

Heretical Views on the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ and the Evangelical Standpoint

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Abstract

This work aims to encourage Christians, teachers, and pastors to actively prepare themselves as apologists on Christ's deity and humanity. Defending the gospel's truth regarding Jesus' nature is crucial due to widespread perversions of this doctrine, which cause spiritual, theological, and moral issues within Christendom. Many professing Christians are unknowingly affected by the false teachings of growing cults, leading to confusion about Jesus being truly God and truly man— a fundamental Christian doctrine. Understanding this doctrine will aid Christians, pastors, new believers, and outsiders in appreciating Christ's plan and purpose. It will also encourage and strengthen theologians, pastors, and laypeople to study diligently and effectively propagate the true doctrine of Jesus Christ. As many are confused by perverted teachings, this work is necessary to clarify the true nature of Christ and reinforce commitment to His Lordship. Given the seemingly paradoxical nature of this doctrine, Christians, especially theologians, must face these challenges with God's power and strength to teach, preach, and expose the true doctrine of Jesus' deity and humanity. This effort will combat the age-old perversions introduced by Satan and propagated by cults.

Keywords: Apologetics, Christ's Deity and Humanity, Evangelical Standpoint, Doctrinal Clarity, False Teachings, Theological Issues

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Many of the historical heresies especially on their diverse views when it comes to the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ have affected the Christendom one way or another. There are so many cultic groups that developed over the years who base their theology on those diverse and perverse teachings. These groups grew large in the West and introduced controversial teaching in the Christian Society. As these groups are now present in the Liberian society with their teaching, many people are led astray because of the lack of the basic evangelical Theological teaching on the Deity and Humanity of Christ by many churches.

Given this, there is a need for Theologians and basic theological teaching on these heresies to present the evangelical Theology on the Deity and Humanity of Christ. It is with this background I have decided to write on the topic of heretical views on the Deity, the Humanity of Jesus Christ, and the evangelical standpoint.

1.2 Statement of the Study

As I mentioned earlier in the background of the study there are a lot of challenges with many pastors when it comes to the instability of their members concerning the right doctrine on the person of Jesus

Christ. It is so because of the lack of adequate teaching on the subject matter. Again, some of the pastors do not have basic theological training that they could in turn impart to their fellow Christians who they are leading.

With this problem, I deem it necessary to do this piece of work to enable every Christian who will read this work or use it as research material to face the challenges of our times in the Christian society in our country.

1.3 Context of the Study

The real focus of this study is the need for an intensified teaching of Christians and pastors so as to enable them to cope with the Diverse and heretical views that have been in motion for more than a hundred years and surfacing in our society.

The goal is that Christians should be able to prepare themselves to become apologists on the subject of Christ's Deity and Humanity.

This study will basically help other readers to become effective in defending the truth of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ, in their homes schools, churches working (job) sites, and wherever the gospel can be preached.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

The study will be limited to the basic diverse historical views on the Deity, the Humanity of Jesus Christ, and the "Evangelical" viewpoints. It will also cover the challenges posed to the Christian society in Liberia because of the existence and teaching of many cults that originated from these diverse historical and heretical views on the person of Christ.

The precise scope of limitations will enable the reader to carefully look at any Christological statement from an evangelical context while these diverse heretical views are still propagated by many people.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is going to be very useful to the church, many Christians, pastors, and people who are coming to the Christian faith. It will also help those who are outside of the church and want to know the truth doctrine or teaching on the person of Jesus Christ. It will invigorate laymen, pastors, and theologians to study hard, to be effective in their apologetics.

1.6 Need of the Study

It is necessary to do this study because there is confusion in the minds of many Christians on the exact nature of Jesus Christ. And many people are turning to the perverted teaching on the subject of the person of Christ.

This study needs to be used as a guide and instrument to encourage Christians and others to discover the true nature of Christ. This will also strengthen the commitment of many Christians to the Lordship of Christ and motivate those who are not in the faith.

1.7 Nature of the Study

Before engaging in theological studies, I noticed that churches, individuals, Christians, and pastors are following historical heresies on the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ.

I was once influenced to go with the philosophy of Jesus Christ being the creation of the Father. However, I realized that was the lack of knowledge on the basic Christological teaching in confirmation to the scripture.

This and many other things moved me to write a biblical statement of faith in the person of Christ. I am doing an exposition on the statement in this study.

Therefore, this piece of work will awaken the zeal or stir in the reader an apologetic position of the gospel on the Deity and humanity of Christ.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is arranged systematically so that when the readers read, they get what the entire work is about without much difficulty.

It is systematically arranged into chapters:

- Chapter one (1) gives the background of the whole study and its statement. It also gives the context and limitations of my thesis.
- Chapter two (2) tells us why it is necessary to do this study, its nature, the way it is organized as I am stating it here, and the definition of some of the terms used in this work.
- Chapter three (3) is the body of the whole where details information is given concerning my topic starting from its historical background to the solution of the needs of the true biblical and evangelical position indicated here.
- Chapter four (4) has to do with the bibliography of books and writers I quoted from.

1.9 Definition of Term

1. Apologetic - is an activity of the Christian mind that attempts to show that the gospel message is true in what it affirms.
2. Apologist - Is prepared to defend the message against criticism and destruction, and to give pieces of evidence of its credibility.
3. Deity - is a term used to refer to God
4. Christological - this strictly has to do with the doctrine of Christ, his person, and nature.
4. Evangelical - it is a term that has to do with or relate to the essential care of the Christian message based on the scripture.
5. Ebionism - a teaching that says that Jesus was not God.
6. Arianism - a teaching or belief that Jesus was not fully God.
7. Nestorianism – A belief that Jesus was two distinct persons.
8. Docetism- A belief or teaching that Jesus was not human.
9. Apollinarianism - A belief that Jesus was not fully God.
10. Eutychianism - A belief that Jesus had one blended nature.
11. Heresy - A doctrinal deviation from the fundamental truth taught by scripture.
12. Monophysitism - A belief or teaching that Jesus has one nature.
13. Monotheism – A belief or teaching that Jesus has one will.
14. Eschatology - This has to do with the teaching of the last happenings. Christ's return.
15. Transmutation - this is a belief that has to do with essential change.
16. Theanthropic - A term that means a God-Man who unites in himself all the conditions of divine and human existence.
17. Patripassianism - The belief that the one God (father) became incarnate in the term of the son born of a virgin, suffered, and died on the cross.
18. Ontological - This has to do with the branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature of being.

2.0 Research Methodology

2.1 Overview

I have done critical reading from many books while writing this Thesis paper. These many relevant books on the issues or topics of this thesis have been discussed in this work.

I have also used my experience from teaching in secondary schools and bible colleges on the Christian doctrine, especially on the deity and humanity of Jesus. The primary source in this research work is the Bible, the word of God. I use other research materials from other books that have to do with historical heresies, cults, and orthodox or evangelical views.

2.2 Research Design/Execution

In writing this thesis I have done a lot of research on the evangelical Christian position in relation to this piece of work. I have also read many books on various heresies and did an analysis and how the many present-day cults found in our community relate to some of those heresies in belief and practice. I was able to explain some strange concepts concerning the orthodox position that has developed over the years.

2.3 Data Collection

In doing this work, effectively, I did a lot of research from many theological books. I visited some theological institutions and libraries such as Global University, Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, and Vision International University. I interviewed some theologians, pastors, lay leaders, and church members from different Christian denominations and some cult leaders and members on this subject. I did my analysis of all data collected and I was able to come up with this piece of work.

2.4 Data Interpretation

The survey research for this piece of work was done from seventeen (17) books of theology, history, church doctrine, and other religious books. These books are written by well-known and respected scholars, theologians, and historians on the subject matter. I met and interacted with ten (10) church leaders in the Christian circle who are well-informed theologically on the theology I am writing about in this piece of work. I also met with six (6) cultic theologians and discussed this subject. Some of the Christian theologians I met are from the Catholic Church, United Methodist Church, Baptist, Episcopal, Pentecostal denominations, and non-denomination independent churches. Almost all of them agreed with me on the theology I put forth in this thesis on the deity and humanity of Christ as Evangelical.

The cultic theologians also agree with me on their exact belief when it comes to the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. Some of those cults whose leadership or theologians I met are the Jehovah Witnesses, the Latter-day Saints of Jesus Christ known as "Mormons" the Unification church, and many others.

3.0 Discussion

3.1 Background

It is prudent to do such a work on the heretical views of the Deity and Humanity of Christ and the evangelical standpoint.

In this work, I will state the principle of diverse views or heresies on the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ. I will give their historical background and do an analysis of these views. We will also bring to light some of the modern-day cults that are following these perverted views on the nature of Jesus Christ as a person.

Having stated and analyzed these views, I will give the evangelical standpoint on the nature of Jesus

Christ. All this will be done systematically. We will look at how these views are put forth on the Deity, Humanity, and unity of Christ's person and the evangelical position.

This work will be a help to any reader of this thesis by strengthening his or her Christian apologetic capacity. I am not saying that you will find all you need on Christian apologetics in this thesis but helpful information on the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ is available here.\

3.2 Review Related Literature

In writing this thesis, I did many extensive studies and read books from various fields of knowledge such as Christian Theology an Introduction, Introduction to Christian Theology, The Kingdom of the cults, introducing Christian Doctrine, A Guide to cults and New Religions, and many other books relative to the subject matter and the holy Bible. The below-listed topics will be reviewed as our basic strength to expand on the thesis topic.

3.3 What Is Meant by the Deity and Humanity of Christ

The Deity and Humanity of Christ is a Theological concept referring to the person of Jesus Christ being God as well as human. The evangelical standpoint is the essential core of the Christian message based on the scripture especially as it relates to the topic under discussion, the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ.

3.4 Early Historical Views on the Deity of Christ

3.4.1 Gnosticism

The Gnostics were followers of a variety of religious movements which stressed salvation through gnosis or knowledge above all of one's origins. Gnosticism was attacked in the writing of the church fathers in the 2nd to the 4th centuries. They regarded the various Gnostic groups as heretical perversions of Christianity. Many scholars in modern times believe that Gnosticism was a religious Phenomenon, which was in some cases independent of Christianity. There is as yet no consensus as to when and how it originated, but a context in heterodox or fringe Judaism has the support of several scholars (Wright, 1998).

The Gnostics reject the true Deity of Jesus Christ. They maintained that the heavenly Christ who appeared among men was but an emanation from the one true God. We see that in Colossi, these Gnostic teachers placed Christ among the hierarchy of angels, thus denying his time headship (Col. 2:18-19). The entire number of intermediary beings emanating from God and linking him to this world the Gnostics called the Pleroma. St. Paul's answer to this heresy was that Christ is "the Pleroma of the Godhead", who suffered in the flesh to reconcile us to the Father (Col. 1:19-22).

Near the close of the first century, Cerinthus taught at Ephesus that the heavenly Christ descended upon the human Jesus as his baptism, remained upon him during his ministry, and ascended back to the spiritual world at Jesus' death. In effect, Jesus and Christ were two different persons (Purkiser, 1978). St. John was addressing himself against this heresy when he wrote, "Who is a liar but he that denied that Jesus is the Christ, he is antichrist, that denied the father and the son (1 John 2:22).

3.4.2 Ebionism

This is a view of the sect of heretical Jewish Christians who deny that Christ was divine because this would contradict God's oneness. They deny the ontological deity of Jesus. According to them, Jesus is an ordinary man possessed of unusual but not superhuman or supernatural gifts of righteousness and wisdom. They rejected the virgin birth, maintaining that Jesus was born to Joseph and many in a normal

fashion (Erickson, 1991). This group went on to say that the Baptism of Jesus was a significant event in Jesus' life, for it was then that Christ descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus. This was understood more as the presence of God's power and influence within the man Jesus than as a personal, metaphysical reality. They also believe that at the end of Jesus' life, Christ withdraws from him. In other words, Jesus was primarily a man.

The Ebionites view of Jesus had the virtue and tried to resolve the tension between belief in the Deity of Jesus and the monotheistic view of God. However, Ebionism had to ignore or deny a large body of scriptural materials. All of the references to the pre-existence, the virgin birth, and the qualitatively unique status and function of Jesus. This the church view as far too great a concession.

Their view was one of the major views and contemporary with the Gnostic when it comes to the deity of Jesus Christ. Their concept is that Jesus was the natural son of Joseph and many fulfilled the Jewish law that God chose him to be messiah and that he is destined to return and set up a Jewish kingdom.

3.4.3 Arianism

This is one of the historical heresies that grew rapidly and many cults today are following their ideologies. Arianism is the teaching of an Alexandrian presbyter named Arius. This view has become the first major threat to the views implicitly held by the church regarding Jesus' deity. Although Arius was condemned by the church at the council of Nicea in 325 and at subsequent councils, Arianism lingers on to our day in various forms. One of the large and aggressive varieties of Arianism in popular form is the movement known as Jehovah's Witnesses (Ibid, Book).

The central conception in the Arian understanding of Jesus is the absolute uniqueness and transcendence of God. They believe that God is the only source of all things, the only uncreated existence in the whole universe. God alone possesses the attributes of a deity. They base their view upon rather extensive collection of biblical references.

They use various scripture references to appeal to their view. (John 14:28) where they indicate the son is inferior to the father. They also use Mark 13:32. There are major responses to the Arian theology. Let me mention just two aspects because they will be dealt with lengthily in the latter section under the evangelical view of the deity and humanity of Christ. However, one of the responses to note here is that the types of evidence appealed to in substantiating the deity of Christ, are either ignored or inadequately treated by the Arians. The other is to take a closer look at the passages appealed to in support of the Arian's view.

In general, it must be made clear that Arians have mis-constructed various biblical passages or statements referring to the son's subordination during his incarnation. The description of his temporary functional subordination to the father has been misinterpreted as about the essence of the son. This fourth-century teaching holds the view that Christ was an incarnation of the pre-existing logos or word, but that this word was an intermediate creature the highest indeed of all created beings, yet outside of the God-head. This position was the forerunner of the earlier Socinianism and the more modern Unitarianism (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946).

3.4.4 Unitarianism

Unitarianism is a view that rejects creeds and has a wide spectrum of beliefs, they stress the oneness of God and deny the divinity of Jesus Christ (Wright, 1998). It is also referred to as anti-trinitarianism. Unitarianism's roots are the Arian denial of the deity of Christ. It asserts that the father begat the son at a point in time so that the son is not eternal.

Modern. Humanistic Unitarianism reflects the influences of the Enlightenment and nineteenth-century transcendentalism in its further rejection of the authority of scripture and of the supernatural. Modern Unitarians generally speak of Jesus as an ethical ideal, a great moral teacher, or a messenger from God. However., in the Unitarian thought Jesus cannot be the eternal son of the eternal father because God is one, not three persons (Greenze & Guretzki, 1999)

Unitarians generally like to trace their history to apostolic times, especially to the councils of Nicaca (AD. 325) where the great Arian heresy enunciated a semi-Unitarian theme by denying the New Testament doctrine of the full deity of Jesus Christ. Unitarians, however, are notoriously poor historians and it was not until the fourteenth century that the dogmas now designated as Unitarian markedly gained any popular support (Martin, 1985).

Of a certainty, some poorly informed thinkers in the early church adhered to various principles now claimed by Unitarians, but most of the leading theologians of the Christian church even held to Unitarian teachings, nor do they today. The first Unitarian writer of note was Martin Caldarium (1499 - 1564), a friend of Martin Luther, who advanced Unitarian views in 1527. This bold presentation was followed in succession by the Anti-Trinitarian positions of Luduiz Hactzer, 1529, and Michael Servetus, 1531, who was martyred for his views at Geneva in 1553 and culminated in the work of Fausto Sozini, better known to history as Socinus (1539 - 1604). Socinus, an Italian by birth, was a nephew of Lelio Sozini, an associate of John Calvin and Philip Melanchthon, whose theology at times wavered, but remained orthodox enough for him to escape martyrdom and to remain in fellowship with reformed theologians.

In contrast to his uncle Lelio, Socinus became anti and denied the true deity of Jesus Christ, as do all Unitarians to this day. Socinianism found surround roots in Hungary, Poland, and Transylvania and eventually spread to Holland then to England, to the United States, and finally around the world (Ibid, Book).

3.4.5 Latter Cults Develop Out of Earlier Heresies.

There are many cults and religious sects that developed out of the Diverse heretical views that I mentioned above. In this section, I will comment on how some of these cults are related to those earlier heretical views on the Deity of Jesus Christ.

One of the most noted cults of today that propagate Arianism is the Jehovah Witnesses. When it comes to the Deity of Jesus Christ, this is the witness's reflection. They formulated a doctrine against the Deity of Christ. They go on to say that, the true scriptures speak of God's son the Word, as a god. He is a mighty god, but not Almighty God, who is Jehovah. In other words, he was the first and direct creation of Jehovah God. They state that the Bible shows that there is only one God, Greater than His son and that the son, as the first-born, only begotten, and the creation of God, had a beginning. The father is greater and older while the son is reasonable, easy to understand, and is what the Bible teaches (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society 1958, P. 164). Jesus was the son of God and not God himself. The very fact that he was sent proves he was not equal to God but was less than God his father (Ibid, Book).

These doctrinal points mentioned are the identical pervasion on the true teaching of the deity of Christ propounded by Arius an Alexandrian presbyter in 335/336 AD (Pocket Dictionary of Theological terms). The Central characteristic of Arian thought that is propagated today by the followers of Charles Taze Russell known as the Jehovah's Witnesses was that God is one. Jesus could not have also been truly God. To deal with the scriptural testimony to the exalted status of Christ, Arius and his followers proposed that Jesus was the highest created being of God. So, although Christ was fully human, he was not fully God. Arius's teaching was condemned as heretical at the first Ecumenical council (Nicaca) in AD 325.

Other cults also propagate this same teaching concerning Christ's Deity that is rooted in Arianism, such as the Mormons, etc. One of the cults that developed out of the earlier historical name is the Unitarian church. This non-Christian cult spread rapidly in the United States. Today its membership in the United States is more than 150,000. With its liberal and humanistic attitudes, beliefs, and practices, it is little wonder that it enjoys popularity in Liberal America.

This group that generally believed in one God holds that the orthodox Christian world has forsaken the real, human Jesus of the gospel, and has substituted a Christ of dogmatism, metaphysics, and pagan philosophy because Unitarians refuse to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and God. They are excluded from the National Council of Churches of Christ (Martin, 1985).

This teaching of the Unitarian church that views Jesus as simply a good man, a religious genius of exceptional insight is making its way into the world. Especially this teaching has landed on the Liberian soil and is present in the Theological atmosphere. Apart from these cults that came out of the earlier heresies that I mentioned, there are many others that will be mentioned in the subsequent or proceeding section of this thesis if not all.

3.5 Early Heretical Views on the Humanity of Christ

3.5.1 Docetism

Early in the life of the church, however, there came several departures from the understanding of Jesus as fully human. One of those theological positions sometimes regarded as a tendency within theology is Docetism. Docetism takes its name from the Greek verb *Dokeo* which means "to seem or appear". The central point of this is that Jesus only seemed to be human. God could not have become material since all matter is evil, and he is perfectly pure and holy. Docetism states that God could not have possibly united with such a corrupting influence (McGrath, 1997).

This theological position goes further by saying that God is impossible and unchangeable and could not have undergone the modification in his nature that could necessarily have occurred with a genuine incarnation. God could not have exposed himself to the experiences of human life. In other words, the humanity of Jesus, his physical nature was simply an illusion, not a reality. This concept or viewpoint was quickly rejected as heretical by the church (Ibid, Book).

As this particular position of Christology that is heretic in nature tries to resolve the tension that seems to exist in the idea that deity and humanity were united in one person, it has developed heresies. It did so by saying that while the deity was real and complete, the humanity was only appearance.

It is well noted when the church recognized that this solution had been achieved at too great a price, the loss of Jesus humanity and thus of any real connection between him and us as human, Erickson said it right that "it is difficult today to find pure instances of Docetism, although domestic tendencies occur in many and varied schemes of thought (Erickson, 1991).

3.5.2 Apollinarianism

Apollinarius, a fourth-century Laodicean from Syria, was very concerned with maintaining the unity of the son, Jesus Christ. Now if Jesus, reasoned Apollinarius, had two complete natures, he must have had a human soul mind, reason as well as a divine. He thought this duality absurd from this, a view of Apollinarianism came about when he constructed a Christology based upon an extremely narrow reading of John 1:4 'the word became flesh'. Flesh was the only aspect of human nature involved (Kelly, 1960).

This view states that Jesus was a compound unity, part of the composite, in other words, some elements of Jesus were human, and the rest divine. What the word took was not the whole humanity, but only

flesh. That is the body. This flesh could not, however, be animated by itself. This was the divine logos; it took the place of the human soul. Thus, Jesus was human physically, but not a human soul. His soul was divine (Ibid, Book).

Apollinarius went on to say that although Jesus was human, a bit different from other human beings. Jesus did not have a human will. Subsequently, he could not sin, for his person was fully controlled by his divine soul. Loraine Boettner draws the analogy of a human mind implanted into the body of a lion; the resulting being is governed, not by lion or animal psychology, but by human psychology. That is a rough parallel to the Apollinarian view of the person of Jesus (Boettner, 1947).

Apollinarianism proved to be an ingenious but unacceptable solution to the problem. The dual nature of Jesus tended to become one nature in practice, the divined soul swallowing up the human body. Consequently, the Apollinarian doctrine was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381 (Erickson, 1991).

3.5.3 Latter Cults Develop Out of These Heresies

We see that a similar belief of Apollinarians is found in the cults of Christian Science and the unity of Christianity. Some of their beliefs are also docetic.

In this section, I will only comment briefly on how these cults see Jesus particularly the Unity School of Christianity. They say Christ's meaning 'Messiah' or 'Anointed', designates one who had revived a spiritual quickening from God, while Jesus is the name of the personality. To the metaphysical Christian - that is to him who studies the spiritual man-Christ is the name of the super-mind and Jesus is the name of the personal consciousness. The spiritual man is God's son, and the person man is man's son. They go on to say according to Water Martin that Jesus Christ himself was a parable, and his life an allegory of the experiences that man passes through in development from natural to spiritual consciousness (Martin, 1985).

One needs only to peruse the many literatures of the unity cult to realize that in the theology of unity, Jesus Christ is not the God-man of the New Testament doctrine but a perversion of the teaching of John 1:14.

3.6 Early Heretical Views on the Unity of Christ's Natures

3.6.1 Nestorianism

This view is a heresy that denies the real union of the divine and human natures in Christ. Divine personality dwelt in the person that two unrelated persons. They go on to say that Jesus is a man filled with God, but without true deity and true humanity in one person. This heresy and the subsequent ones came about while many theologians were trying to develop a Christology on the unity of Christ's nature. Nestorians is a bishop of Constantinople in the fourth century who went to the opposite extreme, and so separated between the two persons, thus destroying the unity and uniqueness of Christ's person (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946).

The view condemned by the church as Nestorian fell short of the full orthodox position and was probably held by some of Nestorius's followers. It is the judgment of leading scholars, however, that Nestorius himself was not a Nestorian but that some poorly chosen terminology, coupled with an aggressive opposition, led to an unjust condemnation of his view.

Soon after Nestorius was installed as patriarch in 428, he was obligated to rule upon the suitability of referring to Mary as the *otolos* ("God-Bearing"). This Nestorius was reluctant to do unless the *Theotokos* was accompanied by the term *anthropotokos* ("Human-bearing") (Erickson, 1991).

While his ideas were not unique at that time, the choice of some rather unfortunate language caused problems for Nestorius. He observed that God cannot have a mother, and certainly, no creature could have generated a member of the God-head. Mary, therefore, did not bear God; she bore a man who was a vehicle for God. Although Nestorius would later profess to agree with the Chalcedonic formulation (two natures united in one person, he preferred to think in terms of a "Conjunction" rather than a union (Ibid, Book).

Perhaps the best possible summation of Nestorius is to say that while he did not consciously hold nor overly teach that there was a split in the person of Christ. What he said seemed to imply it from the statement of Nestorius and the reaction to his views came the traditional picture of Nestorianism as a heresy that split the God-man into two distinct persons. This heresy was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431.

3.6.2 Eutychianism

The Eutychianism view states that Christ had but one nature and will not separate wills and natures. The divine and human were so intermingled into one that it constituted a third nature (McGeorge). Eutyches (AD 375-454) was the archimandrite of a monastery in Constantinople. It is not easy to ascertain exactly what Eutyches's doctrine was. He declared that the Lord Jesus Christ after his birth possessed only one nature, which of God made flesh and become human.

While rejecting the idea of two natures as contrary to scripture and to the opinions of the church fathers. Eutyches did, however, subscribe to the Virgin birth and affirmed that Christ was simultaneously perfect God and perfect human. The main contention of his doctrine seems to have been that there were two natures before the incarnation, and one after the incarnation (Purkiser, 1978). This view is sometimes known as absorption. It is also called 'Monophysitism.

His view constituted the foundation of a movement that teaches that the humanity of Jesus was as absorbed into the deity as to be virtually eliminated. In effect, Eutychianism was a form of Docetism. The variant interpretation was that Jesus' deity and humanity were fused into something quite different, a third substance, a hybrid as it were. It may be that this is what Eutyches himself held. Although his thought was confused.

3.6.3 Monotheletism

While the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) closed the Christological discussion in the West, however, the controversies still continued in the Eastern Church. Monophysitism or the doctrine of one nature: and monotheism or the doctrine of one will but later development of Eutychianism. Both of these positions were in error, in that they did not do justice to the complete human nature of Christ.

We see that monotheletism was a veiled re-edition of the monophysite error. It declared that in Christ the two natures were united without mixture, but that there was only one will, one mode of operation (Ibid, Book). This is a subtle point, but monotheism must be judged erroneously by denying the reality of Jesus' human will. This view gives us an incomplete humanity in Jesus, and an inadequate account of the relationship, divine and human natures in one person.

3.6.4 Adoptionism

An early and recurrent attempt to solve the problem of two natures in one person is adoptionism. Put in its simplest form, this is the idea that Jesus of Nazareth was merely a human during the early years of his life. At some point, however, probably Jesus' baptism or his resurrection as this view puts it, God "adopted" Jesus as his son. This was more a case of a human's becoming God than of God's becoming human (Erickson, 1991). In support of their position, adoptionists concentrate on the scriptural idea that

Jesus was begotten by God (John 3:16). Those who fully follow the basic teaching of scripture are aware of major obstacles to this view.

This view which arose in Spain in the latter part of the eighth century in reality is a revival of Nestorianism. It taught that Christ was the son of God naturally, only in respect to his deity, but that in respect of his humanity, he was merely a man like other men, who was made son by adoption. Christ was regarded as an ordinary man, whose humanity was adopted into divinity by a gradual process. This denies a real incarnation. As Purkiser describes this view, it is noted that according to his divine nature, Christ was the only begotten, according to his human nature, he was the first begotten (Purkiser, 1978).

3.6.5 Latter Cults Develop Out of These Heresies

Adoptionism is one of the major views or doctrines propagated today by the unification church, the Christian Science, the unity school of Christianity, and spiritualism (spiritism) when it comes to the unity of Christ. These cults accept Jesus as an ordinary man while the other cults like Mormonism (letter-day saints) hold the view that Jesus is a separate god from the Father (Elohim) (Christianity, Cults, and Religions). However, they believe that he was created as a spirit child by the father and others in heaven, and is the elder brother of all men and spirit beings. His body was created through a sexual union between Elohim and Mary.

Armstrongism, one way or another holds the doctrine that is similar to adoptionism. Just as I mentioned above, the various cults which include the Latter-day Saints, the unification church, Christian Science, the unity school of Christianity spiritism, and Armstrongism (the worldwide church) all have some elements of the early heresies on the unity of Christ nature such as Nestorianism, Eutychianism, Monotheletism, and Adoptionism (Ibid, Book).

To the unification church, the divinity of Jesus is limited to his being a perfect man. Thus, he may be said to even possess deity and in light of this he may well be called God. Nevertheless, he can by no means be called God Himself. While he was on earth, Jesus was no different from any other person except for the fact that he was without sin (Eroth & others, 1983). Time does not permit me to comment on every cult one by one but they all are similar when it comes to their misunderstanding of the unity of Jesus nature about the early historical heresies on the unity of Christ nature.

3.7 Evangelical View on the Deity of Christ

There is biblical teaching when it comes to the deity of Christ which is our source of conviction. We begin our investigation or inquiry at the point where all evangelical conviction must begin on the subject which is the witness of scripture. Here we find a wide variety of materials and emphases. While it is not possible to investigate and put forth every reference which bears on the consideration of the deity of Christ. For this thesis, I will limit the Evangelical argument or position to some of the most and clearer passages (teaching) of scriptures on this topic.

3.7.1 Jesus Self-consciousness

When we are looking at the deity of Christ, it is worth beginning with Christ's self-consciousness. What did he think and believe about himself? Many people from the opposition party on Christ's deity argue that Jesus did not himself make any claim to be God. His message was about his father and not himself. This means we are called to believe in Jesus as the Father deity but not in Jesus' deity.

It should be noted that Jesus did not make an explicit and overclaim to the deity, saying in so many words, "I am God". What we do find, however, are claims that would be inappropriate if made by someone who is less than God (Erickson, 1991).

For example, Jesus said that he would send "his angels" (Matt. 13:41); elsewhere they are spoken of as "the angels of God" (Luke 12:8-9); (Luke 15:10). In this reference he also spoke of the kingdom of God as "his Kingdom". However, before going further in this thesis, I must state that heresies concerning the deity and humanity of Christ arose in the early centuries of church history. The pendulum swung back and forth in its extremes. However, there was more denial of his deity than of his humanity. The deity and humanity of Christ need to be kept in a delicate balance, as evidenced by the New Testament writers, to avoid heresy (Conner, 1988).

There are two avenues of approach to the study of Christ's deity in the evangelical circle. They are the textual and the historical. The textual method approaches the subject through numerous texts referring to Christ's divine names, titles, acts, attributes, and worship as well as the human aspects. By the historical method, men have generally been convinced of the supernatural character of Christ, and have been led to the persuasion that he is very God (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946).

The Evangelical position on the deity and humanity of Christ embarrasses both the textual and historical approaches in Christology. However, for this thesis, my emphasis will be on the textual method.

Following are the scriptures which confirm the deity of Christ. The strongest proofs that the Lord Jesus Christ is God are the divine attributes, divine names, divine works, divine worship, divine claims, and the divine relationship ascribed to him.

3.7.2 Divine Attributes of Christ

The attributes of Christ can be classified into two categories. The essential such as his eternity of being. In other words, the son-ship of Jesus Christ is eternal in the Godhead. His name is "I am" which expresses the eternity of being. Christ knew that he pre-existed with the Father and came down from heaven (John 1:1-3, Prov. 30:4, Matt. 3:11, Ex. 3:4, Rev. 1:81, and John 6:33).

The Son existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Son is the life- source and has the power to give eternal life to all who will believe. This kind of language can only apply to a deity. John 1:4: 5:21-26 and 1 John 5:111 – 12 are basic scriptures witnesses that testify to the deity of Christ against the heresy on the deity of Christ. Christ existed in the beginning as the words, as God (John 1:1, Genesis 1:1; Phil. 2:6 and Revelation 19:13) This same Jesus is God (Romans 9:5, Hebrew 1:8, 10). He is the mighty God and Emmanuel which means God is with us (Isaiah 7:14: 9:6, Ps. 45:6). It is pointed out in scripture that Jesus is the true God (1 John 5:20; Titus 2:13).

Now we come to an essential attribute that belongs only to God but is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Such as omnipotence. Just about the way everyone realizes that God is all-powerful is Jesus. When we look at the life of Jesus, we see how God uses his power. When Jesus calmed the storm by speaking to the wind and waves, his disciples were amazed. Again, how could anyone walk on water? Jesus seemed to be able to change or suspend the very laws of nature (O'Donovan, 1996). Christ is truly God; therefore, he is omniscient nothing is hidden from him (John 16:30, Col. 2:3). He is omnipresent; he is everywhere at all times. Because of this attribute, he can gather with his people wherever they meet in his name (Matt. 18:20).

The son is immutable, that is unchanged and unchangeable (Heb. 13:8). Only God or deity is infallible but we see Jesus who is infallible, therefore, he is God. Jesus is sovereign an attribute which belongs to God alone. Sovereignty means absolute rule or authority over a kingdom. One very practical application of the truth of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. Over all things are found in the book of Revelation. Jesus spoke of the Christians in the church in Philadelphia of his sovereignty (Rev. 3:8) (Ibid, Book).

The second classification of Christ's attributes that makes or that is in him as God is his moral attributes.

There is a perfect holiness that is found in Jesus. Jesus is considered as son of God who is holiness personified (Conner, 1988). The ever-perfect person who ever walked the earth (Luke 4:34). This is dealt with also under the sinlessness of Christ. Heb. 1:9, Jer. 23:5-6 and other biblical passages or texts classified Jesus as the Lord of our righteousness. This means he is Jehovah Tsidkenu. This attribute is only applicable to deity. The perfect love and faithfulness of Christ Jesus can also be noted under this category of his deity (John 15:9-10; Rev. 1:5).

3.7.3 Divine Names

There are many divine names ascribed to Jesus Christ. These names justify the deity of Jesus because they were only used for God. The name everlasting Father is applied to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6. This name is usually associated with the father of the first person of the Godhead but here the title belongs to Christ. One of the most intriguing exercises for the imagination is to consider the eternity of Jesus. Jesus always was; he had no beginning. As God, he is the great first cause of all things. We find Jesus with the Father at the beginning. He was there when the planets and universe were created. Paul writes of the eternal existence of Christ; he is before all things (Col. 1:17). In that same text he tells us that all things were created by Christ (V 16). We reckon our time in terms of BC and AD before or after Christ but Paul speaks of pre-world time. Apostle John recorded Jesus' words when he said "Glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began" (John 17: 5) to show that Jesus is everlasting.

People always ask, "Who were Buddha and Napoleon?" but always, "Who is Jesus Christ? (Gariepy, 1988). Christ is also called Lord (Joel 2:32 (Acts 2:21). It was blasphemy to call any man "Lord" to the Jewish mind, as this was the name of the deity. There are many scripture passages where Jesus was called either Lord or Host etc. One of these passages is Jeremiah 23:6 where he is called Lord of Righteousness. Jesus is called Lord and is also called Jehovah in Genesis 19:24, Ps. 83:18, and Alpha and Omega, which is the beginning and the End in Revelation 1:7-11; 22: 13 – 16. In these cases, if Jesus is the beginning and the end then surely, he is God. He is also called the eternal word (John 1:1, Heb. 1:1-29, and Revelation 19:13).

Jesus did not only speak the words of God as a prophet would do; he is called the word of God. He is even known in the Muslim Ou'ran by his name (Sura 4:171) (O'Donovan, 1996). Jesus is the I am (Exd. 3:14-15, John 8: 56- 59, and Leviticus 24:12-16). It would be blasphemy to use this name of deity unless Jesus were God. Jesus uses about seven "I AM" in his claim mostly in the gospel of John. In his divine name, he is also considered the root and offspring of David. He is David's son and David's Lord, as to his deity. He is offspring and son, as to his humanity (Conner, 1988).

Lastly, Jesus is the son of God. This sonship is eternal and is acknowledged by all realms. This title of Christ defines his special relationship to God the Father as the second person of the trinity, equal with the Father (Col. 2:9). Jesus called himself the son of God (John 5:25, 10:36, 11:4). His sonship is acknowledged by the father God (Acts 13:33, Heb. 1:5), by demonic spirits (Matt. 8:29), by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:35), by apostles (Matt. 16:16 -17; Romans 1:1-3), by the Lord Jesus himself (Mark 1:61-62, Luke 22:70, John 5: 25 etc.). In his sonship, he is the holy one (Mark 1:24), and the truth Christ did not only say the truth or what is truthful but he was the truth personified. This is inapplicable to any man and has never been. All these titles and names mentioned in this section qualify Jesus as God or point to Jesus' deity because he was already God before he was called these names and titles.

3.7.4 Divine Works

Divine works that can only be done by God were done by the son of God, Jesus Christ. Can we still say

he is not God? These works prove that he is God (John 14:11, 10: 37). Jesus was the creator of the universe of worlds (Heb. 1:1- 10, Gen. 1:1-5. Col. 1:16 - 17): the angels and men (Gen. 1:26, Prov. 8:30), and in Genesis 1, the pronoun "Us" is in the plural form.

This shows that Jesus was part because this is one of the key verses of the Trinity. Jesus raised the dead and not just raised the dead but will change the entire bodies of believers at his second coming because of who he is (John 5:28- 29, 11:25, 2 Timothy 4:1). Who can forgive sins only God but Jesus did (Acts 5:31; Luke 5:21 – 41; Matt. 9:6, Ps. 51:4). Christ will judge the whole world. In righteousness and upholds and maintains the universe by his mighty word of power (John 5:22 -29; Heb. 1:3). The Bible says Jesus is the giver of eternal life. To be the giver of eternal life one must be eternal and the eternal one is God (John 10:28, 17:1). At the end, Jesus will bring about the regeneration of the heaven and the earth (Heb 1:10-12; Rev. 21:5). All of these works and many others can only be done by God. You can now see where the Evangelicals stand.

3.7.5 Divine Worship

Divine worship was given to and received by Jesus. Jesus never refused such worship. This is in great contrast to other men of God who refused the worship of other men, as did the elect angels (Ibid, Book). Only self-deified men accepted the worship of others as seen in the Roman Emperors (Acts, 10:26; 14:15, Rev. 22:9). To worship Jesus as God would be blasphemy and idolatry if he were not a deity. For Jesus to accept worship which alone belongs to God his father would have been robbery, blasphemy, and idolatry.

Here are some scriptures that clearly show how Jesus received worship and by whom. He was worshipped by angels (Heb. 1:6; Rev.5:12-14); he was worshipped by men (Matt. 8:15:25-28; 28:17; Lk. 24:51-52; Acts 1:24; Rev. 5:11; 1 Thess, 3:11); he is worshipped by all creatures (Rev. 5:13); he is prayed to as praying to God (Acts 1:24; 7: 59-60); he is honored equally with the father God (John 5:23; Rev. 1:5-6; Heb. 1:6 -8). It is clear that Jesus did not only dispute the charge that he claimed to be God, but he also accepted the attribution of deity to him by his disciples. The clearest case of this is his respect for Thomas' Statement, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Millard Erickson says this was an excellent opportunity to correct a misconception if that is what it was, but Jesus did not do so (Erickson, 1991).

3.7.6 Divine Claim

Jesus made claims which only have been made by God. If these claims are not so, then Jesus was either self-deceived or a liar and imposter which of course Jesus is not.

The highest testimony of the deity of Christ must, of necessity, be his claims. If it be argued that a man's claims for himself are worthless, it must be answered that this depends upon a prior question as to who the man is. To the rejection of the Pharisees, Jesus said, "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I come and whither I go it is also written in our law that the testimony of two men is true. I bear witness of myself and the father that sent me bear witness of me (John 8:14- 18) (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946).

Jesus claimed to be one with God (John 10: 30), in another argument with Jesus sometime later, the Jews said to him "We are not stoning you for any of these but for blasphemy, because you a mere man, claim to be God" (John 10:33). For the Jews, they knew it that when Jesus said he is one with God it means he is God. He claimed to Go to be the "I AM", denoting eternal existence (John 8:56-58; 18: 1-5), he also claimed divine sonship making himself God (John 5:25, 11:4; Mk. 12:6; Prov. 30:4).

3.7.7 Divine Relationship

The son is associated with the Father and the Holy Spirit in a conventual relationship both in eternity and time. This could not be so unless the son was divine, co-equal in the Godhead. This relationship is seen in various aspects of Christian theology. For example, baptism is administered in the name of the Triune God, the Son being centrally involved (Matt. 28:18- 20; Acts 2:34- 36); the apostolic benediction involves the eternal Godhead, the Son being the revelation of the grace of God (2Corinthians 13:14).

It is impossible to deny or reject the truth of the deity of the son of God in the light of these scriptures. For Jesus to accept such claims, worship, names, and works as ascribed or attributed to him. If he were not God, would be blasphemy. No saint ever made such claims or accepted homage, which would have been presumptuous sin and worthy of death (Conner, 1988) However, Jesus accepted and demonstrated the claims of deity. Jesus, the son of God is indeed a deity; God manifests in the flesh, The true believer can only exclaim with Apostle Thomas to say "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

3.7.8 The Evidence of Resurrection

To some opposition or critics, the approach I have been taking to demonstrate Jesus' deity that is the evangelical position from textual approach may appear to be uncritical. That is to use the Bible without taking into consideration the findings of the more radical methods of Biblical investigation or more analysis. However, I want us to look at another way to establish Jesus' deity. This will not enmesh us in contesting critical issues point for point. Let us turn to the Christology of Wolfhart Pannenburg as it is developed in his book called "Introducing Christian Doctrine".

This Christology is based on the view of revelation and history. The whole of revelation and history can be said to have taken place only when history has run its course because it is only then that we can see where it has been going. The resurrection, however, because it is the end of history, has taken place poetically, and does give us revelation, even within time.

The resurrection must be understood from the viewpoint of the historical tradition of which it's a part. Whereas it is commonplace to regard an event as a constant and its interpretation as a variable changing with time. The meaning of an event is the meaning attached to it by the persons into whose history it comes. It is pointed out by Annenberg so say Erickson that to the Jews of Jesus' time, his resurrection would have signified divinity (Erickson, 1991). This can be traced back to the appearance of the resurrection of Christ which Paul classified as the emergence of Christianity.

Erickson agrees with Annenberg on the emergence of Christianity as Paul puts it. He goes further to say the emergence of Christianity can be understood only if one examines it in light of the eschatological hope for a resurrection of the dead then that which is designated is a historical event, even if we do not know anything particular about it.

Within the earliest Christian community, there was a reliable testimony to the empty tomb. The Jewish polemic against the Christian message of Jesus' resurrection has no claim at all that Jesus' grave was not empty (Ibid, Book). We the Evangelicals have adequate evidence to establish the historicity of the resurrection, which is proof in itself of Jesus' deity.

Apart from the empty tomb was a consistent and unanimous testimony by the apostles (Acts 2:32), an amazing change in the character and attitude of all the followers of Jesus (Acts 5: 29 - 42, Acts 12:1 -2); the remarkable conversion of Paul of Tarsus (Acts 9: 1- 19); Jesus answers prayers up to today. There was a change in worship from the seventh day of the week and one of the most obvious proofs of the resurrection is the fact that the Roman guards who were assigned to guard Christ's tomb. (Matt. 28:11-15) The resurrection proves to us that Jesus Christ is the God-Man, that is, the man who was God and

the God who became a man (O'Donovan, 1996). These are genuine proofs to authenticate the deity of Jesus Christ.

3.8 Evangelical View on the Humanity of Christ

The issue or topic of Christ's humanity does not, in some way, arouse quite the attention and controversy that his deity does. It seems to be something of a self-evidence matter, for whatever Jesus was, he must surely have been human. Nowadays Jesus' humanity has not received the close and extensive attention paid to his deity, which has been a major topic of dispute between fundamentals and modernists. Yet, historically, the topic of Jesus' humanity has played at least as important a role in theological dialogue as has his deity, particularly in the earliest years of the church. In practical terms, it has in some ways posed a greater danger to orthodox or evangelical theology.

3.8.1 Biblical Evidence

First, Jesus Christ was man, in the full psychological sense, sharing truly and fully in the condition of our empirical humanity, sin only excepted. The perfect life was at the same time a true human life. He was no archangel, or demigod, playing a human role to edify us: for verily he took not on him the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham (Heb 2:16). In Purkiser words concerning Richard I, Jesus was "a man living upon victuals (Purkiser, 1978). Jesus ate and drank. He knew hunger, thirst, and weariness; he was tempted as we are tempted, his heart knew the bitterness of grief and disappointment. He was crucified, dead and buried.

The New Testament speaks with one voice, "Behold the man!". The essential truth is that "it beloved him to be made like unto his brethren" (Heb, 2:17). He needed no one to "testify of man (John 2:25). Let us now turn to these Biblical pieces of evidence systematically since we have dealt with them in a general sense concerning the humanity of Jesus Christ.

3.8.2 Physical Human Nature

There is ample biblical evidence that the man Jesus was a fully human person, not lacking any of the essential elements of humanity that are found in each of us. The first thing to take into consideration is that he had a fully human body. He was born. He did not descend from heaven and suddenly appear upon the earth but was conceived in the womb of a human mother and nourished prenatal like any other child. Jesus also had a typical family tree, as is indicated by the genealogies in Matthew 1 and Luke 1. He had ancestors and presumably received genes from his forebears (Erickson, 1991).

Jesus' life also indicates that he had a physical human nature. It is said in the scripture (Luke 2:52) that he increased in wisdom and stature, and favor with God and man. He grew physically and felt with food and water. To some degree, Jesus had the same physical limitations as other human beings, for he had the same physiology. Thus, he experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2), he experienced thirst (John 19:28). In addition, he experienced fatigue when traveling (John 4:6), and presumably on many other occasions as well.

A further indication of Jesus' humanity is his use of the word man about himself. A clear statement is in John 8: 4; when Jesus addressed the Jews at the time they asked to kill him. The apostle Paul also uses the word man in reference to Jesus. In his argument regarding original sin, he compares Jesus and Adam and uses the expression "One man" of Jesus three times (Romans 5:15, 17, 19).

About Christ's physical nature, John said in John (1:14) "The word became flesh and dwelt among us". John was particularly emphatic on this matter in his first letter, one of the purposes of which was to combat a heresy, which denied that Jesus had been genuinely human (Ibid, Book)

Jesus had a physical body is evident in the fact that his contemporaries had a genuine physical perception of him. It is said vividly in 1 John 1:1 “That which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life”. John is here establishing the reality of the human nature of Jesus.

3.8.3 Psychological Human Nature

If Jesus was a human being in a physical, he was also genuinely human in the psychological sense. Scriptures attribute to him the same sort of emotional intellectual qualities that are found in other humans. Jesus thought, reasoned, and felt human emotions. He loves (John 13:23), and he had compassion, and pity on those who were hungry, ill, or lost (Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20: 34). The Greek word used to denote his reaction literally means, “To be moved in one's internal organ”.

Contrary to his godly emotions, he shows astonishment in response to both positive and negative situations. He marveled at the faith of the centurion (Luke 7:9). He was in struggle and stress in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32 – 42). His cry on the cross "My God, My God, why have thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34), was a very human expression of loneliness. One of Jesus most human reactions occurred at the death of Lazarus; Jesus was troubled and wept (John 11:33, 35)

Turning to Jesus' intellectual qualities, he had some rather remarkable knowledge concerning the past, present, and future to a degree not available to ordinary man (Luke 9:47; John 4: 18; Luke 6:8, John 11:14). However, this knowledge was not without limits. He frequently asked questions, and the impression given by the gospel is that he asked because he did not know and needed information (Ibid, Book). We see such in (John 6:5).

On the religious aspects, he attended synagogue, and did so on a regular or habitual basis (Luke 4:16). His prayer life was a clear indication of human dependence upon the Father (Luke 6:12). Jesus' disciples and authors of the New Testament, there was no question to them of Jesus humanity. They were able to verify for themselves that he was human. On one occasion after Jesus' resurrection, there was some question as to whether he might be a spirit; he invited them to ascertain the genuineness of his humanity for themselves. He showed his hands and feet to them saying that the spirit has no flesh and bones (Luke 24:39).

3.8.4 The Sinlessness of Christ

There was no original sin in Christ's human nature. Inherited depravity is a consequence of the natural descent from Adam: but Christ's birth was miraculous, and hence without the natural or inherited corruption that belongs to the fallen nature of man. Sin does not belong to original human nature, and the nature which Christ took, was untainted by sin.

Christ's birth was not a birth of sinful nature because of God the Father but it was a conjoining of human nature and deity (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946). Christ did not sin, he did not die, and neither was guile found in his mouth (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 7:26). We see that Christ had perfectly sinless and incorruptible humanity in the testimony of the Old and New Testament scriptures. Kevin Conner said that Christ needed to be sinless to be the savior of the world. If he had not been sinless, he would have had to die for his sin and would have needed redemption himself (Conner, 1988).

The question the opposing view or opposition always asks is “Is a person who does not sin truly human?” If we say no, we are maintaining that sin is part of the essence of human nature. Such a view is complete heresy by any person who believes that God is the cause of sin because he created humankind with nature, which is essentially evil. On the contrary, sin is not part of the essence of human nature. "Are we as human as Jesus instead of Is Jesus as human as we are?" as Erickson puts it, the human

nature that each of us possesses is not pure human nature. The true humanity created by God has in our case been corrupted and spoiled. He went further that there have been only three pure human beings: Adam and Eve (before the fall) and Jesus. All the rest of us are but broken, corrupted versions of humanity.

Jesus is not only as human as we are, he is more human. Our humanity is not a standard by which we are to measure him. His humanity, true and unadulterated, is the standard, by which we are to be measured (Erickson, 1991). He experienced everything and was in all his humanity like us today.

3.8.5 The Suffering of Christ

As humans, Christ was mortal and suffered: for those who are born die. Christ as a human suffered and met death while still a young man, under thirty-five years old (Clarke, 1948). His death was inevitable. His death, by crucifixion, was the death that was commonly inflicted by the Romans upon criminals of the lower class and was, therefore, most shameful. Christ suffered in that his human nature was subject to the natural weaknesses' incident to mankind, such as hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, and suffering.

Alister E. McGrath reflected on the basic evangelical theories on the humanity of Christ put forth by G.S. Steinhart, IG Toiner, and others that through suffering the person who died upon the cross was a human being, and the impact of that death is upon human beings. That impact takes the form of inspiration and encouragement to model ourselves upon the moral example set by Jesus himself (McGrath, 1997). Death has belonged to man since the fall of Eden. When Jesus took our sin upon himself, in his own body on the tree, he suffered the wages of sin which is death (1 Peter 2:24; Gen. 2:17; Heb. 9:27; Luke 23:33; Heb. 2:9). His death was the supreme purpose of the incarnation, to be followed by his resurrection.

Finally. We see that Jesus suffered physically and died, just like everyone else. This is evident in the entire crucifixion story, but perhaps most clearly in John 19:34. It is read that a spear was thrust into his sides, and water and blood mingled came out, indicating that he had already died as a human. He had surely felt physical suffering as you and I would when he was beaten and the crown of thorns was placed on his head and nails were driven through his hand or wrists and feet. With all of those proofs, it would be illogical for anyone to still deny the true humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3.9 Evangelical View on The Unity of Christ's Nature

We have put forth and discussed the scriptural proofs of the deity of Christ and his humanity, in other words, his perfect manhood.

Now we must consider the evangelical position on the union of these two natures in one person. This union was affected by the incarnation, and the result was a theanthropic person or the conditions of divine and human existence. In this section, we will consider the nature of incarnation, the one person and two natures of Jesus Christ.

3.9.1 The Nature of Incarnation

The incarnation was not a form of transmutation or transubstantiation. The scripture does not teach that the second person of the trinity ceased to be God when he became man. When it is said that the word was made flesh, it is equivalent to saying Christ came in the flesh, thereby assuming the experience of men (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946).

In the incarnation natures, Paul said in Philippians 2:6-8 that Christ made himself of no reputation. He is saying that Christ emptied himself. This is spoken of as the kenosis theory in theology. The expression "Emptied himself" comes from the Greek word "Kenoo" meaning "to make empty". This is misunderstood by many people that at the point of incarnation Christ emptied himself of his deity and

divine attributes. This means he ceased to be God at a point in time. The proper concept of this emptiness as Conner puts it, is that Christ only laid aside his prerogatives as God to act as God, and became dependent upon the Father's will for any exercise, operation, or manifestation of these attributes (Conner, 1988). This in other words means Christ added humanity to his deity. He never ceased to be God. When we take Colossians 2:9 into account, it says "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily".

It was the word or logos, the second person of the trinity alone, who became incarnate, and not the whole of the Godhead. To teach that the whole of the Godhead became incarnate surely leads to the error of partipassianism in which it is said that "the father suffered or the father died". This idea arose during the third century and was associated with Noetus, Proxeas, and Sabellius (McGrath, 1997).

The incarnation was a union of the divine person with human nature, and not with a human person. The human nature, which he assumed, acquired personality by its union with him. This incarnation marked the beginning of the theanthropic person. The God-man was a new person as well as a unique person. There was no God-man until the union of the two natures in time.

The whole process was necessary as the ground of our Lord's redemptive work. After he assumed human nature, he had the full experience of mankind, thinking as men think. The union of the two natures was necessary in order that Christ might become our merciful and faithful high priest.

3.9.2 The One Person

The possession of two natures does not involve a double personality, for the ground of the person is the eternal logos and not human nature. Christ, therefore, uniformly speaks of himself in the singular person. A person may consist of one, two, or three natures. A Trinitarian person, as that of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit, has but one nature, that of the divine substance or essence. A human person has two natures - a material body and an immaterial soul. Christ as the theanthropic person may be said to have three natures - the divine logos or word, a human soul, and a human body. The latter two are combined in thought when speaking of Christ as having two natures, but these are not joined in a mere eternal or mechanical manner as H.O Wiley puts it. It is a personal union and therefore close and inseparable (Wiley H. O. & T., 1946). In Christ, we are to believe that the union between the divine and human natures was even closer than that of what exists or the closeness between the soul and the body in man.

In the personality of Jesus Christ, the God-Man primarily depended upon the divine nature. We see that it was not destroyed by death. At the death of Christ, there was a temporary separation between the divine logos and either the human soul or body. Between Christ's death and resurrection, both were still united with the logos or divine word. It is because of that Jesus' body never saw corruption (Ibid, Book).

3.9.3 The Two Natures

Now we have come to the end of the exposition on the deity and humanity of Christ. The last point to look at here is the two natures of Jesus Christ. The unity of Christ's person finds its complementary truth in the diversity of the two natures. Here the Godhead and his manhood retain their respective properties and functions without an alteration of essence or mutual interference. H. O. Wiley said that while the acts and qualities of the divine or the human nature of Christ may be attributed to the theanthropic person, it might not be said that they can be attributed to each other (Ibid, Book). It should be noted that the properties which belong to nature are confined to it. A material substance can have only material properties, and an immaterial substance can only have spiritual properties. Similarly, human nature can have human properties while divine nature can only have divine properties. As we see it in Christ, however, nature, although heterogeneous, may belong to the same person.

The statement prepared by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D. Clearly defines the two natures of Jesus Christ. They stressed the points that Jesus Christ is to be confessed as the same (Person), that he is perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, very God and very man. This the same Jesus Christ, the only begotten son (of God) must be confessed in two natures, unconfused, immutably, indivisibly inseparably (United) and without distinction of nature being taken away by such union, but rather the peculiar property of each being preserved and being united in one person (Christ) (Walker, 1985).

This Chalcedonian creed has furnished the church with a true basis for its Christology and was accepted as orthodox by both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Protestants reject the word Theotokos or mother of God. The two natures of Christ are not only affirmed, but their relations to each other are also adjusted in four main points without mixture, without change, without division, and without separation.

If and only if we hold true faith, we must believe that the union of two natures in Christ does not confuse or mix them to destroy their distinctive properties. The deity of Christ is as pure deity as before and after the incarnation, and the human nature of Christ is also pure and simple human nature except sin. We must reject as unorthodox and unevangelical: any theory that would convert one nature into the other, the Eutychianism: any theory that divides the person of Christ into two selves, Nestorianism or the blending of the two natures, which is neither God nor man, Apollinarianism. We must hold to a union of the two natures that is inseparable. The union of humanity with the deity in Christ is indissoluble and eternal.

3.10 Hypothesis

My point here is that there has been the propagation of false doctrine concerning the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. This is because many of our Christian churches today are neglecting to teach the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. This is also because the pastors and Christian teachers who are responsible for teaching the other believers are not equipped theologically. There is a need for pastors and other Christians to engage in theological studies to enable them to know the basic evangelical or Biblical position when it comes to the deity and humanity of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Telling people that Jesus loves them and inviting them to our churches is not sufficient. They need to be established into the basic Evangelical belief that they will not be prey to the cults who are still propagating the misconception of the earlier heresies on the deity and humanity of Christ.

3.11 Assumption

I assume that, if there had been basic and adequate training of pastors and Christian members in our churches, especially on the true nature of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the confusion in the minds of the so-called Christians who are many and prey to the cults would have been minimized.

I, therefore, assume that with adequate training of pastors, other leadership, and members in our churches today, particularly in Liberia and as well as in theological institutions with an emphasis on the true nature of Jesus Christ, this will save many from following heretical teaching and getting lost for eternity.

4.0 Conclusion

From the four major earlier heretical teachings on the deity of Jesus Christ, there are so many cults that developed and propagating these same heresies in our society today. The mystery of Jesus' deity is a bit difficult for the finite mind to understand. However, scripture clearly teaches that Jesus is truly God. It is

clearly stated in scripture and mentioned earlier that as God, Jesus was self-conscious, he had divine attributes, and names did work that non-divine cannot do, he was worshipped, he made claims to deity and relationship, at last, we see his resurrection proven his deity.

Some theologians also rejected the humanity of Jesus, which seems easy to understand. By denying the humanity of Jesus Christ, other heresies developed basically the Docetism and Apollinarianism. The teachings on this subject are still carried on by some sects today.

There are many biblical evidences to show that Jesus is truly man. He has physical and psychological human nature. He was tempted but remained sinless. In fact, he suffered. This shows that he is man.

The unity of Christ's nature is very essential to this branch of theology known as Christology. There are some heretical views on this subject such as Nestorianism, Eutychianism, Monothelism and so on which seem to appeal to the mind but they are still heretical. Their teaching does not give the true nature of Jesus Christ.

The scripture teaches that Jesus Christ, who is the second person of the Godhead, came in the flesh. When he came in the flesh does not make him cease as God. He was still God at the same time he was man. He is not two persons but one. In his person, the two natures are combined.

Conclusively, Jesus Christ is truly and properly God and truly and properly man. He is the God almighty and eternal, the second person of the trinity and savior of the world. He is a man born of a virgin who lived on planet Earth, died, resurrected on the third day, and ascended to heaven. Any true Christian must ascribe to these scripture teachings. Any teaching contrary to this is heretical and should be rejected as no Christian.

4.1 Recommendation

As I said over and again, the basic fundamental teaching on the deity and humanity of Christ is needed in our churches today. We also need such a solid teaching on this subject in our theological institutions and where the Bible is taught. Such training in this subject should involve pastors, lay leaders, and every member of our churches.

Knowing that Christology is cardinal to Christian theology and to the Church of Jesus Christ as a whole. I recommend that:

1. Every church should lay emphasis on the subject of the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ out of which comes our redemption.
2. Theological institutions should evaluate the knowledge of every person who wants to study the subject of Christ's deity and humanity when the students are enrolling and when they are going out.
3. There should exist an organized forum at theological institutions where key theological issues will be discussed including the subject "The deity and humanity of Christ".
4. Every church should develop or produce tracts to send out and use in their churches as part of their evangelism and discipleship effort that will include this subject "Christ's deity and humanity".

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