

## Jesus' Two Natures: God and Man

"**Jesus Two Natures: God and Man**", Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry, accessed August 22, 2016, <https://carm.org/jesus-two-natures>

Jesus is the most important person who has ever lived since he is the Savior, God in human flesh. He is not half God and half man. He is fully divine and fully man. In other words, Jesus has two distinct natures: divine and human. Jesus is the Word who was God and was with God and was made flesh (John 1:1, 14). This means that in the single person of Jesus he has both a human and divine nature, God and man. The divine nature was not changed when the Word became flesh (John 1:1, 14). Instead, the Word was joined with humanity (Col. 2:9). Jesus' divine nature was not altered. Also, Jesus is not merely a man who "had God within Him," nor is he a man who "manifested the God principle." He is God in flesh, second person of the Trinity. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Heb. 1:3). Jesus' two natures are not "mixed together" (Eutychianism), nor are they combined into a new God-man nature (Monophysitism). They are separate yet act as a unit in the one person of Jesus. This is called the Hypostatic Union.

The following chart should help you see the two natures of Jesus "in action":

### **GOD**

He is worshiped (Matt. 2:2, 11;14:33)

He was called God (John 20:28;Heb. 1:8)

He was called Son of God (Mark 1:1)

He is prayed to (Acts 7:59)

He is sinless (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15)

He knows all things (John 21:17)

He gives eternal life (John 10:28)

All the fullness of deity dwells in Him (Col. 2:9)

### **MAN**

He worshiped the Father (John 17)

He was called man (Mark 15:39;John 19:5)

He was called Son of Man (John 9:35-37)

He prayed to the Father (John 17)

He was tempted (Matt. 4:1)

He grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52)

He died (Rom. 5:8)

He has a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39)

### *The Communicatio Idiomatum*

A doctrine that is related to the Hypostatic Union is the *communicatio idiomatum* (Latin for "communication of properties"). This is the teaching that the attributes of both the divine and human natures are ascribed to the one person of Jesus. This means that the man Jesus could lay claim to the glory He had with the Father before the world was made (John 17:5), claim that He descended from heaven (John 3:13), and also claim omnipresence (Matt. 28:20). All of these are divine qualities that are laid claim to by Jesus; therefore, the attributes of the divine properties were claimed by the person of Jesus.

One of the most common errors that non-Christian cults make is not understanding the two natures of Christ. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses focus on Jesus' humanity and ignore His divinity. They repeatedly quote verses dealing with Jesus as a man and try to set them against Scripture showing that Jesus is also divine. On the other hand, the Christian Scientists do the reverse. They focus on the Scriptures showing Jesus' divinity to the extent of denying His true humanity.

For a proper understanding of Jesus and, therefore, all other doctrines that relate to Him, His two natures must be properly understood and defined. Jesus is one person with two natures. This is why He would grow in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52) and yet know all things (John 21:17). He is the Divine Word that became flesh (John 1:1, 14).

The Bible is about Jesus (John 5:39). The prophets prophesied about Him (Acts 10:43). The Father bore witness of Him (John 5:37; 8:18). The Holy Spirit bore witness of Him (John 15:26). The works Jesus did bore witness of Him (John 5:36; 10:25). The multitudes bore witness of Him (John 12:17). And, Jesus bore witness of Himself (John 14:6; 18:6).

Other verses to consider when examining His deity are John 10:30-33; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 1:6-8; and 2 Pet. 1:1.

1 Tim. 2:5 says, "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Right now, there is a man in heaven on the throne of God. He is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). He is our Savior (Titus 2:13). He is our Lord (Rom. 10:9-10). He is Jesus.

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In addition to the above CARM article, let's look at a few questions people have had about who Jesus Christ is as we consider the most important question to be answered: who is Jesus Christ?

1. Some claim that since God cannot die and Jesus died, then Jesus can't be God. It is true that God cannot die. It is also true that man can die. But we see that Jesus has two natures, not one. It was the human part of Jesus that died on the cross, not the divine. But, because He is both God and man in one person, and because He was sinless, His sacrifice is sufficient to cover the sins of the world.

2. Some question that if Jesus is God, then why did He say the Father was greater than He. (John 14:23)

Jesus said this not because He was not God, but because He was also a man and as a man He was in a lower position. He was "...*made for a little while lower than the angels...*" (Hebrews 2:9). Also in Philippians 2:5-8, it says that Jesus "*emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men...*"

Because of Jesus' two natures, He was merely acknowledging that He was also man. He had added to Himself human nature (Colossians 2:9). He became a man to die for people.

Jesus subjected Himself to the laws of God so that He might redeem those who were under the law; namely, sinners. (Galatians 4:4-5)

3. Some ask, if Jesus is God, then whom did He pray to?

Again, this is answered by understanding Jesus' two natures: the doctrine of the incarnation is that Jesus, who is the second person of the Trinity, added to Himself human nature and became a man.

Thus, as a man, Jesus needed to pray. When He was praying He was not praying to Himself, but to God the Father.

4. Some question Jesus being God because He did not know the time of His return. (Matthew 24:35-36)

As a man, Jesus cooperated with the limitations of being a man. That is why we have verses like Luke 2:52 that says, "*Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*"

Therefore, it is not a denial of being God, but a confirmation of Him being man. Before Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, He said the Father alone knew the day and hour of His return. It wasn't until after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection that omniscience (being all knowing) is attributed to Jesus.