

45-Minute Small Group Bible Study

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

The Christian Faith, pages 25-27

Purpose: To confess Jesus Christ as the one person who is fully God and fully man, to see why the incarnation is necessary for our salvation, and to receive Jesus as the definitive revelation of God and the one Mediator and Savior given for the whole world.

Main Truth: Jesus Christ is the eternal Son and Word of God who became truly human in the virgin Mary without ceasing to be fully God. In the one person of Christ, God and humanity are united for our salvation. As Immanuel, Mediator, and Savior, Jesus reconciles us to God and reveals the Father's love and glory.

1. Opening Prayer - 2 minutes

Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of the Father and true Son of Mary, open the Scriptures to us. Guard us from making you less than fully God or less than truly human. Help us rejoice that in you God has come near to save us, reconcile us, and make the Father known. Strengthen our trust in your name, for there is salvation in no one else. Amen.

2. Opening Discussion - 3 minutes

Begin with one or two questions:

1. Why does it matter that Christianity confesses Jesus as both fully God and fully human, rather than simply a great teacher or spiritual being?
2. Which is easier for people to imagine wrongly - Jesus' full divinity or his full humanity? Why?
3. What do you think Christians mean when they say that Jesus is "God with us"?

3. Read the Doctrinal Statement - 2 minutes

Have one person read the doctrinal statement for "The Person of Jesus Christ" on page 25. Listen for Jesus' eternal divine identity, his true human birth, the union of God and humanity in one person, his work as Mediator, and the way he reveals God to us.

4. The Savior of the World Is the Eternal Word Made Flesh - 5 minutes

The chapter begins with a breathtaking confession: the Savior of the world is the eternal Son, equal with the Father and the Spirit, who truly entered human history.

Read: 1 John 4:14

The apostles testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

Discuss:

1. What does this verse say about where Jesus comes from and why he was sent?
2. Why is the title “Savior of the world” larger than the role of merely a teacher or example?

Read: John 1:1-2, 14

The Word who was with God and was God in the beginning became flesh and lived among us.

Discuss:

1. What truths about Jesus are held together in these verses?
2. Why must “the Word became flesh” mean more than God temporarily appearing in human form?

5. Jesus Is Truly Human, Born of the Virgin Mary - 4 minutes

The eternal Son did not merely look human. He assumed our humanity in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit and was born into the royal line of David.

Read: Matthew 1:18, 22-23

Jesus is conceived from the Holy Spirit and fulfills the promise of Immanuel, “God with us.”

Discuss:

1. How does Matthew protect both Jesus’ true humanity and his divine origin?
2. What comfort is contained in the name Immanuel?

Read: Luke 1:31-32, 34-35

The angel tells Mary that her son will receive David’s throne and will be called the Son of God; his conception is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Discuss:

1. Why do both the Davidic kingship and divine sonship matter?
2. How does the virgin conception point to God’s initiative in the incarnation?

Key Insight: The incarnation is not God pretending to be human and not a human being promoted into deity. The eternal Son truly assumes our humanity so that the one person Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.

6. All the Fullness of God Dwells Bodily in Christ - 4 minutes

The human Jesus is not a lesser manifestation of God. Scripture places the fullness, glory, and divine nature of God in the Son who acts in a human body.

Read: Colossians 2:9

All the fullness of God’s being dwells bodily in Christ.

Discuss:

1. How does the word “bodily” challenge any attempt to separate God from the humanity of Jesus?

2. What does this say about where Christians look to know God?

Read: Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Discuss:

1. What divine works and qualities does Hebrews attribute to the Son?
2. Why can Jesus not be reduced to a created intermediary between God and us?

7. The God-Man Is Our Mediator and Reconciler - 4 minutes

Everything Jesus does, he does as the one God-man for us. In him God reaches humanity, and in him humanity is brought back to God.

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:19, 21

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and the sinless Christ was made sin for us so that we might become God's righteousness in him.

Discuss:

1. Who is acting in Christ to reconcile the world?
2. How does the exchange described in verse 21 reveal the saving purpose of the incarnation?

Read: 1 Timothy 2:5-6

There is one God and one Mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.

Discuss:

1. Why is Jesus uniquely able to stand between God and humanity?
2. What does "ransom for all" say about the scope of his saving work?

8. The Incarnate Son Reveals God's Self-Giving Love - 4 minutes

The incarnation shows what God is like. The Son does not cling to visible glory but humbles himself into servant form and the obedience of the cross.

Read: 1 John 4:9

God's love is revealed in sending his only-begotten Son so that we may live through him.

Discuss:

1. How does Jesus make God's love visible and concrete?
2. Why is Christian knowledge of God inseparable from the saving mission of the Son?

Read: Philippians 2:6-8

Though by nature God, Christ takes the nature of a servant, becomes human, and humbles himself to death on a cross.

Discuss:

1. What does this passage reveal about the character of divine greatness?
2. How does Jesus' true humanity make his obedience and death genuinely "for us"?

9. Jesus Alone Is the Savior - 4 minutes

Because salvation is located in the person and work of the God-man, the apostolic message does not present Jesus as one saving option among many.

Read: Acts 4:12

There is salvation in no one else and no other name under heaven given by which we must be saved.

Discuss:

1. Why does the uniqueness of Christ's person lead to the uniqueness of his saving name?
2. How can Christians confess this claim with both confidence and humility?

Key Insight: The exclusiveness of Christian salvation is not the claim that Christians possess a superior religious technique. It is the confession that God himself has come to us in the one Mediator, Jesus Christ, and that salvation is found in him.

10. Jesus Is the Definitive Image and Revelation of God - 4 minutes

The chapter ends by directing our knowledge of God to Jesus. The invisible God has made himself known personally in his Son.

Read: John 1:18; Colossians 1:15

The only-begotten Son makes the unseen God known, and Christ is called the image of the invisible God.

Discuss:

1. What does it mean to say that Jesus makes the unseen God known?
2. How should the person of Jesus shape every Christian claim about what God is like?

11. Bringing It Together - 2 minutes

Jesus Christ is one person, fully God and fully man. The eternal Son became flesh in the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, uniting God and humanity without sin. As Immanuel and the one Mediator, he acts for us, reconciles the world to God, gives himself as a ransom, and reveals the Father's self-giving love. To know Jesus is to encounter God's saving presence.

12. Application Questions - 5 minutes

Choose two or three:

1. Which passage most clearly helps you confess Jesus as both truly God and truly human?

2. What would be lost from the Gospel if Jesus were only human? What would be lost if he were not truly one of us?
3. How does the title “Immanuel - God with us” speak to fear, guilt, or loneliness?
4. How does Philippians 2 reshape the way you think about divine power and greatness?
5. How can Acts 4:12 be confessed clearly without turning Christian witness into pride or hostility?

13. Closing Prayer - 2 minutes

Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, we praise you for coming into our flesh for us and for our salvation. Thank you for taking our place, reconciling the world to the Father, and revealing the heart of God. Keep us from inventing a Jesus of our own imagination. Fix our faith on you as you reveal yourself in Scripture - Immanuel, Mediator, Savior, and Lord. Amen.