

“The Deity of Christ”  
Romans 9:5  
(Preached at Trinity, September 6, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we entered **Chapter 9** we found Paul quickly changing the course of his discussion from describing the rich blessings of being united to Christ to his great concern over the spiritual condition of Israel, his kinsmen in the flesh. Paul shares his grief over their continued hardness towards the Gospel. He says if it were possible he would even give his own soul if they would but turn to Christ.
2. In **Verses 4-5** Paul describes the wonderful blessings they enjoyed as God’s covenant people. He describes 8 of the advantages Israel enjoyed.
  - A. The Adoption as sons, The Divine glory, The Covenants, The receiving of the Law, The Temple service or worship, The promises, The fathers – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Christ in the flesh
  - B. Israel misunderstood all of the blessings they received as God’s chosen people. They thought it was an end in itself. They thought that as long as they were the sons of Abraham they were blessed of God.
  - C. What they didn’t understand is it all pointed to Christ Jesus. They rejected Jesus as the Messiah
  - D. All of these blessings meant nothing apart from Christ. With these rich blessings came high accountability This should cause us to take very seriously the rich blessings God has provided us- The Word, the indwelling Spirit, the Church
3. After Paul mentions the blessing of Christ in **Verse 5** he makes a profound statement about Christ – he calls Him God.
  - A. This is a verse that has not escaped much debate and disputation. Some have twisted it to read as if there is a period before the word God and thus denying that this verse teaches the deity of Christ. The Revised Standard Version which has often been accused of a liberal bias took this position.  
RSV **Romans 9:5** – “to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen.”
  - B. The KJV and NAS are a bit vague in translation.  
KJV **Romans 9:5** – “Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”  
NAS **Romans 9:5** – “whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”  
These two translations simply imply that Jesus is forever blessed of God.

- C. Most translations paint a clear picture of the meaning.  
 ESV **Romans 9:5** – “To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.”  
 NIV **Romans 9:5** – “Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”  
 NKJ **Romans 9:5** – “of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.”
4. Paul is referring to Christ as God; that this Jew born of Israel according to the flesh is in fact, God.  
 Literally it should read, “Christ, who is God over all, forever praised.”
5. Most theologians of history have read this verse in this manner.  
 Of the church fathers they include: Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine, and Jerome. The reformers Luther and Calvin held this position. And in modern times Robert Haldane, Charles Hodge, John Murray, and Leon Morris.
- I. This subject has been debated for centuries and heresies have abounded – Is Jesus God?
- A. Ebionites in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century
1. They were Judaizers who were fighting to maintain the monotheism of God
  2. They taught that Jesus was not preexistent, not divine  
They taught He received the H.S. at baptism
  3. This group was opposed by Irenaeus, Origen, and Eusebius
- B. Arian heresy in the 4<sup>th</sup> century – Arius, presbyter of Alexandria
1. Christ was the first and highest created being but not divine  
homoiousios but not homoousios x  
Homoiousios – Christ was of a similar but not the same substance as God  
Homoousios – Christ was the same substance as God
  2. Arius was condemned at the Council of Nicea in 325  
The Nicene Creed:  
 I believe in one God the Father Almighty,  
 Maker of heaven and earth,  
 And of all things visible and invisible:  
 And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God,  
 Begotten of his Father before all the worlds;  
 God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God . . .
- C. The debate continues today
1. The Mormons believe that Jesus was literally the offspring of God along with Satan – They do not believe that Jesus is eternal
  2. The Jehovah Witnesses teach that Jesus was created as a mighty god, but a lesser god than Almighty Jehovah.
- II. The Bible makes it infinitely clear, Jesus Christ is God.
- A. The Bible declares Jesus to be the Creator
1. We all know that God created all things  
**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2. Paul tells us that this Creator was Jesus Christ  
**Colossians 1:16** – “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”  
**Hebrews 1:10** – “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:”
  3. We have that wonderful declaration at the beginning of the Gospel of John  
**John 1:1-3** – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> The same was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
- B. The Apostles declared Him to be God
1. Thomas  
**John 20:27-29** – “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed. Believed What? The truth about Christ – His resurrection, His deity
  2. Paul continually made statements of Christ’s deity
    - a. This verse is really beyond dispute
    - b. Paul speaking to the elders of Ephesus:  
**Acts 20:28** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
    - c. Paul writing to Titus about the second coming of Christ:  
**Titus 2:13** – “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”
    - d. **Hebrews 1:8** – “But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom.”
- C. Jesus claimed to be God
1. Jesus referred to Himself as the great I Am  
**John 8:58** – “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”  
 evgw, eivmi – Jesus was declaring Himself to be the self-existing one
    - a. This is the same way the Septuagint translated **Exo 3:14** – “I am that I am

- b. The Jews knew precisely what Jesus was saying  
**John 8:59** – “Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”  
**John 10:30-33** – “I and *my* Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”
2. Jesus continually compared Himself with the Father  
**John 12:45** – “And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.”  
**John 14:7** – “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.”
3. Jesus continually received the worship of men.  
**Matthew 28:9** – “And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.”  
**Luke 19:37-40** – “And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; <sup>38</sup> Saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. <sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. <sup>40</sup> And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”  
Compare that with Peter:  
**Acts 10:25-26** – “And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”

### III. Implications – What difference does it make?

- A. Our proper understanding of Christ is essential for salvation
1. This is often a matter of debate. How much do you have to know about Christ to be saved? Obviously you don’t have to be a theologian.
    - a. A complete trust in God’s promise was sufficient for Abraham and the patriarchs. This is all the light they had and they trusted with their whole heart.
    - b. But we have the light of the Gospel. We know the promise fulfilled. Yet, a sinner forsaking his sin and having a simple childlike dependence upon Christ is all that is necessary.
  2. Our Christian life doesn’t end there, however. If you do not have a proper understanding of Christ you cannot have a proper relationship with Him

3. Very important. If you deny the deity of Christ you cannot know Him.  
The issue of salvation hangs upon this doctrine  
**John 8:23-24 NAU** - "And He was saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.  
<sup>24</sup> "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."  
evgw, eivmi
  4. Without the deity of Christ there can be no atonement. Without the atonement there can be no salvation.
- B. Our proper understanding of Christ is essential for His proper worship
1. If our view is contrary to the revealed truth of Scripture then we are serving another God
  2. If you do not see Jesus Christ as God you cannot worship Him properly as God. God is a jealous God and will share His worship with none  
The Bible declares that Jesus Christ has been exalted above all  
**Philippians 2:9** – “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:”
  3. We must fall on our faces before the living Christ  
Thomas –  
**John 20:28** – “And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”  
John who had before sat at His bosom  
**Revelation 1:17** – “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:”
  4. This verse is actually teaching the great praise due to Christ.  
<sup>NIV</sup> **Romans 9:5** – “Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”
- C. Our proper understanding of the deity of Christ is essential in evangelism
1. Our theology must always be balanced. With regard to Christ we must hold to both His humanity and His deity.
    - a. We must surely have a high understanding of His humanity – of His love and mercy. We must imitate Him. We are inviting sinners to a compassionate Christ, a merciful Christ.
    - b. We must also have a high view of His deity.
  2. Today there is a lack of emphasis on the infinite deity of Christ  
Jesus is very God of very God.  
We must go forth in the power and authority of Christ commanding all people to bow and repent.

**Conclusion:**

1. Actually, this verse is actually teaching four things about Christ.
  - A. His humanity – Christ came according to the flesh. He was like us in every way.
  - B. His deity – Jesus was God in every way.
  - C. His supremacy – “Who is God over all” – Jesus Christ rules with absolute power and dominion over all things. To come to Christ for salvation is to fall before Him as Lord. He is God and king.
  - D. The praise and adoration due to Him – “who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”  
**Revelation 5:12** – “. . .Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”
2. Is this the Christ you know?  
Paul is lamenting with great sorrow because Israel had squandered all of their blessings and missed Christ. All of us have been given great blessings from God designed to point us to Christ.