

B. Development of the Doctrine

Every systematic presentation of the doctrine of the Person of Christ must concern itself with (at least) four major issues:

(1) Was Jesus Christ truly divine? Was Christ truly God? Did Jesus have a divine nature? This is the question of the true deity of Christ.

(2) Was Jesus Christ truly human? Was Jesus truly man? Did Christ have a human nature? This is the question of the true humanity of Christ.

(3) Was there a genuine personal union of the divine and the human natures in Jesus Christ? Were the two natures really united in the one Person? This is the question of the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ.

(4) Was Jesus Christ, although both truly God and truly man, nevertheless one Person? Did the two natures constitute one Person, the God man? This is the question of the unipersonality of Christ.

We will take up these four issues in the order listed above.

1. The Deity of Christ (Note: spelled "de-ity", "di-ety"!)

a. Meaning of the term

The true deity of Christ, expressed in the creeds by the words "very God", is the first element of the doctrine of the Person of Christ. What does "true deity" mean?

The term "true deity" includes (at least) the following five ideas:

- (1) that Jesus has the nature of God, with all of the divine attributes.
- (2) that Jesus possesses all of the rights and powers of deity
- (3) that Jesus existed as the Second Person of the Trinity before the incarnation, from eternity past
- (4) that Jesus is equal to the Father and to the Spirit in wisdom, power, glory, etc.
- (5) that Jesus performed divine works

b. Scriptures pertinent to the doctrine

Matt. 8:26 27 -- "And He said to them, 'Why are you timid, you men of little faith?' Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm. And the men marveled, saying, 'What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?' "

(Note: The disciples had cause to marvel. In Psalm 107:28-29 we discover that it is the Lord who has power to do what Jesus did: "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, And He brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still, So that the waves of the sea were hushed.")

This scripture speaks to us of Christ's omnipotence.

Mark 2:8 -- "And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, 'why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?' "