

CHRISTOLOGY

Introduction

Christology is the study of the person and work of Christ.

Why study Christ?

That question will be answered as the fundamental study method is defined.

With any study it is important to establish the basic principles for how information gathered will be processed and understood. In scriptural studies this is called 'hermeneutics', and provides what can be considered to be the 'interpretive lens' through which all subject matter will be viewed. What lens is used will significantly affect resultant understanding and interpretation.

For this Christology study, the hermeneutic method chosen will be to view everything from God's perspective. In this way the question 'what is God's intention, plan and purpose?' provides the context for all study.

Through consideration of God's nature and attributes, and by looking at His plan and purposes as unfolded and revealed in His scriptures, it is possible to make some observations from God's perspective, and begin to develop an understanding of God's ultimate intentions for creation and mankind:

- God the Father purposed to declare and reveal His glory through the created world for His own pleasure.
- He is, and His glory is simply being ('I Am that I Am'). His desire is to be in and through creation for His own sake.
- The pinnacle of creation, man, was chosen before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless before Him, in the Son. Man is to be a son of the Father, in the Son, for the Father's pleasure.
- The Father was to live in and through His sons, by His Son, and therefore be in His creation.

(Note: At the foundation of the world, man was created with the free will to choose to be a son (this was in some way directly related to the Tree of Life)).

These points can be all be brought together and be entitled 'God's Eternal Purpose', in that before creation and in eternity God had a purpose in all that He has done:

This eternal purpose therefore was for man, as a human, to be His dwelling place ie. God's house, so that God could live in and through him, with man fully participating with and enjoying being indwelt with the life of his Creator.

God's Eternal Purpose can be considered then at three levels;

- Creation - God delights in Himself, and creation is an expression of His sheer joy of living and being, loving His creatures for His own sake, loving in them Himself.
- Mankind - God made man for His own delight, for the sole purpose of indwelling him as man's very Life where man can freely and fully participate with Him in the mutual joy of living and the knowledge of the joy of the I AM.
- Personal - God made me just so that He can live in me and be my very life, delighting in me as I fully participate in His life as my very own.

In its most simple form, God's Eternal Purpose is that God can be in a created universe. This is where everything begins and is the 'driver' for the existence of all things. From this starting point and perspective, and progressing forward, answers to a primary and fundamental question of 'how then is God's Eternal Purpose accomplished for mankind?' can begin to be researched, and also the answer to the question, 'why study Christ?' becomes obvious as certain significant facts immediately draw attention Him.

- In His Deity (Son of God), Christ is the Creator.
- Everything was created by the Son for the Father, and the Son became part of this creation by assuming humanity, and therefore all interactions between the created world and the Father can only occur through the Son.
- In His humanity, Christ is God's full expression of Himself in mankind and the very model of God's purpose and intention for all of humanity.
- In His humanity (Son of Man), Christ accomplished God's Eternal Purpose.

For these reasons the writer of Hebrews rightly adjures 'consider Jesus'.

Using God's Eternal Purpose then as the interpretive lens and primary means for understanding scripture, Christ comes into prominent and clear focus, demanding that it is necessary to study the Person and work of Christ to achieve a true understanding of mankind, his nature and purpose, hence this study in Christology.