

The Crystallization

CONSIDERING CHRIST

As we consider Christ, we should avoid heresy and affirm the full revelation of Christ in the New Testament. We repudiate all heresies concerning the person of Christ.

Christ having only divinity but not humanity. This was the erroneous teaching of the Docetists, who claimed that Christ has divinity but not humanity. Since, for the Docetists, matter is essentially evil and Christ is holy, Christ could not have been incarnated. In their misguided view, Christ's body was not actually flesh but merely seemed to be so. This denies the truth that Jesus Christ, the true God, has come in the flesh. God Himself became flesh; He was born as a genuine human being with a body of blood and flesh. *Christ having only humanity but not divinity.* This teaching of the Ebionites, who resemble today's modernists, maintains that Christ has only a human nature but not a divine nature. The Bible, however, clearly declares that Christ is not only man but also God (Heb. 1:8; Rom. 9:5).

Christ's divinity being incomplete. This was the false teaching of the Arians, who denied Christ's uncreated divinity, rejecting the truth that Jesus Christ is Jehovah God come in the flesh, that Christ is the eternal, uncreated I Am. The Arians asserted that Christ's deity was incomplete and not absolute, for, they supposed, He was simply the noblest and highest of God's creatures. Since in their heretical view Christ was a divine being created by God, Christ is not co-eternal with God. The truth is that the Word, Christ, is the self-existing and ever-existing God, Jehovah. His deity is eternal and absolute. *Christ's humanity being incomplete.* According to the mistaken notion of the Apollinarians, Christ had a human body and a human soul but not a human spirit, which, they alleged, was replaced by the Logos. The Bible reveals that Christ's humanity is complete and perfect; He has not only a human body and a human soul but also a human spirit, which He exercised in living the life of a God-man.

Christ's divinity and humanity being separated. The Nestorians separated Christ's divinity from His humanity to such an extent that went to the extreme of teaching that Christ possesses not only two natures but also two persons. They believed that two persons, one divine and the other human, were in the body of Jesus. On the contrary, the Bible reveals that although Christ has two natures, He is still one person, the God-man who is both the Son of God and the

Son of Man. *Christ's divinity and humanity being merged into one.* This was the doctrine of the Eutychians, who denied the distinctness and coexistence of Christ divinity and humanity and asserted instead that Christ's two natures were merged into one, producing something that was neither fully divine nor fully human but a third thing. This is contrary to the Bible, which reveals that Christ, in His unique person, is the mingling of divinity and humanity.

We not only repudiate heresy—we affirm the full revelation concerning Christ in the Word of God. Christ, the wonderful God-man—the unique One who is the complete God and the perfect man—is all-inclusive. He is the reality of God, of man, and of every positive thing in the universe. Many books in the New Testament unveil Christ in His all-inclusiveness. Hebrews presents Christ as God, man, the effulgence of God's glory, the impress of God's substance, the Creator, the Upholder, the Heir, the One who destroyed the devil, the Firstborn, the One crowned with glory and honor, the Forerunner, the Captain of salvation, the Apostle, the Builder, the real Joshua, the Sabbath rest, the High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec, the heavenly Minister, the replacement and reality of the offerings, the Mediator and Surety of a better covenant, the One enthroned for God's administration, the Author and Perfecter of faith, the great Shepherd of the sheep. This all-inclusive Christ is the heavenly ladder which joins earth to heaven and brings heaven down to earth.

On the one hand, Christ is in the highest heaven, far above all, where He ministers on our behalf by dispensing God into our being to bring us into the glorious expression of God. On the other hand, Christ, the last Adam, in and through resurrection became the life-giving Spirit. As the glorified God-man He is in the third heaven; as the life-giving Spirit He dwells in our regenerated spirit, and now we are one spirit with Him. This marvelous One is both the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. As we acknowledge the biblical witness to the historicity of Jesus Christ, especially to the facts of His virgin birth, sinless life, redemptive death, and bodily resurrection, we experience and enjoy Him as the Christ of faith. The Jesus of history has become the Christ of faith, who is everything to us for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose.

by the Editors