

Christology: The Person and Work of Christ

Lesson 1: The Person of Christ – Preexistence and Eternality

Statement of Belief: Jesus Christ, the Son of God and second person of the Trinity, existed before everything and will continue to exist for all eternity.

Vocabulary

Preexistence: Refers to the Son of God “existing before” everything else in the universe.

Eternality: An essential element of the Son of God’s inherent nature in which He has always existed and will always continue to exist. In other words there has never been a time at which the Son did not exist, and there will never come a time at which the Son will not exist.

Question #1: Does the Bible directly state that the Son of God always existed?

Jesus claimed that He preexisted creation and came to earth from God in Heaven.

John 3:13; 6:38, 41-42, 50-51, 58; 7:29; 8:23, 42

Christ is said to be the “first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

Isaiah 9:6
Micah 5:2
John 1:1-3; 8:58
Colossians 1:16-17

Philippians 2:6
Hebrews 1:8, 10
Revelation 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13

Question #2: Is there indirect evidence for Christ's preexistence?

The Angel of the LORD in the Old Testament is said to be God.

Genesis 16:13; 22:11-12

Exodus 3:2, 6

Judges 2:1; 6:11-16; 13:21-22

Cf. John 1:18; 6:46; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; 1 John 4:12)

Conclusion: The Angel of the LORD is the preexistent Christ.

Question #3: What about the fact that Jesus was born about 2,000 years ago?

The New Testament is clear that Jesus did not have a human body until he was born into this world through Mary. He "took on flesh" (*incarnation*).

John 1:14; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8

We know that Jesus preexisted everything, but that he was born on earth about 2,000 years ago? So, how do we reconcile those two facts?

We can say that Jesus' divine nature has always existed. However, his human nature certainly had a beginning.

Does that mean Jesus is both infinite and finite? Isn't that a contradiction?

- Jesus' two natures, one divine and one human, do not negate or inhibit the other
- The merger of two natures results in the God-man, 100% human and 100% divine
- When the Son takes on temporal flesh (which will always exist now), he maintains his divine nature

APPLICATION

Why are Christ's preexistence and eternity important?

How does it help in everyday life?

Food for Thought:

Is Jesus *temporally everlasting* or *timelessly eternal*? What's the difference? Does it matter?