

Christology in the Pastoral Epistles

Studies in the Pastoral Epistles

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Learning Outcomes

1. Employ exegetical analysis of Phil 2:5-11 to summarize some of the key contours of Pauline Christology.
2. Critically evaluate the various ways in which the Pastoral Epistles underline the divinity of Jesus.
3. Use exegetical analyses of appropriate passages from each of the Pastoral Epistles to summarize their Saviour Christology.
4. Explain how the Pastoral Epistles relates Christology to Pastoral Theology

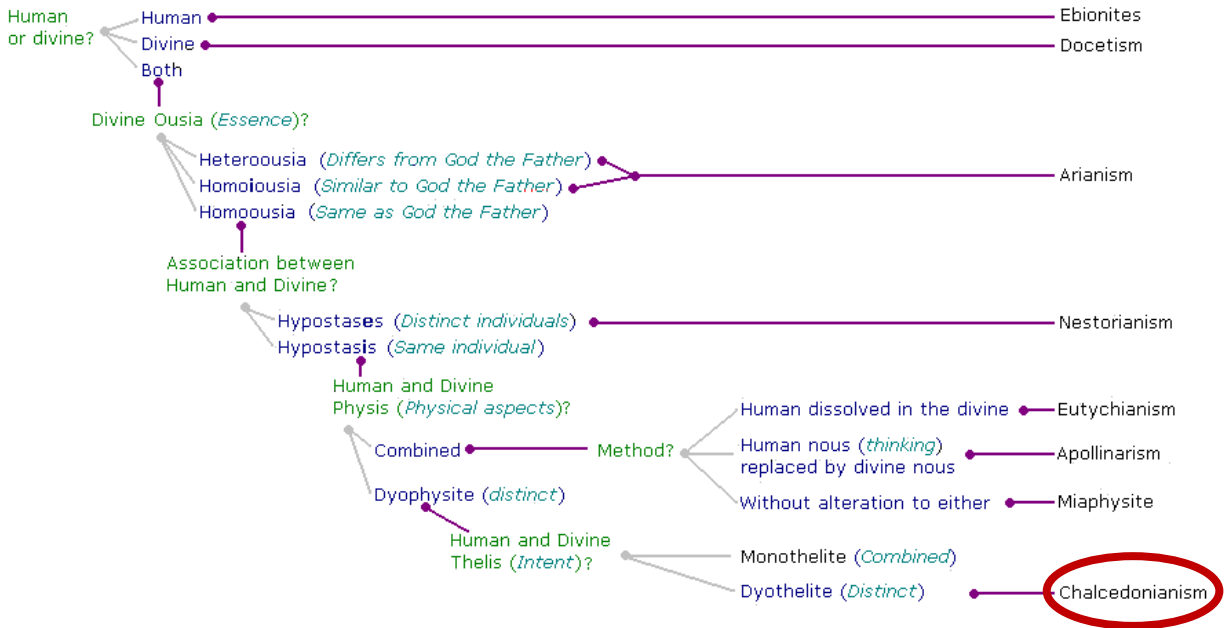
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Definition of Christology

Theological analyses of the biblical teachings on the person and works of Jesus Christ and its implications for history of the world and contemporary Christian doctrine and praxes

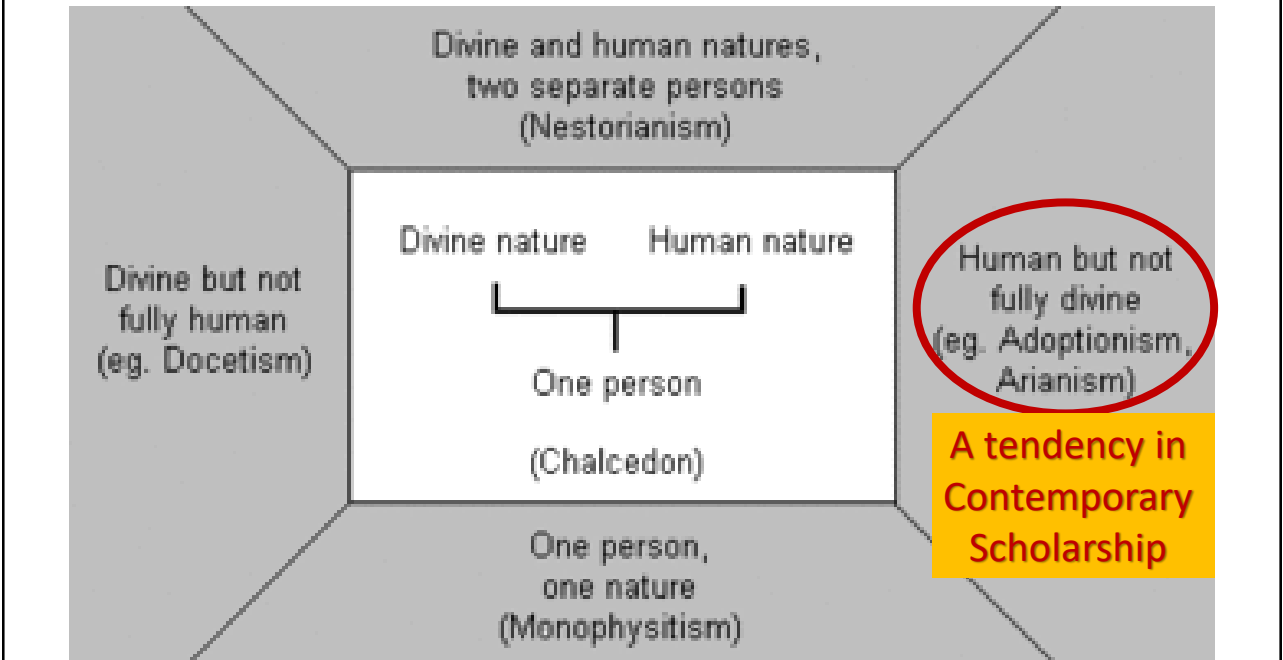
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Christological Debates in History



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Distinguishing Chalcedonian Christology from Heresies



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What is the contribution of the Pastoral Epistles to contemporary debates in Christology?

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The task of analysing and evaluating the significance of the Christology in the Pastoral Epistles

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Scholarly Evaluations of Christology in Pastoral Epistles

- **Unorganized Christology**
 - Pastorals lack and seriously conceptualized and organized Christology e.g., Hanson
- **Non-Original Christology**
 - From Adoptionist Christology e.g., Windisch
- **Pre-Pauline Christology**
 - Christology of Primitive Christianity
 - Borrowed from Synoptic and Messianic Christology
 - To correct false interpreters of Paul
- **Post-Pauline Christology**
 - Christology of Hellenistic Christianity
 - Some borrowed from Johannine Christology
- **Pauline Christology**
 - Lau – faithful pseudonymous re-interpretation of Paul
 - Fee – Christology by Apostle Paul himself

See Asumang, 2024:257-262

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Contours of Pauline Christology

1. 1 Cor 8:6b
2. Phil 2:6-11
3. Col 1:15-17

See Asumang, 2024:264-274

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Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. [1 Cor 8:6]

Christian confessional defined who is "us" and who is not

**The Jewish Shema modified to include Jesus as Christ the Lord
Christological Monotheism**

A major feature of Divine Christology in the New Testament

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Divine Christology

Use of language, concepts and depictions of activities directed to or stated about Jesus which indicate or imply that He shares in what is uniquely ascribed only to God and so defines God's identity and function as God.

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Contour of Pauline Christology in Philippians 2:6-11

Phil 2:6-11

who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage,⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus' Pre-existence
as equal with God

Chronological & Spatial
framing of the Christ Event

Name Christology
Bearing the divine name

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Conclusions from Contours of Paul's Christology

- Paul's Christology formed the fundamental matrix of his arguments and pastoral discourses
- Paul's Christology frequently combines Jesus' divinity and His humanity
- Pre-existence is often assumed or implied than explicitly argued
- Paul's Christology was often embedded in creedal, hymnic and confessional forms
- Paul's Christology was frequently deployed to deal with "mundane" issues

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Christology in Pastoral Epistles

1. Humanity of Jesus
2. Divine Christology
3. Saviour Christology
4. "Epiphany" Christology
5. Jesus and Pastoral Ministry

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Humanity of Jesus in the Pastoral Epistles

1 Tim 2:5: “One mediator between God and mankind, **the man Christ Jesus** [ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς]”

Event(s)	Passage	Comment
Summary statement of humanity	1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 1:9-10; 2:8	Mostly in Creedal forms
His Incarnation	1 Tim 1:15; 2 Tim 1:10; Tit 2:11; 3:4	Soteriological emphases
His Teaching Ministry	1 Tim 5:18, 6:3; 2 Tim 1:8;	Includes quotes & allusions
His Trial	1 Tim 6:13	Pilate outside Gospels and Acts
His Passion & Resurrection	1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 1:9-13; 2:8	Foundation of Soteriology & Mission
His Second Coming	1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1, 8	Also reflected in “Epiphany” Christology

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Alongside repeated emphases
on the divine status of Jesus,
the Pastoral Epistles also
extensively stress on Jesus’ full humanity

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Indications of Divine Christology in Pastoral Epistles

1. Literary dyadism
2. Modified Shema
3. Pre-existence
4. Divine language ascribed to Jesus
5. Unique devotion, prayer, and doxology addressed to Jesus

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Literary Dyadism in Christology of Pastoral Epistles

- Dyadism: Phenomenon of close coupling of two entities as if they are one
- Close linguistic and conceptual collocation of Jesus with God in a manner that was not accorded any human being in Jewish religious conception
- Verbal proximity, and use of conjunctions and or prepositional words and phrases to bind Jesus to God
- Exhibits the Paul's assumption of Jesus' divine relationship with God

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Literary Dyadism in Christology in Pastorals

- References to God and Jesus are often crowded together within a couple of vs.
- 60% of the 46 occurrences of Θεοῦ (God) identify Jesus within 1 or 2 vs.
- Only 6 occasions are references to God and Jesus separated by more than 3 vs.
- On 12 twelve occasions references to Jesus and God occur in the same verse.
 - Separated on 3 occasions by only one word, καὶ (1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 1:1, 4:1) and
 - Separated on 3 occasions by only two words (2 Tim 1:2, Tit 1:1 and Tit 1:4)
 - Farthest separation of God and Jesus occur in a single verse is the 6 words in 2 Tim 1:8

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Paul was impelled to speak about Jesus whenever he thought about God

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Christological Shema in the Pastoral Epistles

- Deut 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one...”
- Core of the Jewish religious beliefs, spirituality, and pietistic practices
- Paul (and other inspired writers) adapted it by the inclusion of Jesus (1 Cor 8:6; Gal 3:20; Eph 4:5-6 & Rom 3:29-30)
- Four Passages in the Pastorals
 - 1 Tim 1:16-17
 - 1 Tim 2:5
 - 1 Tim 6:14-16
 - ? Tit 2:13-14

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1 Tim 2:5 - there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus

Εἷς...θεός
Declaration of Monotheistic Shema
defining the God of the Pauline mission

Εἷς...μεσίτης
Verbally Matching inclusion
of Jesus into Shema

ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς
Emphatic identification of Jesus
as human being and yet inserted
into monotheistic slogan to
define the God of the Pauline mission

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Creedal Hymn of 1 Tim 2:5-6a

- **“One God” – The Jewish Shema**
 - 1 Tim 2:5a – “For there is one God”
 - Deut 6:4 – “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one”

- **Christological Shema:**
 - 1 Tim 2:5b: “One Mediator between God and humankind”
 - Combines His divinity with His humanity
 - 1 Cor 8:4b-6: ““There is no God but one...yet for us there is but one God, the Father...and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came...”
 - Polemic against Artemesian religion

- **Christ the Redeemer**
 - 1 Tim 2:6: “who gave himself as a ransom for all people”
 - Drawn for Jesus’ words in Mk 10:45
 - God’s people gather only to Him and only through His Son that their worship is acceptable.

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In Paul’s theological matrix Jesus is divine because He shares in the identity of Israel’s one God

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The Hymn of 1 Tim 3:16

Christology

Eschatology

Incarnation

He appeared in the flesh,
 was vindicated by the Spirit,
 was seen by angels,
 was preached among the nations,
 was believed on in the world,
 was taken up in glory.

Jesus' Pre-existence is assumed to be fundamental

Jesus' glorious reign present (& future)

World Missions

His Glorification

His Triumphal Victory

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Introductory formula to the Hymn of 1 Tim 3:16a

καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον ὅς

Affirmation of Confession
 NKJV: Without Controversy
 NIV: Beyond all question
 ESV: We Confess

Mystery
The Christian Gospel

Godliness
Christian Life

He
God manifested as Jesus

The Truth of which the Church is Foundation & Pillar (1 Tim 3:15)

The Definition of Christianity

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1 Tim 3:16 (NKJV)

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh

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1 Timothy 3:16 & Definition of Christianity

The Truth Christianity stands on is the person of Jesus and not just a doctrine

Christology, soteriology & Ethics are intimately related when it comes to the Gospel

Phil 1:21 – “For to me, to live is Christ”

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Divine Ascriptions on Jesus in Pastorals

1. Jesus' sharing of divine name, titles, and attributes

- Κύριος (Lord) for both God & Jesus
 - 7 of 22 uses explicitly for Jesus (e.g., 2 Tim 2:7; 2:19; 4:1, 8, 14; 4:17)
 - 8 uses uncertain whether is for Jesus or God
 - 2 Tim 1:18 – “May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day”
- Identified as God: Tit 2:13 - "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ"

2. Jesus performing uniquely divine functions

- Thanksgiving directed to Jesus for salvation (1 Tim 1:12; cf. Rom 16:4)
- Jesus dispenses Mercy (1 Tim 1:2, 12-16; 2 Tim 1:2, 16, 18; 2 Tim 2:1; Tit 3:6)

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τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [lit., of the great God and Saviour our Jesus Christ] (Tit 2:13) – Three Interpretations

1. Dyadic (Ontological) Christology

- Appearance of two Persons?
- Very unlikely as nowhere else does eschatological appearance depict two Persons

2. Glory Christology

- Jesus appears as the glory of the great God
- NIV – “the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”
- Jesus as God's glory: E.g., 1 Cor 2:8; 2 Cor 4:4-6; Phil 3:20-21

3. Divine Christology

- Jesus is the Great God and Saviour
- ESV – “the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ”
- Rom 9:5 – “the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever” [cf. 2 Thess 1:12; 2 Pet 1:1]

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Formative Assessment 3

Using appropriate examples from each of the Pastoral Epistles, demonstrate the various ways in which these letters underline the divine status of Jesus.

See Asumang, 2024:286-307

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Indications of Divine Christology in Pastoral Epistles

1. Literary dyadism
2. Modified Shema
3. Pre-existence
4. Divine language ascribed to Jesus
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Jesus as Saviour in Pastoral Epistles

1. Use of the title Σωτῆρος

- 2 Tim 1:10; Tit 1:4; 2:13; 3:6

2. Ransom soteriology

- 1 Tim 1:15 - Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners
- 1 Tim 2:5-6 - who gave himself as a ransom for all

3. Paul's experience of salvation

- 1 Tim 1:12-16

4. Periphrastic use of the term "grace"

- 1 Tim 1:14 - the grace of our Lord overflowed for me"
- 2 Tim 2:1 - "be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus"
- Tit 2:11 - "grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all"

5. Davidic Messiahship

- Use of Christ title
- 2 Tim 2:8-13

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1 Tim 1:12-16: Paul's Experience of Salvation

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, by his strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. ¹³ Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because of my ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴ The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

Salvation is Wrought by Jesus

Salvation is divine Activity by Jesus

Paul's Past Sinfulness

Paul's Present Testimony

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Paul demonstrates in 1 Tim 1:12-16 not just how salvation occurs, but even more so how thoroughly Christological and divine salvation is. Christ the divine Lord is the active agent of the salvation of the world.

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“Epiphany” Christology

Passage	Word	Event	NT Use & Resonances
1 Tim 3:16	ἐφανερώθη (manifest)	Incarnation	1 Pet 1:20; Heb 9:26; 1 Jn 1:2; 3:5, 8
1 Tim 6:14	ἐπιφανείας (appearing)	Christ’s Return	2 Thess 2:8
2 Tim 1:10	ἐπιφανείας (appearing)	Incarnation	Cf., 1 Tim 3:16
2 Tim 4:1	ἐπιφάνειαν (appearing)	Christ’s Return	2 Cor 5:10; Acts 17:31; 1 Thess 5:27
2 Tim 4:8	ἐπιφάνειαν (appearing)	Christ’s Return	Jn 5:22; 2 Cor 5:9-11; 1 Tim 6:14
Tit 2:11	Ἐπεφάνη (He appeared)	Incarnation	2 Cor 1:12; Rom 5:15
Tit 2:13	ἐπιφάνειαν (appearing)	Christ’s Return	1 Tim 1:11; 2 Cor 4:4-6

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There is no distinctive Epiphany Christology with its own theological construction.

However, there is a concentrated use of the epiphany terminology for aspects of the Christ event which elsewhere Paul tends to use the term *Parousia*

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Jesus and Pastoral Identity in the Pastorals

1. **Jesus as the Pastor's sphere of Christian existence**
 - Christian exists within Christ and therefore derives their whole being from Him
 - 1 Tim 1:14-16, 3:13, 2 Tim 1:1, 1:9-13, 2:1, 3-15, and Tit 2:13
2. **Jesus as the Commissioner of the pastor**
 - Jesus commissioned Paul (1 Tim 1:1; 1:12; 2:7; 2 Tim 1:1; 1:11; Tit 1:1)
 - Pastor as servant of Christ (1 Tim 4:6; 2 Tim 2:19)
3. **Jesus as Exemplar to be followed**
 - 1 Tim 6:2b-3; 12-13
4. **Jesus as Enabler of the pastor**
 - Jesus is sources of spiritual virtues such as grace, mercy, love and faith
 - 1 Tim 1:12, 2 Tim 2:1, 4:17, Tit 3:6
5. **Jesus as Eschatological judge of the pastor**
 - 1 Tim 6:14-15a, 2 Tim 4:1, 8

See Asumang, 2024:562-567

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What is the contribution of the Pastoral Epistles to contemporary debates in Christology?

1. Humanity of Jesus
2. Divine Christology
3. Saviour Christology
4. “Epiphany” Christology
5. Jesus and Pastoral Ministry

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Questions?

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