

FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL | 25 MINUTES

Christology, Part 1: The Person of Christ

The eternal Son became truly human without ceasing to be truly God.

Big idea: Jesus Christ is one eternal Person with two complete natures—truly God and truly man.

Anchor texts: John 1:1–3, 14; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 4:15.

1. Opening: The Most Important Question

A person may speak respectfully about Jesus and still be terribly wrong about Him. Some call Him a good teacher. Others call Him a prophet, an angel, or one of many divine beings. Jesus did not merely ask whether people admired Him. He asked, ‘Who do you say that I am?’

Read or summarize Matthew 16:13–16. Emphasize Peter’s confession: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Whole group: What answers do people today give to the question, “Who is Jesus?”

Christology is the study of the Person and work of Jesus Christ. This week we ask who He is. Next week we will ask what He has done. We must begin with His Person because the value of His work depends upon who performed it.

2. A Brief Introduction to Christology

“The Bible does not give us several different Jesuses. It reveals one Lord Jesus Christ. He is one Person—not two people sharing a body—and He possesses two complete natures. He is fully divine and fully human.”

One Person: the eternal Son, Jesus Christ.

Two complete natures: divine and human.

Not half God and half man; not a divine-human mixture; not God merely pretending to be human.

The historic Christian shorthand is “truly God and truly man.” The technical phrase “hypostatic union” simply names this union of two natures in the one Person of Christ.

Family Discussion: Why do we need to discuss who Jesus is before we talk about what Jesus did?

3. The Son Before Bethlehem

Read John 1:1–3 and 1:14. listen for what was already true of “the Word” before He became flesh.

Before His conception in Mary's womb, the Son already existed. He was with God, He was God, and everything created came into existence through Him. The incarnation did not turn a man into God. The eternal Son took to Himself a true human nature.

John 1:1–3 — The Word was already present “in the beginning,” was with God, was God, and is Creator rather than creature.

John 1:14 — The Word “became flesh”; He did not merely appear human.

John 8:58 — Jesus speaks of His existence before Abraham and uses language that echoes God's own self-identification.

Colossians 1:16–17 — All things were created through Him and for Him; He is before all things.

Whole Group: Was Christmas the beginning of Jesus?

4. Fully God and Fully Human

Family Discussion: Name one verse or event that displays Jesus' deity and one that displays His humanity.

Jesus is completely God

Jesus does not merely resemble God, represent God, or carry a small piece of divinity. Everything it means to be God belongs to the Son eternally. He is distinct from the Father, but He possesses the same undivided divine nature.

John 1:1 — The Word was God.

John 20:28 — Thomas addresses the risen Jesus as “My Lord and my God,” and Jesus receives the confession.

Colossians 2:9 — The fullness of deity dwells bodily in Christ.

Hebrews 1:3 — The Son perfectly reveals God's glory and nature and sustains all things.

Jesus does what belongs to God: He forgives sins (Mark 2:5–12), receives worship (Matthew 14:33), gives life, and will judge the world (John 5:21–23).

Jesus is completely human

The eternal Son did not put on a human costume. He became what He had not previously been—a man—without ceasing to be what He eternally is—God. He took a real human body and a real human mind, will, and affections. Yet He was without sin.

He was born and grew (Luke 2:7, 52).

He became hungry, tired, thirsty, sorrowful, and He wept (Matthew 4:2; John 4:6; 11:35; 19:28).

He was tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sin (**Hebrews 4:15**). Temptation was real; sin was never part of His nature.

He suffered and died in a real human body (John 19:30–34).

He rose bodily and remains the incarnate Son (Luke 24:39; 1 Timothy 2:5). The incarnation was not a temporary disguise.

5. Why the Two Natures Matter

This doctrine is not a puzzle for theologians to admire. Our salvation depends upon it.

As man, Jesus can represent us. He obeyed where humanity failed, suffered in our place, and is a merciful High Priest who understands our weakness (Hebrews 2:14–18; 4:15).

As God, Jesus has infinite worth and saving power. Salvation belongs to the Lord; no mere creature can bear the full weight of divine judgment, defeat death, and give eternal life.

As the one God-man, Jesus brings God and sinners together. The mediator is not two persons cooperating but the one Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).

Whole Group: Finish both sentences: “Jesus had to be truly human because...” and “Jesus had to be truly God because...”

5. Old Errors About Jesus

The early church did not invent Jesus’ deity or humanity. Christians were forced to state the Bible’s teaching clearly when false teachers denied, divided, or confused what Scripture says.

Error	What it claimed	What it loses
Docetism	Jesus only seemed to be human; His physical life and suffering were appearances.	Denies His true humanity. Read 1 John 4:2–3.
Ebionism / Adoptionism	Jesus was merely a man—perhaps specially chosen or adopted by God.	Denies His eternal deity and preexistence. Read John 1:1–3, 14.
Arianism	The Son existed before the world but was the highest created being, not eternally equal with the Father.	Makes the Creator a creature. Read John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16–17.
Apollinarianism	The divine Word replaced an essential part of normal human interior life, so Christ did not possess complete humanity.	What He did not truly assume, He did not represent and heal. Read Hebrews 2:17.
Nestorian error	Christ’s deity and humanity are divided so sharply that He is treated as though He were two acting persons.	Divides the one Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture consistently speaks of one “He.”
Eutychian / Monophysite error	Christ’s natures are blended or one nature overwhelms the other.	Confuses the natures; Jesus is neither a mixture nor a third kind of being.

6. The Same Question in Today's Religions

Say: "We should describe other people's beliefs accurately and speak with gentleness. We should also recognize that using the name 'Jesus' does not guarantee that someone means the Jesus revealed in Scripture."

Group	Its teaching about Jesus	Biblical distinction
Islam	Honors Jesus (Isa) as Messiah, virgin-born, miracle-working messenger and prophet, but rejects that He is God the Son and explicitly rejects the Trinity. The Qur'an calls Him a messenger and warns, "Do not say, 'Three.'"	It affirms a remarkable human prophet but denies the eternal divine Son revealed in John 1. Respectful language about Jesus is not the same as confessing His identity.
Jehovah's Witnesses	Teach that Jesus is not Almighty God, that He was Jehovah's first creation, and that Michael the archangel is Jesus before and after His earthly life.	This closely resembles the Arian direction: the Son is placed on the creature side of the Creator-creature line. John 1:3 says that everything created came through Him.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Calls Jesus the premortal Jehovah and divine Firstborn Son, but teaches that He is the firstborn among Heavenly Father's spirit children and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three separate beings united in purpose.	The familiar words carry a different doctrine of God and Christ. Historic Christianity confesses one God in three Persons and the Son as eternal, uncreated, and of the same divine being as the Father.

Family Discussion: What common pattern appears in these views?

7. Confess, Worship, and Trust

The right response to the Person of Christ is more than passing a theology quiz. Because Jesus is truly God, worship Him. Because He is truly man, draw near to Him with confidence. Because He is the one God-man, trust Him alone to bring you to God."

Optional take-home family questions

What is the difference between saying Jesus is "godlike" and saying Jesus is fully God?

Which events in the Gospels most clearly show Jesus' humanity? Which show His deity?

Why can no created angel, prophet, or merely good man replace the biblical Jesus?

How should knowing that Jesus understands human weakness change the way we pray?