

**The Comparison of Jesus and Thich Quang Duc,
and Understanding the Catholic Doctrine of Hypostatic Union**

In 1987 I helped Vietnamese refugees that were coming to the United States after the Vietnam War had ended. It ended with the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975. So many were still trying to leave the country because of the Communist takeover. I worked with a church and an organization called World Relief. I would sponsor a family to come in to the country. I would help them by giving them a place to stay until they could get settled themselves. I was young, but I had two things in my favor, I had already learned the language, and I had a home for which families could stay.

They would come with absolutely nothing, but the clothes on their backs. And a lot of the times, those clothes were given to them by the church, because what clothes they did wear were sometimes so tattered that would literally have to be held on. I would spend the next 4-6 months teaching them some English, help them to get all of their paperwork, social security cards, driver's licenses, you know, that kind of thing. I would help them get their kids enrolled into school, and help them find jobs... and transportation. Sometimes a car. Sometimes just a bike.

I said, "4-6 months" because that was all the time it took for the Vietnamese to get settled in and be able to support themselves. And I might add, they were only allowed to have welfare benefits for up to six months. After that, they were on their own. Some Americans have been on welfare their entire lives. There is absolutely no excuse for that. I have seen, first hand, the Vietnamese overcome almost every excuse that Americans give for their dependence on the welfare state. So within 6 months, they were settled in with jobs, school, and would have found another place to live of their own, and I would start it all over again with the next family.

Anyway, although coming through the church, not all of them were Christians. Some were Buddhists. There was one girl in particular that bothered me. You see, when the Vietnamese would come to America, they would attend church, even though they were Buddhists, out of gratitude and thanks for the help of coming to America. At this time, everyone still wanted to come to America. They thought it to be the greatest country in the world. My, how times have changes. In so doing, this often led to discussions on religion. The Vietnamese that I dealt with were always willing to listen to a defense of the Christian faith when coming up against something that rivaled their own Buddhist beliefs. But there was this one girl, her name was Thuy, that asked me a question that I didn't know how to answer at the time. She told me of the story of Thich Quang Duc, then asked me, "What is the difference between your Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and what he (Thich Quang Duc) did?"

Here is where I am going to have to explain some things. The Vietnam War was actually a conflict, and not a war. But its all politics. (And don't get me started here, because most Americans are so ignorant and say the stupidest things due to their "feelings" and their lack of knowledge, that it upsets me... Actually, its the exact same way with modern churches. They don't even know or understand what they believe. They just regurgitate what they have been told. Sorry. It's a point of contention with me. At least the Vietnamese were willing to hear me out.) Anyway, given the politics of Vietnam at the time, the North had the Communist Viet Cong, the South was a "Catholic" regime under the political burden of the unpopular Ngo Dinh Diem. The majority of the population of South Vietnam were Buddhist. As a Catholic, educated in France, Diem favored Catholics and routinely denied government positions to

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anyone who wasn't Catholic. He actually put his immediate family first. One of his brothers, Nhu was placed as head of the National Police. Another brother, Can, effectively exercised one-man dictatorship in Hue, central Vietnam, and yet another brother, Thuc, was archbishop of the city then called, Saigon.



Ngo Dinh Diem was the first President of South Vietnam from 1955-1963.

The Ngo Dinh Diem regime mistreated and even persecuted Buddhists. This is where Thuy's story and question, "What is the difference between your Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and what he (Thich Quang Duc) did," can come into play. Thich Quang Duc was a Buddhist monk that set himself on fire in Saigon, Vietnam on June 11th of 1963 in protest against the then Catholic government's persecution of Buddhists.



"I was to see that sight again, but once was enough. Flames were coming from a human being; his body was slowly withering and shriveling up, his head blackening and charring. In the air was the smell of burning human flesh; human beings burn surprisingly quickly. Behind me I could hear the sobbing of the Vietnamese who were now gathering. I was too shocked to cry, too confused to take notes or ask questions, too bewildered to even think... As he burned he never moved a muscle, never

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uttered a sound, his outward composure in sharp contrast to the wailing people around him.” -David Halberstam (New York Times)

Thuy had asked me how my Jesus was any different than this guy. I didn't know how to answer her at the time. 1 Peter 3:15 says,

1 Peter 3:15 NKJV But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

This left me a lot more reluctant to talk about Christianity to people. If I couldn't answer questions like this, I could only hurt the cause of Christ. I thought it best to say nothing. I wasn't really that much of a Christian at that time anyway, so I wasn't ready "to give a defense", as Peter put it. My brothers and sisters and I weren't really raised as Christians. We were sometimes sent to a Baptist church on Sunday mornings, and sometimes taken to a Pentecostal church on Wednesday nights, but that was just so my mother could get rid of us for a few hours so she could do her own thing. But our home life, absolutely was not Christian.

My story of becoming a Christian is one for which I have begun writing a book called, "The Story of Nobody". Don't know if I'll ever finish it. Don't know if it even matters now. Besides, most people wouldn't want to read my story, or couldn't handle it or wouldn't believe it if they did. But it is one that has put me on a 31+ year journey toward the Christ.

I did eventually find the answer. The answer is in the person-hood and sacrifice of Jesus, the Christ, which most of today's church misunderstands. It has to do with the Catholic doctrine of Hypostatic Union, or commonly called, the Two Natures Theory.

You see, most Christians talk about Jesus' sacrifice on the cross as being such a great and noble act that no other's could compare. I disagree. In my years, I became an extremely skilled martial artist that loved hand to hand combat, cherished it, longed for it. I, in fact, became a combat instructor, which led me to teach a lot of Marines. Marines that became very close friends and allies. Marines I have fought side by side with. Stories of sacrifice are rather common in these circles. Anyone who has seen war knows that some have indeed sacrificed themselves for others. A mother will sacrifice herself if someone else tries to rip her child from her arms. A father will kill or be killed if his family is threatened. The Apostles themselves withstood the ultimate sacrifice for their faith. Some of the early church fathers did the same. People all over the world have sacrificed their own lives to save others... all nations... all races... all times.

So what makes Jesus' sacrifice so different? I will tell you. It is simple really. Some say love, that is part of it. What a lot of Christians miss is the giving up of His deity, and just how big of a sacrifice that really was. This is something that no other person on earth or in history can claim. He gave up His deity to become flesh, to become a sacrifice, to pay for our salvation. Genesis 2:17 tells us that death, the shedding of blood, is the price we have to pay of disobedience.

Most Christians will say,... "uh, yeah, we know this." Do you really? Here is the problem... modern Christianity is so broken with false doctrines as to be deplorable in the eyes of those who can see the

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truth. The particular doctrine is speak of here, as mentioned earlier, is that of the Catholic doctrine of Hypostatic Union.

One thing that I've always tried to do is to trace different doctrinal beliefs back as far as possible in time in order to see where they first started. I want to know where these doctrines first entered into Christianity. Whenever we get a particular belief that we may have been taught all our lives as Christians in churches, that does not necessarily mean that that is what was taught from the very beginning. Christianity started with Christ and the Apostles. That belief is an interpretation of the Bible, but that interpretation may or may not be true. And one of the signs that a doctrine is probably not true, is if you cannot trace it in Christian writings all the way back to the beginning. If it seems to have entered at some point, you know, 1, 2, 3, 400 years or more after the time of Christ and the Apostles, if the earliest Christians didn't believe or teach it, that ought to be a big question mark as to whether or not this is really what was taught by the Apostles.

A lot of today's Christians have "sacred cows", certain beliefs that are off limits. You cannot question it. You cannot touch it in any way, shape, or form. It is absolutely off limits. Almost every single denomination has these. And each denomination thinks the other is lost or deceived for not believing as they do. But Christians shouldn't have anything like that. We should be the Bereans of Acts 17:11. Everything should be open to being tested by the written Word of God, the Bible. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 says, "Test all things; hold fast what is good." And we should be willing to change our point of view, if in fact, it is shown, even something we have believed all our lives, not what Christ and the Apostles taught. I have tried to do that by examining the Scriptures, by looking at the original languages, but also, and maybe most importantly, because not everyone it seems, has the ability to easily understand other languages, historically. I try to trace things back historically to see how, when, and why certain doctrines have entered into Christianity; And how they become so entrenched in Christian tradition.

So when you take the idea of the 'Doctrine of God' what you will find is that the earliest Christians did **not** hold the views that most modern Christians typically hold today. The view of who God is, the Trinity, they did believe in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but they defined it differently than modern Christianity does... not three distinct persons.

What you will see in the very earliest centuries within the church (assembly) is a little bit of disagreement on a few of the finer points. But over time, after the Roman Catholic Church became dominant because of the merging of the Roman Empire, there indeed was a merging of church and state into one. After that, what you see is, the doctrines that people believed, particularly about God and His son, being more precisely defined, so to speak. They had church councils beginning in 325 AD where they declared a Christian "creed". And it had to do with God. It had to do with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The first creed in 325 sort of summarized what the Christians believed prior to that time. And that was about the time of the merging of the Roman Empire with the Roman church. Then after that merger, and as time went on, and the church became accustomed to being merged with the state, they tried to hammer these doctrinal disputes out more precisely because the Roman emperor wanted unity. Anything that threatened the Empire would be a threat to him and his power.

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So they had further church counsels in order to hammer things out. And what we find is that first church counsel's creed, which I agree with completely. It is a very precise description of the Trinity. It states:

The Nicene Creed 325 AD

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God]; Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made [both in heaven and on earth]... But those who say: 'There was a time when he was not' and 'He was not before he was made' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'He is of another substance' or 'essence' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable'--they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.

And that was declared under Constantine. (If you don't know who Constantine is, well, I can't go into it now for the sake of time. See "The Real Meaning of Christmas" study in this section for a better understanding.) But as time went on, a hundred years later, whatever "vagueness" you find in this creed, you see it become more precisely defined; but it's being defined contrary to the original creed, and contrary to what the Bible teaches.

The Catholic Doctrine of Hypostatic Union (The Two Natures Theory)

This Hypostatic Union doctrine, basically what it means is that Jesus, the Christ, is fully God, possessing all of the attributes and characteristics of divinity, including immortality, being unchangeable, always existing, all those things that make God, God... But at the same time He is fully man. The Catholic Church actually defined it that way. They also publicly stated that anyone who did not agree with that was not a Christian, and must be excommunicated from the Church. And anyone who disagreed with that definition was persecuted. For priests, their church buildings could be confiscated, and their wealth could be taken away. Some were completely left destitute. And this doctrine was enforced with the sword. People were killed because they did not agree with this doctrine. The Catholic Church has killed millions under the guise of protecting orthodoxy against heresy.

Now there were two church counsels in 431 and 451 where these issues were hammered out for the sake of unity. And in those two counsels they hammered out this Hypostatic Union doctrine. These counsels also declared that Christians must refer to Mary as the mother of God. If you refused to do either of these, you were outside of orthodoxy and considered a heretic.

Now, what I believe is what the earliest creeds taught. And that is that the Son was begotten by the Father, of His own "essence", His own "substance" prior to creation and that the Son was co-creator with the Father and the Spirit of all creation. Then the Son became flesh.

The "Word" is used in Scripture as a title for Jesus.

John 1:1 NKJV In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

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John 1:2 NKJV He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:3 NKJV All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Then in John 1:4 we are told that the “Word” became flesh.

John 1:14 NKJV And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

And the earliest creeds actually state that. That He became man, not that He took on flesh, but that He fully became man for our sakes, for our salvation. I agree with the early creeds completely. It's the later creeds that were changed I don't agree with.

I want to give you a list of reasons why I reject that teaching and doctrine. And when I say I reject it, I am not saying that I have always rejected it. Because I just assumed it to be true for most of my Christian life. It was only in the last several of years that I began to question it... and doubt it. And now I know it's wrong. I was forced to change my view because I found, through study of the Bible, that I was wrong. As Christians we should not be afraid to “pull weeds”, so to speak. We shouldn't have sacred cows that we can't question.

This change, it is a subtle change. It's not an complete change. I still believe Jesus is God. I still believe He is the Son of God, I mean all that stuff I believe, but in some subtle ways in which we define it, there is a very important distinction.

I want to emphasize that distinction. And some people might say, well you are going so far in emphasizing Jesus' humanity that you are excluding His deity. I'm not excluding His deity, I'm emphasizing His humanity because it has been neglected. And how important it is that we believe it because if we don't believe it, it makes Jesus out to be something so different from us that we are not going to be able to imitate His example. This is the crucial point.

It is not that I want to say that He is exactly like us in the sense the He was “just a man”. Because “just a man” means that He came into existence at the moment of His conception, and that's not true. He came forth out of God. In the beginning He was the Creator with the Father. He existed before He became a man. But when He did become a man, He did become fully man. He did leave those attributes that are not consistent or are incompatible with being human, He did set those aside to really experience the human experience to the full extent that we do. Because if you believe in the Roman Catholic doctrine of Hypostatic Union, then Jesus did **NOT** fully experience the human experience. And I intend to show you this in Scripture. If that doctrine is true, then He was not fully tempted as we are. It wouldn't be possible if you would just stop and think about it. But Hebrews 4:15 says that He was tempted in all points as we are.

Hebrews 4:15 NKJV For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

James 1:13 says that God **cannot** be tempted.

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James 1:13 NKJV Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

So if Jesus was fully God and fully man, then you would have to say that God had to be struggling in the fight with man in order that He was tempted as the Scripture says He was. Who in their right mind thinks that a man stands a chance against God Himself in anything?

The Roman Catholic Jesus could not sin. That Jesus had no choice. His deity, His divine nature, made it impossible for Him to choose anything that wouldn't be divine. But that is not what the Bible teaches. If you hold that view of Jesus, it separates Him from us by such a degree that we cannot possibly imitate Him. And that is where I think it becomes dangerous for us.

Here are a list of reasons and some verses, as to why I had to change my point of view on this doctrine, and why I think this is an important and critical doctrine so that I can't just say, “Let's not talk about it. Let's just agree to disagree. Let's just leave that alone, it's too controversial.” I could do that. But I don't think that I would be fulfilling my responsibility as a Christian, as someone who is to imitate Christ. And for me personally, it makes a difference in my own behavior. It really does. It has made a difference in my behavior. It has made a difference in my walk with God. It has made a difference in my love for my savior. And if I just neglect to tell others of the knowledge of God that I have gained, I don't think that when I stand before God that He is going to have too much good to say about it. When I make a decision to tell someone about what I have learned it is because I feel absolutely responsible before God to do so.

And if some people don't like to hear the truth, and most of today's Christians don't, which Paul explains in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 ever so clearly, then they can call me a heretic. I have been called a heretic with absolutely zero investigation as to what I am saying is even true... well, I would gladly be called a heretic by men, if I know that my Lord is going to say, “Well done.” But if I do the opposite, in order to please people, I know that when I give an account I am not going to hear those words, “well done.” That's what motivates me.

Even though I know that most Christians will not make it into the Kingdom, as Jesus stated in Matthew 7:13-14, I still have to fulfill my duty as a “watchman” and a “disciple” of the Christ. Remember what Ezekiel said of the watchman, their blood will be upon their own heads. This passage is always in my mind.

Ezekiel 33:1 NKJV Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Ezekiel 33:2 NKJV "Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: 'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman,

Ezekiel 33:3 NKJV 'when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people,

Ezekiel 33:4 NKJV 'then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head.

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Ezekiel 33:5 NKJV 'He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life.

Ezekiel 33:6 NKJV 'But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.'

I don't want others, especially those who call themselves Christians, or brothers in Christ, to flee from me every time they see me, or gossip behind my back and say that I am some kind of heretic because I don't believe the same things they do. But that is what most often happens when you take a stand, and I always take a stand.

So here are my reasons:

1. The idea that Jesus had all the attributes of God and all the attributes of man, and I am going to call this the "two natures theory" instead of Hypostatic Union, which is what the Catholics call it, because it is more easily understood by others. This theory states that Jesus had both a divine and a human nature at the same time. Now we know that we don't have that. The Scripture says the He became like us in every way. Are we gods? That alone should give you pause.

The Two Natures doctrine is not explicitly taught in the Bible. That is the first problem. It also makes the burden of proof fall to my opponent. But Christians are not exactly logical or wise these days. The two natures theory is never taught in the Bible, that's a big one. You can search the Bible high and low and you will not find it stated anywhere. It is based solely on inferences. That is, while I infer this, and if this is true, and I infer something from another passage, and if that is true, you can kind of construct this doctrine.

The pre-tribulation rapture theory is built exactly the same way, I might add. My position is stated explicitly in Scripture, which is a post-tribulational rapture. Again, this makes the burden of proof fall to my opponent's theory. But this is going off on a tangent. The point is, this theory is also solely based on inferences. It is not actually stated anywhere in the Bible, period.

Just in case you don't know, an inference is something that you think the Scriptures implies, but doesn't actually say. Well, the Catholic Church, and most of today's Protestant Christians, have built their doctrines on inferences that they claim the Bible says, by stringing verses together from anywhere in the Bible, but doesn't actually say. The fact is, those inferences are not required by the text. That is, there are other ways to interpret the text that are perfectly legitimate that don't require that inference.

So that is part of the problem. The Bible doesn't actually teach it anywhere.

2. It is flatly contradicted by many explicit statements in Scripture. I am going to give you a small sampling just to prove my point.

Explicit statements that contradict the two natures theory:

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1. Isaiah 7:14-16. If the two natures theory is true, and Jesus did not have a choice to choose between evil and good, then Isaiah 7:14-16 cannot be true because Isaiah says,

Isaiah 7:14 NKJV "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:15 NKJV "Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isaiah 7:16 NKJV "For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.

Now this passage is teaching that Jesus, as a baby, had to learn the difference between good and evil and then He had to choose the good. Now it says that He will choose the good and He won't choose the evil, but it is clear that He is learning the difference between these, and that He is making the choice.

When it says, in verse 16, "...before the child shall know, that is experience, good or evil..." He will choose to do good. He makes a choice. Deity has no choice but to do good or He would no longer be God. It states that He starts out as a child and learns to make a choice. That's what γινώσκω means in verse 15... to know absolutely, to understand completely. It says, "before" which means it's a process before coming to know completely. βούτυρον καὶ μέλι φάγεται πρὶν ἢ γνῶναι αὐτὸν ἢ προελεσθαι πονηρὰ ἐκλέξεται τὸ ἀγαθόν· (verse 15). Greek is an inflected language, which just means that it changes form based on the context. But γινώσκω and γνῶναι are the same word here. The point is, He is learning. Something that is not compatible with the two natures theory because the two natures doctrine teaches that Jesus could not sin, so He could not choose the evil. He had no option to make that choice. If He had no option, then He wasn't truly tempted as we are, but Scripture says that He was.

John 5:19. Jesus specifically says, that He has no power of Himself to do the works that He was doing.

John 5:19 NKJV Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself**, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

The clause "the Son can do nothing of Himself" is not speaking of authority here, but the actual power from His own person to perform the miracles. The reason is stated by Paul in Philippians 2:5-8. The Son, contemplating His nature as being "equal with God" chose to "empty Himself", which is exactly how it reads in Greek, in order to take the form of a man, being made fully human in every way (Hebrews 2:16-17). This was necessary for Him to be genuinely "tempted in all points as we are" (Hebrews 4:15), and to die a human death. (God cannot die. That is what makes Him God.) Jesus' miracles were always the Father working through Him by the full measure of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Him (John 3:2; John 5:30; John 8:28; John 14:10; Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Please thoroughly research this verse for yourself, because it doesn't read in English exactly how it does in Greek. And it uses the word **δύναμαι**, which is actually the verb form for the word "power". It literally says, "the Son is not able..." or "...the Son cannot be doing anything". Jesus was talking about the signs and miracles that He was doing. He goes on to say that it was the Father who does the works

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through Him. Read the rest of this chapter slowly and carefully. It will start to sink in. We just have to overcome our presuppositions. If we come to the text thinking it says something, it is difficult to see what is actually printed right there in front of you.

Anyway, Jesus says many times in the Gospel of John that He does not do any works, but that the Father does them through Him. If Jesus were doing them, He wouldn't be fully human. No humans can do these miracles, nor could they throughout the entire Bible, without God the Father doing them through the Holy Spirit working through those men. If Jesus could do them of Himself, then He would be lying throughout the Gospel of John, and He wouldn't actually be fully man. Can you see that? Jesus constantly says that it is not of Him Himself, but the Father that does the works... that He says nothing but what the Father has given Him to say, indicating clearly that He was not, as a man, equal to the Father. If He were equal to the Father then He would have all the knowledge that the Father had... He would have all the authority that the Father had. Right? But He didn't. Matthew 28:18-20, and Matthew 24:36 are two of many examples that prove these points of Jesus' limitations as a man. He made it very clear. In fact, there are several statements in John where Jesus says that the Father is giving Him authority to do something. Well, why is the Father giving Him authority if He, that is, Jesus, had all the attributes of deity as a man? If He were God as a man, He would have that authority in His own person. But He is constantly in the Gospel of John saying that the Father is giving Him authority to do or say something.

Not to mention that Jesus Himself said that the Father was His God. How can Jesus have a God if He is God and they are "co-equal" as the Hypostatic Union doctrine states? See John 20:17; Revelation 3:12; Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3; Ephesians 1:17; Colossians 1:3; and 1 Peter 1:3. I am sure there are more, but I don't know anymore offhand.

In Acts 10:36-39 when Peter was preaching before Cornelius and his household, and this is a Gospel sermon to people who had never heard about Jesus before, he says that God anointed Jesus with power and with the Holy Spirit so that He could go about doing miracles of healing all of those who were oppressed by the devil, and then it says, "for God was with Him".

Acts 10:36 NKJV "The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all;

Acts 10:37 NKJV "that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

Acts 10:38 NKJV "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Acts 10:39 NKJV "And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

The works that Jesus was doing was not by His own inherent power, His own miracles. He was acting as a man with God working through Him, speaking through Him, which is exactly what the New Testament says that we are supposed to be doing. The Holy Spirit is what gives us "power". Now it doesn't mean that we are going to do all the things that Jesus did because God chooses different people to do different things. He chose the Apostles to do miracles. The Apostles raised people from the dead.

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The Apostles did all the same kinds of things that Jesus did, but they did it by the power of God. The Apostles didn't inherently have a divine nature. They did exactly the same things that Jesus did.

Now you might be asking, is Jesus God in the flesh? Yes. Of course. But because of who He is, not because He possessed certain supernatural powers, if you want to call it that.

In Romans 5:12-21 and in 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; & 45-49 the Apostle Paul makes a very strong argument about Jesus being the second Adam, or the last Adam, or the new Adam. He calls Him that... the last Adam. And he says, particularly in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, that just as we bare the image of the first Adam now, in the resurrection we are going to bare the image of the last Adam... that is Jesus, the Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:45 NKJV And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:46 NKJV However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.

1 Corinthians 15:47 NKJV The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:48 NKJV As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.

1 Corinthians 15:49 NKJV And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

And this is not the only passage that says this. In Philippians 2:1-11; 3:10-11; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11, and in 1 John as well it says that in the resurrection that we are going to be exactly like Jesus. That is, we are going to be just like Him in body in the resurrection.

Now if you take these facts and compare them to the two natures theory, that would mean that we become Gods. That would mean that we become deity in the resurrection. I don't think any Christians, outside of Mormons, and I don't consider them Christians because of the biblical definition of what it means to be one, would actually teach that or believe that; but that is what happens when you take the Hypostatic Union doctrine and you look at it in light of passages like this, it would require that we become Gods or divinity in the resurrection... and we don't. We clearly don't.

In Philippians 2:5-8, my old pastor spent a lot of time referring back to this passage, it states plainly, it talks about Christ in His pre-incarnate state, that is, when He was with the Father all through the Old Testament times, that He was equal with God. It says that He was in the form of God; which means that He was divinity in His vary form, His vary nature. But it says that He 'emptied' Himself. In Greek it means exactly that. He emptied Himself and took the form of a servant and the likeness of man. In fact, it goes on to say being found in the fashion as a man, the external condition as a man. In fact the word σχῆμα (schema) in Greek and it is the same word we use as a blueprint or wiring diagram or schematics, in English, which comes from that Greek word and means to have the exact same design.

Then it says that after being found in the fashion as a man, that He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death. That word 'became' **requires** a transition. It is a process. To become obedient

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means that something has to happen, there was some progress in Him so that He was then willing to lay down His life.

In Luke 22 an angel had to give Jesus strength otherwise He would not have been able to endure unto the cross. If Jesus was fully God as well as fully man He would not have needed any strengthening from any outside source. God doesn't need anything. See Luke 22:39-44.

In 1 Timothy 6 there is a passage that distinguishes between the Father and the Son. It says that God, and it is talking about the Father in the context, the One who is invisible, is alone immortal... that God alone has immortality and dwelling in unapproachable light. This passage is contrasting the Son with the Father.

1 Timothy 6:13 NKJV I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

1 Timothy 6:14 NKJV that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

1 Timothy 6:15 NKJV which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

1 Timothy 6:16 NKJV who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

So in a statement that is contrasting the Son with the Father, and when I say the Son, I mean after He became man. When the passage is making a distinction between them and it says that the Father alone has immortality, that statement **must** exclude the Son. The Son did not have immortality therefore it is impossible for Him to be God as a man. And how do we know He didn't have immortality? Well, He died. He laid down His life.

And again, the Scripture says, Jesus said specifically, no one can take My life from Me, but I lay it down of My own. Right? ...that I might take it up again. And that was because He was the new Adam. He said, this command I have received from my Father.

John 10:17 NKJV "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

John 10:18 NKJV "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

The Father had given Christ, Jesus the authority to make that choice. In fact, Jesus said that the Father has delivered all things into My hands. And what did He mean by that in the context? He meant the fate of all humanity had been put in His, that is Jesus' hands. Whether or not Jesus chose to go through with His death was entirely up to Him. He chose to go through with it. That is what the Bible means when it says that He was **perfected** and **became** obedient unto death even the death on the cross.

In Hebrews 4:15 it says that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are. And that phrase literally means, "just like we are". Jesus' temptation was just like our temptations. Jesus could not sin if he were Deity. And if Jesus could not sin, then it is impossible for Him to be tempted as we are. Because we can sin,

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we are mortal; we are not deity. And its that potential to sin that makes temptation so potentially disastrous for us. If we could not sin, then we could not be tempted. In order to sin you have to be able to make a choice. Temptation is trying to persuade you to make a particular choice.

Jesus was tempted for 40 days by the devil; and the devil was trying to make Jesus make the wrong choice, right? If the Bible says that He was tempted in all points as we are, then Christ had to have the potential to make the choice or He wasn't really being tempted. This idea that Jesus has all the attributes of divinity and all the attributes of humanity at the same time, does not allow Him to be tempted as the Bible says He was tempted.

In my opinion, this is where the rubber really starts to hit the road, so to speak, in understanding who Jesus was and why it is so important in our daily lives.

In 1 John 4:1-4, John says that there is a confession that distinguishes between those who are truly of God and those who are not.

1 John 4:1 NKJV Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 John 4:2 NKJV By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

1 John 4:3 NKJV and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

1 John 4:4 NKJV You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Let me clarify something here. If you misunderstand this doctrine, doesn't mean that you are lost. If I were to say that I would have to say that I have been lost most of my Christian life, and I don't believe that's the case. I believe I have been a true Christian. And I think God knows that we are weak. He knows that we are dust. He knows that our minds are sometimes clogged up with stuff that shouldn't be in there. God is more interested in our "hearts" than He is that we have all of our doctrinal i's dotted and our t's crossed. He is more interested in our love for Him and our pursuit of Him. But every mistaken doctrine clouds our pathway to Christ.

There are a lot of people who have wrong thinking and wrong doctrines about the Trinity and Christ and things like that. Now you can absolutely stray far enough where you can't be a Christian. An example is where John in 2 John 1:7 tells us what it is to be an antichrist. But I don't believe this is one of those.

2 John 1:7 NKJV For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

The point I want to make is when John in 1 John is talking about false prophets, he is saying that when they come and say that Jesus has not come in the flesh, he says that those are not of God, but they are

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of the spirit of the Antichrist. Then he says that those who come to you and say that Jesus has come in the flesh, that these are of the spirit of God.

So then the question is, what does he mean when he says that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? Because you can interpret that phrase a couple of different ways. The Catholic view, that Jesus had two natures, Hypostatic Union, they would say that Jesus, the divine being, put on human flesh like a coat or jacket of some sort, so “He came in the flesh”. They would say that their understanding agrees with what John said.

But what did John really mean? Because there are two different ways to interpret that He came in the flesh. It could be that Jesus as God simply put on a flesh suit, and then He came in the flesh. Or it could mean that Jesus, as God, **became** man... that He transitioned from God to man. Divinity became humanity. That equally would agree with the statement that John made. But the fact is that John, in other places, clarifies what he means by this, particularly in the first verses of the Gospel of John. Especially verse 14, where John talks about Logos before He became man, then he talks about Him becoming man. Then he says, “the Word became flesh.”

John 1:14 NKJV And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Now that one phrase doesn't mean the “Word”, the “Logos”, Jesus, put on flesh. Because it is a word that means He transitioned from this to that. This is especially clear in the Greek text, but even in the English it is pretty plain. There is a transition from becoming fully divine to becoming fully flesh.

The two natures theory denies that the Word became flesh. They say that the Word took on flesh. Or the Word put on flesh. They are not saying that the Word **became** flesh. That's how John is actually defining it.

Those Catholics who teach the two natures theory, when you press them on Jesus' temptation and whether or not He really had any choice, their point of view starts falling apart. What they say is that Jesus could not sin because of His divinity. And we know that divinity cannot partake in sin. So if Jesus was to sin in any way, His divinity would be partaking in sin. Therefore He didn't really have a choice. But if you press them, the Bible says that He was tempted in all points as we are. Then they say His humanity was tempted, but not His divinity. But when they do that they are making Him into two beings, two people. Because a nature doesn't have a choice. A person has a choice. A choice comes from a consciousness and a will. You have to have them in order to make a choice. Now a person might choose according to his nature, but you have to tempt the person, not the nature.

By saying that His humanity was tempted and not His divinity, they are making Jesus into two people in one body. Or two wills in one body... and that is Gnosticism. That is **exactly** what Gnosticism did. In fact, that is what John was writing against in the book of 1 John. If you study the early church views that came in about Christ, the Gnostics say that Jesus was a man; and the Christ was this divine spirit that entered into the man Jesus at the time of His baptism by John the Baptist. The the divine spirit, the Christ, left the man Jesus when He died on the cross. They said that Jesus and the Christ were not the same being.

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But John says that Christ was flesh, not just Jesus was flesh. The two natures theory sort of merges into that Gnostic idea of who Jesus was. How can you be 100% human and 100% divine? You can't be 200% of anything. The math doesn't add up. That is a logical contradiction. When you press the Catholic Church, because they know that their logic is faulty, they say it is a "divine mystery". Well, the fact of the matter is, it doesn't make any sense. They say I have to accept that. Why do I have to accept it?

God did not give us the Bible so that we couldn't understand it. 1 Corinthians 14:33 says the God is not the author of confusion. If we don't understand something, it's our own faulty thinking. And for another thing, the Bible does not teach this theory. You cannot show it to me in the Bible. Yet another thing is that it just doesn't add up logically. So why should I accept a logical absurdity and call it God's truth?

This is also why Christianity is rejected by the Muslims and Jews. It is because of the illogical nature of this concept as well as the Doctrine of the Trinity. Yet they insist on it being the cornerstone of Christianity. It's not. Satan has spent thousands of years twisting the word of God as to cause as many as possible to fall. And many that will come under the test of their faith in these end times, shall indeed fall. They refuse to pursue the knowledge of God. They listen to seminary pastors who teach what they have been told themselves in their colleges. In Hosea 4:6, God says that His people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Hosea 4:6 NKJV My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.