

STUDIES IN
THE DEITY OF *JESUS*
THE CHRIST



Dr. E. E. DeWitt

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THE DEITY OF JESUS,
THE CHRIST**

**By
E. E. DeWitt**

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Address All Inquiries To:

THE OLD PATHS PUBLICATIONS, Inc.

142 Gold Flume Way

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Web: www.theoldpathspublications.com

E-mail: TOP@theoldpathspublications.com

DEDICATION

"To my wife, Linda"

E. E. DeWitt

SAMPLE PAGES

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FOREWORD

(Session One)

We begin today a study in the Person of Jesus Christ. We will look at the historical references to His Divine nature. Most importantly, we will also look into the Scriptural record of His Divine nature. There are many views of Jesus and His nature within history; some of these are heretical while the majority of them are based on the Scriptural record.

The important thing to understand is that our beliefs and conjectures are not in the end result very important. What is of utmost importance is "What saith the Scripture." That is where our study will go. Upon the Rock of Scripture is where our study will rest.

This study was prepared some years ago to be used in the television ministry of Dr. E. E. DeWitt. As such the study was intended to be as understandable as possible. "Big words," or theological jargon, were kept to a minimum and are explained where such terms were used. The intent was to make this study usable for the student of the Bible irrespective of his or her educational background. It is our intention of course that the educational background might be stronger from a theological standpoint after this study is completed.

The outline being used contains the following chapter headings.

What the Churches Say

Terms

Jesus: The Son of God

Jesus as The Angel of the Lord

gods With a Small "g"

God: He is One

God: He is Plural

The Dual Nature of Jesus

His Voluntary Submission

The Glorification of Jesus

Jesus Has the Attributes of Deity

The Authority of Jesus

The Eternality of Jesus

Jesus is the Creator

The Personality of Jesus

Jesus Admits His Divinity

Others Admit to the Deity of Jesus

The Prophets Speak of the Messiah

The Old Testament, and the New Testament, Speak of the Divinity of Jesus

The Scriptures Declare that Jesus is Divine

The Truth of His Divinity

This study will also, of necessity, speak of the nature of God.

Some things are hard to understand. God speaks to us from the vantage point of eternity and Spirit. We are beings of time and physicality. As such, we are prone to accept that which we are able to fully understand and to reject that which differs from our natural frame of references. True Christianity, however, is a medium of faith. We are to accept what God says as Ultimate Truth even when we have problems grasping the content of that Truth.

A few weeks after I had left the war zone of South Viet Nam in 1969, I was home in the kitchen of our apartment. As I reached for the cookie jar my wife decided to sneak up behind me and scare me. She, as a civilian, could have not understood what war was like. She could not have understood the defense mechanisms which were built into a soldier in a time of war. But, she began to understand rather abruptly that one must not sneak up upon a soldier less than a month removed from a war zone.

We cannot understand all the things which God has for us. Besides the above references to time/eternity and physicality/Spirit, we are creatures born with a nature which is blinded by the fact of sin. As we go through this study I would caution that you not believe something is so simply because I wrote a sentence. Check all the Scriptural references. Only God is Truth and that Truth has been given to us in His inspired and preserved Words.

It is my intention to keep each session short at an easily digestible amount of words for the average person of the twenty-first century. Further length would detract from the value of what was written.

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT THE CHURCHES SAY

(Session Two)

When I propose to write about "What The Churches Say" about the Divinity of Jesus in today's section I intend to be very broad in my definition of "Church."

Meaning of the Word: Church

The meaning of the word we use, "Church," comes from a New Testament word which describes "a called out assembly of persons." In a sense, my unit in the Viet Nam War was a "church" by the New Testament definition. The group which assailed Paul at Ephesus was a "church" by the New Testament definition. A group of jurors called out of the general population to determine the guilt or innocence of a man at a trial is a "church" by the New Testament definition.

In general society our use of the term Church is defined from an ecclesiastical dictionary rather than a strict Biblical understanding. We use the term to define denominations, groups of various denominations (as in "the church world") and even the building where the people meet to worship together on a Lord's Day morning.

The Real Definition of a Church

The real definition of a church, in the religious sense, is that it is a body of believers whom God has called out of the general population. They have been given the purpose to fulfill the Great Commission. Rightly speaking, with the literal interpretation of the word, we can have local churches but we can have no "Church."

A true church, Biblically speaking, is a local group of believers who have banded together, under God, with the express purpose of worshiping Him in a corporate body and taking His teachings and message out into the larger world.

I wrote the above just so I would not confuse anyone with a false description of the concept of "Church" as I, somewhat, misuse it here. My purpose here is to speak of the broad concept of "the church world" and note how various organizations which are religious, specifically Christian, in nature have viewed the Person of Jesus.

For the most part I am simply going to list the writings of these various groups. I will not attempt to add my comment, except as it may be necessary to explain some term, as it would be superfluous to the discussion.

The Historical Church

First, Cole (*Basic Christian Faith*) describes the testimony of the historical church. From the Council of Chalcedon 451 AD:

"We acknowledge one and the same Christ so to be perfect God and perfect man; of the same substance with the Father as regards His Godhead, and of the same substance with us as regards His manhood - in all things like unto us, sin only excepted; begotten of the Father from everlasting, but in the last days born of the Virgin; subsisting of separation; the distinction between the natures not being destroyed by the union, but each preserving its own properties and both culminating in one Person and Hypostasis:

one and the same Christ, not divided into two Persons.”

From the early part of the 20th century, in a series of position papers which shaped early Fundamentalism (*The Fundamentals*), Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D., wrote the section on “The Deity of Christ.”

Luke 15:10 - In answering the Pharisees murmurings at His meetings with sinners, Jesus points out that the very nature of the Heavenly, which He Himself is, is to meet and call sinners.

The Liturgical Churches

Second, about the testimony of liturgical churches, Cole (*Basic Christian Faith*) again writes:

From the Thirty-ninth Article of the Church of England, 1563: “The son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided.”

From the Westminster Confession of Faith:

“The Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that the two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, as Godhead and manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion, which is the very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man.”

The Lutheran Church

Luther’s Small Catechism sets forth the teaching of the Lutheran Church. This volume says:

“I believe that Jesus Christ is true God because the Scriptures ascribe to Him A. Divine names... B. Divine Attributes... C. Divine Works... D. Divine honor and glory.”

Further, Luther’s Small Catechism argues that it is necessary that Christ be Divinity so that:

- A. His fulfilling of the Law would be efficacious for all men (Ps. 49:7-8; Rom. 5:19).
- B. His life and death would be sufficient for our redemption (Mk. 10:45),
- C. He could defeat both death and Satan (II Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14; I Cor. 15:57)

The Orthodox Church

Coniaris (*Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life*) speaks of the Orthodox Church:

“Jesus is Lord - absolute and undisputed creator and possessor of the entire universe... When the title ‘Christ’ (meaning the Anointed One or the Messiah) is applied to Jesus it becomes a confession of faith indicating our faith that Jesus, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is the Messiah.”