

The Person of the Son

I. Deity of Jesus

A. Biblical Support

Jesus claimed many of the prerogatives of God: he would send angels (Matt. 13:41), forgive sins (Mark 2:5), and judge the world (Matt. 25:31-46). He claimed to be one with the Father (John 10:30) and to exist before Abraham (John 8:58, cf. Ex. 3:14-15). The statement “I am” appears throughout John (e.g., “I am the good shepherd, the door, the way, truth, and the life”). John wrote his gospel to prove Jesus is “the Messiah, the Son of God” (John 20:31). At his trial Jesus claimed to be God (John 19:7, Matt. 26:63). His virginal conception, miracles, transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension also provide support for his deity. Also see Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:19; 2:9; Revelation 22:13.

B. Heresies

1. Arianism:

Arius’ confession of faith (327): “We believe in one God the Father Almighty: and in the Lord Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, who was begotten of him before all ages, God the Word through whom all things were made, both those which are in the heavens and those upon the earth; who descended, and took flesh, and suffered, and rose again, ascended into the heavens, and is coming again to judge living and dead.”

Missing *homoousios* (Father and Son are identical essence).

2. Adoptionism: Jesus was a man who earned the title of God.

a. Paul of Samosata taught something similar (200-75). His “dynamic monarchianism” said Jesus was a mere human who was divinized by the Logos’ impersonal, rational power and thus made worthy of the title God.

b. Liberalism: Jesus is the moral but not the metaphysical Son of God (e.g. Schleiermacher, H. Richard Niebuhr)

II. Humanity of Jesus

A. Biblical Support

Jesus was human, though not merely human. Luke 2:40, 52: he grew in wisdom with God and man. Jesus frequently asked questions apparently because he did not know the answers (Mark 9:21, 13:32). Luke 24:36-43: even the resurrected Christ remained fully human.

B. Heresies

1. Docetism/Gnosticism/Marcion

John 1:14—"the Word became flesh"

2. Apollinarianism

Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epistle 101*: "what he has not assumed he has not healed."

III. Deity and Humanity in One Person

A. Biblical Data

The Gospels always present Jesus as a unified subject. They never suggest any signs of insanity or multi-personality dissociative disorder.

B. Jesus Is One Person: Council of Ephesus vs. Nestorius (431)

Hypostatic union: the divine Son acquired a human nature but not a human person.

C. Jesus Has Two Full Natures: Council of Chalcedon vs. Eutyches (451)

Four fences of Chalcedon: Jesus' two natures are "without confusion, without change (vs. Eutyches), without division, without separation (vs. Nestorius)."

D. Attempts at Explaining the Incarnation

1. Kenosis theory

2. Two minds theory. See Thomas Morris, "God Incarnate and Triune," in *Our Idea of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991): 159-74.

E. Lutheran vs. Reformed

1. Lutheran: *communicatio idiomatum*

2. Reformed: *extra calvinisticum*

The Work of the Son

I. Major Theories of the Atonement

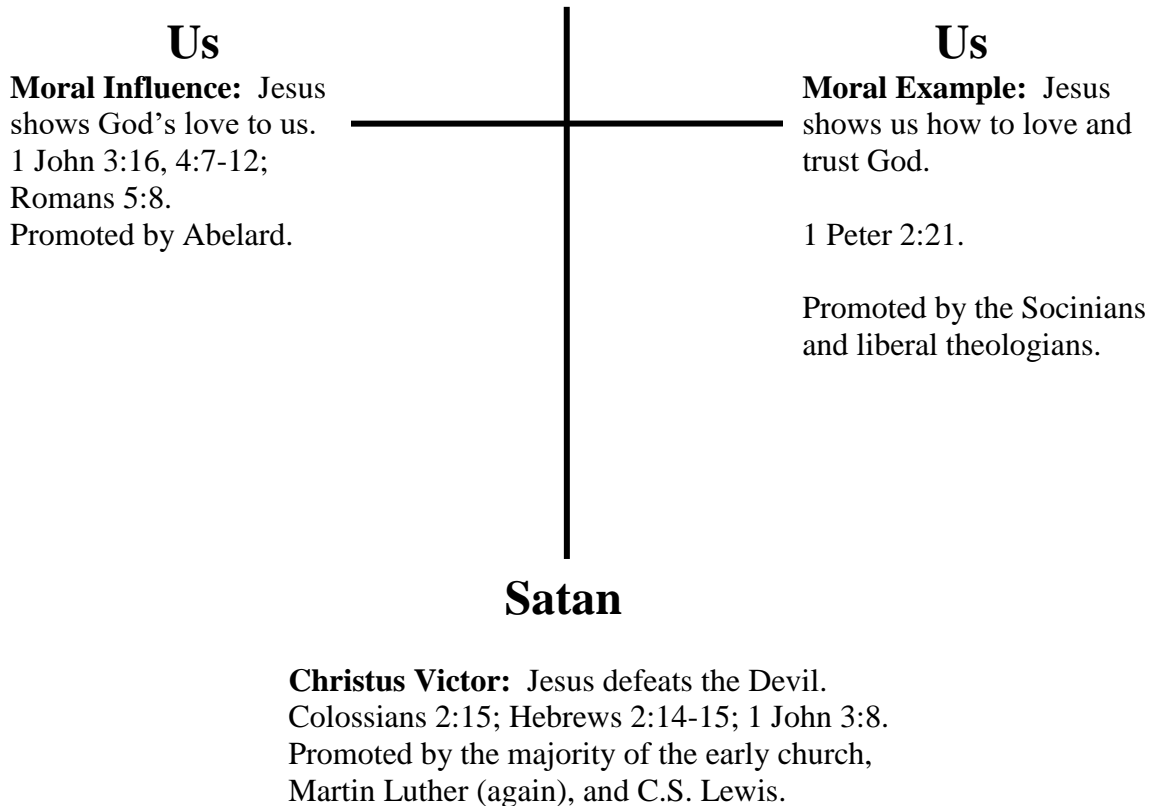
Who is the Target of the Cross?

God

Penal Substitution: Jesus satisfies God's wrath.

Romans 3:25-26; Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21,
1 John 2:2, 4:10.

Promoted by (Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*) John Calvin,
Charles Hodge, Martin Luther and nearly all
evangelical Christians.



II. Response to Accusations of Divine Child Abuse

A. God sacrifices himself rather than someone else (the Trinity is one)

B. God's loving and righteous nature demands payment for sin

1. God's nature: self-giving love → righteousness → life
2. The opposite: selfishness → sin → death

III. The Life of Christ

A. Jesus' life, not only his death, is redemptive.

1. Active, preceptive righteousness (life) and Passive, penal righteousness (death)
2. Irenaeus' recapitulation theory (2nd century)

Romans 5:12-21—first and second Adam

Re (new) + capit (head) + ulation (ship) = “new headship.”

Christ recapitulates Adam's life. Adam fell to death because of a tree and a foolish virgin (Eve), while Christ rises to life through a tree (cross) and a virgin (Mary).

B. Three offices of Christ

1. Prophet: because we must learn the truth. We need knowledge. Jesus is the Messiah (Matthew).
2. Priest: because we must have our guilt removed and God's wrath satisfied. We need righteousness. Jesus is the Suffering Servant (Isaiah).
3. King: because we must obey the creation mandates. God must rule over the earth through mankind. We need power and protection. Jesus is the Son of Man (Daniel).

IV. The Resurrection of Christ

Necessary for our forgiveness (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:17)

V. The Ascension of Christ