

CHRIST THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Colossians 1:15-20

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- Has anyone ever told you that the Christians invented the idea that Jesus was God as well as man? How did you respond? How would you respond if someone said that to you today?
- How is learning about church history beneficial to us? Do you think it's important to know how the church came to the beliefs it professes today?

When we find something difficult to believe, it isn't always our first instinct to accept 'the mystery.' Much of the Christian faith requires some acceptance of mystery, but that doesn't mean we accept things without thoughtful reflection. Early in the Church's history, thoughtful Christian leaders spent much time debating the mysteries around the person of Jesus Christ. Learning about some of the heretical ways people have tried to explain Jesus in the past, can help us recognize these unorthodox variations in today's context. And, as always, we will dig into a scripture passage to unpack the orthodox understanding that Jesus Christ was, is, and always will be fully God and fully man. This same passage tells us about the work of Jesus, that he came to bring salvation and reconcile us with God the Father.

Listen: [*Christ Throughout History*](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- What has convinced you that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and our Savior?
- In segment 2, while discussing Jesus Christ's work of reconciliation with hosts Dave Bast and Scott Hoezee, Han-Luen Kantzer Koline says, "what Jesus Christ did in his death and resurrection—so scandalous—dying on a cross—is actually in perfect keeping with the loving way that God has been relating to creation all along." Spend some time identifying other stories in the Bible that demonstrates this loving way God relates to his people. Can you identify experiences from your life? What do these examples teach you about reconciliation? What does it show you about the person of Jesus Christ and the character of God?
- Why do you think we feel the need to explain the mystery of how Jesus can be both the fullness of God and fully, completely human? In what ways is this good? What risks accompany these efforts?
- Arianism, Modalism, Docetism, Apollinarianism are some of the heretical teachings about Christ we've discussed in this series. Knowing even just a little bit about them can help you recognize their presence in today's culture. Where have you seen or heard variations of these teachings today?
 - Arianism - says Jesus is just a very special human being, God's greatest creation, but therefore

created by God and not of the same substance as God.

- Modalism - says God is one person with three roles. The Trinity is God's 3 roles, like a human might be one person with three roles: a parent, spouse, and employee.
- Docetism - said Jesus Christ was only God and just looked human, or his humanity was a fake act
- Apollinarianism: posited Jesus Christ was God in the shell of a human body

Related Passages

- **John 14:8-11**
- **Acts 17:24-31**
- **Hebrews 1:1-4**
- **John 3:16-18**
- **Philippians 2:1-11**

Conclusion

Read the [Athanasian Creed](#). Does it bring up any questions for you? Write them down and ask your pastor for clarification. Are there parts that resonate with you? Why? Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the church fathers who did this heavy theological lifting that our spiritual lives continue to benefit from. Seek the Holy Spirit's help to make you comfortable with mystery even as you study explanations. May this study bless you by bringing you closer to him and deeper in your faith.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/christ-throughout-history>

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