

# DOCTRINE OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST

October 31, 1982

- I. Explicit references that affirm the deity of Christ.
  - A. Jn.1:1 "*In the beginning was (imperf. εἶμι eimi) the Word, and the Word was with God (separate person) and the Word was God*"; cf. Jn.1:14 "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*"
  - B. Jn.20:28 "*Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and My God!'*" (Jesus did not rebuke; see vs.29 for what He did say.)
  - C. Rom.9:5 "*and from whom (Israel) is the Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.*"
  - D. Phil.2:6 "*Who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality (acc.neut.pl. of ἴσος, isos: equal things, i.e., attributes) with God a thing to be grasped.*"
  - E. Ti.2:13 "*looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.*"
- II. Deity inferred from His eternal preexistence.
  - A. Jn.8:58 "*Jesus said to them (Jews) 'Verily, verily, I say to you, before Abraham came to be (literal translation of aor.dep.infin. of γινομᾶι ginomai) I am (pres.act.inf. εἶμι, eimi).'*"
  - B. Micah.5:2: a Messianic prophecy of Christ's birth at Bethlehem and destiny as ruler declares of Him "*His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity*" (Hebrew מִיָּמֵי עוֹלָם mime' olam; cf. Ps.90:2; Prov.8:22,23; Jn.1:1).
  - C. Isa.9:6 is another prophecy of Christ's birth. He is called "*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*"
  - D. Jn.1:1 "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*"
  - E. Col.1:16,17 after stating that all things were created through Him and for Him comes the expression "*And He is before all things*".
  - F. Rev.1:8 "*'I am the Alpha and Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'*"
  - G. Eph.1:4 is associated with the divine decrees "*chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.*"
  - H. Jd.25 "*to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*"
- III. Additional evidences of His pre-incarnate existence (which supports His deity).
  - A. Jn.3:13 "*And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man.*"
  - B. Jn.3:31 "*He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.*"
  - C. Jn.6:38 "*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.*"
  - D. Jn.17:5 "*With the glory which I always had with You before the world was*" (cf. Jn.17:24).
  - E. Other verses: Jn.1:15,30; 6:33,42,50,51,58,62; 7:29; 8:23,42; 9:36; Eph.1:35; 1Pet.1:18,20. Most references to His preexistence are in the gospel that deals with His deity.
- IV. The ascription of divine attributes to Him is conclusive proof of deity (Col.2:9 "*For in Him all the fullness [πληρώμα, pleroma] of Deity dwells [κατοικέω katoikeo: dwell permanently] in bodily form*").
  - A. Sovereignty (Mt.28:18 "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me*"; Rom.9:5 "*Who is over all*"; 1Pet.3:22; Jn.3:27 "*And He gave Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man*"; Act.2:36; 1Cor.12:3; Phil.2:9,10; Col.1:18; 1Pet.3:22; Rev.1:5,6 "*Ruler of Kings of the earth...to Him...the glory and dominion forever and ever*"; Rev.17:14 and 19:16 call Him "*King of kings and Lord of lords*").

- B. Eternal Life (Isa.9:6; Micah.5:2; Jn.1:1; 8:58; Col.1:17; Rev.1:8; 22:13).
- C. Righteousness and Justice (Jer.23:5,6; Lk.1:35 "*holy offspring*"; Act.3:14 "*The Holy and Righteous One*"; Heb.7:26 "*holy of His priesthood*"; Rev.3:7 "*He who is holy*").
- D. Love (Jn.13:1,34; 1Jn.3:16; cf. Jn.3:16).
- E. Omniscience (Jn.2:24,25 "*He Himself knew what was in man*"; Jn.16:30 "*We know that you know all things*"; Jn.6:64 "*But there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him*"; Jn.13:11; Mt.9:4 "*And Jesus knowing their thoughts/hearts said, 'Why are you thinking evil?'*"; 1Cor.4:5 "*Until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts*"; Rev.2:23 "*I am He who searches the minds and hearts*").
- F. Omnipresence (Ps.139:7-10; Deut.4:39; Prov.15:13; Isa.66:1; Jer.23:24; Act.17:27; Mt.28:20 "*I am with you always*"; Mt.18:20 "*For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst*"; Jn.3:13).
- G. Omnipotence (Mt.8:25, calmed the storm; Jn.10:18 "*No one has taken it from Me*"; Phil.3:21 "*Who (the Lord Jesus Christ, see vs.20) will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself*"; Heb.7:25 "*He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him*"; 2Tim.1:12 "*I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day*"; Jd.24 "*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory irreprehensible with great joy*"; Rev.1:8 "*The Almighty*").
- H. Immutability (Heb.13:8 "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever*"; Heb.1:10,12; cf. Ps.102:25-27; 1Jn.1:9).
- I. Veracity (Jn.14:2 "*If it were not so, I would have told you*"; 14:6 "*I am the way and the truth and the life*"; Rev.3:7 "*He...who is true*").

V. His deity is affirmed in trinity passages (Mt.28:19; 2Cor.13:14; 1Pet.1:2).

VI. His deity is required, since He is said to perform the tasks of deity.

- A. Creation (Jn.1:3 "*All things came into being through Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being*"; Jn.1:10 "*The world was made through Him*"; Col.1:16 "*For by Him all things were created in the heavens and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things have been created through Him and for Him*"; Heb.1:2 "*Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world*"; Heb.1:10 "*You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands*"; cf. Gen.1:1).
- B. Providence (Lk.10:22 "*All things have been handed over to Me by My Father*"; Jn.3:35 "*The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand*"; Jn.17:2 "*Even as You have given Him authority over all mankind, that to all You have given Him, He may give eternal life*"; Eph.1:22 "*And He put all things in subjection under His feet and granted Him as head over all things to the church*"; Col.1:17 "*And by Him all things hold together*"; Heb.1:3 "*and upholds all things by the word of His power*"; Rev.1:5 "*ruler of the Kings of the earth*").
- C. Forgiveness of sins (Mt.9:27; Mk.2:7,10 "*Who can forgive sins but God alone?*"; Col.3:13; 1Jn.1:9).
- D. Resurrection and judge (Mt.25:31,32; Jn.5:19-29; Act.10:42; 17:31; Phil.3:21; 2Tim.4:3).
- E. Dissolve and recreate the universe (Heb.1:10-12; Rev.20:11; cf. 21:5 "*Behold I make all things new*").

VII. Christ possesses the titles of deity.

- A. Yaweh, יהוה, translated kurios in the New Testament (Zech.12:10b;cf. Rev.1:7; Ps.68:18; cf. Eph.4:8-10; Ps.102:12; cf. Heb.1:10,11; Isa.6:5; cf. Jn.12:41; Jer.23:5,6; cf. 1Cor.1:30; Mt.3:1; cf. Mt.12:6; 21:12,13 [Lord of the temple]; Mt.12:8 [*Lord of the Sabbath*]).
- B. Adonai, אֲדֹנָי translated κυριός (kurios) in the NT (Ps.110:1; cf. Mt.22:44 and Mk.12:36; Lk.10:43; Act.2:34,35; Heb.1:13; 10:13 [the NT equivalent is kurios]).

C. Elohim, אֱלֹהִים translated Θεός (Theos) in the NT. In Isa.40:3, Christ is spoken of as both Yaweh and Elohim (cf. Lk.3:6).

#### VIII. The title "Son of God" and Christ's deity.

A. It is used of men and angels (Rom.8:14,19; cf. Job.2:1).

B. It is used of Christ in a unique way, as seen in the term "*only begotten*" (μονογενής monogenes; Jn.1:14,18; 3:16,18; 1Jn.4:9; cf. Lk.7:12 "*only son*"; 8:42 "*only daughter*"; 9:38 "*only child*"; Heb.11:17, "*offered up his only begotten son*"; Christ is God's only uniquely begotten Son).

C. The above is explained in a threefold application under the title "firstborn", πρωτότοκος, prototokos (background: primogeniture).

1. To teach the doctrine of eternal generation (Col.1:15 "*And He is the firstborn of all creation*"; Heb.1:6 "*And when He again brings the firstborn into the world*").

2. To read His humanity into the doctrine (Mt.1:25; Lk.2:7 "*She gave birth to her firstborn son*").

3. To further read His glorified humanity into the doctrine (Ps.2:7 "*He said to me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You'*"; cf. Rom.8:29 "*That He might be the firstborn among many brothers*"; Col.1:18 "*The firstborn from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything*"; Rev.1:5 "*The firstborn from the dead*").

4. Summary: as eternal God the Son, He has always been the firstborn. Via the virgin birth, His humanity became firstborn in hypostasis, and at His resurrection His glorified hypostasis achieved firstborn status.

#### IX. The Angel of Yaweh identification proves His deity.

A. The Angel of Yaweh (Gen.16:7-13, esp. vs.13; cf. Gen.22:15-18; 31:11-13; 48:15,16; Ex.3:1ff; 14:19; Judg.6:11-23; 13:9,20).

B. The Angel of Yaweh is distinguished from Yaweh (Gen.24:7,40; Ex.23:20; 32:34; Num.20:16; Judg.2:15; 1Chr.21:15-18; Isa.63:9; Dan.3:25-28; Zech.1:12,13).

C. The Angel of Yaweh is the second person of the Godhead.

1. He is the visible God of the Old Testament (OT).

2. He no longer appears after the incarnation.

3. God sent both.

4. Christ is called Yaweh in NT quotations of OT passages, (translated kurios, see point VII.A.).

#### X. Other OT theophanies of the second person of the Godhead.

A. The burning bush (Ex.3:2), where He became known as the "*I am*" (Qal.perf. and Qal.imperf. of אָנֹכִי, hayah; Greek, cf. εἰμί eimi, reflected in the "*I Am's*" of John's gospel (Jn.6:35 "*I am the bread of life*"; 8:12 "*I am the light of the world*"; 10:9 "*I am the door*"; 10:11 "*I am the good shepherd*"; 11:25 "*I am the resurrection and the life*"; 14:6 "*I am the way and the truth and the life*"; 15:1,5 "*I am the vine*").

B. The pillar of cloud and fire (Ex.13:21; 14:19; 23:20-23; 32:34; 33:2; Num.20:16; Isa.63:9).

C. A man (Gen.18:1-33 [to Abraham]; 32:24-32 [to Jacob]; cf. Hos.12:4).

#### XI. Observations on those who deny it.

A. They are called Antichrists (1Jn.2:22 "*Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son*"; 1Jn.4:3 "*and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the (spirit) of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now is already in the world*"; cf. 1Jn.2:18 "*and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen*").

B. It is the basis for eternal condemnation (1Jn.5:12 "*He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life*").

C. It is a characteristic of cults (Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Armstrongism, etc.).

D. It is prophesied of liberalism (2Pet.2:1 "*Who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even*

*denying the master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves"; cf. Jd.4).*

XII. The Lord taught it (Jn.10:30 "*I and the Father are one*"; vs.31 "*And the Jews took up stones again to stone Him*").

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