

Jesus Christ: The God/Man

Romans 5:12-19

Introduction

I told you last week about the man who said that doctrine was too divisive in the church and all that really mattered was for people believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. While it **is** true that all it takes to make one a Christian is to believe in Jesus and what He's done, true doctrine is important. I see this disdain for **doctrine** as paralleling the disdain for **math** or **history**. **Fox News** had a **Presidents' Day** interview on where some people didn't know who the president during the **Civil War** was, let alone be able name the presidents on **Mt. Rushmore**. There seems to be a feeling that being able to add and subtract is enough to live. It might be enough to get by but multiplying and dividing come in handy and higher math is necessary to economics, engineering and the sciences. It's the same with theology. (Read **1 Corinthians 3:1-3**). The Corinthians knew the basics, yet that was causing division. (Read **Hebrews 5:11-14**). If one wants to mature in Christ, one needs to go beyond the basics. Doctrine goes beyond the **what** and seeks answers to the questions **how** and **why**.

What: Jesus Christ is Fully Human and Divine

The what of today's Scripture is that Jesus Christ is **human and divine**. He is both **God and man**. He's not half God and half man, like **Hercules**. Nor is he an alien visitor, pretending to be human, like **Superman**. Nor is he a human, endowed with supernatural powers, like **Spider-man**. He is the **Son of God, incarnate** by the **Holy Spirit** and born of the virgin **Mary**, as the **Creed** says. That's basic to our understanding of the Savior. Unless He is fully divine and human, He could not be our Savior. Why?

Why Does Jesus Have to Be God and Man?

Christ, our Savior, died in our place to pay the price for our sins. He didn't come to help us out of messes, to show us how to love, teach us morals or be an example. These are side-effects or **bonuses**. His **mission** was to save us from our sin.

He Had to Be God

The sacrifice also had to be **perfect**. No one could pay the price for our sin, except God. No matter how Spirit led a person is, they could not live a life without sinning. Christ was obedient; He could keep the Law. There was no blemish of sin at all on this Sacrifice Even if a man could be righteous enough to die for another person, he couldn't die for all of humanity.

He Had to Be Human

Christ had to be human, because he had to **die**, and God can't **die**. He had to live **under** the Law and God is not **under** the Law. He had to be born of Mary, because He had to be one of us. God could have created Him out of the **dust** like **Adam**. But then He would not be one of us, a representative of humanity.

Why Not Half and Half?

(Read Colossians 1:17-20). To sum up, we turn to the **Explanation of the Small Catechism**. *Christ had to be true man in order to act in our place under the Law and fulfill it for us (active obedience).*

He also had to be able to suffer and die for our guilt because we failed to keep the Law. ... Christ had to be true God in order that His fulfilling of the Law, His life, suffering and death, might be a sufficient ransom for all people; He might be able to overcome death and the devil for us.

How Could Christ Be True God and True Man?

This is the doctrine of the **Incarnation**. *The divine and human natures are united in Jesus Christ. This personal union began when He became man and continues forever* (**Explanation of the Small Catechism, question 125**). The **incarnation** was when the Holy Spirit “came upon” Mary and she conceived Jesus. These two natures did not **commingle**, making a hybrid, but were eternally **united** in Jesus Christ, making Him fully divine and fully human.

Means of Grace

This doctrine speaks to the heart of **Communion**. If the two natures of Christ were not eternally united, He wouldn’t be able to feed us on His **body** and **blood**. The bread and wine would be mere symbols. It’s because they remain united that He can give us this nourishment. As we learn doctrine, we see how they all work together and depend on each other. This makes true doctrine something to be defended, not abandoned for the sake of ease or “getting along”.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
