modernity and the quest for the historical Jesus especially valued the humanity of Jesus as the reconstructed it (as was mentioned in the introduction to this book).¹⁷⁹ The second quest and the Jesus seminar in the third quest exemplifies this. The second quest began by Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem with the Historical Jesus,” which tried to bridge the radical divide of Rudolf Bultmann’s frail human Jesus and docetic Christ of faith.¹⁸⁰ This phase was followed by scholars like Fuchs, Bornkamm, Robinson and Perrin. Colin Brown criticized this quest as “unhistorical and short-sighted” on several counts, especially: 1) “it remained curiously indifferent to the world of first century Judaism as known from Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and rabbinic literature,”¹⁸¹ (which contemporizes Troeltsch’s criticism that such liberal questing had not properly understood history underlying their quest) and 2) for second questers, proclamation of the cross was a central event but they really gave no reason for it. To these criticism we could add Weiss and Schweitzer’s criticism that like the first quest they were largely ignoring the eschatological basis for the Kingdom of God.¹⁸² Much of the response in the third quest to this earlier liberal quest for the historical Jesus is to show the deeply contextually connectedness of the human Jesus to His second Temple Jewish context. However, this evangelical response also emphasizes the humanity of Christ because it is where the weight of incarnational evidence lays. Such an approach values the historical narrative for its second Temple Jewish human roles and occasionally historical claims for Christ’s divinity among them. For example, N. T. Wright views Jesus as Messianic

¹⁷⁷ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), vol. 1, p. 208.

¹⁷⁸ Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, pp. 67–73.

¹⁷⁹ E.g., Adolf von Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1913) translated as *What is Christianity* (New York: Harper, 1957); E. F. Scott, *The Ethical Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1924).

¹⁸⁰ E. Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” trans. W. J. Montague. *SBT* 41 (Naperville, Ill.: Allenson/London: SCM, 1964). Original title, “Das Problem des historischen Jesus.” *ZTK* 51 (1954): 125–53.

¹⁸¹ Brown, “Quests for the Historical Jesus,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel Green, Scot McKnight and I. Howard Marshall (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 337.

¹⁸² Johannes Weiss, *Die Idee des Reiches Gottes in der Theologie* (Giessen, 1901), pp. 1–4; Albert Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, trans. W. Montgomery (New York: Macmillan Co. 1910 and 1968), pp. 222–37; cf. D. S. Russel, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 BC-AD 100* (London: SCM, 1964, 1980).

Judge, King, and God.¹⁸³ Of course the more liberal advocates of the third quest also contemplate Jesus through a human window.¹⁸⁴

G. C. Berkouwer describes what he takes to be a “crises in the dual-nature doctrine” of Christ because the terms “nature” and “person” “have become ambiguous and perhaps, unacceptable concepts” especially as Christology works through Neo-Orthodoxy toward post-modernity.¹⁸⁵ An example of this is Oscar Cullmann’s *The Christology of the New Testament* which summarizes his view, “in the light of the New Testament witness, all mere speculation about his natures is an absurdity. Functional Christology is the only kind which exists,” for “the New Testament neither is able nor intends to give information about how we are to conceive the being of God beyond the history of revelation.”¹⁸⁶ However, when he was later attacked at this point, he conceded that Chalcedon “corresponds to what the Christology of the New Testament presupposes.”¹⁸⁷ That is, he maintained that the reflection of Chalcedon is “absolute necessity,” it is *not* exegesis of the N.T. which would limit itself to functional Christology. John A. T. Robinson’s presentation of Jesus in his book *The Human Face of God* shows another example of functional Christology which moves further from Chalcedon, as he concludes that Jesus is human in the role of definitive representative of God, namely:

One human person of whom we must use two languages, man-language and God-language. Jesus is wholly and completely a man, but a man who ‘speaks true’ not simply of humanity but of God. He is not a man plus, a man fitted, as it were, with a second engine-which would mean that he was not a man in any genuine sense. He is a man who in all that he says and does as man is the personal representative of God: he stands in God’s place, he *is* God to us and for us.¹⁸⁸

In the realm of post-modernity, existential relevance and phenomenal language games dominate. David Cunningham summarizes the post-modern approach to Christology to emphasize: 1) relationality, 2) difference, and 3) rhetoric.¹⁸⁹ In rejecting a modern penchant for division and isolation, he proposes that the post-modern is concerned for relation. “To speak of ‘Father’ or ‘Son’ is not to speak of an individual who is potentially isolated from other individuals; rather, the two terms specify *relations*

¹⁸³ E.g., N. T. Wright *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), p. 625; “The Divinity of Jesus” in *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), pp. 161–68.

¹⁸⁴ E.g., John Dominic Crossan, who see Jesus as healer and Cynic especially in *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (1991); and Marcus J. Borg who sees Jesus as Jewish mystic, sage and social prophet especially: *A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and The Life of Discipleship* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991); *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & The Heart of Contemporary Faith* San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994); and the co-authored work with N. T. Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*.

¹⁸⁵ G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. by John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), p. 21.

¹⁸⁶ Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), pp. 326–7.

¹⁸⁷ Oscar Cullmann, “The Reply of Prof. Cullman to Roman Catholic Critics,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1962): 36–8.

¹⁸⁸ John A. T. Robinson, *The Human Face of God* (London: SCM, 1973), pp. 113–4.

¹⁸⁹ David Cunningham, “The Trinity” in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, edited by Kevin Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 186–195.

that depend absolutely on *each other* for their meaning.”¹⁹⁰ These relations constitute their difference. With regard to rhetoric, Cunningham agrees with Wittgenstein when he says, “*Practice* gives the words their sense.”¹⁹¹ For example, Lindbeck’s Yale school tells the narrative of the Son’s coming from the Father during the incarnation and the continuance of the salvific struggle when he sends His tag team partner the Spirit to intimately work within us and complete our salvation. In such a post-modern approach the group’s contextual sense of relationship and concepts reframe Jesus into their thought forms.

Liberation Theology exemplifies a post-modern approach by the segment of the Third-World which views themselves as “oppressed.” For example Jon Sobrino identifies that we only come to know Christ by getting beyond ‘static contemplation’ and involving ourselves in implementing His program.¹⁹² The Christ of faith is irrelevant to this task, so the stress falls on Jesus humanity to show the compassionate pattern by which liberation is realized and real needs are met. This approach can advocate a Chalcedonian perspective, as Leonardo Boff does, but the humanity of Jesus is the lens through which the revelation and compassion are focused.¹⁹³ As Jurgen Moltmann points out, Christ became the brother of the despised, abandoned and oppressed to bring a concrete resolution for these needs in society.¹⁹⁴ He argues against the two natures of Christ for the static divine nature which is incapable of suffering.¹⁹⁵ Instead he argues that the Father and the Son, both suffer while Jesus is on the cross and for their covenant people. When the deity of Christ is contemplated like this it becomes framed in a trinity that is the prototype of community for humans to emulate.¹⁹⁶ However, the kingdom message that the liberationist Jesus portrays is more existentially framed than from second Temple pattern; namely Sobrino defines it as “The Kingdom of God expresses man’s utopian longing for liberation from everything that alienates him, factors such as anguish, pain, hunger, injustice and death, and not only man but all creation.”¹⁹⁷

Besides Liberation, the Third-World has run headlong toward indigenous theologies that also explore the humanity and connectedness of Jesus to its advocates. For example, Bénézét Bujo emphasizes the humanity of Jesus from his African Congolese *Bantu* environment where Jesus is seen as a “Proto Ancestor.”¹⁹⁸ The principle idea in Bujo’s theology is life.¹⁹⁹ The concept of ancestor in *Bantu* retains them as accessible life-force available to inform the living members of the clan. Bujo claims,

¹⁹⁰ David Cunningham, “The Trinity” in *Postmodern Theology*, p. 189.

¹⁹¹ David Cunningham, “The Trinity” in *Postmodern Theology*, p. 195.

¹⁹² Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach* (London: SCM, 1978), p. 275.

¹⁹³ Leonardo Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Time* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1978), pp. 178–81, 194–95, 243–45.

¹⁹⁴ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 24.

¹⁹⁵ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, pp. 245–246, 270.

¹⁹⁶ L. Boff, *Trinity and Society* (Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oates, 1988), pp. 6–7.

¹⁹⁷ Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads*, p. 275.

¹⁹⁸ Bénézét Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context* (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1992), pp. 80, 83–85; a range of other African Christologies are explored by Matthew Schoffeleers, “Folk Christology in Africa: The Dialectics of the Nganga Paradigm,” in *Journal of Religion in Africa* 19:2(1989): 157–83.

¹⁹⁹ Bénézét Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, p. 80; Christian Terras, “Bénézét Bujo: La Passion de l’homme Africain,” in *Goliath/Dieu a-t-il peur d’Afrique*, No. 36 (Paris: Villeurbanne, 1994), p. 145; point translated and also made by Carl Sundberg, *Conversion and Contextual Conceptions of Christ* (Uppsala: Swedish Institute of Missionary Research, 2000), p. 16.

“Jesus Christ is the Proto-Ancestor, the Proto Life-Force, bearer in a transcendent form of the primitive ‘vital union’ and ‘vital force.’ By his resurrection, Jesus is taken up once and for all into the glory of God, He not only has life, he is life, and awakens others to life, (cf. Jn. 11:25).”²⁰⁰ As a perfect ancestor, He healed, spoke wise words, and called people to love each other.²⁰¹

The consequence of Bujo’s reasoning is that Christ, in fulfilling what the ancestors strove for, moves their goals to a higher sphere. As it is now God himself, through Jesus, who fulfills the goals of the ancestors, the ultimate meeting point is created. ‘Jesus Christ himself becomes the privileged locus for a full understanding of the ancestors,’ and the ancestors become understandable through Christ.²⁰²

The closest that this idea comes to the Biblical material is that it identifies Jesus as a supreme healer, including their resurrection.²⁰³

Alternatively, from the academic First-World, John Milbank’s team of Radical Orthodoxy explores at greater depth the intimacy in which the phenomenal reality of Mary as impregnated with the Word of God, thus turning the *eros* toward the world through enrapturing bodies into new mystical *agape* love for the infinite.²⁰⁴ Sensual love woos toward the divine mystical experience which is the only love to continue to enrapture our souls. This wooing is part of the superior friendship which the Son provides in His incarnate intimacy with the creation and especially the Christian.²⁰⁵ God’s love further shows itself by the shattering of “the Christ-form” on the cross and the regathering of resurrection which ushers into a regathering of the scattered disciples into a vibrant community.²⁰⁶

Webber identifies the paradigm theologian for the younger evangelicals to be Stanley Grenz.²⁰⁷ While the “millennial evangelicals” may not have published on trinity at least Grenz has identified his commitment to a social Trinity model that reflects the younger evangelicals concern for authentic relationship. Grenz sees the Trinity as “the sine qua non of the Christian faith.”²⁰⁸ He follows Barth’s emphasis on an economic Christology which becomes the Christocentric focus of the Biblical witness as filtered through Frei’s narrative theology’s “Revelational Christology,” appreciating Christ as developed in the life and experience of the first century writings.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁰ Bénédét Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, p. 81.

²⁰¹ Bénédét Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, p. 78.

²⁰² Carl Sundberg, *Conversion and Contextual Conceptions of Christ*, pp. 17–8; Bénédét Bujo, *African theology in its social context*, p. 83.

²⁰³ Bénédét Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, p. 85.

²⁰⁴ Gerard Loughlin, “EROTICS: God’s sex” in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, edited by John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock and Graham Ward (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 147–50.

²⁰⁵ David Moss, “FRIENDSHIP: St. Anselm, *theoria* and the convolution of sense,” in *Radical Orthodoxy*, pp. 147–42.

²⁰⁶ Frederick Bauerschmidt, “AESTHETICS: The theological sublime,” in *Radical Orthodoxy*, pp. 211–12.

²⁰⁷ Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), p. 92.

²⁰⁸ Stanley Grenz and John Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), p. 170.

²⁰⁹ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, pp. 186–190.

The early Christians faced a grave theological problem, namely how to reconcile their inherited commitment to a confession of the one God with the lordship of Jesus Christ and the experience of the Spirit. Far from a philosophical abstraction, therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity was the culmination of an attempt on the part of the church to address the central theological question regarding the content of the Christian faith, a question that arose out of the experience of the earliest followers of Jesus.²¹⁰

He then advocates a social trinity model pioneered by Leonard Hodgson and developed into academic awareness as a rival model by Jürgen Moltmann.²¹¹ He follows Moltmann and Robert Jenson, who advocate “the idea that God finds his identity in the temporal events of the economy of salvation.”²¹² In this development, procession and generation are replaced by relationality. So the core idea of person is Catherine LaCugna’s “toward another,” which means that the essence of Trinity is “in relation to another.”²¹³ Which implies that the Trinity is essentially a community of love.²¹⁴ Furthermore, the relationality of Christ has structural implications for Grenz in defining the image of God as that of relationality in humans.²¹⁵ The result of this awareness is that we should strive for fellowship and community.

Echoed in the Arts:

The God-Man in art probably fuses the Roman Sun god Apollo into the image of the Son. Constantine, who was a follower of the Sun god, in 312 A.D. had a vision commanding him to conquer Rome under the monogram of Christ (combining X and P) on his shield and flag.²¹⁶ Likewise, the entire army of Constantine saw the heavenly apparition and was struck with amazement. His subsequent victories over Maxentius’ forces at Turin, Verona, and the battle of Milvian Bridge at Rome ushered in the acceptance of Christianity as the religion of the empire. Constantine returned the favor

²¹⁰ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, p. 173.

²¹¹ Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Croall Lectures, 1942–1943* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1944), especially pp. 49–55, 69–77, and 176–194 where Hodgson used social metaphors to express a trinity view that emphasized a Barthian economic model and an adoptionist Christ; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981) proposed a full scale social trinitarianistic model; cf. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. “The Hodgson–Welch Debate and the Social Analogy of the Trinity” (Ph. D. dissertation Princeton Theological Seminary, 1982), pp. 49–57, especially p. 51; Royce Gordon Gruenler, *The Trinity in the Gospel of John: A Thematic Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986); and Cornelius Plantinga, “Social Trinity and Tritheism” in *Trinity, Incarnation and Atonement: Philosophical & Theological Essays* edited by Ronald J. Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1989), which are polished presentations from a conference at Marquette University in 1988.

²¹² Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, p. 191.

²¹³ Catherine LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and the Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991), pp. 14–15; Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, pp. 193–194.

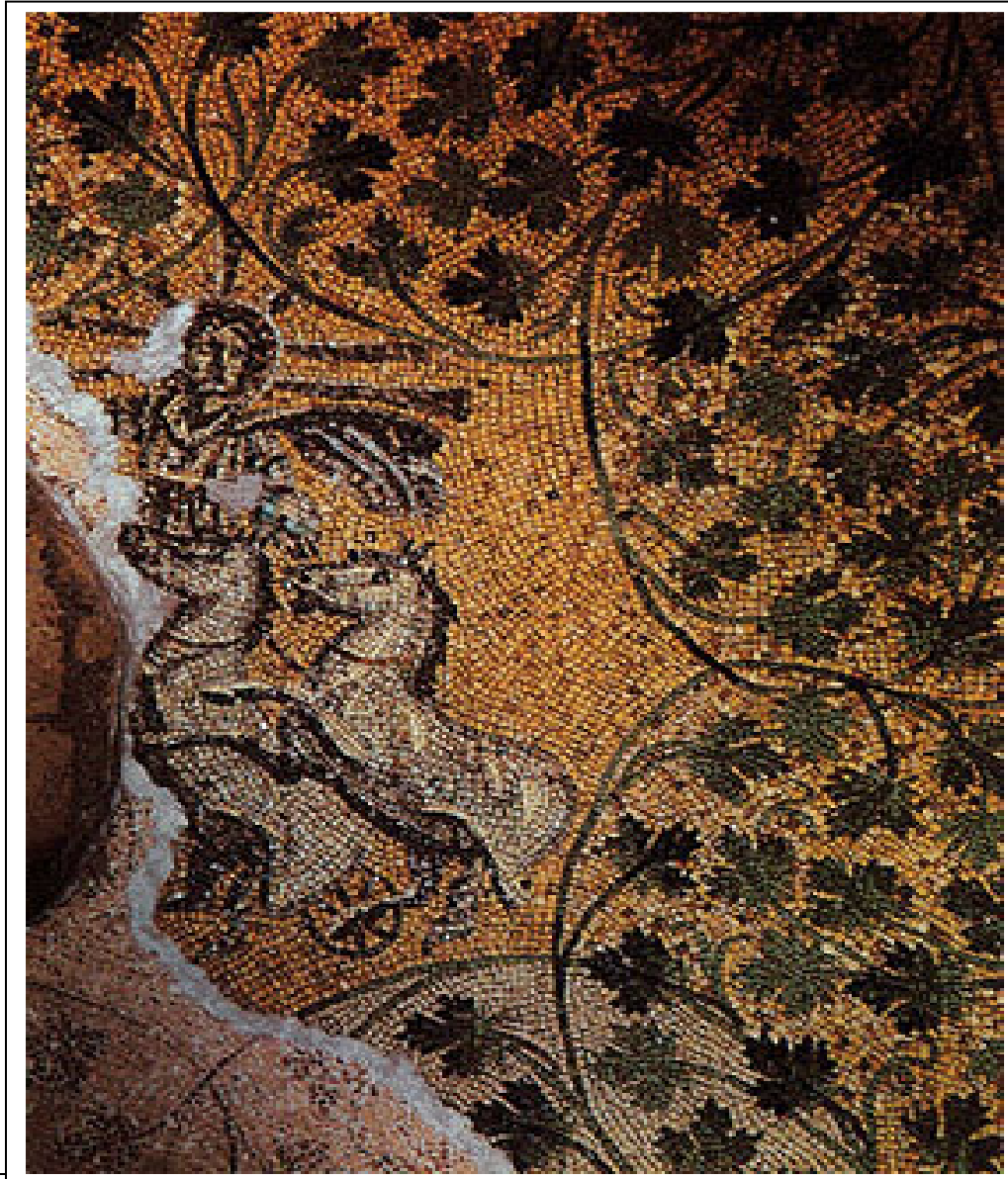
²¹⁴ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, p. 195.

²¹⁵ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, pp. 197–202.

²¹⁶ Described by Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, as told by Paul Maier, “The End of Persecution,” In *Eusebius: The Church History: A New Translation with Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999), pp. 339–344.

“as a thank offering to his Savior for the victories he had obtained over every foe,”²¹⁷ by convoking the council of Nicea. Constantine personally intervened in the council, “our emperor, most beloved by God, began to reason concerning [Christ’s] divine origin, and His existence before the ages: He was virtually in the Father without generation, even before He was actually begotten, the Father having always been the Father, just as [the Son] has always been a King and Savior.”²¹⁸ As a result, the council of Nicea affirmed that Jesus was the true Son of God, very God and very man.

In the fourth century this fusion of the Sun God and Jesus is represented with the posture and coloring of Apollo on a Christ, whose head or body is surrounded by Apollo’s nimbus disk with rays of the sun emanating from Him. For example, there is a mosaic on the floor of a wealthy family tomb in which the mosaic has reworked the Apollo image to be that of Christ.



²¹⁷ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 1.6–7.

²¹⁸ Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.11–12.

This Apollo image gets taken over in art by the image of the Christ as the Almighty ruling in heaven.

This image of the Almighty often pictures the last judgment scene, as in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel wall painting, but on occasion also reaches back into Jesus' transfiguration as in encostic (wax painting on wood, left) and mosaic (right) in St. Catherine's monastery portrays with the brilliant light reflecting His divinity.



At times Jesus' divinity and humanity are merely closely juxtaposed. For example, the Vatican has a fourth century sarcophagi which combines Christ as God on the heavenly throne handing out the Law to Peter and Paul.²¹⁹ Beneath that image there is another of the humanity of Jesus entering into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Jesus humanity is further reflected by a fourteenth century letter which circulated recounting a vision of seeing the Jesus in bodily form. The human descriptions became influential for artists coloring of Jesus for centuries. Jesus was reported to have hair the color of an unripe hazelnut, parted in the middle and falling on to His shoulder in waves. Likewise His beard was reported to be full but not long, parted in the middle. He had a simple but mature glance with His blue grey eyes. This description influenced many artists in their design of the image of Christ.

At times the trinity is reproduced with Jesus face to show the divinity of Christ along with the Father and the Spirit. For example, there are several Ethiopian presentations of God as a three headed person but each head is an exact reproduction of the others, or three faces of Jesus to represent the trinity persons. In South America the triplet divinity combined into a single head with three faces, each sharing the next face's eye (that is, four eyes and three noses). Such triplet divinity art was suppressed and finally condemned in 1774 A.D. at Santa Fe Columbia, but such images continue to be painted through the twentieth century.

²¹⁹ Cf. in chapter, "Mosaic Teacher of the Law."



Bryan Stone in *Faith and Film: Theological Themes at the Cinema*²²⁰ describes the films of Jesus to highlight those which present a more divine image (like, *The Greatest Story Ever Told*) and others which present a more human one (like, *The Last Temptation of Christ*).

What is most striking about [George Stevens' and David Lean's 1965] *The Greatest Story Ever Told* is how strongly it attempts to assert the deity of Christ with barely a hint of his humanity or Jewish origins—a strategy that finally works against itself by turning Jesus into an impersonal icon or religious postcard. The film is framed at the beginning and the end with a fresco of Jesus on a church wall—similar to Byzantine images of the *Christos Pantocrator*, a kind of cosmic lord who is suspended otherworldly Jesus, the narrator is at the same time reading from the prologue of John, the gospel that most strongly asserts the deity of Christ: In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.”...

If the *Greatest Story Ever Told* distances Jesus from his human origins and social context, thereby hoping reverently to universalize his message, *The Last Temptation of Christ* also hopes to make Jesus more universally accessible, but by

²²⁰ Bryan Stone in *Faith and Film: Theological Themes at the Cinema* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), pp. 70–79.

provocation rather than reverence. It attempts to strip away the conventional Hollywood trappings of previous Jesus films and instead to concentrate on the human dimension. Based on the 1955 novel of the same name by Nikos Kazantzakis and directed by Martin Scorsese [in 1988], *The Last Temptation of Christ* is undoubtedly the most controversial Jesus film in history and one that rushes headlong into the tension between deity and humanity in Jesus. The film's opening credits quote Kazantzakis:

The dual substance of Christ—the yearning, so human, so superhuman, of man to attain God...has always been a deep inscrutable mystery to me. My principal anguish and source of all my joys and sorrows from my youth onward has been the incessant, merciless battle between the spirit and the flesh...and my soul is the arena where these two armies have clashed and met.

The film then adds the disclaimer, “This film is not based upon the Gospels but upon this fictional exploration of the eternal spiritual conflict.”

Despite the disclaimer, *The Last Temptation* is clearly a portrayal of the life of Jesus with most of the standard characters, events, and teachings drawn from the gospels. Filmed in Morocco, the entire film has a dusty, Middle Eastern authenticity about it (though the exotic score and other sound effects are sometimes more Arabic than Jewish). The scandal associated with the film is due primarily to an extended temptation sequence while Jesus is on the cross. Jesus (played by Willem Dafoe) fantasizes that his guardian angel has come to inform him that he is not the Messiah after all and that he can come down from the cross. He is now free to live a normal life as a carpenter and to grow old with a wife and children. Jesus marries Mary Magdalene and, in a scene that was widely objected to, is briefly shown making love to her. After Magdalene dies in childbirth, Jesus weds Mary, the sister of Lazarus, and has several children both by her and her sister, Martha. As the angel says to him, “There is only one woman in the world; one woman with many faces.” Though the larger context here is Jesus' lifelong temptation to abandon self-sacrifice and to embrace instead the normal pleasures of life, love, family, and home, it is the sexual dimension of the temptation that proved to be the most scandalous, especially among conservative Christians...

In 1962, Pier Paolo Pasolini, an avowed Marxist and atheist, stumbling across a Bible in his hotel room and, with time on his hands, began to read the gospels “from beginning to end, like a novel.” He was so struck by “the revolutionary quality” of Matthew's Jesus that he decided to make a film using only the text of Matthew and without any of the extraneous material normally written into screenplays about Jesus for the sake of good storytelling. What Pasolini ends up with is nothing at all like the Hollywood Jesus-spectacles with their huge budgets, big-name actors, and elaborate sets. Filmed in black and white, in a stark, neo-realistic style, Pasolini used mostly nonprofessional actors and shot the scenes in remote location in impoverished southern Italy. The faces of the actors (Pasolini uses frequent close-ups) are as rough and weatherworn as the landscapes. Except for Jesus, played by Enrique Irazoqui, the actors generally

repeat their lines with little interpretation or feeling. Pasolini clearly wants to present the text of Matthew as simply and with as little embellishment as possible...

Jesus' words in the film are often caustic and biting. He is certainly not the blue-eyed evangelist of love, harmony, and peace created by George Stevens, and he is much more self-confident and decisive than the confused Jesus of Scorsese. Instead this Jesus is a social critic who is often angry, rarely smiles, lashes out at the religious establishment, and is quite stern with his own disciples. It is tempting to account for this with reference to Pasolini's Marxism. Consider, for example, the words of Jesus that appear only in Matthew: "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (10:34). Pasolini's own run-ins with the law over his publicly admitted homosexuality as well as his arrest and trial for his film *La ricotta*, which was perceived as blasphemous, would clearly endear such words to him.

At the same time, it is impossible to blame Pasolini entirely for the aggressive and confrontational Jesus of Matthew. It is difficult, in fact, to read through Matthew in a single sitting without coming away impressed by the fact that this Jesus does not fit in with his own social world. He is at odds with the pious, with the wealthy, with the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and temple leadership, with the entire political establishment, with lawyers, his hometown synagogue, and often with his own disciples. This Jesus even curses a fig tree because it has no fruit! Pasolini, however, takes this conflict far beyond the text of Matthew and isolates it as virtually the only dimension of Jesus' character (through Pasolini's Jesus is always affectionate and warn to children)...

Interestingly enough, in all three films the humanity and divinity of Jesus rise and fall together. All three offer us a Jesus who is not at home in the world and who therefore can be neither fully human nor the incarnation of a God who created the world. In other words, when Jesus' humanity is diminished, so also is his divinity. It is precisely *because* Jesus is the truly human one that we are able to see God so perfectly through him.

Returning to the Biblical imagery, Albrecht Dürer carved a woodcut of Revelation 1:12–20 that present Jesus Christ after the pattern of the Lord God of Revelation 1:7–8. The glowing Jesus is seated on his heavenly throne surrounded by seven lamp stands and with seven stars in his hand and a sword extending before him. He is God after the Father's image.

