

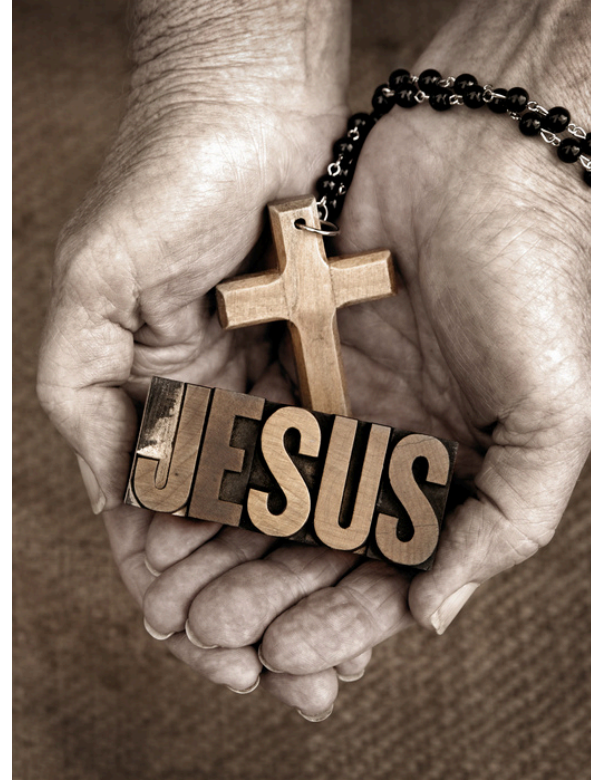
A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a brown jacket over a sweater and shirt, stands in a classroom. He is pointing his right index finger towards the text on a green chalkboard. The chalkboard has the title 'BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101' written on it in a white, serif font. The background shows a window with multiple panes on the left and wooden chairs in the foreground.

BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101

LESSON 3: WE BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST...

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ...

Who is Jesus Christ? If you had to describe Jesus in one sentence, what would you say?



We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ...

Jesus Christ

- Jesus once asked His apostles, “Who do people say I am? (Matthew 16:13)”
- **Ask yourself:** Who is Jesus according to the Bible? Who is He to me?



Did Jesus exist??

- **Nearly every scholar and historian agrees that Jesus of Nazareth was a real historical figure.** Bart Ehrman, a famous atheist scholar who often opposes Christianity, strongly defends the historical Jesus, saying, “Of the thousands of early Christianity scholars who do teach at such schools, none of them, to my knowledge, has any doubts that Jesus existed.”



Extra-Biblical sources for Jesus

- **Josephus - Testimonium Flavianum (Antiquities 18.63–64) (94 AD)** “Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man. For he was a doer of startling deeds, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. And he gained a following both among many Jews and many of Greek origin. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”
- **Tacitus – Annals 15.44 (116 AD)** “Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome.”



Extra-Biblical sources for Jesus

- **Pliny the Younger – Letters to Trajan 10.96 (112 AD)** “They [the Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a fixed day before dawn and singing a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not to falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so.” (This text highlights the worship of Christ as God dating back to the second century)



Why isn't there more?

- **Bart Ehrman** says: "If an important Roman aristocratic ruler of a major province [Pontius Pilate] is not mentioned any more than that in the Greek and Roman writings, what are the chances that a lower-class Jewish teacher (which Jesus must have been, as everyone who thinks he lived agrees) would be mentioned in them? Almost none" (45).
- "[F]rom Roman Palestine of the entire first century we have precisely one, and only one, author of literary texts whose works have survived... That one author is Josephus (who wrote about Jesus)."
- Most people were illiterate and couldn't read or write; that was a luxury and wasn't widespread. Stories would've been transmitted orally.



What does the Bible say? (OT)

- **Many passages predict the coming of the Messiah (Christ - anointed one)**
- **Genesis 3:** God says to Adam and Eve that a human being will one day crush the head of the serpent (Satan) and defeat him and sin forever.
- **King David:** God promises King David that one of his descendants will sit on the throne forever (2 Samuel 7:12–13).
- **Isaiah:** Prophesied a Messiah who would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), God almighty and eternal ruler (9:6–7), and a suffering servant who would heal the world by His wounds (53, cf. Psalm 22)
- **Plus many more!**



Christophanies

- **Jesus appears pre-incarnation multiple times in the OT, often called the “Angel of the LORD” (These appearances are called Christophanies)**
- **Examples:**
 - *The burning bush (Exodus 3:2–6, cf John 8:58)*
 - *Joshua meets the Commander of the Lord’s Army (Joshua 5:13–15, cf Revelation 19:11–16)*
 - *The Angel of the LORD with Gideon and Manoah (Judges 6 & 13, cf John 14:9)*
- These show us that Jesus was present from the beginning, even before His incarnation



What did Jesus do?

- **In Luke 1, the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, telling her she will give birth to a son named Jesus, which means 'God saves'. Jesus' being born of a virgin is important for three reasons:**
 - It fulfills Isaiah's prophecy that the Messiah would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7).
 - Every person who is born of man inherits a sinful, corrupted nature. But Jesus' birth by the Holy Spirit means that He could not be conceived in sin. [Catholics, Orthodox, and Lutherans/some Calvinists take this one step further, saying Mary was also preserved from sin, so Jesus had no sinful origin].
 - It shows that Jesus is fully God from God. Jesus being born of the Holy Spirit shows that He is fully God. His birth from Mary shows that He is fully human.



Jesus' threefold ministry

- **Prophet:** Jesus is the Word of God who speaks to the people directly with God's law. He fulfills it perfectly.
- **Priest:** He offers the greatest sacrifice for sins: Himself. OT sacrifices were temporary and symbolic; Christ's sacrifice is eternal.
- **King:** Jesus is the conquering King who is victorious over sin and death, and is seated at the right hand of God.





The hypostatic union

- **Hypostatic Union: Jesus is one person with two natures: fully human and fully God.** These two natures are distinct; we cannot combine the natures (Jesus isn't half god, half man or a demigod), nor can we separate them (Jesus isn't two people). John 1:14 says that the Word, who is God, became flesh, and Colossians 2:9 says, "For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily."



The hypostatic union

- **Salvation depends on it:**
 - Only fully human → could truly represent us and die in our place.
 - Only fully God → could bear infinite punishment and offer perfect righteousness.
- This is why God's Word says in 1 Timothy 2:5 – “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”



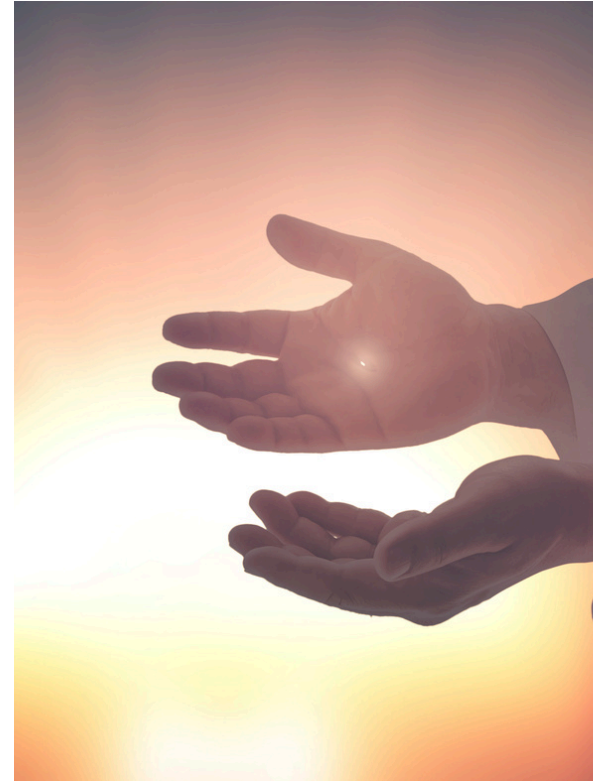
The hypostatic union

- **It's Biblical:**
 - **Jesus' divinity:** John 1:1, John 20:28, Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 1:3, Titus 2:13, etc.
 - **Jesus' humanity:** John 1:14, Hebrews 2:14, Luke 2:7, Matthew 4:2, John 19:28, etc.
 - **The Hypostatic Union:** Philippians 2:6–7, Colossians 1:19, 1 Timothy 2:5, John 1:14, 18, Hebrews 4:15
- Jesus' two natures also explain His human limitations (tiredness, hunger, thirst) and His divine power (calming seas, healing the sick, knowing the future, etc)



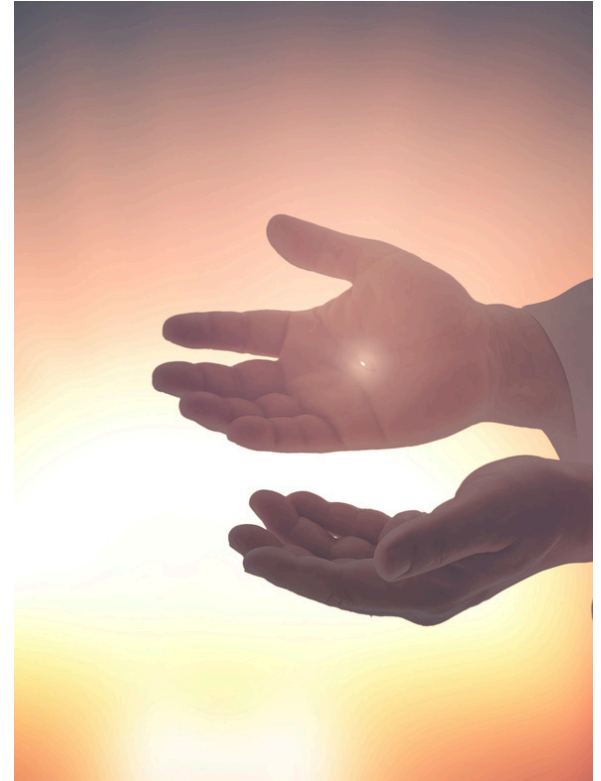
Christological Heresies (YA)

- **Adoptionism** (Jesus became God, typically at His baptism) - declared a heresy at the Council of Frankfurt in 794. Jesus was fully God from the beginning; to “become” God means He was never eternal, meaning He was never God. (John 1:1, Colossians 2:9)
- **Apollinarianism** (Jesus had a divine mind in a human body, with no human mind - declared a heresy at the First Council of Constantinople in 381). To deny that Jesus had a human mind means He was not fully human. If that was the case, He wouldn’t be able to truly represent us as a man. (Hebrews 4:15)
- **Nestorianism** (Jesus was two separate persons: human and divine) - was declared a heresy at the Council of Ephesus in 431. This splits Jesus’ one-person work of salvation as the God-man and inaccurately portrays Jesus. (John 1:14).



Christological Heresies (YA)

- **Monophysitism** (Jesus had one nature that was both divine and human) - declared a heresy at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Denies the full humanity and divinity of Christ; His divine nature would have overshadowed the human attributes.
- **Monothelitism** (Jesus had one will that was both human and divine) - declared a heresy at the Third Council of Constantinople in 681. Denies His true human will, which is necessary for real obedience and representation of humanity.
- **Docetism** (Jesus only appeared to be human) - not formally condemned at an ecumenical council, but condemned implicitly by multiple church fathers, councils, and 2 John.
- **Arianism** (Jesus was divine but created by God) - condemned as heresy at the Council of Nicaea in 325. If Jesus were created, He wouldn't be God. (John 1:1-3).



We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ...

How will you respond?

- When God created the world, it was perfect. But mankind chose to rebel against Him, and sin entered our world, corrupting every facet of it. But God promised Adam and Eve that someday, a Saviour would come, defeating Satan and sin, and restoring creation to its original state.
- **That Saviour is Jesus Christ.** By faith in Him alone, by His grace alone, you can be saved if you repent and place your faith in Him.
- **Will you accept Him as Lord and Saviour?**



Additional Resources

- Glorifying and Enjoying God: William Boekestein, Jonathan Landry Cruse, Andrew J. Miller
- To be a Christian
- Christian Beliefs: Wayne Grudem
- -The Nicene Creed
- -Anathasian Creed
- -1689 LBC (Chapter 8)
- -Westminster Catechism
- -Baptist Faith and Message
- -Bart Ehrman on the historical Jesus: 1 / 2

