

10-2017

Was Jesus Christ Truly a Human Being in the Fullest Sense of the Word?

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Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "Was Jesus Christ Truly a Human Being in the Fullest Sense of the Word?" (2017). *The Second Person File*. 34.
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Was Jesus Christ truly a human being in the fullest sense of the word?

He was indeed, as seen by the following:

- **The Old Testament predicted that the Messiah would be a man.**

- A. As predicted by Isaiah:

“As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men” (Isa. 52:14).

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isa. 53:3).

- B. As predicted by Daniel:

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13, 14).

- **Jesus referred to Himself as a man.**

“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham do” (John 8:40).

Here it is noted that Jesus’ favorite name for Himself was “the son of man” as testified by the following:

“And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matt. 8:20).

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” (Matt. 16:13).

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Matt. 25:31).

- **Jesus was looked upon by both friends and foes as man.**

- A. Testimony of His friends:

- 1. The disciples

“But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!” (Matt. 8:27).

- 2. The man born blind

“Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight” (John 9:10, 11).

B. Testimony of His foes:

“Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them” (John 9:16).

“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10:31-33).

“Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!” (John 19:5).

- **Jesus experienced all the sinless limitations, traits, and characteristics of humanity.**

A. Physical traits:

1. His body was conceived within His mother’s womb.

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS” (Luke 1:31).

“But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 1:20).

2. He was born.

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).

3. He lived within that body while on earth.

“For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial” (Matt. 26:12).

4. He possessed flesh and blood.

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14).

5. He grew.

“And the child grew ...” (Luke 2:40).

“And Jesus increased in ... stature ...” (Luke 2:52).

6. He hungered.

“And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” (Matt. 4:2).

"Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered" (Matt. 21:18).

7. He thirsted.

"There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, 'Give me to drink'" (John 4:7).

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst" (John 19:28).

8. He was weary.

"Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour" (John 4:6).

9. He slept.

"And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep" (Matt. 8:24).

10. He sweat drops as of blood.

"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

11. He suffered.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin" (1 Peter 4:1).

12. He bled.

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34).

13. He died.

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (Matt. 27:50).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3).

B. Mental traits:

"And the child (was) filled with wisdom ..." (Luke 2:40).

"And Jesus increased in wisdom ..." (Luke 2:52).

"And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers" (Luke 2:46, 47).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

C. Emotional traits:

1. He loved.

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:21).

"Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3).

"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23).

2. He displayed compassion.

(1) Upon a crowd of 5000 (Matt. 14:14)

(2) Upon a crowd of 4000 (Matt. 15:32)

(3) Upon two blind men (Matt. 20:34)

(4) Upon a leper (Mark 1:41)

(5) Upon a maniac (Mark 5:8)

(6) Upon a widow (Luke 7:13)

3. He was angered and grieved.

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mark 3:5).

4. He wept.

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it" (Luke 19:41).

5. He experienced joy.

"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Luke 10:21).

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

6. He was troubled.

"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled" (John 11:33).

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour" (John 12:27).

"When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (John 13:21).

“And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch” (Mark 14:33, 34).

7. He experienced desire.

“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15).

- **Spiritual traits**

A. He prayed.

“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee” (John 17:1).

“And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:41, 42).

B. He was tempted.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matt. 4:1).

“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Heb. 2:18).

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

In conclusion, note the words of theologian Wayne Grudem:

People Near Jesus Saw Him As Only a Man: Matthew reports an amazing incident in the middle of Jesus’ ministry. Even though Jesus had taught throughout all Galilee, *“healing every disease and every infirmity among the people,”* so that *“great crowds followed him”* (Matt. 4:23-25), when he came to his own village of Nazareth, the people who had known him for many years did not receive him:

And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?” And they took offense at him ... And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief (Matt. 13:53-58).

This passage indicates that those people who knew Jesus best, the neighbors with whom he had lived and worked for thirty years, saw him as no more than an ordinary man—a good man. No doubt, fair and kind and truthful, but certainly not a prophet of God who could work miracles and certainly not God himself in the flesh. Although in the following sections we will see how Jesus was fully divine in every way—was truly God and man in one person—we must still recognize the full force of a passage like this. For the first thirty years of his life Jesus lived a human life that was so ordinary that the people of Nazareth who knew him best were amazed that he could teach with authority and work miracles. They knew him. He was one of them. He was “*the carpenter’s son*” (Matt. 13:55), and he was himself “*the carpenter*” (Mark 6:3), so ordinary that they could ask, “*Where then did this man get all this?*” (Matt. 13:56). And John tells us, “*Even his brothers did not believe in him*” (John 7:5).

Was Jesus fully man? He was so fully human that even those who lived and worked with him for thirty years, even those brothers who grew up in his own household, did not realize that he was anything more than another very good human being. They apparently had no idea that he was God come in the flesh. (*Systematic Theology*, Zondervan Publishers, 1994, pp. 534, 535)