

## **The Hypostatic Union: God and Man, Part 1**

### **Acts 20:28-32**

### **Introduction to the Hypostatic Union**

The hypostatic union is a fancy term that shows us the union or uniting of God and man. This union is the PERSONAL UNION of two complete and distinct natures. God and human. True deity and true humanity. And there's only one person with that and He is Jesus Christ.

So, I want you to remember this because this is highly important to understanding the Scriptures. There are difficult Scriptures that are clearly explained by the hypostatic union. And this all goes together in what we've been learning about Jesus going to hell after He died on the cross.

I want to stop here for a while and explain the hypostatic union. Again, the hypostatic union is the union in ONE PERSON, the Son of God, of two complete natures without mixture or division. In other words, this is a union at the person level, not a blending of the natures. This is deep and this is important.

Hypo means under. Static means stand. Hypostatic means what stands under the attributes equals the Person. Hypostatic union is the two natures of God and man united in the one Person who stands under all Jesus says and does.

### **Is the Hypostatic Union Biblical?**

Now, when you first see the phrase "hypostatic union" you might not think it's a Biblical term. And that exact phrase isn't in the Bible. But we do see the noun hypostasis as an underlying Greek word within the new Testament five different times.

I want to show you those 5 verses and talk about them so you better understand the hypostatic union. Remember, this is just Part and you need to know this to understand the remaining Bible studies.

#### **""2 Corinthians 9:4**

Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.""

The underlying word there is hypostasis. It is translated as confident in English. The sense here is firmness and assurance. Keep these in mind or write them down as we look at these five verses.

**""2 Corinthians 11:17**

That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.""

We've seen the word as confident and confidence so far. We've seen 2 out of the 5 in 2 Corinthians. Now we're going to see the other 3 occurrences in Hebrews.

**""Hebrews 1:3**

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;""

Hypostasis here is rendered as person. The sense here is a being or subsistence. Now we see this talking about the PERSON of Jesus Christ. He is the express image of God the Father. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Jesus is the right hand man. We've seen confident, confidence, and person so far.

**""Hebrews 3:14**

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;""

We see hypostasis translated as "of our confidence." This is "a setting under" or support. We are assured. We are confident.

**""Hebrews 11:1**

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.""

The substance in the sense of the underlying reality. That's all five occurrences of the word hypostasis in Greek. We see the word can mean firmness or assurance, underlying reality or substance, and person or being.

Hebrews 1:3 says the "express image of His person" which ties the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the very BEING/SUBSISTENCE or the PERSON of God. So this is a strong and positive witness to the Son's FULL DEITY but yet a distinctness from the Father. Yet, they share the same divine reality.

Hypostasis came to be used precisely for person. Please understand what I'm saying here. Hypostatic union means the UNION in the ONE PERSON of Jesus Christ of two complete natures, God and man, without mixture or division.

But none of the 5 occurrences, by themselves, spell out two natures united in one person. But there are many other Scriptures, when looking at the Bible as a whole, that do.

So, is the phrase "hypostatic union" a Biblical term?

The noun hypostasis is an underlying word in the Bible. The phrase "hypostatic union" is not a Bible phrase but it is a Biblically rooted language that faithfully summarizes what the Scriptures teach. There's one Lord Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, one Person, two natures.

You can think of it in the same way we speak about the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity is Biblical, the term is theological shorthand drawn from Biblical vocabulary. Substance = what. Subsistence = who.

Trinity: One substance or one divine essence and three subsistence's or three persons.

Christology: Two natures. Divine and human substances or essences united in one subsistence—the one Person of the Son of God. This is why we speak of the hypostatic union. This is a union or coming together at the level of the Person and is not a BLEND of natures. And you can CLEARLY see this in the Scriptures once we start studying them.

## **The Hypostatic Union Only Applies to Jesus Christ**

The hypostatic union only describes one Person who is truly God and truly man. When we talk about the hypostatic union, you know we are ONLY speaking of Jesus Christ. The Father and the Holy Ghost did not assume a human nature, and no angel or believer shares this kind of union. Jesus Christ is unique in every way.

### **""1 Timothy 2:5**

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;""

I hope that Scripture is starting to hit you a little harder now. The Bible goes deeper and deeper. There is one God. There is one mediator between God and men. How is that possible? Think about that. Says there right at the end: "The man Christ Jesus." Is Jesus a man just like you and I? Yes He is. Is Jesus the one God? Yes He is.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." That's why Jesus is the perfect mediator. He is God. He is man. Do you see that? I hope so. Only the Son of God became man. The Father did not take on flesh. The Holy Spirit did not take on flesh.

### **""John 1:14**

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.""

The eternal Word, the Son of God, truly became a man in the flesh just like us. He took a complete human nature: body, spirit, and soul from Mary, without ceasing to be God at any moment. Jesus is the eternal Son of God and has not for one moment ceased to be God.

### **""John 1:1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.""

The Word was God and was made flesh. He's God meaning He's eternal but then He was made flesh. And He dwelt among us. And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Every word of God is important here.

**""1 Timothy 3:16**

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.""

The flesh you see in that verse equals true, mortal humanity under the conditions of this world. This doesn't mean Jesus became sinful.

**""Romans 8:3**

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:""

God sent Jesus, the Son of God, in the likeness of sinful flesh. And then Jesus, being God in the flesh, condemned sin in the flesh. How? Because Jesus is God and the flesh is against God, contrary to God, but Jesus won. Jesus wins against anyone and anything.

## **The Hypostatic Union in Action**

Keep thinking about this. ONE PERSON, TWO NATURES. The Son of God is the who. Deity and true humanity are the two what's united without mixture, change, division, or separation. You can see the hypostatic union in action with Jesus Christ within the Scriptures. And this is very important. You'll begin to get to know Jesus Christ better when you understand this.

**""Philippians 2:5-8**

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.""

Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He was made in the likeness of men. He already existed as God from eternity but Jesus was then made in the likeness of men. He was found in fashion as a man.

As a man, He humbled Himself. As a man, He became obedient unto death. AS A MAN. Equal with God. But He became a servant. God Himself as a man. The Bible teaches this hypostatic union, and if you get it wrong, you go towards false doctrine, heresy, and unbiblical teaching. This is very important to understand and to get right.

For example, and I will show you this later. As a man growing up, Jesus didn't know everything. As God, Jesus knew everything. And it might sound wrong, when I say: "As a man growing up,

Jesus didn't know everything." But you have to understand the hypostatic union. I didn't write the Bible.

""**Luke 2:49-52**

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.""

Jesus, as a young man, increased in wisdom and stature. Yet, Jesus never sinned once even as a young man growing up. This is the hypostatic union in action. I hope you see what I mean. Jesus is God and was God right there in that verse. It's obvious because He never once sinned.

But, as a man, He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. He increased as a man. He cannot increase as God because He's already God. God cannot increase because God is everything.

Some people might say, "Well that verse proves Jesus isn't God." Muslims love to use that verse so keep that in mind. They will say, "If he increased in wisdom, how can he be God?" And they think that's the end of it. But the verse they attempt to use just proves the greatness of Jesus Christ even more. As a man, He increased in wisdom and yet He never sinned. Imagine that.

THE GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST. God in the flesh.

## **The Hypostatic Union Means All The Fulness of God in Jesus Christ the Man**

""**Colossians 2:9**

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.""

In body form, it's Jesus Christ. Make sure you see it again. "For in Him dwelleth ALL THE FULNESS of the Godhead bodily. Jesus has it all. He's God. He's not one bit less than God. He is God in bodily form. The Father is not God in bodily form. The Holy Spirit is not God in bodily form. JESUS IS GOD IN BODILY FORM. Do you see that?

The Son of God, His entire divine nature, dwells in Jesus in a real human body. God the Father and the Holy Ghost do not have human bodies. Only the Son of God became flesh. This is all very important to getting your doctrine correct.

""**Luke 24:39**

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.""

Let me be clear. Jesus has flesh and bones. God the Father does not have flesh and bones. The Holy Spirit does not have flesh and bones. The entire divine fulness of God dwells in the incarnate Son of God in a human body. The Father and the Spirit remain Spirit and invisible; only Jesus Christ is the God-Man. Understand that.

When you get this right, you won't allow false doctrine to creep in because it does. I've been there before, and I've heard it with my own ears.

**""Hebrews 2:16-17**

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.""

He wasn't like the angels as a spirit. He took on flesh. He came like us to save us. He didn't come to save angels, the good ones or the devils. He came to save humans. We are His brethren because He was made just like us. He understands our struggles because He is a MAN. He is God. He is man. He is the PERFECT MAN.

The Word was made flesh” means the eternal Son personally took true human nature from Mary—so that in the one Lord Jesus Christ, God Himself tabernacles among us or pitched his tent among us, revealing the Father perfectly, obeying the law as man, bearing our sins in His body, opening the way to God through His flesh, and inaugurating the new humanity without ever ceasing to be fully God.

## **Because of His Human Nature, Did Jesus Cease to Be God?**

And make sure you hear me on that because there are pastors out there that teach Jesus could have ceased to be God. For example, you might hear one in Baptist churches say that if Mary Magdalene would have touched Jesus that she would have defiled Jesus.

This is essentially saying Jesus would have ceased to be God. Pastors who teach this aren't aware of what they are saying. Jesus can't be defiled EVEN IN THE FLESH. He is God. He can't be defiled as a man or as God.

He never ceased to be God. As a man, He increased in wisdom but that doesn't mean He ceased to be God. He died on the cross, but that doesn't mean He ceased to be God. His soul was not left in hell but that doesn't mean He ceased to be God. He was born of the virgin Mary. As a baby, He didn't cease to be God.

The Son of God truly has and keeps a human body. Only the Son of God assumed a human nature by the virgin conception and now lives in a glorified human body forever. The Father and the Holy Ghost did not incarnate. Jesus is the only hypostatic union in existence. God with man. God with us.

Jesus is always God at any moment throughout eternity. ALWAYS. He became a man when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not His Father. The Spirit of God is the agent of the conception. The Father is the Father of the Son eternally. The eternal Son of God became a man.

Jesus assumes or takes a complete human nature into His one divine Person—without mixture or change of either nature. Make sure you understand that. God did not change. The Bible says in Malachi 3, "For I am the Lord, I change not." God didn't change who He was. Without mixture and without change of either nature—God or man. Man didn't become something else.

Jesus didn't become something different than us. Hey, listen, this is important because I've heard pastors recently say that the blood of Jesus was different than our blood. Well then that means He wasn't a man. His blood was exactly like ours—he was a man just like us when His blood was shed.

We have to get the hypostatic union correct because this is Scriptural. Without this concept of the hypostatic union, taught in the Scriptures, false doctrine will abound. So we need to get this right.

There wasn't a new breed of man. Jesus is a man. Jesus is God. There is no one like Jesus—the God-Man. But understand He is God and He is man. A human body was prepared for Him.

### **Conclusion: What is the Hypostatic Union?**

So, remember, this hypostatic union is Biblical. The union happens at the level of the Person or the who. It is not a blending of the natures of God and man. They aren't blended together. They aren't mixed. And you can see this within the Scriptures.

And we'll go over more of those Scriptures in this series, and some of the verses that were confusing to you will no longer be confusing. We use the light of the Scriptures to teach the truth.

We see two complete sets of faculties: a divine intellect/will and a human intellect/will—harmoniously united in the one Lord. He truly grew, hungered, learned, and suffered as man, while He truly forgave, created, knew hearts, and received worship as God.

Understand there is only ONE acting Person as the SON OF GOD: so Scripture can ascribe to "God" what was suffered in the assumed humanity. Jesus, as a man, is called God. Last verse. This is the one we started with. And understand what I mean. There is ONLY ONE acting PERSON as the Son of God, the Son of man, and God Himself.

Now watch what this verse says again as we close here:

**""Acts 20:28**

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.""

I hope you are now starting to see the brilliance of God's words, His plan, His holiness. You see that Jesus is God in that verse. You see that Jesus is man in that verse. He had blood. Humans have blood. Jesus became a man and purchased us and He feeds His church, the church of God.

God's word: Flawless. Brilliant. Powerful. Awesome. Wonderful. Astonishing. Majestic. Breathtaking. Unmatched in wisdom. Glorious.

For the Sunday evening service, we are going to look at Scriptures that people attempt to use that say Jesus isn't God. But now that you know this concept of the hypostatic union, taught in the Scriptures just like that one right there, you'll understand that Scriptures easily.

Let's pray.