

Remnant Life Church  
October 26, 2014  
“Jesus – God or Man?”  
Luke 3:17-26

- Who was Jesus?
  - The learning and history channels have spent countless amounts of money and dedicated many programs to answering that question – poorly
  - Scholars have debated it since they last saw Jesus in human form – to multiple conclusions
  - Pastors preach this topic often in an effort to bring some measure of clarity to the question – with varying measures of success
  - This morning we look at one small part of that question
    - Was Jesus a man or was He God? Or was He both?
    - Most here this morning would say that you have no doubt at all who Jesus is - but why?
      - Because it is what you have grown up being told?
      - Or because you yourself have come to the conviction of that place in your own heart and mind?
    - And if He was both how can we come to that conclusion?
- Christology – the study of Jesus
  - Just as Theology is the study of God (Theos – Greek for God)
  - Christology is studying the person and work of Jesus
    - But that in and of itself raises questions
    - Do we know Jesus first by His works which builds our faith?
    - Or do we know Him first through history which then leads us to examine His works as a real person?
  - To simply reply both without understanding the differences and the reasons why denies us a wonderful opportunity to grow as a Christian
- One major issue we have to deal with when doing any study of the nature of God or Jesus is that we do it from the foundation of a sinful or flesh nature
  - That nature has been covered by the spirit nature when we accept Jesus into our lives but it does not remove it
    - It is why Paul writes that we continue to struggle with those two (**Rom 7:19**)
    - Our sinful nature is trying to comprehend a perfect, sinless God
    - This is why we must have at the core of any and all of our questions – FAITH
- The search for the historical Jesus is somewhat frustrated by a lack of details of His life for most of the first 30 years
  - All we really have is the record of His birth and age 12

- Adolf von Harnack (German theologian of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century) wrote what many liberal scholars consider the definitive work of the Jesus of history
    - But he dismisses the miraculous divinity of Jesus as naturally explainable and simply unreliable when that explanation does not fit
  - Albert Schweitzer in his *Quest for the Historical Jesus* believes that Harnack's conclusions were based on his own presuppositions and beliefs as opposed to his unbiased research
- Two schools of thought in viewing Jesus
    1. Christology from Above –
      - a. This was the method of belief of the earliest churches
      - b. They did not require proof of Jesus' physical life as it had just ended within that last few hundred years and the account of His life was fully accepted (as we regard George Washington or Benjamin Franklin today)
      - c. This focus is not on the man but rather the works of Jesus
        - i. The knowledge of His divinity by what He did demonstrated who He was
        - ii. When the Pharisees questioned Him He pointed them to what He was doing ([Luke 5:17-25](#))
        - iii. When JTB disciples came to Him and questioned His identity He told them to report what they had seen Him do ([Luke 7:20-22](#))
    2. Christology from Below
      - a. Focuses on the historical life of the man
      - b. It desires to prove the existence of the man Jesus but not always in conjunction with the deity of Jesus
      - c. Those who focus solely on this aspect of His life often cannot accept Him as being God because their faith is limited to the tangible
      - d. Their claim is that there must be a connection of who Jesus claimed to be with a validation by God – they claim that there must be proof!
        - i. We have that proof – it is in the resurrection of Jesus
        - ii. The empty tomb and His appearances to over 500 people prior to His ascension is the validity that the mind alone seeks
        - iii. Can we see Jesus for who He is and not merely who we think He is?
      - e. I believe the answer is yes when we recognize that Jesus was both/and not either/or.
    3. Both/And
      - a. Today we must believe in and hold to both aspects of who Jesus was and is
      - b. His life gives hope and assurances in the daily relationship we have with Him
        - i. He was a man who was born in 3 BCE and died in 30 AD
          - But He lived, sent by the Father, to provide a way for us to be reconciled back to the Father by the forgiveness of our sins

- ii. He walked the earth, ate food, got tired, wept, and even frustrated
    - But He lived a perfect life only doing what His Father told Him to do including the demonstrations of who He was
  - iii. He allowed Himself to be killed on the cross for our sins
    - He was omnipotent and could have changed the course of what was happening with just a thought
    - “He could have called 10,000 angels...”
      - i. Ray Overholt - 1958
- Today Jesus is both/and - everything to and for us
  - He knows the limitations of our minds and bodies having lived within those same limitations so we can be assured that His comfort is genuine – He knows what we need in our times of need
  - He knows the frailty of our faith because He experienced it not just with those who opposed Him but those who were closest to Him
    - Just as He did in that day, He still loves us
- Taking this knowledge of Jesus into the depths of our hearts and minds forces doubt to leave.
- Without doubt fear has no place to grow in our lives
- Without fear we can do anything and everything to the glory of God in and through His perfect will for our lives
  - Change in our relationships
  - Health – of body and mind
  - Peace
  - Boldness
- That is the Christian who makes a difference wherever he/she goes
  - Not because of us and what we are
  - But because we know without a shadow of any doubt who Jesus is
  - **Isaiah 40:31** - *those who hope (wait; expect) in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*