

**The Nature and Emptying of Christ**  
*Wednesday Online Bible Study*  
6/24/20

**Different Views of the Nature of Jesus Christ:**

Ebionitism (late 1<sup>st</sup> century through 4<sup>th</sup> century): Jesus was not the eternal second person of the Trinity. He was adopted as the Son at his baptism. They also rejected salvation by grace.

Docetism: (began in late 1<sup>st</sup> century): Denied the humanity of Christ but affirmed his deity. His suffering on the cross and his death appeared to be real, but concluded that since Jesus was God he could not have actually suffered. Gnosticism (2<sup>nd</sup> century) is a form of Docetism as it affirmed that all matter is evil, so Jesus could not have taken on flesh.

Arian (250-336 AD): The Son of God was created by the Father and therefore not coeternal with the Father. When Jesus Christ incarnated, he was no longer fully divine nor fully human. Jehovah's Witnesses hold to this view today.

Council of Nicaea (325 AD): Affirmed Jesus was both fully God and fully man.

Apollinarius (310-390 AD): Only the body of Jesus was human. The soul of Jesus was full of his divinity.

Nestorius (381-451): The two natures, his divinity, and his humanity remained separate but worked together in the person of Jesus Christ.

Council of Chalcedon (451 AD): Affirmed the unity of the two natures of Jesus.

Monophysites (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries): Believed Jesus only had a divine nature. This was an overreaction to Nestorianism.

Council of Constantinople (680 AD): Reaffirmed the Council of Chalcedon

Adoptionism (8<sup>th</sup> century): Originated in Spain and France and taught that Jesus was only human at his birth but had a second birth at his baptism to be adopted as the Son of God.

Kenoticism (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries): Comes from the Greek word in Philippians 2:7 for "empty." The view believed that Jesus was fully human when he incarnated and that his divine nature was set aside until after his ascension back to heaven. The Holy Spirit gave him the ability to perform miracles just like the Spirit did for the apostles.

**Key Bible Verses:**

Philippians 2:6-8 – who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

John 1:1-3 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:14 – <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 8:58-59 – <sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” <sup>59</sup>So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

John 10:28-30 – <sup>28</sup>I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup>My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup>I and the Father are one.”

John 10:38 – <sup>38</sup>but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”

John 14:9 – Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

John 17:20-21 – <sup>20</sup>“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup>that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Colossians 2:9 – <sup>9</sup>For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.

Hebrews 1:1-4 – Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Revelation 21:3 – <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.