



Scan to know paper details and
author's profile

The Concept of Christology: Exploring the Theological Understanding of the Divinity and Humanity of Christ

Desmond Tutu Osei-Acheampong

Adventist University of Africa

ABSTRACT

Throughout the history of the early church, Christian theology has consistently recognized the concept of Christology. The topic of the divinity and humanity of Christ has attracted a wide range of attention among theologians. Despite this recognition, there have been some conflicts specifically related to Christological theology. The study rests on the nature and understanding of the divinity and the humanity of Christ. The present study will address the understanding of the theological concept of Christology and how we perceive the coexistence of human and divine aspects. Thus, exploring the human and the divine attributes of Jesus Christ in dialogue with contemporary experts. The Christological theology emphasizes the importance of Jesus Christ in Christian theological contemplation. Christology addresses the fundamental inquiry of "Who is Jesus" due to skeptics and limited believers. It also stresses the need for investigating of Christ's divine and human nature, similar to the disciples' question about Jesus' obedience to every circumstance, including death, resurrection, and salvific value.

Keywords: christology, theology, divinity, humanity, christ.

Classification: LCC Code: BT198

Language: English



Great Britain
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573392

Print ISSN: 2515-5784

Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities & Social Science

Volume 25 | Issue 10 | Compilation 1.0



© 2025, Desmond Tutu Osei-Acheampong. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncom-mercial 4.0 Unported License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), permitting all noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The Concept of Christology: Exploring the Theological Understanding of the Divinity and Humanity of Christ

Desmond Tutu Osei-Acheampong

ABSTRACT

Throughout the history of the early church, Christian theology has consistently recognized the concept of Christology. The topic of the divinity and humanity of Christ has attracted a wide range of attention among theologians. Despite this recognition, there have been some conflicts specifically related to Christological theology. The study rests on the nature and understanding of the divinity and the humanity of Christ. The present study will address the understanding of the theological concept of Christology and how we perceive the coexistence of human and divine aspects. Thus, exploring the human and the divine attributes of Jesus Christ in dialogue with contemporary experts. The Christological theology emphasizes the importance of Jesus Christ in Christian theological contemplation. Christology addresses the fundamental inquiry of "Who is Jesus" due to skeptics and limited believers. It also stresses the need for investigating of Christ's divine and human nature, similar to the disciples' question about Jesus' obedience to every circumstance, including death, resurrection, and salvific value.

Keywords: christology, theology, divinity, humanity, christ.

Author: Desmond Tutu Osei-Acheampong, Adventist University of Africa, Ongata Rongai, Private Bag Mbagathi 00503, Nairobi-Kenya.

I. INTRODUCTION

Many theological disputes have surrounded the characteristics of God the Son, His divine nature, and His humanity; hence it is crucial to undertake a methodical study of Christology. Daniel L. Migliore asserts that Christology is not the

entirety of Christian doctrine, but rather the foundational basis from which all other aspects are derived and analyzed the doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ. The critical examination of our fundamental principle is belief in Him. Migliore has explicitly stated the Apostles' Creed articulates our unwavering belief in Christ: "I have faith in Jesus." Jesus Christ, the exclusive Son of God, our sovereign. The Bible affirms that Jesus is the Messiah and the realization of the divine agreement concluded by God with His followers. The prior knowledge of Christ's identity is necessary to understand the advantages we derive from receiving His gifts. Christology comprises more than a simple examination or theoretical understanding of Jesus.

According to Daniel Nicholas and Stanley Horton, the redemption of humanity by God through the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ unveils the divinity and humanity of Christ. Thus, from an exegetical perspective, the presence of God's redemption on earth is through Jesus Christ. Thus, Daniel and Stanley disclosed that Jesus Christ possessed the qualities of both divinity and humanity.

Roy Adams unpacks that personal identity is shaped by an individual's historical background and the nature of Christ. The ancient church declared Jesus Christ's identity as described in Gospel accounts. The passage anticipates Jesus' redemption and extraordinary actions as a foreshadowing of the Messiah. The concept of Christ's person and activity reveals his inherent bimodal nature, combining deity and humanity.

Oscar Cullman projects the characteristics of the Christological concept, acknowledging the presence of God initially. This sensitive concept often leads to contrasting ideas and diverse

beliefs. The genuine and Living God is explicitly discussed, with the Bible being the divine originator of the cosmos. Recognizing God's characteristics is grounded in faith and aligned with Hebrews 11:3.

William J. Abraham argues that belief in Christ's nature is fundamental rather than epistemically basis, and can be maintained without evidence as a specific belief rooted in a sound noetic framework. Abraham unfolds that while there are compelling reasons for God's existence, they are not crucial for rationality. He suggests that a comprehensive understanding of divine qualities is necessary to demonstrate divine favor towards humanity, the church, and oneself. This personal acknowledgment of divine favor is not solely derived from an academic or theoretical perspective but also from the soul.

From Marcus Borg and Nicholas Wright, the Pentecostals' worship and testimony of God's characteristics arise from their soul, as they believe in the singularity of their deity, the Lord, as the supreme deity of the universe. This scholarly article will be divided into six sections: the divine nature of Christ, his human nature and interconnectedness, God the Son and the Trinity, Christ's divine mission, the ultimate goal of emulating humanity, further elaboration on the divine, and the revelation of Christ's divine nature, demonstrating His divine nature.

The paper uses a comprehensive methodology of a biblical-theological analysis to glean various literature materials. The research paper will opine that Jesus Christ possesses both spiritual and carnal tendencies. The study will help the readers to understand that the nature of Christ is the center of humans' salvation. The research paper will examine the doctrine of Christ covering areas such as the background of the study, attributes that depict the nature of Christ, narratological concept of the nature of Christ, divinity of Christ, humanity of Christ, God the Son in the Trinity, humanity in Christ's divine purpose, Seventh-day Adventist Church's stance on the divinity and humanity of Christ, Biblical position on the divinity and humanity of Christ, analysis and evaluation, and conclusion.

II. THE ATTRIBUTES THAT DEPICT THE NATURE OF CHRIST

Russell E. Joyner underscores the nature of Christ as independent assumptions or personal aspirations. Thus, Joyner fashioned deities that aligned with their lifestyles and aspirations, resulting in futility and despondent hearts. He posted that Jesus Christ possessed both divine and human qualities.

Stephen R. Holmes explores the Scriptures to understand Christ's identity, depicting five issues in discussing the divinity and humanity of Christ. The first is derivation, which involves determining which terms to use to describe Christ's qualities. The second issue is span, which involves establishing Christ's holiness, eternity, and immutability. The third issue is analogies, which involve distinguishing between Christ's goodness and human goodness. Finally, Holmes unlocks the concept of the external standards to measure the goodness of Christ's and His perfection respectively. Holmes argues that human language is insufficient for articulating concepts related to Christ, posing a linguistic dilemma concerning word selection. It unfolds the univocal and equivocal use of words that are crucial in defining Christ's goodness. Holmes suggests that Christ's goodness is identical to God His life, making Christ self-existent. The doctrine of divine perfections, including Greek impositions like impassibility, simplicity, and immutability, has been argued to contradict the Trinity, Christology, and soteriology, leading to defining divine attributes based on the Scriptures.

From Randy Maddox, John Wesley's analysis of Christ's essence stresses divine traits and perfections, differentiating between the natural and moral properties of Christ. He posits that Christ possesses God's primary natural attributes are eternity and infinitude, signifying His self-existent essence. Wesley's theological pursuits and convictions underscore the significance of divine direction and the necessity of exalting Christ's glory, honor, and strength in worship.

God is a Spirit, eternal, everlasting, and perpetual, predating creation. He is all-powerful and capable

of accomplishing divine goals. God fashioned the heavens and earth through the Word and demonstrated His immense might in Christ. He is omnipresent throughout the universe and is the study of Christ's divinity and humanity. God is omniscient, aware of our thoughts and intentions, and the origin of all wisdom (Psalm 104:24).

Hans Frei argues that God's moral characteristics are primarily characterized by compassion, purity, forgiveness, sacredness, and graciousness. Frei stressed God's kindness as more fundamental than justice. God is reliable, veracious, and benevolent, as demonstrated in Psalms. He is patient, slow to anger, and abounds in love and forgiveness. Christ's love is considered sacred, and He is a source of comfort and guidance for believers. The concepts of grace and mercy represent God's unique nature and actions. Grace involves receiving unmerited gifts, while mercy safeguards us from retribution. God is sacred and distinct from sin, emphasizing the importance of sanctification and holiness.

III. NARRATOLOGICAL CONCEPT OF THE NATURE OF CHRIST

In the historical narratology of Jesus Christ, extensive discussions have emerged concerning His divinity and humanity. During this era, Jesus's disciples acknowledged Him as Immanuel, "God with us." Matthew 1:23 In contrast, the Pharisees and Sadducees regarded Him as merely human (Matt 26:65). After the ascension of Jesus and the death of the disciples, the church progressively faced challenges in understanding the character of Jesus and His connection with the Father, resulting in the development of new doctrines and diverse perspectives on this matter. The Ebionites alleviated this tension by denying the authentic or ontological divinity of Jesus, claiming that He was born to Joseph and Mary like any other human being.

He was intended to be the Messiah, albeit in a completely normal and human capacity, lacking any supernatural or special powers. Thus, the antithesis of Ebionism was Docetism, which asserted that "the divine Christ possessed no authentic human body; it was merely an illusion, a

phantasm, for if Christ died, he could not be God, and if he was God, he could not die."

In the Seventh-day movement, the founders, previously affiliated with the Christian connection, introduced Arianism, also a concept regarding Jesus' pre-incarnational origin. This led them to assert that during His incarnation, Christ was both human and divine, viewing His death as a mere human sacrifice rather than a divine atonement. In His human essence, there exists no distinction whatsoever between Christ and humankind. This perspective elucidates the ontological character of Christ concerning humans' soteriology. While there is a consensus on the sinlessness of Jesus, there remains much disagreement concerning the nature of His humanity, specifically regarding whether He possessed the inherent tendencies of fallen human nature.

3.1 *The Divinity of Christ*

Andrew Ter Ern Loke's encounter with salvation and inner spiritual metamorphosis in his comprehension and evolution of the essence of Jesus Christ served to validate the teachings articulated in Scripture. Andrew Loke placed greater emphasis on the divinity of Christ than on humanity. He posited that the essence of Christ, his unwavering preoccupation was with the divine nature of Christ. Undoubtedly, the only christological heresies that elicited his direct condemnation were those that he concluded rejected the complete divinity of Christ. Loke laid much emphasis on Christ's divinity influenced his perspective on Christ's humanity.

Essentially, Loke's intense focus on the divinity of Christ constituted an articulation of his belief that 'God is the one who initiates our salvation. It is Christ's death that facilitated our forgiveness, redemption, and salvific value. In the Gospel of John, Christ's divinity is prominently demonstrated through the impactful introduction of the incarnate Word of God.

Hans Schwarz surveys grace as a gift from God based on the assertion that Jesus Christ is God, as indicated in John 1:1. Schwarz formulates the concept of "Triune Grace" by examining the

connection between Jesus and the Trinity. He posits that the object of grace is the Son of God who acts independently. There is no division of work among the three members of the Trinity who portray divine identity. Hence, the essence, characteristics, and actions of God the Father are the same and incorporated both in God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. More importantly, the divine nature of Jesus Christ is indisputable, reliable, and accurate. Karl Rahner rejected this divine nature and eliminated it as the fundamental basis concerning inspiration and revelation.

3.2 The Humanity of Christ

In John 1:1, Christ is presented as the Word of God, and in verse 14, the Word incarnates and resides among us, signifying Christ's humanity. Kathryn Tanner opines that individuals are fashioned in the likeness of God, and comprehending this is essential for grasping the significance of Jesus Christ. Humans resemble God more than other beings, and Jesus embodies the image of God through incarnation. Tanner stresses the hypostatic union of incarnation as the perfect human representation of God. Through oneness with the non-human, Jesus embodies the quintessential image of God. Thus, the second person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is intrinsically linked to Him, representing the first person of the Trinity.

According to Thomas Torrance, the image of God explores the concept of human beings in the Psalm, specifically in verses 4-6. Torrance asserts that Jesus, the "Son of Man," is incarnated in humanity and made a little lower than God. He is then crowned with glory and majesty, seated at the right hand of God the Father, and all creation is under His feet. He surveys the significance of the Son of God's incarnation, arguing that the human nature of Jesus Christ of the Creed contradicts Arians' theological perspective assertions. The second person of the Trinity was incarnated for our redemption, as articulated in the Creed. The incarnation is a singular occurrence, as Christ arrived to reinstate the intent of God's creation. The restoration remains ongoing since Apostle John asserts that

humankind shall be like God when Christ appears in His second coming.

From Wilhelmus Brakel, the concept of participating in human nature is emphasized through Christ's conception and birth, which are shared events with humanity.

Brakel's Christology does not argue for Christ's humanity but assumes he was the Son, the second person of the Trinity. He believed that Christ incarnated as man, concealing his divine traits. Again, Brakel asserted that Christ's humanity was evident in Mark 13:32 and Luke 2:52, where he classified the second coming as applicable solely to his human nature. Thus, the conviction in Christ's humanity was evident in his writings and teachings. The doctrine of the divinity and humanity is the heart of the Christian faith. Christian faith depends on Jesus' being God in human flesh and not an extraordinary human. The divinity and humanity of Christ are attached to Jesus' self-consciousness. Some theologians argue that Jesus did not make any claim to be God, but He is both spirit and flesh. Thus, Jesus Christ preached about the Father, but not for Himself. It is alleged that Jesus did not claim He is the God, but there is someone lesser than God.

3.3 God the Son in the Trinity

According to Robert Jenson, the Father is the unreturned giver, while the Son and Spirit are distinct gifts. The Son represents the external manifestation of grace, while the Spirit signifies the inward endowment. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are interconnected, with Christ's work emanating from the Father and conveyed through the Holy Spirit. Jenson emphasizes the importance of understanding God through the doctrine of the Trinity. He argues that the Triune nature of God is a mystery beyond our understanding, and neglecting this could lead to the church losing its identity. Thus, humankind can comprehend the Father and Son through revelation from the Bible. Jesus praised the Father for concealing these matters from the wise and discerning and emphasized that no one understands the Father except the Son.

3.4 Humanity in Christ's Divine Purpose

Tony Lane posits that knowledge of God not only requires faith but that faith also incessantly pursues fuller comprehension of Jesus Christ. Christians seek to comprehend their beliefs, aspirations, and moral affections. More significantly, humankind certainly grasps our position as human beings within the framework of Christology. Thus, the Bible projects many significant declarations on the divinity and humanity of Christ. Consequently, we no longer regard anyone from a worldly perspective; although we once knew Christ in a worldly manner, we now know Him differently. Even though, Jesus Christ possesses the qualities of humans, His human tendencies project the divine purpose.

According to Frank B. Holbrook, in the Bible, human beings recognized Jesus Christ in His humanity and He was slightly inferior to God and adorned with glory (Psalm 8). Therefore, we now recognize the resurrected Christ, who is at the right hand of His majesty. This understanding is based on God's reconciliation through Christ. Human beings have been transformed into a new creation in Christ, a unique position in the Trinity. Holbrook emphasizes the human nature of Christ, highlighting his unity with humanity and being human in facets of life. This rationale for Christ's triumph over darkness and evil is based on his incarnation in human form, experiencing and participating in our existence from birth to death. From Erwin Lutzer, Christ has benevolently bestowed upon humanity the gift to partake in its shared existence while allowing humankind to partake in Christ's glory. The Apostle Paul unveils a pivotal passage regarding our identity in Christ as humans (Romans 8:16-18). The Spirit of God testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, His heirs, and fellow heirs with Christ. With this Jesus Christ bears with all humanity and shares sentiments with all our afflictions and hardships.

IV. SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH'S STANCE ON THE DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST

The Seventh-day Adventist Church persists in confronting substantial theological difficulty, especially about the nature of Christ's person. Despite the persistence of this issue over the years and the emergence of new insights, substantial arguments on the nature of Christ endure. The dispute within our church concerning the relationship between the nature of Christ, sin, sanctification, and perfection has endured for decades and shows no signs of resolution. Kenneth Gage argues that Jesus adopted our complete human nature after the fall caused by Adam's transgression. They contest the claim that Christ may have represented the unfallen character by utilizing passages from Ellen G. White and doing a biblical interpretation of Hebrew texts and analogous verses. The alternate viewpoint asserts that Christ has an unfallen nature, a concept that has recently gained popularity among several Adventists, who contend that Christ came in this pristine condition.

Norman Gulley addressed Adventist theology's issue of the nature of Christ. He questioned whether Christ took pre- or post-fall human nature if He was affected by the Fall of Adam and Eve if He accepted sinless human nature, and if He vicariously took upon Himself fallen human nature. Gulley explains the Man of Sin in Romans 7:1, focusing on the law of sin and Christian turmoil. According to Norman Gulley, humankind can only overcome this dilemma by attaining the complete infilling of the Spirit, as demonstrated by Jesus. He rigorously argues that Jesus was the only person born and baptized by the Holy Spirit.

Woodrow Whidden asserts that Jesus was born of sinful flesh but remained without sin. This brings about the concept of the nature of Christ's fallen. Erickson unpacks that the virgin birth (Matt. 1:16, 18-25; Luke 1:26-28; 3:23) denotes His birth from a human mother, confirming His identity and connection with humanity as the "Son of Man" (Matt. 8:20; 24:27). The analogy clarified in Romans 5 and Hebrews 2:11, 14, 16-18, which

demonstrate the comparison between Adam and Christ. Paul concedes that Jesus assumed the sinful nature of humanity (Romans 8:3). Whidden explores the nature of Christ's fallen. To comprehend the nature Christ adopted upon His entrance on Earth, humankind must examine the purpose of His coming, as expressed by Whidden. Thus, Christ descended to Earth to rectify Satan's distortions and allegations, projecting the substitute surety and model for fallen humanity. Jesus Christ became our alternative, the pioneering figure, and the paragon of humanity, achieving fallen nature through the example of Jesus Christ.

Joseph Ellet Waggoner debated and supported the nature of Christ's fallen. Waggoner affirmed that Jesus Christ was created in the form of sinful flesh, suggesting that He embodied all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies characteristic of fallen humanity (John 1:14; Rom. 8:3, 4). He emphatically opined that Christ was fashioned of the seed of David according to the flesh. David acknowledged the full spectrum of human desires, as he proclaimed, behold, I was sharpened in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. He clarifies that Christ took on human form to redeem humanity; consequently, He was made akin to sinful man, as it is sinful man that He came to redeem. Russel Standish radically stressed that Jesus Christ has the strength and power to conquer death. Death has no authority over an immaculate entity, like Adam in Eden; likewise, it could not have affected Christ had the Lord not placed upon Him the sins of mankind. Therefore, He contends that because He was tempted in the same manner as we are and participated in our human nature in every imaginable respect (Hebrews 2:16-18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal 4:4, 5; Heb. 2:18; 4:15, 16; Heb. 5:2). Humankind undermines Christ's divine essence and subjects Him to fallibility. He disclosed that through His vulnerability, He could prevail, be spotless, and overcome similar obstacles by placing our complete reliance on Him. Thus, Christ's session at God's right hand, His high priestly ministry, and the last confrontation of His saints with Satan culminated in their victorious triumph over sin. This indicates that in the

ultimate generation, the people of God (saints) will exhibit immaculate, impeccable qualities without sinning on this Earth.

The nature of Christ unfallen projects the nature of Christ. This concept emphasizes the character of Christ as the central focus, rather than shifting from ontology to soteriology or hematology. Soteriology must be determined in conjunction with the examination of ontology, chiefly concerning the nature of Christ. The human nature of Christ unfallen examines the notion of original sin, claiming that all post-fall individuals are involved in a disrupted connection with God (Rom. 14:23). This ultimately leads to the commission of immoral actions (1 John 3:4). Another assertion is the use of the Greek terms *homoima* or *homoioo* (likeness) instead of *isos* (same), unveiling that Jesus was merely analogous to other humans in possessing a sin affected physical body, but not identical. James Stevenson examines the appellations of Christ as "monogenes" and "protokos, signifying that His birth and essence are both unique and unmatched identities. Stevenson agrees with this argument and clarifies that it is widely recognized among Adventists concerning the humanity of Jesus.

It is crystal clear that Jesus embodies the essential characteristics of human nature and blood (Heb. 2:14); had a human mother (Gal. 4:4); adhered to the conventional laws of human development (Luke 2:52); and encountered physical limitations typical of ordinary humans, including hunger (Matt. 4:2; 21:18), thirst (John 4:7; 19:28), fatigue (Matt. 8:24), and weariness (John 4:6). Wolfhart Pannenberg asserts that Jesus Christ remained unfallen, albeit in a reduced state (Heb. 2:17). Hence, in every aspect, it was essential for him to be made akin to his brethren so that he might function as a compassionate and trustworthy high priest. Adams believes this can be contextually understood in other texts as not including all meanings. Paul's counsel to Timothy on the suitability of every creature for consumption, and Peter's endorsement of submission to human authority for the Lord's sake do not suggest a literal interpretation but rather convey a significant understanding.

Thus, Christ was a genuine human being, vulnerable to the fluctuations, perils, and constraints that threaten us all. However, this does not suggest that He possesses impulses toward sin. Ellen White argued that Jesus needed to be a second Adam, not a descendant of Adam, to face greater temptations, as resisting them is more challenging than succumbing.

V. BIBLICAL POSITION ON THE DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Biblically speaking, God revealed Himself to humanity after Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden. After Adam and Eve defied God, God reconciled humanity to Himself. God communicated with humanity, established companionship, and demonstrated His strength by annihilating Sodom and Gomorrah. God has engaged with humanity through self-revelation and has persistently manifested Himself in various manners. Gerard Van Groningen explores the narrative of the Exodus to be the most remarkable direct embodiment of God's presence, splendor, and might. God established the nation of Israel to manifest Himself as the Anointed One and the Savior of humanity. Thus, the nature of Christ's humanity unlocks that He came in human form to redeem all humankind from our sins. This helps mankind to comprehend that if we fully rely on and trust in God we will gain salvation.

God profoundly cherished the world, granting His sole begotten Son so that all who believe in Him and not perish attain eternal life. Paul Tillich unpacks that the deity descended among humanity. Tillich unfolds a compelling analysis of human ignorance and blindness about recognizing God's qualities. Jesus Christ encountered conflicts and conspiracies to thwart His earthly ministry. Matthew and Mark unveil his robes in reaction to the statement of the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God. Jesus Christ revealed the mystery of the Kingdom of God and kept the identity of the Messiah.

According to Adrian Rodriguez, the identity of Jesus Christ existed on Earth as both fully God and fully man. This concept is revealed when Peter attains the revelation of the Messiah. Jesus

Christ's identity was a subject of skepticism throughout the centuries. Jesus attains the status of the revelation of the Son of God (Mat. 11:25). At His crucifixion, the enigma of salvation and liberation from sin was revealed. The self-disclosure of Jesus Christ occurred to Saul and John on Patmos. More significantly, Jesus Christ is ontological and soteriological in human nature, whereas He was functional in divinity. With this, Christ came to this earth in human identity, humbled Himself to die for all human beings, but He ministered through the unction of the Holy Spirit.

From Gerald O'Collins, the Revelation of Jesus Christ bestowed by God to reveal to His slaves the imminent events; transmitted through His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. John to the seven churches in Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is, who was, and who is to come, from the seven Spirits before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the sovereign of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has liberated us from our sins via His blood, and has established us as a kingdom and priests to His God and Father, be glory and reign forever and ever.

Thus, every eye shall behold Him, including those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will lament for Him. John the Revelator posits that Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega which implies the beginning and the end. According to Jurgen Moltmann, humankind can achieve unity with Christ; despite our human weaknesses, temptations, and capacity for sin regenerated and born again, with faith in Christ dwelling within us. Mankind can be completely aligned with the Father and directed by the Holy Spirit, thereby becoming similar to Jesus. Hence, human beings can attain sinless perfection if we fully rely on God.

VI. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The understanding of the divinity and humanity of Christ depicts Jesus' character as either fallen or unfallen and is evaluated from the perspective

of persons who are born again, regenerated, or sanctified. Many theologians opine that Jesus possessed a sinful nature, he contextualizes this notion from Paul's viewpoint (Heb. 2:17). This indicates Jesus Christ was made like an image of God, and possessed falling identities, but He did not sin.

Jesus assumed a fully human nature while simultaneously being divine. Consequently, in His corporeal form, He experienced human frailty, subjected to temptations akin to ours, with the potential for transgression. In this instance, Jesus Christ possessed an unblemished intellect, spirit, and volition, remaining perpetually aligned with the Father and guided by the Holy Spirit. Thus, He resembled the unfallen Adam.

The nature of Christ is a multifaceted issue that has been scrutinized by nearly all systematic theologians and researchers who go into this subject extensively. Thus, examining the essence of Christ will undoubtedly shape one's view on soteriology. Kwabena Donkor asserts, that an action-oriented hamartiology normally leads to a perfectionist soteriology, a concept echoed in the concept of the unfallen nature of Christ perspective. Kenneth Gage also reiterates that since Jesus did not sin, no individual should sin. This suggests and advocates for legalistic approaches to self-salvation, undermining dependence on and the essential role of Christ as the atoning sacrifice through whom salvation is achievable. Therefore, the soteriology of the unfallen nature does not perceive Jesus as an equal to be emulated in overcoming sin, unfolding that salvation is attained by meticulously mirroring the example of one who was wholly akin to us. It asserts that Jesus' substitute possesses deeper importance than simply serving as an example.

The Christian church acknowledges Christ's nature, permitting a range of perspectives on the divinity and humanity of Christ, thereby promoting its examination while rejecting any imposition of personal opinions on others. The church acknowledges that the argument has persisted for decades, even centuries, without resolving the diverse perspectives involved.

Donkor and Gage projected the unfallen nature of Christ, but a fallen perspective regarding the nature of Christ approaches the issue primarily through missiology, transitioning from ontology to soteriology. Conversely, proponents of the unfallen view examine it within the framework of hamartiology and soteriology to ascertain the ontological nature of Christ.

Ellen White posits that Jesus Christ's nature portrayed humanity, but not the propensity to sin. Despite Christ's human infirmities, Satan could not triumph over Christ. However, humans are sinful by nature, and White believed we must cleanse ourselves from all unrighteousness. Ellen White's belief in Christ's complete humanity emphasizes His obedience to God's Holy Law, not as a lesser God but as a man. On the strength of this, she considered Jesus as the global redeemer, demonstrating that a man can keep God's commandments through faith in God's power, making Him an example of what humanity can do. Christ's life demonstrated obedience, as He was not uniquely adapted to obey God's will. His sinless human nature did not give Him an advantage in dealing with temptation. Thus, Christ's identity with humanity is complete enough to avoid the unfair advantages of sinning.

In respect to the divinity and humanity of Christ, Christ possesses human tendencies and spiritual tenets. The church acknowledges that the Bible unequivocally reveals Jesus as God, human, and sinless, and hence agrees that what transpired within Mary's womb remains incomprehensible to humanity. Consequently, acknowledging the profundity and sanctity of this research paper, we must consistently realize that our perspectives are inherently restricted and that our assertions of comprehension should be marked by humility. Meanwhile, humankind must emphasize that the incarnation occurred not to provoke theological discourse among believers, but to enable the Son of God to die for us and liberate those who throughout their lives the sacrifice that God made for us. This leads to the atonement for our sins and the redemption human beings have received through faith in Jesus, freely accessible to us continual reliance on Christ, and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. I contend that one of the

problems contributing to this situation is our divergent opinions on the divinity and humanity of Christ in which I confirm that Christ is both fully spiritual and flesh.

VII. CONCLUSION

Tanner articulates the paramount anticipation of all time by quoting Augustine, who asserts that the true honor of man is the image and likeness of God, which is not preserved except by him through whom it is expressed. Tanner asserts that humans embody the image of God, strictly speaking, only when beholding God directly in heaven. The resemblance of God will be complete in this image when the vision of God is realized. The Apostle Paul posits that all humankind exhibits the image of Christ (1 John 3:2).

At the manifestation of Christ, we will be transformed to reflect his likeness, as we will perceive him in his authentic form. At Christ's revelation at the final trumpet of God, we shall ascend to heaven to meet the Lord. The teaching of the mystery of the theology of the divinity and humanity of Christ persistently burdens our souls as we prepare ourselves for the most momentous day in historic glorification. He is described as the one who was and is to come, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the Prince of Peace. Christology surveys Christ's everlasting nature and identity. He has granted humans as a new creation in Him. Humankind's ambition reconciles with Paul's passage which depicts that, for the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first, people living and endure will be assembled with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and shall be with the Lord forever (1 Thess.4:16-17).

It is a significant honor to draw near to Christ and to reign beside Him, as expressed in Revelation 20. The dual nature of Christ, encompassing both divinity and humanity, is most effectively expressed in the hymn located in Philippians 2:6-11. Jesus Christ existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be seized, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a

bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

In Christ's human form, He exhibited humility through obedience, culminating in death, specifically death on a cross. In the light of this, God elevated Him to the highest position and bestowed upon Him a name that exceeds all others, ensuring that in the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend, whether in heaven, on earth, or beneath the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

About Author

Pastor Desmond Tutu Osei-Acheampong is a Seventh-day Adventist Gospel Minister and Publishing Ministries and Global Mission Director at Ashanti Central Ghana Conference. Pastor Osei-Acheampong is a PhD Candidate in Biblical and Theological Studies at Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi-Kenya. He has his PhD studies in thematic emphasis in Systematic and New Testament Theology. Pastor Osei-Acheampong is a part-time lecturer who teaches religious courses at Valley View University, Kumasi Campus. Currently, he has authored fifteen articles and several book reviews. Finally, he has a strong Biblical Christian foundation which has impacted significantly contribution to his Gospel Ministries and lectureship.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Abraham, William J. *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology: The Existence of God*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007.
2. Adams, Roy. *The Nature of Christ: Help for a Church Divided Over Perfection*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1994.
3. Adrian Rodriguez, *Toward a Priestly Christology: A Hermeneutical Study of Christ's Priesthood*. London, UK: Lexington, 2018.
4. Bock, Darrell L. *Jesus According to Scripture: Restoring the Portrait from the Gospels*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 142.

5. Borg, Marcus and Nicholas T. Wright. *The Meaning of Jesus*. New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2007.
6. Brakel, Wilhemus. *The Christian's Reasonable Service*. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Book, 2011.
7. Cullman, Oscar. *The Christology of the New Testament*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1963.
8. Daniel, Nicholas R. and Stanley M. Horton. *Systematic Theology*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2007.
9. Donkor, Kwabena. *The Nature of Christ: The Soteriological Question*. Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2005.
10. Douglas, Hebert. *Jesus: The Benchmark of Humanity*. Nashville, TN: Southern Adventist University Press, 1977.
11. Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1985.
12. _____. *The Word Became Flesh*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991.
13. Frei, Hans. *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1975.
14. Gage, Kenneth. *What Human Nature Did Jesus Take? Fallen*. Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1994.
15. Gronington, Van Gérard. *Messianic Revelation in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990.
16. Gulley, Norman. *Systematic Theology: Creation, Christ and Salvation*. Berrien Spring, MI: Andrews University Press, 2012.
17. Holbrook, Frank B. *The Atoning Priesthood of Jesus Christ*. Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Society, 1994.
18. Holmes, Stephen R. *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology: The Attributes of God*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007.
19. James Stevenson, James and Kidd B. J. *Creeches, Councils and Controversies: Documentations Illustrative of the History of the Church A.D. 337-461*. New York: Seabury Press, 1966.
20. Jenson, Robert W. *Triune Grace Dialogue*. *A Journal of Theology*, Volume 41, November 4, Winter 2002.
21. Joyner, Russel E. *Systematic Theology*. Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1994.
22. Lane, Tony. *A Concise History of Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Michigan: Baker Academic, 2006.
23. Loke, Ern Ter Andrew. *The Origin of Divine Christology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
24. Lutzer, Erwin. *The Doctrines That Divide: A Fresh Look at the Historic Doctrines That Separate Christians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1998.
25. Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994.
26. Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 3rd. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014.
27. Moltmann, Jurgen. *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993.
28. O'Collins, Gerald. *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009.
29. Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Jesus: God and Man*. London, UK: SCM, 1970.
30. Paul Tillich, Paul. *Systematic Theology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1967.
31. Peckham, John. *God with US: An Introduction to Adventist Theology*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2023.
32. Pfandl, Gerhard. "The Doctrine of the Trinity among Seventh-day Adventists," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 1 (2006): 160-179.
33. Rahner, Karl. *The Trinity: Translated by Joseph Donceel*. London and New York: Burns and Gates, 1970.
34. Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series, Volume III*. New York, NY: Cosimo Classics, 2007.
35. Schwarz, Hans. *The Trinity: The Central Mystery of Christianity*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017.
36. Standish, Russel R. *Our Savior: Human or Divine*. Rapidan, VA: Hartland, 2010.

37. Tanner, Kathryn. *Christ the Key: Current Issues in Theology*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
38. Torrance, Thomas F. *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic and Paternoster, 2008.
39. Waggoner, Ellet Joseph. *Christ and His Righteousness*. Oakland Cal: Pacific Press Publishing Company, 1890.
40. Whidden, Woodrow W. *Ellen White on the Humanity of Christ: A Chronological Study*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1997.
41. Whidden, Woodrow W., Jerry Moon, and Reeve, John W. *The Trinity: Understanding God's Love, His Plan of Salvation and Christian Relationships*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002.
42. White, Ellen G. *The Great Controversy*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950.
43. _____. *The Desire of Ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940.

This page is intentionally left blank