

Concerning God, the Father:

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit; perfect in Holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and spiritual death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (John 4:24; John 3:16, 17)

As we've already established

God is INCOMPREHENSIBLE - Romans 11:33-26

BUT - God is also KNOWABLE - Romans 1:20.

And God DESIRES to be known - John 17:3

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.” - Deuteronomy 29:29

How does the Bible describe God?

We call these the Attributes or Perfections of God - aspects of his essence.

2 categories - INCOMMUNICABLE and COMMUNICABLE. Definitions:

Incommunicable - does not share with his creation. Attributed to God alone.

Communicable - we can “catch glimpses” of these traits in ourselves, although in a smaller and imperfect way.

Incommunicable:

- Eternity - aseity - self-existence. Psalm 90:2 “from everlasting to everlasting, you are God. Genesis 21:33 “the everlasting God” (El Olam)
- Freedom - independent from his creation. “Isaiah 40:13-14”

- Holiness - absolute moral perfection: absence of evil. OT: Leviticus 11:44 "Be Holy for I am Holy" NT: 1 Peter 1:15 "be like the holy one who called you" 1 John 1:5 "God is light, in him there is no darkness at all"
- Immutability: unchangeable. Malachi 3:6 "I the Lord do not change" James 1:17 "with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow" PROBLEM VERSES: Gen 6:6 or Jonah 3:10, how can it say that God repents? Most believe this is God relating to mankind in an anthropomorphic way, that from his divine perspective it is unchanging, but as he relates to man. If God changes, it eliminates any basis for any of the attributes to be consistently true.
- Infinity: God has no bound or limits: He is in no way bound by the universe or by time-space boundaries. 1 Kings 8:27 "Behold, the heavens and the highest heaven cannot contain you" Acts 17:24-28 in response to the worthless idols.
- Omnipotence: all powerful. "Almighty" referenced 56 different times. Genesis 17:1 "The almighty One" Revelation 19:6 "For our Lord God Almighty Reigns" LIMITS? Natural limitations i.e. according to his nature. Cannot lie (Titus 1:2) cannot be tempted to sin (James 1:13) cannot deny himself (2 Timothy 2:13)
- Omnipresence: everywhere present with His whole being at all times. Psalm 139:7-11 "Where can I go from your Spirit?" (rhetorical) PROBLEM: lake of fire: separated from the face-presence of God (2 Thess 1:9, prosopon) but not his omnipresence (rev 14:10, enopion)
- Omniscience: all-knowing: never discovers, never surprised, never amazed. Psalm 139:16 God knows everything about our lives before we are born. Psalm 147:4 "numbers the stars... calls them out by name" Acts 15:18 "things known from long ago" Hebrews 4:13 "Nothing is covered from God's sight"
- Simplicity: God is not a compound being. One in essence. Important with respect to the trinity. John 4:24 "God is spirit" even in the incarnation, the deity of Christ is found only in Spirit.
- Sovereignty: supreme, in control, chief being in the universe. "Known from old" acts 15:18 aka he has a plan. "Works out all things according to the council of his will" Ephesians 1:11, "whatever the Lord pleases, he does" Psalm 135:6, "The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble" prov 16:4, problem: tension between man's free will and Gods sovereignty (Phil 2:12-13)
- Unity: One God who is indivisible. Deuteronomy 6:4 (Shema) "The Lord is our God, the Lord is One." Ephesians 4:6, "one God and Father of all" 1 Corinthians 8:6 plays with the triunity while affirming unity "on God, the father, from whom all things came."

Communicable:

- Love: seeks good for the object loved. Love in God is seeking the highest Good and glory of His perfections. By nature selfless. Exodus 34:6 "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" 1 John 4:8 "God is Love"
- Righteousness: Justice, God always does the right thing: there is no law either within his own being or making that is violated by anything in his nature. Psalm 11:7 "The Lord is righteous" Acts 17:31 "he will judge the world with justice" Love and justice intersect at the cross (Romans 3:21-26)

- Truth: "agreement to that which is represented" veracity, faithfulness, consistency. To build off of immutability, he stays consistent in truthfulness. John 17:3 "the only true God" Titus 1:2 "who does not lie" Hebrews 6:18 "is impossible for God to lie" 2 Timothy 2:13 "he remains faithful for he cannot disown himself."

GO DEEPER - NAMES OF GOD

Names of God in the OLD TESTAMENT

ELOHIM - Genesis 1:1 "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" a plural word for God peculiar in the text - cannot be polytheistic plural, as God would not reveal himself this way and deny his oneness (deut 6:4) it could be a reference to a trinitarian plurality or even a majestic plural which denotes God's unlimited greatness and supremacy

Compound names of Elohim:

El Shaddai - most connected to the word "mountain" God standing on the mountain, to give comfort and confirmation of the covenant - has some connections to the idea of nurturing too. Genesis 28:3 "El Shaddai bless you"

El Elyon - the most high God, emphasizing God's strength, sovereignty and supremacy. Genesis 14:19 by Melchizedek "Blessed be Abram by El Elyon, possessor of heaven and earth"

El Olam - Everlasting God. Isaiah 40:28 "The Lord is El Olam, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable."

El Roi - God who sees - Hagar gave this name to God - Genesis 16:13 "You are the God of seeing"

YAHWEH - second basic name for God is the personal one YHWH, most frequently used name occurring more than 5000 times in the Old testament. The name denotes existence - that he is the self-existent One. in the days of Seth - Gen 4:26 people "called upon the name of YHWH" Most notable when God revealed his name to Moses at the burning bush - Exodus 3:14 "I AM WHO I AM" and "say to the people 'YHWH has sent me to you'" because of its sacredness, people often did not say the name, replacing it with either Adonai or even Jehovah - which is an artificial name.

Compound names of YAHWEH:

Yahweh Jireh - "The Lord will provide" (Genesis 22:14)

Yahweh Nissi - "The Lord is My Banner" after the defeat of Amalek (Exodus 17:15)

Yahweh Shalom - "The Lord is Peace" from Gideon (Judges 6:24)

Yahweh Sabaoth - "The Lord of Hosts" (Angel Armies) (1 Samuel 1:3)

Yahweh Maccaddeshcem - "The Lord who sanctifies you" (Exodus 31:13)

Yahweh Roi - "the Lord is my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)

Yahweh Shammah - "The Lord is there (Ezekiel 48:35)

Yahweh Elohim Israel "The Lord, the God of Israel" (Judges 5:3)

ADONAI - like Elohim - Plural of majesty. The singular means Lord, master, owner (Joshua 5:14) - New testament equivalent is kurios - "Lord"

Names of God in the NEW TESTAMENT:

GOD (THEOS) - most frequent way to describe God in the NT. Septuagint equivalent to Elohim. Matthew 23:9 "since God is one" Although sometimes refers to false gods and the devil (2 Cor 4:4) also often used to point to the deity of Christ Romans 9:5 "is the Christ, who is God over all" or John 1:1, Titus 2:13.

LORD (KURIOS) - used 717 times between Luke and Paul's writings as they wrote primarily to Greeks. Luke 19:34 could have ties to ownership "The Lord has need of it" or masters Colossians 3:22 "obey your earthly masters... but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord"

Christ as Kurios - "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28) "made him both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36)

MASTER (DESPOTES) - more in line with ownership. "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace" (Luke 2:29) "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true" (Revelation 6:10) Christ is even called Despot - "even denying the Master who bought them" (2 Peter 2:1) "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4)

FATHER - much more common reference in the New Testament. James 1:17 "father of lights", 2 John 4 "just as we were commanded by the Father" Ephesians 2:18 "for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father"

LET'S TALK TRINITY:

Concerning the Trinity:

We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. (Isaiah 43:10-11; Mark 12:29-32; John 1:1; John 10:30; Phil. 2:6; I Tim. 3:16; James 2:19; Mark 1:9-11; Acts 5:3,4; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:6)

THIS IS WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD IN APOLOGETICS.

TRUE OR FALSE: the word "Trinity" is never used in the Bible? True.

- While the word is never used, the concept is VERY implicit throughout the Bible. There are a lot of different concepts we have in our Theology that we have a modern word for to describe a Biblical Truth: penal substitutionary atonement, canonization, ex nihilo, premillennialism, Sola Fide, etc.

WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

God is ONE in essence yet he is 3 persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

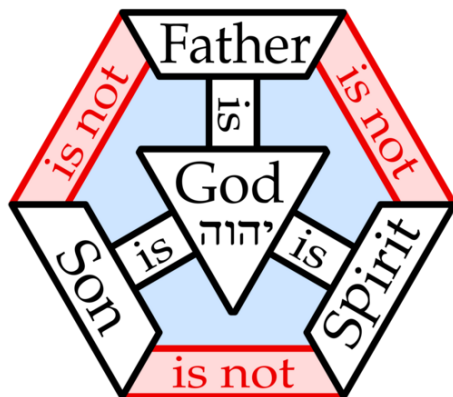
He is not a Tritheism - 3 Gods (as the mormons hold)

He is not one without 3 persons - as unitarian groups hold (Jehovah's Witness)

He is both ONE and Three - Three in One. Father is God, Jesus is God, Spirit is God, There is only one God. HOW? We cannot fathom it in our limited understanding. But keep in mind, as we've already established. God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient - An All knowing, All Powerful, All knowing, Infinite God is able to do things we humans deem impossible.

TO ELIMINATE the TRINITY is to ELIMINATE the CHARACTER OF GOD.

It simplifies God into a way that humans can grasp - making him NOT GOD.



INFINITE PLANE EXAMPLE - Circle, Square, Triangle, Whiteboard.

OLD TESTAMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRINITY:

Unity of God "The Lord is One" (Deut 6:4) yet plural name and verbs (Elohim) "let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26) Angel of Yahweh - sometimes referred to as God, yet distinguished from Him. "The angel of the Lord found her" (Gen 16:7) "Commander of the army of the Lord" and Joshua worshiped, stood on holy ground (Josh 5:13-15) distinct reference to the Lord from the Lord "I will save them by the Lord their God (Hos. 1:7) "And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit" (Isaiah 48:16)

NEW TESTAMENT CONTRIBUTIONS:

Disregarding oneness in the trinity leads to Tritheism (as in Mormonism). Emphasizing oneness and disregarding the threeness ends in unitarianism.

Evidence of Oneness - "One God" (1 Cor 8:6) "one God and father of all" (Eph 4:6)

Evidence of Threeness - The father - "God the Father" (1 Pet 1:2)

Jesus Christ - He himself claimed attributes that only God possesses, omniscience "Jesus, knowing their thoughts" (Matt 9:4) omnipotence "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28:18) omnipresence "I will be with you always" (v20) did things only God can do - forgave sins "Son, your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5) raise the dead "whom he had raised from the dead" (John 12:9) Other evidences: "Word was God" (John 1:1) "I am the Alpha and Omega... behold I died and I live forevermore" (Rev. 1:17-18)

Holy Spirit - "Lied not to men but to God" (Acts 5:3-4) "another helper" (John 14:16) of the same kind as Jesus - AKA GOD. possesses God's attributes: omniscience "The Spirit searches everything" (1 Cor 2:10) omnipresence "Body is the temple of the Holy Spirit" all believers (1 Corinthians 6:19) Regenerates people "born of the Spirit" (John 3:8)

Evidence for Triunity - Great commission "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt 28:19) "I and the father are one" (John 10:30) "grace of the Lord Jesus... Love of God... fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (2 Cor 13:14)

Question: Jesus is Begotten from the Father, and the Holy Spirit Proceeds from the Father and the Son - Does that mean that The Father is Greater the Jesus and the Holy Spirit? No.

They are ONE in essence and EQUAL in worth and value - But from an economical and administrative sense, their roles are reflected in their procession and begetting. Begetting and procession do not imply in any way inequality, priority of time, or degrees of dignity. Father begets the Son (John 3:16), Holy Spirit proceeds from the father and the Son "when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father" (John 15:26) in the sense of unity of will, it is helpful to have begetting and procession, for the reader and hearers to understand that all the will of God proceeds from the father (John 5:19) ONE WILL.

Some quick History of the Trinity: History of Trinity - early church did not formulate any clear statement concerning the Trinity. Tertullian (ad165-220) first to use the word Trinity. He Battled Monarchianism - Dynamic (adoptionism) given special power at baptism. Modalism - the trinity are modes by which God manifested Himself. Arius vs. Athanasius at the council of Nicaea(325ad). The Nicene creed clarified the Deity of Christ. Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus clarified vocab - ousia - essence. One essence of the Godhead, hypostasis for the persons. Council of Constantinople clarified the Spirit as Deity. Augustine finalized its formulation. Three persons of the trinity possessed the entire essence and that all are interdependent on the others.

Some roles of each member of the Trinity:

Father elects “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1 Peter 1:2) loves the world (John 3:16) gives good gifts (James 1:17)

Son suffers and redeems “Son of Man must suffer many things” (Mark 8:31) “ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers” (1 Peter 1:18) Upholding all things (Hebrews 1:3)

Holy Spirit Regenerates, energizes, and sanctifies “by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (Acts 1:8) “but the fruit of the Spirit is...” “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-25)

CHRISTOLOGY

Concerning Jesus Christ:

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death for the sins of all mankind, bodily resurrection, ascension into Heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and His personal, premillennial, and imminent return for His Church. (Is. 7:14; John 1:14; John 8:58; I Cor. 15:3-6; I John 1:7; II Cor. 5:21; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 7:25; I Thess. 4:13-17; I Thess. 5:9; John 14:1-6; I John 2:2; Phil. 2:6-11; Rev. 3:10)

Everything we believe as CHRISTIANS rises and falls on our view of Christ - WHO he is, What he has done, What he is doing, and what he will do.

The doctrine of the **person** of Christ is crucial, if our Lord was not what he claimed to be, then his atonement was deficient, not a sufficient payment of sin.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. 19 For it was the Father's good

pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. - Colossians 1:15-20

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 ^[a]in these last days has spoken to us ^[b]in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ^[c]world. 3 ^[d]And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and ^[e]upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. - Hebrews 1:1-4

THE PREINCARNATE CHRIST:

Preexistence - he existed before his birth. This is important, why? **If Christ came into existence at his birth, then no eternal Trinity exists.** He is not God because God is eternal. If he is not preexistent, **then he is a liar (John 8:58)** Evidence for his preexistence: His heavenly Origin (**John 3:13**) His work as creator, he had to exist before creation to create the world **For by Him all things were created** (Colossians 1:16, John 1:3) His relationship with God and his claim to be equal with God (John 10:30) Paul's claim that in Christ dwells all the fullness of Deity (Colossians 2:9) **John the Baptist acknowledged that Jesus existed before him (John 1:15,30)**

We have to go beyond preexistence - he has the attribute of eternality - he did not have a beginning, nor was he created. **Hebrews 1:3** says that he is the exact representation of God's nature or essence. (see Micah 5:2, Isaiah 9:6)

The activities of the preincarnate Christ:

Creator: Col 1:16-17. Angel of Yahweh: he speaks as God, Identifies himself with God and claims to exercise the prerogatives of God (**Gen 16:7-14**) Hagar calls this angel of the Lord "The God Who Sees" El Roi. notice too that the appearances of the Angel of Yahweh cease after the incarnation. **"The rock who followed Israel was Christ** (1 Cor 10:4) while these acts are glorious, the **pinnacle of his activity happen in the incarnation** (John 1:17)

THE INCARNATION:

Predictions of the Incarnation **Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself will give you^[a] a sign: The virgin^[b] will conceive and give birth to a son, and^[c] will call him Immanuel."**

Isaiah 9:6 **"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will ^[a]rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."**

Arguments that “almah” means maiden - these fall flat because the word is never used to describe anyone other than a virgin - this is why the Septuagint translates it by “parthenos” or virgin. Matthew unambiguously sees Christ as the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Luke 1:26-38 detail the virgin birth for us -

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin ^[t]engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the ^[s]descendants of David; and the virgin's name was ^[t]Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her, “Greetings, ^[u] favored one! The Lord ^[v]is with you.” 29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. 30 The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” 34 Mary said to the angel, “How ^[w]can this be, since I ^[x]am a virgin?” 35 The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the ^[y]holy Child shall be called the Son of God. 36 And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and ^[z]she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 For ^[aa]nothing will be impossible with God.” 38 And Mary said, “Behold, the ^[ab]bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Mary was a Virgin v26

She will conceive in her womb v31

Mary rightly puzzled by this v34

Angel explains that this will be done in a non-natural way v35

Angel explains that this is an impossibility in human terms v37

This was the SECOND time God had created something out of nothing.

Why is the virgin birth CRUCIAL for understanding the character of God?

It establishes that He is God's Child

It establishes that He is Human

It establishes that He is Perfect.

If you don't have these established facts - it puts into question his character. His nature, his purpose, even his atonement and resurrection are on the chopping block!

The Purpose of the Incarnation:

- To reveal God to us "He has explained him" (John 1:18)
- To provide an example for our lives "leaving you and example for you to follow in his steps (1 Peter 2:21)
- To provide an effective sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 10:1-10) specifically v10 - "by this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"
- To fulfill the Davidic covenant (Luke 1:31-33)
- To destroy the works of the Devil (1 John 3:8)
- To be our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16)
- To be a qualified Judge (John 5:22)

THE PERSON OF CHRIST INCARNATE:

Full Deity, perfect humanity, one person, forever. (continues to have a body although resurrected - Acts 1:11)

Full Deity: **he possesses attributes only God has**

- Eternality "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58)
- Omnipresence "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20)
- Omniscience - "He knew what they were thinking" (Matthew 16:21, Luke 6:8)
- Omnipotence "all authority has been given to me" (Matt 28:18)
- He performs works that only God can do - forgiveness "who can forgive sins except God alone?" (Mark 2:1-12)
- Gives "life to whomever he wishes" (John 5:21)
- He will raise the dead (John 11:43)
- He will judge all people (John 5:22) He was given the names and titles of Deity - Son of God (John 10:36) Son of Man (Daniel 7:13) He claimed to be God - "I and the father are One" (John 10:30)

Perfect Humanity, he is 100% **human in every respect yet perfect:**

Being a man is easy to accept, but a perfect man is much harder to accept.

- First off he had a body and he developed the natural way (Luke 2:52)
- and he called himself a man (John 8:40)
- he possessed a human soul and spirit "my soul is grieved" Matt 26:38, "into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46)
- He exhibited human weaknesses - hunger (Matt 4:2) thirst (John 19:28) weariness (John 4:6)
- experienced love and compassion (Matt 9:36) He wept (John 11:35) he was tested (Hebrews 4:15)
- He was called by human names "Son of Man" (80 times! Both a mixture of humanity and divinity - see Daniel 7:13) linked to his mission on earth.
- He was also the Son of David - linking to his ancestry, and the royal promises to be fulfilled by the messiah. Paul called him a man (1 Tim 2:5)

One person, fully God and fully man:

Hypostatic union. Chalcedonian creed says that the two natures were united “without mixture” meaning fully both. Practically speaking, this is why at times we see him weak, yet omnipotent, ignorant, yet omniscient; limited, yet infinite. It can be confusing but that is what we see in scripture he grew, yet he was before Abraham (Luke 2:52, John 8:58) How many wills did Christ have? Two - a divine will, and a human will - because he had two natures, in order to have truly two natures he had to have two wills.

Heresies about Christ's nature:

Docetism - Christ only appeared to be a man (false teaching, 1 John 4:1-3) which pairs with Modalism: that God has modes that he manifested himself in.

Ebionism - natural born of Joseph and Mary, elected to deity at his baptism. Similar to

Manarchianism - adopted into God's family, given special power at baptism.

Arianism - begotten, so had a beginning? Not eternal

Apollinarianism - his Divine Logos dominated his human body/soul

Nestorianism - two persons - divided Christ

Eutychianism - only one nature, mixed between man and divinity (demi-god)

ORTHODOXY - Perfect Humanity, Full Deity, One person

Kenosis Theory:

A FALSE Theory about the character of Jesus - Emptied himself of his divinity when he became a man. “Emptied himself” only comes from One passage:

Philippians 2:5-11 *“Have this attitude ^[a]in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be ^[b]grasped, **7** but ^[c]emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. **8** Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death ^[d]on a cross. **9** For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

The principle verses here are 6 and 7 - he did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped - meaning that he did not want his divinity to give him advantage - his “emptying” himself was to SELF limit his divinity - not to eliminate but to hold back - SO THAT he could die for this sins of Humanity.

Parents: when we play wrestle with our kids, we might say - I'll only use one arm, or I'll sit down so you could reach me - that doesn't mean you lost your strength or emptied yourself of your faculties - it simply means you have purposefully disadvantaged yourself so that the fight could be fair.

Plus how could he have emptied himself of divinity and say things like "I and the father are ONE"? (John 10:30) He would be a liar.

THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST:

For Christ to be the perfect sacrifice for sin - he HAS to be sinless.

He claimed sinlessness himself -

- "for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." John 8:29,
- "I have kept my Father's Commandments" John 15:10

Others claimed his sinlessness -

- Paul - He became sin who knew no sin" 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Peter - "who committed no sin" 1 Peter 2:22
- John - "and in Him there is no sin" 1 John 3:5
- The Writer of Hebrews "Tempted in every way... yet without sin" Hebrews 4:15

DEBATE: Could Christ have sinned? Impeccable or peccable?

Weight Hebrews 4:15 - tempted in all, yet without sin" and James 1:13 "God is not tempted with evil" - Since Christ is God incarnate - can he even be capable of sin? If not, does that conflict in that he was tempted as we are? Does Jesus's two natures play into this?

Important thing - He DID NOT sin. Leave it at that at the end of the day.

DIVE DEEPER: CHRIST AS PROPHET, PRIEST, KING:

These are three categories by which people often categorize Jesus's ministry on earth. Interestingly enough, these three categories are all inaugurated by anointing.

Prophet: Moses predicted that God would raise up a prophet like himself (Deut 18:15) which Peter attests to the Lord in Acts 3:22-24. The Lord claimed to be a Prophet (Matt 13:57) It was an occasional thing, sometimes teaching in certain places He used the synagogue services when possible (Mark 1:21) It was unsystematic in that he did it when the right moment arose. It was profusely illustrated - used parables (which in fact were a sort of indictment on those who did not believe) It made use of questions (Matt 22) It was authoritative (Mark 1:22) There were four major messages: Sermon on the Mount (Matt

5-7) the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom (Mat 13) the Olivet discourse (Matt 24-25) and the message to the disciples in the upper room (John 13-16) His messages of prophecy, in some cases, were fulfilled in his lifetime and by the miracles that verified that he was a true prophet. The test case of his detailed predictions about his death and resurrection are proof of that (Matt 26:21, 16:21)

Priest: the priest speaks to God for men, being from the tribe of Judah would have disqualified him from being a priest, however God arranged ahead of his coming for another order of priest, the order of Melchizedek. Aaronic priest had to be a man chosen by God and qualified for His work (Lev 21) Hebrews 5:1-7) they served as representing the people to God and especially in offering sacrifices. The portrait of Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20 and Hebrews 7:1-3 seem deliberately limited to those features that liken him to Christ. The "made like" in Heb 7:3 lends itself to a theophany. It was a royal priesthood - name means "king priest" and the messiah would be "a priest on his throne" (Zech 6:13) and it is unrelated to ancestry "without father, without mother (Heb 7:3) it was timeless, and it was superior to the Aaronic Order as Abraham tithes the spoils of war to him (Gen 14:20, Heb 7:9-10) So how does he act as a priest to us? The Lord refreshes and sustains his people (Acts 7:55 when he stood for the stoning of Stephen) Walks among the golden lampstands (Rev 2:1) His work of redemption is finished (Heb 1:3) aids those who are tested (2:18) and gives grace to help in time of need (4:16)

King: he is in David's Dynasty, (2 Sam. 7:12-16) Gabriel announced to Mary that he Baby would have the throne of David and reign over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32-33) and yet much of his ministry so far on earth as king had been rejected (John 1:11, Acts 4:27) so from a human standpoint, the Davidic kingdom was postponed. He is king today, although he does not rule as king but awaits his second coming and then the Davidic kingdom will be realized (Matt 25:31)

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST:

Importance of the resurrection -

- If Christ did not rise, he is a liar (Matt 20:19)
- If he did not rise, he wouldn't be alive to do all His post-resurrection ministries, he could not be our High Priest, Intercessor, Advocate, head of the church, nor could there be a living person to indwell and empower us (Romans 6:1-10; Galatians 2:20)
- Without the Resurrection, there is no gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)
- If Christ did not raise, we are pitiable, worthless and hopeless (1 Cor 15:13-19)

Best passage for the Reason for the Resurrection - 1 Corinthians 15:3-19

3 For I delivered to you [b]as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to [c]James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as [d]to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, [e]and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. 15 Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified [f]against God that He raised [g]Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

The Evidences of Christ's resurrection.

- Peter said that they were witnesses to the resurrected Christ (Acts 2:32)
- Mary Mag and the other women (Matt 28:8-10)
- to Peter (Luke 24:34)
- the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32)
- 7 disciples on the sea of galilee (John 21:1-24)
- disciples except Thomas in the upper room (Luke 24:36-43)
- including Thomas the next day (John 20:26-29)
- to Jesus's half brother James, the apostles and more than 500 brothers at one time (1 Cor 15:6-7)
- and to those who witnessed the ascension (acts 1:3-12)

What caused the tomb to be empty? Guards reported it, given hush money to make up a lie that the disciples took the body - should've been executed. It is also inconceivable to think that a group of disorganized disciples could get past or subdue a guard of soldiers to get to a body. The coming Holy Spirit (the effect) had to have a sufficient cause (the

risen Christ) (Acts 2:33) If a massive group of disciples held to a lie, which gained them no earthly reward - someone would have cracked. All but one of the apostles were martyred.

Results of Christ's resurrection

- **a new prototype body** - first time in history that there was a resurrected with an eternal body, never to die again. All former resurrections only were back to the earthly temporary bodies and each person would face a future death. Some connection between his resurrected body and his former body.

People recognized him and his crucifixion wounds were retained (John 20:20-29) **He could eat** (Luke 24:30-33, 41-43) **He breathed on the disciples** (John 20:22) **His body had flesh and bones** (Luke 24:39-40) **But he did have some differences, he could enter closed rooms without opening doors** (Luke 24:36) **He could appear and disappear at will** (Luke 24:15) **He is the "firstborn from the dead"** (Col 1:18)

these resurrected bodies will be new yet related to the former ones (1 Cor 15:35-41), we will be "like him" (1 John 3:2) Paul says that the resurrection proved him to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4) one of the earliest creeds for the church was "Maranatha" "our Lord Come" only reason they could say that is that if he resurrected and ascended to heaven!

The Ascension:

In the OT PS 68:18 which was quoted in Ephesians 4:8 and Psalm 110:1, quoted in Acts 2:34-35. Jesus spoke of going to his father (John 7:33, 14:12) and specifically of the ascension (6:62, 20:17) he ascended in the vicinity of bethany (Luke 24:50) he ascended into a cloud, seeming gradual and not sudden. And they were told he would return in the same way (Acts 1:11) After the ascension, his post ascension ministry began.

POST-ASCENSION MINISTRIES OF CHRIST:

- **Going to the Father to send the spirit** "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever" (John 14:16-18) **Peter affirms** (Acts 2:33) "Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."
- **Now he is the head of the Church** (Ephesians 1:22) "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,"
- **He gives gifts to the church** (Ephesians 4:7-13) "But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it."
- **He empowers the body** (John 15:1-10) "apart from me you can do nothing."

- **He is a priest for his people** (Hebrews 2:18; 4:14-16, Rom 8:34) "who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."
- He prepares a place for us (John 14:1-3) ""In my father's house there are many rooms"
- **He will raise the dead both the righteous in Christ and the unrighteous** (John 5:28-29) "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice **29** and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned."
- **Believers will be raptured by christ** (1 Thess 4:13-18) "Caught up together in the air"
- **Believers will be judged and rewarded by Christ** (2 Cor 5:10) "Judgement seat of Christ, to be judged in the Body for what we have done, whether good or bad"
- **He will rule this world during the Millenium** (Rev 19:15) "He will rule them with an iron scepter."
- **He will rule the new heavens and earth** (Rev 21:5) " He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!""