

# PROLOGUE

## **The Chalcedon Formula AD451**

### **(Stressing the unity of Deity and Humanity in Jesus)**

*THEREFORE, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body, of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood. like us in all respects, apart from sin. as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God bearer. one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation. the distinction of nature's being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ. even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.*

## THE WELCOMING

**Opening Hymn: I Believe**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-VdH2lwZk>

Welcome in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and our God, (John 20:28)

**We welcome you in His glorious name**

Let us remember that

**As perfect God,  
Christ came in the flesh (John 1:15 & 1 John 4:2)  
As perfect Man  
To offer a perfect sacrifice for our sin, (Hebrews 9:14)**

So let us heartily thank him

**This we will gladly do gladly for the honour of his great name**

So come and let us hear from the scriptures

**For these reveal the true Christ by whom we are saved.**

**First reading From Psalm 110 (Stressing the Majesty of Jesus)**

*1 The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.*

*2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: for you to rule in the midst of your enemies.*

*3 Your people shall be willing in the day of your power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: you have the dew of your youth.*

*4 The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

*5 The Lord at your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.*

*6 He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.*

*7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.*

**Chorus:** Majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cv2jyDMrPE>

## **CONFESSION**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God have mercy upon me, a sinner

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Let us now pause and together join in the following general prayer of confession

**Almighty and most merciful Judge; we have erred and strayed from your ways. We have selfishly followed the deceptions and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those good things we ought to have done; and we have done those sinful things, which we ought not to have done. There is no righteousness in us. Please, oh Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders. Spare those, oh Lord who confess their faults and restore them that are truly repentant. Finally, oh most merciful Father, grant that for Jesus' sake; we may be filled with your Holy Spirit to live godly, righteous and sober lives that will show your love to others. May this be done for the glory of your holy Name, Amen (1 John 1:8-10)**

If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour and faithfully follow His will [to the degree you understand it] then rejoice! Your sins are forgiven. You are free to make a new beginning (Luke 5:18-25)

**Alleluia! (Psalm 138:1a)**

Lord thank you for your great mercy (Matthew 11:25 & Luke 10:21)

**Saviour Jesus, thank you for your great mercy (Romans 11:30)**

Lord thank you for your great mercy [in cleansing us from sin] (2 Corinthians 4:1 & 13:14)

**Pause for silent reflection**

## **PRAISE**

Let us continue to use scripture to worship the living God who even today, can change lives and work miracles. Together, as one community, may we draw upon Psalm 147 and say...

**1 Praise the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant.**

**2 The Lord does build up Jerusalem: he gathers together the outcasts of Israel.**

**3 He heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds.**

**4 He tells the number of the stars; he calls them all by their names.**

**5 Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.**

**6 The Lord lifts up the meek: he casts the wicked down to the ground.**

**7 Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:**

**8 Who covers the heaven with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow upon the mountains.**

**9 He gives to the beast his food, and to the young ravens who cry.**

**10 He delights not in the strength of the horse: he takes not pleasure in the legs of a man.**

**11 The Lord takes pleasure in them who fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.**

May we now focus our adoring attention upon the majestic person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, (who is the Word made flesh<sup>0</sup> by reading together 1 John 1:1-4).

**1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.**

**2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us)**

**3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.**

**4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.**

As an addition to our praise let us say together the following rainbow meditation (which I wrote during a time of great difficulty in January 1984).

**White is for God's purity**

**His freedom from sin (Mark 9:3)**

**Red is for Christ's blood**

**Shed freely to save**

**Orange is for God's anger**

**Glowing hot, like burning coals**

**Yellow is for God's light**

**Giving us truth**

**Green is for God's creativity**

**Abundant in its lush fertility**

**Blue is for God's mystery**

**Deep and unfathomable**

**Purple is for God's royalty**

**One King and Lord of all (Genesis 9:8-17)**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit – as it was in the beginning, so shall it be, world without end, Amen (Revelation 21:1-7).**

### **Third Reading From John 8:54f. (Stressing the Deity of Jesus)**

*54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honours me; of whom you say, that he is your God*

*55 Yet you have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar to you: but I know him and keep his saying.*

*56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad.*

*57 Then said the Jews to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?'*

*58 Jesus said to them, Verily, verily, 'I say to you, Before Abraham was, I am.'*

*59 Then they took up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed them by.*

This is the word of God, the life-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ

**Thanks be to God**

Hymn: Tell Out My Soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qf3mgRUZkAk>

### **Fourth reading from Matthew 16:13-17 (Stressing the Messiahship of Jesus)**

13 *When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, 'Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?'*

14 *And they said, Some say that you are John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.*

15 *He said unto them, But who say you that I am?*

16 *And Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

17 *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.*

Let us now ponder deeply on the words of our Lord

#### **Pause**

The following reflection will explore the mysterious union existing between the full deity and full humanity of Christ.

## **THE MYSTERIOUS UNION**

### **(How The Two Natures of Jesus Can Bless Trans Christians)**

#### **Part 1: A Doctrinal Gold Standard**

In Christian Theology, the mysterious union between perfect deity and perfect humanity in Jesus is known as the '*Hypostatic union*' or '*personal union*' (which will be the term that shall be used in these reflections). Very simply it refers to the way two natures exist in one person, '*without confusion, without change, without division, without separation. the distinction of nature's being in no way annulled by the union,*' This means, '*our Lord Jesus Christ, [is] at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man,*' You will rightly conclude that the Christ proclaimed in the Chalcedon Declaration following much theological controversy, is the one I follow. This is because I believe that it represent an adequate, if not exhaustive summary of scriptural teaching concerning our Lord's nature. Nonetheless. we are faced with the question as to '*how perfect deity and perfect humanity is able to co-existing in just one person?*'

Theologians have deeply pondered this question. Part of the answer lies in the fact that divinity has the capacity to encompass humanity without diminishing it. Indeed, as we come under progressively greater divine influence our humanity is enhanced. The real problem is not between God and our human nature. Which after all, is a Creation of His – rather it is between God and the sin that has engulfed that nature. There is the added fact that in his love God will gladly restrain the more visible manifestation of His deity in order to allow the human to express itself. On the cross, Jesus could have called a whole legion of angels to rescue him, but He didn't. Calvary was a case of deity restrained rather than deity lost. This was because God himself wanted to experience the worst of human suffering. Think on that, our Creator who flung billions of galaxies into space reduced Himself to being a tortured, murder victim on the cross. If that doesn't fill you with awe I don't know what will.

The belief, that ***as eternal God, the second person of the divine trinity was so motivated by love that He descended to become a sinless human being in order to offer a perfect non-repeatable sacrifice for our sins and those of the world (1 John 2:2) represents the Gold Standard in***

**Christian teaching.** Without this belief, it's hard to see that what remains is in any way authentically biblical. All that is offered is a mangled Christ who's useless for our salvation. If Christ weren't divine to worship Him would be idolatry; if Christ weren't also human how can God identify with our afflictions? Moreover, if He didn't offer a complete non-repeatable sacrifice to atone *i.e.* cover over our sin what use was his ministry? The effect of such denials would at best, be to reduce Christ to being just one good teacher among many good teachers. His uniqueness would be denied. The reality is that Christ's work as a divine-human saviour is clearly bound-up with what He accomplished in His work of procuring our redemption and forgiveness of sin. Only a being with Christ's dual nature would have the capacity to deal with or sins and the sins of the world. This was a point implicit in the Chalcedon formula. The fourth century Church Father Athanasius (c.297-373AD) the five times exiled Bishop of Alexandria in Egypt recognized this point very clearly in his struggle against Arius who wrongly taught '*there was a time when Christ was not.*' Athanasius' treatise on the Incarnation is a masterpiece and well worth reading.

## Part 2: A Threefold Blessing

All this is very well, but '*how does this mysterious union between deity and humanity in Christ bless trans people?*' Is it just a piece of esoteric theology with little relevance to our daily lives or does it represent a divinely revealed truth that have the potential to change our lives and help us navigate the horrendous complexities of being Trans. Obviously, I believe the latter for who Jesus is can strongly influence who we are as Trans people. It can also influence our actions and relationship with others. Present is a threefold blessing.

In his Deity, Christ enables us to gain access to spiritual resources not available to those outside the faith. Being God means He knows everything about us. Moreover, He also knows exactly what we need (which may or may not be what we want). He can also bestow God's Holy Spirit who will generously give us the strength and wisdom needed to handle being Trans. Through being immersed in His Holy Spirit we can receive that incredible love that enables us to go out into the world and be a blessing to others. (A reading of 1 Corinthians 13 will show what that love consists of.) Through faith in Christ we can enjoy a personal '*i-thou*' relationship with our maker. We must remember that Christianity is relational as well as doctrinal. The closer we come to God the more we can appreciate the teachings scripture give about Christ, On a cautionary note, it's worth remarking that a seriously deficient view of Christ if wilfully maintained over a long time period may well be a sign of a deficient relationship with him. A reading of Church History would suggest that militantly held mistaken views of Christ can be a sign of underlying spiritual problems. Almost constantly the real identity of our saviour is under some form of attack from both within the world and from within the Church. All too often it is either ignored, mocked, obscured or overtly denied by those wishing to pursue a Christ of their own imagination. As one Vicar once remarked in a sermon I heard during the 1980s, undermining the identity of Christ appears to be one of the devils main obsessions. He hates the reality of who Jesus is. The ferocious Christological dispute of the fourth and fifth centuries would be enough confirm this point. As the Church fathers well knew, these battles were a manifestation of a ferocious conflict in the spiritual realm.

In his Humanity, comfort can be drawn from the way Christ has been tested in all the ways we have. This means what we've suffered He also suffered; what we endure in terms of personal rejection He endured; the many temptations that beset us also beset Him. Christ was no mere bystander casually observing our sufferings from afar He actually went through them Himself. One only has to read Isaiah 52:13-53:1f to see this. During His time on earth He knew what it was like to feel utterly forsaken by God, (Matthew 27:46). If Christ's deity represents the end of a bridge that linking us to God; then His Humanity remains the end of the bridge linking God to us.

In his personal union between deity and humanity, Jesus showed us the way to inner integration. and wholeness. This means the more we allow His Spirit to fill us the more we become the people we were meant to be. Following over five decades of struggle (from 1964 until 2021) I eventually concluded that if Christ could hold together two natures then why shouldn't His all-powerful Spirit enable me to hold together the male and female inside of me? The key was to be open to that Spirit and to be willing follow His leadings once they have been clearly discerned. By '*walking in the Spirit*' (Galatians 5:16)

and by surrendering everything to Christ the mentally excruciating conflict between the male and female within me finally ended whilst on a private retreat January 2021 (although it had begun to ebb from July the previous year). These aspects of my personality are still there, and they are still distinct but now they are partners rather than warring members trying to destroy each other. Where there was once confusion, conflict and shame there is now clarity, peace and joy. Under God's amazing grace there has been a marriage between the male and female within me. What has transpired has been one of the most incredible miracles of my life. It has also led to the development of some precious friendships. If you wish to receive the blessings outlined here, all I can do is urge you to come to the Christ revealed in God's Holy Word. Place your trust in Him, give Him your undivided allegiance and surrender every area of your life to Him. Do this willingly and He won't turn you away.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and our God, who as the Word made Flesh came to die for our sins, before rising from the dead three days later and ascending into Heaven from where He will come again in glory. Amen.

Having just presented who Jesus is the next step is to have a time when we are relating to him through prayer. But let us first briefly pause to reflect on what has been said.

## PRAYER

Be encouraged by the promise of Hebrews 4:14-16 which stresses the humanity of Jesus *"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* Let us now pray as the Spirit leads.

Let us be confident that in his full deity and humanity Jesus will now graciously hear the prayers that we shall make.

**A Time for Open Prayer now Follows**

## CLOSING PRAYERS

Let us begin to close this service by praying: -

**Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matthew 6:9-13)**

And finally, let us valiantly go out world to serve Him who is our Lord and God, Amen.

**May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
The love of God our Father and  
The fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
Be with us all, forevermore, Amen"(2 Corinthians 13:14)**

Praise you Father, bless you Jesus, thank you Spirit, Glory Alleluia, Amen

**Closing Hymn: He Who Would Valiant Be**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AD7W92d4jmE>