

this I believe®



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# The Impeccability of Christ

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. . . therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

"... they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

Paul warns of those that preach "Another Jesus" in 2 Corinthians 4:4. There is a resurgence of some old errors in these "last days," which is the result of dividing the person of Christ in His incarnation, teaching that He could have sinned in His humanity. Also, "that He so emptied Himself of the prerogatives of God that He faced temptation in His *elemental manhood*. Therefore, He could have fallen; that "the temptations had a *genuine appeal to Him*," and that He had to "overcome *genuine forbidden desires*" are a few of many bold statements evidently based on human reasoning. Not one verse of Scripture says, or can be

*legitimately* used, to back up such statements.

In John 1:1 the Scriptures definitely say "the Word *was God*" and in John 1:14 the "Word *became flesh* and dwelt among us." Impeccability is infinitely more than not sinning. It means "*not capable of sinning*, exempt from the possibility." This we believe: that *He could not sin*. The Lord's impeccability was based entirely upon His person, *Who He was*. In the incarnation He was God and man, with a Divine nature and a human nature, but *not a dual personality*. The Divine and human were perfectly blended together in *one Divine personality*. Therefore, the Bible does not present to us a divided Christ. "To speak of the Lord as doing anything as God or as man is to fall into the ancient heresy of dividing the person (F. C. Hogg). "The human nature of the Son never for a moment stood or stands apart from His Divine nature, and person . . . the manhood was, and is, *never independently*



*personal*” (Dr. H. C. G. Moule). Therefore, the Divine and human natures always acted in the *unity* of His person. He was truly God and truly man, but one person, *The Impeccable Christ!* “God was manifest in flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16).

“For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). Here we have a full Christ, not an empty one! Certainly not so emptied of Divine prerogatives that He lived out of, or from, His manhood independent of His Divine nature. The question then is how and to what extent did He empty Himself? The answer is in Philippians 2:6-7, “*Who being in the form of God.*” While not ceasing to be what He eternally was and is, *Very God*, He took into union with His Deity His humanity, “*was made in the likeness of man,*” and in this manner, “*took upon Him the form of a servant.*” By so doing, He “*made Himself of no reputation*” (emptied Himself). He did not set aside any of the essential attributes of Deity, nor did He take a place of inferiority in the Godhead. He was, and is, and always will be co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead. He laid aside His *Divine Glory*, the outward manifestation of His equality. It is significant that the only thing He asked the Father to restore unto Him was “The glory that I had with Thee before the world was” (John 17:5).

“There is none holy as the Lord . . .” (1 Sam. 2:2). The incarnation was essential for our salvation. His humanity made the sacrifice *possible*. “Who, His own self bare our sins in *His own body* on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). His Deity made the sacrifice infinitely *valuable*. Only a *Divine Savior* could meet the claims of a holy God and meet man’s needs. In 2 Corinthians 2:8 we read, they “*crucified the Lord of Glory.*” The perfection of His person made the sacrifice *acceptable*. “Christ . . . offered Himself without blemish to God” (Heb. 9:14). Isaiah saw the Lord in His preincarnate glory and heard the seraphims say, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts . . .” (see Is. 6:1-3; John 12:41). Holiness is a moral attribute of God. Therefore it is *absolute, eternal, and immutable*. The unalloyed purity of His nature: Concerning His humanity, the child born was conceived in the womb of the virgin

Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. Having no human father He had no fallen nature, or *taint of sin*. But He was more than perfect man, He was “Emmanuel . . . God with us.” The angel spoke of Him as “that Holy thing.” He was as holy *cradled* in the manger as when “*sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,*” and never more holy than on the *cross* suffering for our sins. His sacrifice was substitutionary and had no effect upon the *holiness of His person*. Both the sin and trespass offerings were “Most holy.” The holiness of the Lord is unique in a very real sense.

“For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted” (Heb. 2:18). The word “tempt” is also translated tried, prove, try, and examine. It is used in both a good sense and a bad sense. When sent or allowed of God it is always beneficial to the believer and glorifying to God (see Heb. 11:17; 1 Pet. 1:6-7; James 1:2-3), but never connected with sin. “God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man” (James 1:13). Then, too, it is used in connection with allurements to sin. This is the devil’s work. For example, “that Satan tempt you not” (1 Cor. 7:5, see also 1 Thess. 3:5 and Matt. 4:1). Because we have *sin in us* (see Rom. 7:18; 1 John 1:10) there is an inward response to the temptation, though we may not yield to it.

Not so our blessed Lord. As to *His holy nature*, “in Him is no sin” (1 John 3:5). As to *practice*, “Who did no sin” (1 Pet. 2:22). As to *personal knowledge*, He was a complete stranger, “Who knew no sin” (1 Cor. 5:21). Here we have the perfection of Christ in the clearest possible language! This is in keeping with John 14:30, “The prince of this world cometh and *hath nothing in Me.*” The intent and importance of this verse is to emphasize the absolute *lack of response inwardly* to Satan’s temptations. “But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet *without sin*” (Heb. 4:15). This is not *without sinning*, but *without sin*, literally “*apart from sin.*” That is, the temptations were from without with no response from within. These are irrefutable statements of facts which completely sweep away the erroneous teaching mentioned at the beginning of this study.



The question arises then, in what sense did He "suffer being tempted"? First of all, He did not suffer resisting or overcoming "forbidden desires" resulting from the temptations but the very opposite. He suffered because of the offensiveness of the suggestions which were utterly obnoxious to His holy being. Even Lot, though he belonged to the Lord, was out of fellowship with God, and having no testimony for God. Yet, he was "vexed (oppressed) with the filthy conversation of the wicked . . . in *seeing* and *hearing*, vexed (tormented) his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" (2 Pet. 2:7-8). How much more believers, in fellowship with the Lord, are grieved by the things seen and heard in this ungodly world. This being so with us, think of what anguish the vile suggestions of Satan must have been to the holy Son of God, whose revulsion to sin was infinitely greater than ours!

Some say, "If He could not sin the temptations were not genuine, therefore meaningless." This kind of reasoning comes from those who are unable, or unwilling, to think of temptation apart from inward response and possibility of failure. This is not necessarily true, as used in the Bible or practiced in the world. A security product was invented and offered to the government, but before acceptance it had to be tested. Built to specifications *it could not fail*. The tests were made *to prove that fact*. So it was with our Lord. He was put to the test, not to see if He would fail but to *demonstrate* the absolute holiness of His person. The Scriptures plainly indicate that there was not an instant of hesitation between the devil's *temptation* and the Lord's *rejection*! The temptations were real, but the Lord could not sin.

The erroneous teaching mentioned before is too serious to pass over as unimportant because (as some say) God in His foreknowledge knew that Christ would not sin. A closer examination will reveal how serious it really is. To say, "He could have sinned in His humanity," means that though He was God, in His manhood He could act *independently of*, and in *opposition to*, His Deity. This is dividing His person and opens the door to the grossest of error even blasphemy! Such as:

the temptations had a "*genuine appeal*." That is, arousing a sympathetic response *in Christ*, which in turn resulted in "forbidden desires." Meaning that as man He wanted to do what His Deity forbade. For example, the devil said, "If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine" (Luke 4:7). According to these teachers the Creator (all things created by Him) had a forbidden desire to *worship the devil*, a fallen creature, from a *selfish motive*, to receive the kingdoms of this world from his hand without going to the cross, leaving the world without hope of salvation—kingdoms that were and are His by right of *creation* and that He will receive in due time from the Father by right of *redemption*. They say He did not sin because He overcame the desire; but, according to the principle in Matthew 5:28, *a wrong desire is sin* apart from the deed. A solemn truth indeed.

How different is the incarnate Son of God. Whether it be in His temptations, His ministry, on the cross or on the throne, in time or eternity, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity" (Heb. 1:9). This is the intrinsic holiness of the Impeccable Christ.

*Guilty, vile, and helpless we;  
Spotless Lamb of God was He.*



## we believe

In the Bible as the Divinely inspired inerrant Word of God, the revelation of His mind and will to man, our infallible, all-sufficient guide for salvation and for the Christian life (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

In one God, the Creator of all, eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He is true God and true man begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and that He has a perfect and sinless humanity (John 1:1; Phil. 2:6; Matt. 1:23-25; 1 John 3:5).

In the total depravity of the nature of man through his fall in the Garden of Eden, and the absolute inability of man to save himself from eternal punishment by his own works (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:8-9).

In the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved (1 Thess. 4:17); and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost (Rev. 20:11-15).

In the finished work of Christ on the Cross of Calvary, through which sacrifice Christ has effected complete and eternal redemption, God setting His seal of approval on the work of Christ by raising Him from among the dead, enthroned Him at His own right hand in Heaven and that He is the Head of the Church, the Lord of the individual, the High Priest over the House of God and Advocate in the family of God.

In the immediate and eternal salvation of every person who truly believes on Christ and by faith rests on His finished work as the only righteous ground on which a Holy God can forgive his sins.

That all who by faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour are born again of the Holy Spirit, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and by the Holy Spirit baptized into the Body of Christ, the Church, of which He is the risen and ascended Head (1 Cor. 12:12-14; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).

That the early Church met together and "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). — God's pattern for the Church today.

In the personal, imminent, and premillennial coming of the Lord to the air to Rapture (catch up) the Church (1 Thess. 4:13-17), and

In the revelation of Christ in glory at His Second Advent to the earth to establish His Kingdom on earth and to reign in righteousness (2 Thess. 1:6-10; Phil. 2:9-11).

