

Alton Baptist Church e-Service 11th October 2020

Christ born truly divine and human yet sinless

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You that whether we are in the church building together or thinking about You alone, You are with us and hear our prayers. Help us to spend time each day singing your praises, reading and contemplating Your Word, praying for one another and those issues You bring to our attention. Amen

Song Before the throne of God –

Like so many of our hymns, the words of this hymn contain great biblical truths. This hymn reminds us that we have a sinless high priest before the throne of God. The great unchangeable I AM, the King of Glory.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MUNywhsZPU>

Prayers - In your own words just praise and thank the Lord, for who He is, for what He is, for what He has done.

We've spoken to Him in prayer, now we should listen to Him.
Let's read His word and see what He has for us today.

Readings: Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 4:14-16

⁹ For in Christ **all the fullness of the Deity lives** in bodily form,

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – **yet was without sin.**

¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Song Give thanks with a grateful heart -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXBxImes110>

Prayers of Praise, Thanks and Intercession

Pray as you feel led.

Some thoughts

“Christ born truly divine and human yet sinless”

Last week we considered the divine inspiration of the bible. It is divinely inspired to teach us the truth. Some truths are quite easy to comprehend, but others are more difficult. Today’s statement, that Christ was truly divine and truly human yet sinless, is on the more difficult end of the scale. Many people have written many books and earned theological degrees putting forward various theories and proofs for and against this statement.

Our first reading Colossians 2:9 states that Christ is fully divine, all the fullness of the deity lives in him.

The verse before this warns

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. Colossians 2:8

So we should be careful not to over-complicate things, but to keep it simple. We should believe what Paul wrote to the Colossians, but we can add a couple of other witnesses, namely the angel Gabriel who declared to Mary

³⁵ ‘The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Luke 1:35

Making God his father

And God Himself who, when Jesus was baptised by John, declared

¹⁷ ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’ Matt 3:17

Jesus is unique, we have no precedents or experience by which to judge him. But we can rely on the statements of three reliable witnesses, Paul, the angel Gabriel and God the Father.

Song You did not wait for me to draw near to You -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1L95iue5mU>

Some more thoughts

The other parent of Jesus was of course, his mother Mary, from whom he inherited the human traits. He undoubtedly lived a human life, although how that worked with his divinity is beyond my powers to explain. However we do know from our second reading in Hebrews 4 that

We have a high priest [Jesus] who is able to sympathise with our weaknesses, we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – **yet was without sin.**

So Jesus was subjected to the same temptations that afflict us, but he did not sin. How can we prove this? We have no direct evidence of him sinning or not sinning.

In Romans 3:23 Paul tells us that
²³ all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Yet in our reading Paul tells us that Jesus was without sin. This makes him the exception, the only exception, to the general rule that all humans are guilty of sin before God.

It is important that Jesus was sinless, because he came to be a perfect, blemish-free, sacrifice for our sins. A sin-offering acceptable to God.

It is wonderful that he lived as a human, because he really has first-hand experience of the human condition, and his life on earth showed his willingness to get alongside ordinary people like you and me.

He had friends on earth; he can be our friend, yet his divinity means we can share our concerns, pleasures, hopes and dreams with him in prayer.

Song What a friend we have in Jesus -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LarFhGeE-ac>

Grace

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Love of God,
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us now and always.
AMEN

Robin