

JESUS IS LORD

Lk 24:34; Ex 3:15; Is 41:4; Jn 17:21-22; Jn 8:58; Acts 2:36;
Col 1:15-16; Heb 1:1-3; Rev 17:14 & 19:16

I. EARLY CREEDS AFFIRM

- A. *Ichthys* (fish symbol): “*Iesous Christos, Theou Yios, Soter*—“Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior”
- B. “Jesus Is Lord, and He Is Risen” (Lk 24:34—disciples’ Emmaus Road realization)
- C. Nicene Creed: “We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father as only begotten, that is, from the essence [reality] of the Father, [*ek tes ousias tou patros*], God from God, light from Light, true God of true God, begotten not created [*poiethenta*], of the same essence [reality] as the Father [*homousion to patri*], through whom all things came into being, both in heaven and in earth; Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, becoming human [*enanthropesanta*]. He suffered and the third day he rose, and ascended into the heavens. And he will come to judge both the living and the dead” (in *Creeds of the Churches*, ed. John H. Leith).

II. N.T. PROCLAIMS

- A. Jesus Said: “. . . that they may all be one; even as Thou Father *art* in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one” (Jn 17:21-22, *NASB*).
- B. Jesus Did:
 1. Miracles (especially nature miracles—water into wine; calming lake, feeding 5,000)
 2. Forgave sins
- C. Apostles Testified:
 1. John: “. . . the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14); “And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written: ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS’” (Rev 19:16, *NASB*).
 2. Peter: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36, *NASB*).
 3. Paul: “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible. . . . All things were created through Him and for him” (Col 1:15-16).
 4. Paul (or Whomever?): “God . . . has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power . . . sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:1-3).

III. AS LORD, JESUS CHRIST CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH (AND thus EQUAL TO) HIS FATHER (LORD/JEHOVAH)

- A. Sharing **Aseity** (*a se*=just is, both *ens* (nature—i.e. Pastor Dieter is a human being with a distinct genetic code) and *esse* (being—i.e. actually came to being ca. 1970 A.D.)
 1. Jesus declared: “I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent me” (Jn 8:42); Still more, He said: “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am” (Jn 8:58, *NASB*). **N.B.:** the same Greek phrase—*ego eimi*—used in LXX translation for Ex. 3:14, where God revealed Himself as “I AM” and this verse in John!
 2. Paul, invoking Greek Natural Theology, reminded the Athenians that “in Him [God] we live and move and exist [have our being], as even some of your own poets have said” (Acts 17:28)
- B. Equally **Absolute**
 1. Reality: Primal Being; *Das Ursprung*
 2. First Cause: Singular Source of all that is
 3. Ultimate Standard: preeminently the great Transcendentals: Truth; Beauty; Goodness

KARL ADAM: *SON OF GOD* and *CHRIST OF FAITH*

“Dostoevsky, in the draft for his novel *The Possessed*,” said Karl Adam, “makes his hero declare that the most pressing question in the problem of faith is ‘whether a man, as a civilized being, as a European, can believe at all, believe that is in the divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, for therein rests, strictly speaking, the whole of faith’” (*The Son of God*, p. 9). He insists that Christians believe in “the ‘dogmatic’ Christ, the ‘God-man who lives and works in continuous existence. He has been the great reality of history, the turn of a new era, the beginning of a new Man’” (*Son*, p. 20). Adam insists Jesus is fully God, fully man, for whenever “his human or divine nature is exclusively or falsely stressed, the mystery of the Redemption is misrepresented and therewith the whole of Christian devotion is distorted and misdirected” (*Son*, p. 12).

Above all, “Christianity is the good tidings of Christ. *Christianity is Christ*” (*The Christ of Faith*, p. 17). He alone clearly reveals God to us, and He “is our Redeemer . . . because he is God-man, the new Adam” (*Son*, p. 16). This we believe because He called Himself “the Son,” thus underscoring “his consciousness of being the Messiah, the final, holiest word that he has to say to us” (*Christ*, p. 153). Sharing the very Being of His Father, the Son alone knows and reveals Him to us. “This is the deepest meaning of his mission and of his message, and of Christianity as a whole: by way of the Son to the Father” (*Christ*, p. 158). He was not, as some books and sermons suggest, crucified because he espoused non-violence and peace, brotherhood and love. He was crucified because the Jews accused him of blasphemy, because he dared to say God was His Father! Thus we see in Him not the “progressive transfiguration and divinization of a mere man,” but “a Being who is perfect and complete Man and whose mystery lies in the fact that in this his complete and simple human nature he is essentially One with God. In this paradox of a complete, real human Being who is yet the Son of God the true kernel of the Christian faith consists” (*Son*, p. 67). Importantly, “In his person eternity breaks through into time, the superhistorical into the level of history, the Divine into the human” (*Son*, p. 136).

We encounter the Son of God in the canonical Gospels, wherein Christ is revealed, miraculously fulfilling Old Testament truth and prophecy: “He is himself the *Jahve* of the Old Testament. Thus he always interprets the prophesies as if he himself were in place of *Jahve*” (*Christ*, p. 77). Jesus clearly knew He was the Son of God! He forgave sins and worked miracles and He spoke as one with divine authority. The Evangelists writing the Gospels meticulously recorded the “reminiscences of Jesus preserved by the first generation of Christians” (*Son*, p. 57) and deliberately used the title “‘Son of God’ in the true strictly metaphysical sense” (*Christ*, p. 80). In St John’s Gospel, we find “the most *consummate*” and definitive portrait of Christ, and John, above all, managed to balance “the pre-existent and exalted Jesus” with the “historical Jesus” who walked and talked as a man like us.

This high Christology was sustained by the Early Church, as is evident in the book of Acts and Pauline epistles. The first generation of Christians “made Jesus the object of religious veneration, of a cult. They recognized him to be the Lord, and wrought signs and wonders in his name” (*Christ*, p. 100). Amazingly, within days of the Resurrection, Jesus’ followers boldly acknowledged His “divinity—and a divinity not in the Hellenistic but in the Jewish sense. He alone is the manifestation of God, the all-powerful and all-holy One. Here was the terrible new and incredible thing in the early Christian proclamation of God, that the one omnipotent God had become man” (*Christ*, p. 107). Paul too declared that Christ was fully God, literally “the image of the invisible God,” and his boldest assertion of “this divine mystery of Christ,” says Adam, “is the name of ‘*Kyrios*.’ In the entire Judaic literary tradition before Paul, this name never once occurs as a description of the *Messias*. It is reserved for God alone” (*Christ*, p. 189). Yet *Kyrios* (*Lord*) became the word Christians routinely used when referring to the Christ.

And this Lord was risen indeed! The apostles’ “*Kyrie*” was the first response of their new faith to the Easter message” (*Son*, p. 190). As the Incarnate God-man, while on earth Jesus enjoyed certain necessary “perfections.” “The figure of Jesus stands before us in its intellectual, ethical, and religious aspects as something entirely new” (*Son*, p. 124). Ethically, He was absolutely sinless. Christ was (unlike us) free from all sin. He assumed our *original* nature, sinless before Adam’s fall, and He simply “had no inclination to sin” (*Christ*, p. 278). He was also perfect intellectually. Assuming human nature, the divine Word so suffused the mind of Jesus that He thought perfectly, knowing and understanding in ways appropriate to Adam. In Him the natural and supernatural realms interweave in mysterious ways, so we must never deny the fully human aspects of His development and thought, but we cannot evade the fact that no mere man ever saw and thought and taught as He did.