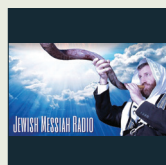
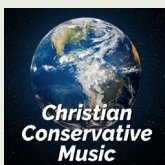


# THE NATURE OF CHRIST

**T**his mysterious subject is controversial among Christians, yet the Bible states just the opposite “Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh ....” (1 Timothy 3:16).



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# NO CONTROVERSY

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*“Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness,  
God was manifest in the flesh.” (1 Timothy 3:16)*

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Let us examine why there is so much controversy over the Nature of Christ. It can be summed up in one word – OVERCOMING.

If Christ is of a different nature than you and I, then we really have an impossible sin problem. If we can't overcome temptations in sinful flesh, there's the need for the Confessional booth, and it's a steady parade of sin / confess / repent. There is no hope of victorious living, albeit for a fleeting moment, till we sin once again. Or as the famous song goes, “I'm only human ...”

But is this what God wants for us? Think of how unrealistic this scenario is, as found in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Seven times Christ admonishes us to overcome just as He overcame, yet if He came in a sinless flesh much superior to ours, what kind of unfair command to us is that? In other words, Jesus dared not come in our flesh because He knew, that even He would have yielded to the temptations common to mankind. The crux of the matter - sinning men prefer that Christ came to us in sinless flesh, which then excuses our sinning as a never ending way of life.

Is a life of constant sinning and repenting a witness to non-believers? One time I met a man who was complaining the people in his apartment building were not open to the gospel. I looked around and saw cigarette ashtrays everywhere. I asked him if anybody else in the complex was a smoker. He replied, “Almost everyone.” I said, “There's your problem, they are looking at you thinking he's got the Bible, prayers, and the Holy Spirit and he can't overcome tobacco either, so I don't need what he's got.” A powerless Gospel achieves meek results.

The controversy is in our own minds. If Christ took upon His holiness a sinless nature such as Adam possessed before the Fall, then there really is no victorious expectation for me to accomplishing much in this sinful flesh which we inherited after Adam fell. Case closed for habitual victorious living.

**“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith ... To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life ...”** (Revelation 2:7)

**“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”** (Revelation 2:11)

**“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna ... and a new name ...”** (Revelation 2:17)

**“He that overcometh, and keepeth My works until the end, to him will I give power over the nations.”** (Revelation 2:26)

**“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father ...”** (Revelation 3:5)

**“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God ... and I will write upon him My new name.”** (Revelation 3:12)

**“To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, EVEN AS I ALSO OVERCAME ...”** (Revelation 3:21)

Let’s make one point clear: “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” **“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”** (1 John 1: 8-10) That leaves only One who has not sinned, and the question is how on this earth did He do it?

There are a thousand ways in which Christ is different than us. He is the Savior of the world. He is the Creator of the world. He is the Resurrection of the world. He is the Author of the Bible, known as the Word. He is the forgiver of sins. **“He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”** (Colossians 1:17) He is Eternal Life.

But there is one area in which He and humanity have in common. The nature He took in becoming our brother. To save a lost world after Adam sinned, the Second Adam needed something that heaven could not manufacture – our sinful nature. When the angel Gabriel came to Mary with the good news of a Redeemer to pass through her womb, she replied, **“How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”** **Gabriel answered, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also, that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”** (Luke 1:34-35)

We know this – Mary possessed what heaven needed to complete the plan of salvation – our sinful flesh. In this sense, Mary was our sister. Her born-again child entered into sinful flesh, and the Bible is chalk full of glorious examples as to what this winning combination can accomplish.

When the Devil and his angels saw what was happening, no doubt they rejoiced. If Jesus had chosen to come to this earth in sinless flesh, He could have been created out of Holy dust just like sinless Adam, standing 10 feet tall, born a full-grown man, and He could have walked into Jerusalem a conquering King of Kings. And Satan would have cried, “Foul, He won’t sin in this nature, I can’t take that King down.” But to become the Savior of fallen humanity, Christ had to be born as one of us. And in fallen flesh, with a born from above Spirit. He could have failed this task. Satan knew it and threw everything at Christ to have Him fall. There was no greater temptation than the cross when He bore the sin of the world and was separated from His Father. As the Satanic mockers below tried to get Jesus to doubt who He even was, Jesus held fast until the final victory was won.



Thus, it can be joyfully stated by Christians the world over: Not by a thought, or deed, or by manifold temptations did our Savior ever yield to sin.

# IN THE FLESH

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Each one of us understands what it means to possess sinful flesh. We nod in complete agreement when we read the definitions of the word “flesh” as applied to humanity from the Greek text found in the Strong’s Concordance. To have the flesh of the sinful nature means: “filthy, degenerate, fallen, corrupted, tainted” and so on. And that sums up my experience with the flesh and yours as well.

But here’s where it gets interesting and humble all in one. There is only one word used for flesh in the entire New Testament. That Greek word is “SARX” and it embraces everything about our human nature after the fall. Whenever Jesus is mentioned as being in the flesh, the word used is sarx.

**“And the Word was made FLESH and dwelt among us ...”** (John 1:14)

**“Great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifested in the FLESH ...”** (1 Timothy 3:16)

**“God sending His own Son ... condemned sin in the FLESH.”** (Romans 8:3)

**“For many deceivers ... confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the FLESH ...”** (2 John 1:7)

**“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the FLESH is of, God.”** (1 John 4:2)

**“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of FLESH and blood, He likewise took part of the same ...”** (Hebrews 2:14)

**“Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the FLESH.”** (Romans 1:3)

**“Who in the days of His FLESH ... offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears ...”** (Hebrews 5:7)

Try as you may, there is no altering the Greek word sarx for flesh. There are no other options to change the references for Jesus coming in the flesh. The big question is how could our Savior, take upon His perfect sinlessness, our nature, and succeed in living a life without sinning?

Jesus came to us born-again and here’s what the Bible says about this type of experience when Christ lives within our hearts in our sinful flesh:

**“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”** (Romans 13:14)

**“Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.”** (Galatians 2:20)

**“Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.”** (Galatians 5:16)



**“I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me.”** (Philippians 4:13)

**“Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling ...”** (Jude 1:24)

It may be hard to get your head around this, as far as Jesus was concerned on this earth, but Jesus looked to His Father God as the One who could save Him.

**“Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears UNTO HIM THAT WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM from death and was heard in that He feared.”** (Hebrews 5:7)

In the Garden of Gethsemane, three times Jesus prayed to the Father to let this cup pass from Him. The cup? Separation from His Father, His lifeline, the One who could save Him. Finally, for your sake and mine, Christ agreed to the trial to save mankind.

Remember it is not a sin to be tempted.

**“Jesus, the Son of God ... was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”** (Hebrews 4:16)

Yielding to temptation is what brings about sin and death.

**“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations ... But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death.”** (James 1: 2, 14-15)

Jesus, through the power of God, stopped well short of being drawn away in human lust. He rebuked the Devil to his face over it.

So, here is the equation of Biblical success in holy living: Christ came in our flesh and lived a perfect life. Christ lives in us.

The One who never lost a battle now gives us that same power. It is no longer our faith trying to gain victory, but His faith.

**“The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith OF the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”** Galatians 2:20

**“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the Commandments of God and the faith OF Jesus.”**

You can trudge along through the Christian life thinking it is your faith in Jesus, which is giving you victory, until you fall hard. Or, you can go through this life, with the faith OF Jesus. The One who never lost a battle in human flesh. The One who will give you victory over the biggest temptations of the flesh the Devil can throw your way. You may stumble, but it won't be devastating because the faith OF Jesus will not lose this war.



# THE SEED

If Christ came to us in the sinless nature of Adam before the Fall, then what would be the point of so many references to the genealogy of Jesus. All such human genealogies relating to Christ are dealing with people in sinful flesh.

However, if our Savior came to us in sinful flesh, then these genealogies become totally relevant:

**“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as One. And to thy SEED which is Christ.”** (Galatians 3:16)

**“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the SEED of David, according to the flesh.”** (Romans 1:3)

Interestingly, both Mary and Joseph’s lineage traces straight back to David. In Mary’s line it includes a Gentile (Ruth the Moabitess) who married Boaz. Their son was Obed, who was the father of Jesse, who was the father of King David. Jesus is known by many names, including The Branch.

**“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a BRANCH shall grow out of his roots.”** (Isaiah 11:1)

The genealogy of Jesus also includes Rahab the prostitute (Matthew 1:5). So, although we speak of the royal line of David, one can clearly see it is tainted by everyday humanity.

Speaking to King David, Nathan prophesied:

**“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy SEED after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of His kingdom forever. I will be His Father and He shall be My Son ... And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever.** (2 Samuel 7: 12-16)

Most readers quickly conclude this prophecy is talking about King Solomon building the magnificent first temple, and probably in dual fashion it is. But the primary gist of this prophecy is talking of Christ to come. Jesus came from the seed of David, and whereas Solomon’s temple was temporary, lasting approximately 390 years, the prophecy speaks of a temple lasting forever. Remember, Jesus referred to Himself as a temple when challenged by the Pharisees:

**“What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, destroy this TEMPLE and in three days I will raise it up.”** (John 2: 18,19)

At that point the Pharisees were dealing with an inferior temple 46 years in the making, and one which was very soon to be crushed to the ground with not a stone remaining upright. So, Nathan the prophet was clearly referring to the temple Jesus, whose kingdom lasts forever.

Regarding the nature of Christ, here’s where Nathan’s prophecy really gets interesting:

**“I will be His Father and He shall be My Son. If He commit iniquity, I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of men. But My mercy shall not depart away from Him ...”** (2 Samuel 7: 14,15)

Well, the perfect Sinless One never fell or committed iniquity, but in becoming sin itself (2 Corinthians 5:21) Jesus was chastened with the rod of men and with the stripes of men (Psalm 22 and many others like it). The amazing point to contemplate: God sent His only begotten Son into this world with the possibility of failure. Jesus could have sinned in His humanity. The nature He assumed had that capability. Thankfully, praise God, not by thought or deed did our Savior yield to temptation. Satan certainly knew Jesus could fall and never gave up trying through persecution, bribery, and even desperately trying to have Jesus’ doubt who He even was while hanging on the cross.

**“We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels ... For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren ... forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise, took part of the same ... and deliver them ... who all their lifetime were subject to bondage, for verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the SEED of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren ... for in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2: 9-18)**

Much is spoken of about the last generation living before Christ comes, and what is prophesied about this special generation to close out the work of God on this earth.

**“So, all the generations from Abraham to David are 14 generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are 14 generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are 14 generations.” (Matthew 1: 17)**

When you count these generations the first two groupings are 14 generations. However, if you count the final generation from Babylon to Christ, 100 times, you will end up with only 13 generations? Why is that? A Biblical typo? Or could it be there is still one final generation to be counted?

**“A SEED shall serve Him. It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this.” (Psalm 22: 30-31)**

One final generation. A generation who believes Jesus came to us in sinful flesh and that He lives in the believers' sinful flesh. They will achieve victory over sin while in their sinful flesh, albeit for a short season, but a time when the Devil is doomed to destruction once and for all. Satan can no longer try to claim this world as his dominion along with all its sinning subjects.

Back in the day when Satan came before the sons of God representing planet earth, he crowed how everyone had bowed the knee to him and there was none righteous no not one. The God spoke to Satan in this manner:

**“Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth (stays away from) evil. And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst Me against him, to destroy him without cause.” (Job 2:3)**

Has there ever been a more perfect “type” of Christ than the patriarch Job? The man who God called perfect, who did no wrong, but suffered terribly for it. Some time, read the book of Job and many times you can substitute the word Job with Christ, for in this story you will behold Christ hanging on the cross.

Think about this: there is no miracle Jesus did upon this earth that had not been done before He came or after He departed. Jesus raised Lazarus – Elijah raised the widow's son (1 Kings) and Paul raised the boy who fell asleep in church (Acts 20); Jesus could read minds – Elisha knew his servant lied about receiving a bribe (2 Kings 5); Jesus stilled the waters – Moses through the power of God parted the Red Sea; Jesus healed the sick – Peter and John healed the cripple (Acts 3) ... and on it goes.

Men in sinful flesh, through the power of God working miracles through them. Christ gave all glory to His Father for these acts, as do we. And one day soon Christ will close shop in heaven and return for His own. Those who are alive and well will be that final generation. Some call them the 144,000. And how true, for they will be without spot or blemish, singing a new song, one that's never been heard before.



JESUS' GENEALOGY

# SPIRIT OF ANTI-CHRIST

And here is the beauty of the Bible - written so that things which were not present would be dealt with when they did finally appear.

The Immaculate Conception is a Catholic doctrine proclaiming the Virgin Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin from the moment of her conception. They believe this special privilege was granted by God through the foreseen merits of her Son, allowing Mary to be born perfectly holy and free from sin. But this understanding only became formal Catholic doctrine in a Papal bull issued by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

So, the Catholic doctrine on the Nature of Christ is clear - the Papacy would have you believe Jesus was born in a sinless nature because His mother supposedly was of a sinless nature. The Catholic church took the extra step in declaring Mary to be the Queen of Heaven. Worshippers pray directly to Mary, and she supposedly intercedes for them.

Mary's title as "Queen of Heaven and Earth" is a great scandal to non-Catholic Christians. After all, the Bible doesn't mention anything about there being a queen in God's heavenly kingdom.

But here is the real kicker: Why have Protestants adopted this recent Catholic theology of 1854 that Jesus came to this earth in a sinless nature? At least the Catholic Church has a reason to believe this, Protestants do not.

Apostle John addressed today's false doctrine head on:

**"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: EVERY spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the FLESH is of God: And EVERY spirit that confesseth NOT that Jesus Christ is come in the FLESH is not of God: And this is that spirit of ANTI-CHRIST ..."** (1 John 4: 2-3)

Why is Christ assuming sinless flesh so important to the Dragon, Deceiver and liar Satan? Because it presents a weak Gospel to believers. The Devil is doomed to die once and for all. If he can keep the final generation of Christians trapped in an endless cycle of sinning / asking forgiveness and repenting, then his time on earth is extended for another day. The sinless natured Jesus achieves just that. However, once a believer accepts that Jesus assumed our sinful flesh as the Second Adam, this changes our entire outlook on the sin problem. If Jesus overcame in our flesh, and now abides in my heart through faith, then together we can overcome any temptation the flesh or Satan throws my way. This group of believers, known as the very last generation 144,000 (Revelation 14: 1-5) will be alive to see Christ come in the clouds of glory. Imagine all of heaven looking down upon this unified group of believers just prior to the 2nd Coming.

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ..."** (Galatians 2:20)

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ..."** (Galatians 2:20)

Come quickly Lord Jesus, your holy Bride is getting ready. There are a people forming who would rather die than knowingly sin against You.

