

**The Theology of Christmas:**  
**The Deity of Jesus**  
***Colossians 1:15-23***

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**Text Introduction:** This Christmas season we are considering some theological themes underscored in the Christmas story. One of the mysteries of the Gospel is that Jesus came to this earth fully God and fully man. He was not sometimes God and sometimes man. He was not part God and part man. He was fully God and fully man. Last week, we considered the humanity of Jesus. Today, we consider the deity of Jesus.

**Text:** <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. <sup>18</sup> And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

<sup>19</sup> For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell, <sup>20</sup> and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled <sup>22</sup> in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

**Introduction:** As we considered last week the humanity of Jesus, I made the statement that “No one really doubted the humanity of Jesus.” The same is not the case, of course, when we consider the deity of Jesus. Understand that the Jews of the first century had an essential belief in monotheism—the belief in one God. So, to believe that Jesus was God was heresy. Yet, our Christian faith depends upon Jesus being God.

**The Revelation of Jesus as God!**

***In relationship to God, He is the image of the invisible God.***

If Jesus is God, you would expect to find the following in Him.

- Sinless—even Pilate said, “I find no fault in Him.”
- Speak the most profound words ever spoken—After Sermon on the Mount, His listeners were amazed at His teaching. Officers summoned by Pharisees said, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” (John 7:46)
- Profound influence on disciples.
- Perform miracles
- Know the future

- Live forever

***In relationship to Creation, He is the first-born of all creation.***

Meaning He is the highest ranking one.

The idea of pre-eminence dominates this passage and this book.

***In relationship to the unseen world, He is the Creator and the King.***

He is the reason everything exists. Even the angels who announced His birth were created by Him.

***In relationship to the church, He is the Head.***

***In relationship to the resurrection, He is the One who holds the keys.***

*Conclusion: Jesus is God! Jesus is called Son of God only in reference to His Humanity. He is more than the offspring of God, He is God. (See also: John 1:1-14, Hebrews 1:1-3, Philippians 2:6, John 14:9, and 2 Corinthians 4:4)*

C. S. Lewis puts an exclamation point on the importance of Christ's deity. "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." (C.S. Lewis)

### **The Reason God Became Jesus**

***To reconcile us to Himself.***

Are you confused as to why Jesus came? The following bit of prose usually makes its way into Christmas cards. It's one of my favorite Christmas sayings.

If our greatest need was for information, God would have sent an educator. If our greatest need was for technology, God would have sent a scientist. If our greatest need was for pleasure, God would have sent an entertainer. If our greatest need was for money, God would have sent an economist. But since our greatest need is for forgiveness...God sent a Savior.

And the text is clear as to how He reconciled us to Himself—through the blood.

### **Our Response to Jesus**

- Believe

- Worship
- Let Him have 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Everything

Ivan the Terrible was one of the Czars of 16<sup>th</sup> century Russia. Legend records about him that he was so busy conquering that he had no time to find a wife. His advisers were concerned about this so they set out to find him the perfect wife. They found and asked for him the hand of marriage of the daughter of the King of Greece. Her name was Sophia. The King of Greece agreed that Sophia could marry Ivan only if he converted to Christianity. Ivan agreed and left for Greece accompanied by 500 of his best soldiers. When these soldiers discovered that Ivan was going to be baptized, they decided they would be baptized. Now, in Greece, in those days, a pre-requisite for baptism in the Greek Orthodox Church was to affirm the articles of the Greek Orthodox Confession of Faith. The soldiers agreed to each one, except for the article, which prohibited being a professional soldier. The soldiers decided that what they could do is to go down into the waters and hold their swords high in the air.

The reasoning of these soldiers is like that of so many. Some people incorrectly reason that they can give God all but a part of their lives. May this Christmas remind us that the call of our lives is to be like Christ not in some, but in every area of our lives.

- Tell all you know about Him

A YouTube clip by avowed atheist Penn Jillette became popular about this time last year. It seems that after one of his shows someone handed him a New Testament. In the video, Penn is clearly emotional as he describes the event. Penn, the brilliant man that he is, says something extremely succinct and profound, that one expects only from the likes of an evangelist:

**"How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible, and not tell them that?"**

Let that sink in for a moment. An atheist is asking how much Christians have to hate non-Christians to deliberately not tell them the gospel.