

Article 1

The Trinity, the Hypostatic Union, and the Communicatio Idiomatum

by [Matt Slick](#)

The [Bible](#) says that there is only one [God](#) in all existence for all time ([Isaiah 43:10](#); [44:6](#), [8](#); [45:5](#), etc.). But, what exactly is the [nature](#) of God? Is He a Trinity or not? The answer to this question has been debated for hundreds of years especially since the non-Christian cults (Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, Christadelphians, etc.,) have arisen. In spite of their attacks on the Trinity, and others in the past, the Christian church has discovered what the Bible says about God and the person of [Jesus](#). Therefore, following is a presentation of three very important Christian doctrines that, in total, answers most every objection raised by the anti-orthodox false teachers that have arisen in these last days. When I say "most every objection," I actually mean "most every objection" because most of them fall into only a few categories; and they are answered with the same basic Christian teachings.

Unfortunately, many in the cults, because they have been taught the Trinity is false, will not accept standard answers to their objections. Instead, many of them continue to raise the same questions, often ignoring our answers and staying willingly ignorant of [Christian](#) doctrines that affect the discussion of the Trinity and person of Jesus. This paper, then, is an attempt to list three important biblical teachings and then apply them to the different objections raised by the critics. In this way, Christians and cultists alike might be better-informed on the Biblical positions held by the historic Christian Church since its inception.

The Trinity

The Trinity is the teaching that there is only one God who exists as three simultaneous and eternal persons: the Father, the Son, and the [Holy Spirit](#).

By "person" is meant the characteristics of self-awareness, speech, having a will, emotions, etc. Therefore, there are three persons. The Father is not the same person as the Son; the Son is not the same person as the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the same person as Father--as each of them has a will and they speak to each other and to people. They are not three separate gods and are not three separate beings. They are three distinct persons; yet, they are all the one God. They are in absolute perfect harmony--consisting of one substance. They are coeternal, coequal, and co-powerful. If any one of the three were removed, there would be no God.

The Hypostatic Union

The Hypostatic Union is the teaching that the Word of God became flesh, and we call Him Jesus. Therefore, Jesus is God in human flesh. He is not half

God and half man. He is fully divine and fully man. That is, Jesus has two distinct natures: divine and human. As the Scripture says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . 14 and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us . . ." ([John 1:1, 14](#)). This means that the divine word became flesh in the single person of Jesus, who is thus both human and divine in nature. The divine nature was not changed. It was not altered in this union. Rather, the divine holy nature of the Word remains as it is.

Furthermore, Jesus is not merely a man who "had God within Him," nor is he a man who "manifested the God principle." He is the second person of the Trinity. "*The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*" ([Heb. 1:3, NIV](#)).

Jesus' two natures are not "mixed together," nor are they combined into a new God-man nature. They are separate yet act as a unit in the one person of Jesus. This is called the [Hypostatic Union](#).

Also, in the incarnation, Jesus was made for a while lower than the angels ([Heb. 2:9](#)) and under the law ([Gal. 4:4](#)). This means that Jesus cooperated with the limitations of being a man ([Phil. 2:5-8](#)). In other words, He really was a man and as a man exhibited the proper restrictions of His humanity such as growing taller, eating, growing in wisdom, etc., which would be expected of a real human being.

The Communicatio Idiomatum

The *communicatio idiomatum* (Latin for "communication of properties") is the teaching that the attributes of both the [divine](#) and human natures are ascribed to the one person of Jesus. This means that the person of Jesus could rightfully claim for Himself the attributes of both the divine and the human natures. Therefore, He could say He had glory with the Father before the world was made ([John 17:5](#)). He could claim that He descended from heaven ([John 3:13](#)); and He could also claim omnipresence ([Matt. 28:20](#)) even though Jesus, the man, began His existence on earth when He was conceived in Mary's womb.

This is vitally important when we look at the atonement. Jesus' sacrifice was divine, as well as human, in nature. Jesus died. But, we know that God cannot die. So, if the divine nature did not die, how can it be said that Jesus' sacrifice was divine in nature? The answer is that the attributes of divinity, as well as humanity, were ascribed to the person Jesus. Therefore, since the person of Jesus died, His death was of infinite value because the properties of divinity were ascribed to the person in His death.

Objections Answered

Following is an outline of basic objections raised by critics of the Trinity and deity of Christ. Note there are many questions that are answered the same way. The answers will frequently refer to the three doctrines listed above.

The word Trinity is not found in the Bible.

This has no bearing on whether or not the Bible teaches the doctrine. The word "monotheism" is not in the Bible, yet it is clearly taught in scripture. Is monotheism not true because the word isn't used in the Bible?

There is no verse in the Bible that teaches the Trinity

First of all, the doctrine of the [Trinity](#) is systematically arrived at. In other words, you look at the whole of scripture to find it. We find various verses that teach that the Father is called God ([Phil. 1:2](#)), the Son is called God ([John 1:1, 14](#)), and the Holy Spirit is called God ([Acts 5:3-4](#)). We see that each was involved in Christ's resurrection (Father, [1 Thess. 1:10](#); Son, [John 2:19-21](#); Holy Spirit, [Rom. 8:11](#)). We see that each is all knowing (Father, [1 John 3:20](#); Son, [John 16:30; 21:17](#); Holy Spirit, [1 Cor. 2:10-11](#)), etc.

Therefore, the Trinity is found in the whole of [scripture](#)-- not just one part of it. Second, there are verses that suggest the Trinity since they mention all three together. So, saying that there is no single verse that teaches the trinity isn't necessarily true.

[Matt. 3:16-17](#), "And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

[Matt. 28:19](#), "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . ." Note that there is one name and three persons.

[2 Cor. 13:14](#), "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

The Trinity is three separate Gods

This objection demonstrates a lack of understanding of the [Trinity](#) doctrine which is, by definition, monotheistic. Therefore, when this objection is raised, the critic is simply demonstrating what he/she does not understand.

Three gods cannot be one God

This objection reveals a lack of understanding of the [Trinity](#). First of all, the Trinity is not three gods. Therefore, the complaint is invalid since it is not based upon what the Trinity really is. The Trinity is one God in three persons.

Three persons cannot be one person.

The Doctrine of the [Trinity](#) does not state that God is one person. Therefore, the complaint is invalid since it does not accurately reflect what the Trinity is. The Trinity is one God in three persons.

The Trinity is illogical

There is no logical reason why the [Trinity](#) cannot be a possibility. An analogy would be time. Time is past, present, and future. Each aspect of time is not

the other, yet the nature of each is "time." If time can be like this, why can't God also exist that way?

It is good to ask the critic what logical premise exists that prohibits the existence of God as three persons. If they state that it just can't happen, then all they are offering is their opinion without fact or reason.

The Trinity is a pagan idea.

Saying that it is a pagan idea does not make it so. Many of the critics will claim that the Trinity was copied from paganism and will cite other religions with triads. A triad is three separate gods. The Trinity is a one God. They are not the same. Therefore, the assertion is unfounded.

Also, even though there were other cultures with triadic deities does not mean that Christianity borrowed from the idea and changed it. The Trinity is found in the Old Testament. There are [many verses in the OT](#) that contain plural references to the one God: **1) [Gen. 1:1,26](#); [Job 33:4](#)**; **2) [Gen. 17:1](#); [18:1](#); [Ex. 6:2-3](#); [24:9-11](#); [33:20](#); [Num. 12:6-8](#); [Psalm 104:30](#)**; **3) [Gen. 19:24](#) with [Amos 4:10-11](#); [Is.48:16](#)**

Jesus cannot be God because He did not know all things, slept, grew in wisdom, said the Father is greater than I, etc.

This type of statement is perhaps the most commonly raised attack.

Unfortunately, it fails to take into consideration the [Hypostatic Union](#) which states that Jesus had two natures: divine and human. As a man, Jesus cooperated with the limitations of His humanity, was made lower than the angels ([Heb. 2:9](#)), talked about position, and was under the Law ([Gal. 4:4](#)), signifying Him being under legal obligations. Therefore, Jesus would sleep, grow in wisdom, and say the Father was greater than He. But, these do not negate that Jesus was divine since they reference His humanity and not His divinity.

There are other verses which reflect His divinity, such as when He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM." ([John 8:58](#) with [Exodus 3:14](#)). He was called God by God in [Heb. 1:8](#), "But of the Son He says, 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever,'" and [John 1:1, 14](#) says that He is ". . . the Word was God . . . and became flesh . . ." This means that Jesus is both divine and human; and as a man, he would grow, sleep, and learn. It means that Jesus had a human nature--not that he had no divine nature.

Jesus cannot be God because that would mean that God changed.

The doctrine of the [Hypostatic Union](#) teaches that the divine nature of the Word did not change as it became united, in the one person of Christ, with the human nature. The [Hypostatic Union](#) maintains there are two distinct natures: divine and human. By definition, God cannot change. Yet, the Bible says that ". . . the Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh," ([John 1:1, 14](#)). By definition, nature of divinity does not change. Therefore, the divine nature did not change when it became united with the human in the person of

Jesus. Again, the Hypostatic Union states that in the one person of Jesus, there are two distinct natures: divine and human. Therefore, the divine nature did not change.

An illustration of this concept would be the biblical doctrine of marriage where the male and female become one flesh ([Gen. 2:24](#)). Though the man and woman are distinct, the Bible says they are one flesh. Were the man and woman changed in nature when they became married? Did they stop being man and woman? Not at all. Likewise, the divine nature did not change when it was united with the human in the one person

Jesus cannot be God because this would mean that God died, and God can't die.

Jesus' sacrifice was divine as well as human in nature. Jesus died. But, we know that God cannot die. So, if the divine nature did not die, how can it be said that Jesus' sacrifice was divine in nature? The answer is that the attributes of divinity as well as humanity were ascribed to the person Jesus. Therefore, since the person of Jesus died, His death was of infinite value because the properties of divinity were ascribed to the person in His death. This is called the [Communicatio Idiomatum](#).

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1. Achtemeier, Paul J., Th.D., Harpers Bible Dictionary, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.) 1985.

Article 2

When Trinitarian Theology Goes Tribal

[SCOT MCKNIGHT](#)

Note from Dr. Stan

This article is VERY academic and for some may be difficult to read. Yet, when the terms used are reduced to basic theological concepts, it is worth the discipline. Your assignment here is to arrive at a few fundamental principles concerning the relationship of the Son to the Father. To achieve this goal, we will need definitions. Read the article, then, go back and look up the words in **RED** and provide a short definition that an average Christian would understand. Why? Because the task of 'theology' is to take difficult issues of

Scripture and streamline them for a wider understanding. I would guess that Scot McKnight had no such parameters when he wrote this article. Have fun!

Long ago I read a portion from a well-known theological textbook to a classical theologian who knows the Creedal tradition with expertise, and his response was “That sounds **Arian**, or at least very close to Arian.”

Michael Bird and Scott Harrower, in their new book [*Trinity without Hierarchy: Reclaiming Nicene Orthodoxy in Evangelical Theology*](#), now have provided a collection of essays that both criticize what must be called a Complementarian sub-Trinitarianism (Bird picks a fight by calling them “theologians of a lesser Son”) and offer an alternative in the classical **Trinitarian orthodoxy** of the church.

Not that all **complementarians** adhere to this for they don’t — those blog posts by those surrounding Westminster Theological Seminary some time back made that very clear. But far more do than are known, some won’t even admit it publicly, while others are gathering over beers and brats to tell one another that they still adhere to what Bird will expose in this volume.

Evangelicals are not as good at **Trinitarian theology** because too many and for too long they have ignored the great church tradition.

What is also clear is that the Grudem-Ware-Burk-Strachan line is now under very serious investigation, and it is a pity that their tribe is so tight that their theology remains under-investigated.

Bird and Harrower are ending the silence and are challenging the tribe. From Bird’s “Theologians of a Lesser Son” preface:

As far as I could tell [from his earlier forays into this subject in writing], Ware and Grudem were clearly not Arians; they did not deny the eternity of the Son, they affirmed that the Son was of the same substance as the Father, and they believed in their own minds that they were orthodox Trinitarians. That said, their language of “subordination” certainly bothered me, but I erstwhile assumed that such scholars were using the term not in its actual sense, but as more of a clunky yet effective way of correlating the **economic Trinity** with the **immanent Trinity** and safeguarding the personal distinctions within the Godhead.

However, after reading and rereading several volumes by complementarians, where the language of subordination and hierarchy are championed, I am now convinced that Grudem, Ware, and others were arguing for something analogical to a **Semi-Arian subordinationism**. The Trinitarian relations being advocated by such scholars are not identical to Arius, since proponents identify the Son as coeternal with the Father and sharing the same substance as the Father. In addition, I think it is fair to say neither are Eternal Functional Subordination (EFS) advocates pure semi-Arians, because they do not think

Jesus is merely like the Father nor do they consider the Son to be the Father's creature. Those caveats aside, they resemble a species of Semi-Arianism, called "homoianism," by virtue of three things:

- (1) an overreliance on the economic Trinity in Scripture for formulating immanent Trinitarian relationships,
- (2) leading to a robust subordinationism characterized by a hierarchy within the Godhead,
- (3) consequently identifying the Son as possessing a lesser glory and majesty than the Father.

Problems abound with this subordinationist and/or quasi-homoian complementarianism view of the Trinity, not least in how advocates describe the theological lay of the land and map their own position within it. For a start, one wonders if it wise to divide perspectives into so-called "feminist" views of the Trinity in contradistinction to so-called "complementarian" views of the Trinity. I submit that this classification tells us more about the classifiers than it does about the *status quaestionis* in contemporary Trinitarian discussions. A historical taxonomy would normally refer to "orthodox," that is to say Nicene-Constantinopolitan formulations, over and against "heterodox" positions, such as Arianism, **Sabellianism, and Tri-theism**. Going further, within orthodox Trinitarianism, one could opt to distinguish "Classical" from "Social" configurations of the Trinity. On close inspection, then, the description of "feminist" and "complementarian" views of the Trinity do not represent historical categorizations or even correspond to contemporary schools of Trinitarian thought. Thus, to insist on views of gender roles as the single criterion for classifying Trinitarian formulations is a strange move. It is also a categorization that is, to be frank, utterly bizarre in that it subordinates Trinitarian doctrine to a very narrow band of anthropology (i.e., gender roles); it even turns out to be a meaningless categorization when it is realized that complementarian and egalitarian advocates both can affirm a non-subordinationist Trinitarian theology.

The problem, as I see it, is that a quasi-homoianism was drafted into the complementarian narrative by a small cohort of theologians in order to buttress their claims about gender roles and to define what distinguishes them as complementarians. In which case, something like homoianism is being utilized as scaffolding for complementarianism with the result that a defense of complementarianism involves a defense of a quasi-homoianism. Now it is quite clear that not all complementarians will allow their views of gender roles in the church to be tethered to this quasi-homoianism since many complementarians will regard such a formulation as extrinsic to their accounts of gender roles and will simultaneously wish to affirm an orthodox and **Nicene Trinitarianism** in which there is no subordination. Indeed, this book proves that very point since it comprises of several essays written by a

mixture of egalitarian and complementarian scholars who are all singularly united in their articulation of a non-subordinationist and non-hierarchical account of intra-Trinitarian relationships. This is fatal to the quasi-homoianistic brand of complementary because it demonstrates that a Nicene and orthodox Trinitarian theology ultimately transcends and even unites those with different convictions about gender roles, marriage, and family. Clearly, then, one does not have to hold to a homoian and hierarchical view of the Trinity in order to be complementarian.

Article 3

Jesus is "God with us," God's Word become flesh

by [Ken Schenck](#)

God became a man in the person of Jesus, the Christ.

1. As we saw in [the previous article](#), Christians believe that Jesus has existed from eternity past. He is the "eternally begotten" Son of God. He is a distinct person within the Trinity--he is not God the Father and he is not God the Holy Spirit. But there is only one God and he has the "same substance" (*homoousios*) as the Father and the Spirit.

So Christians believe that Jesus is fully God, 100% God.

Christians also believe that Jesus became fully human, 100% human. At Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), Christians had wrestled with the Trinity. Is Jesus fully God? Once that issue came to rest, Christians turned to the person of Jesus. How could he be human *and* God at the same time?

There were a number of suggestions made in the years between the "Council of Nicaea" in 325 and the "Council of Chalcedon" in 451. It was at the latter council that the understanding we now have was finalized. So was Jesus one person, both human and divine (the right answer) or was he almost two different people (Nestorianism). Did Jesus have two natures--one human and one divine (the right answer)--or did he pretty much just have a divine nature (Monophysitism).

One man, Apollinaris, suggested that Jesus had a human body but that his soul was divine, made up of the *Logos* or Word of God. Another, Eutyches, suggested that Jesus' divinity was so vast that his human nature was like a drop in the ocean. So while you might technically say he had two natures, when they got mixed together, his human nature could hardly be found. The Church ultimately rejected both of these suggestions.

2. The official position of Christianity, the position that Christians have more or less held in common since the mid-400s is found in the description of Christ that became official at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Here is somewhat of a paraphrase of the definition they set down there:

"He is complete in his God-ness and complete in his humanity, truly God and truly man. He has a rational soul and a body. He is of one substance with the Father in relation to his God-ness and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his humanity. He is like us in every respect, except for sin... He is recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation. The distinction of his two natures are not in any way nullified by the union. Rather, the characteristics of each nature are preserved and come together to form one person and subsistence. They are not parted or separated into two persons, but they constitute one and the same Son..."

Again, the other suggestions were not heresies until the Church had come to this common agreement. Before then, we simply had well-meaning Christian leaders trying to make sense of a mysterious idea, namely, that Jesus was somehow both fully human and fully divine. The consensus that emerged was that Jesus was both. He was only one person, but he had a fully human nature and a fully divine nature. Any option that minimizes either his humanity or his divinity is off course.

3. In eternity past, God the Son was entirely divine. John 1:14 speaks of Christ taking on human flesh: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." [1] We call this moment of God assuming human flesh the **incarnation**. The Nicene Creed of 381 puts it this way: "For us humans, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made human." Now, for eternity future, Jesus is both fully divine and fully human.

The word for "made his dwelling" is related to the wilderness tabernacle of the Old Testament (*skenoo*). It gives us the picture of God's presence wandering through the wilderness with Israel. In the same way, Jesus is "God with us,"

Immanuel (cf. Matt. 1:23; 28:20).

4. In the New Testament, we occasionally find imagery of Jesus as the Word of God. This language of Jesus as the *Logos* found its background in Jewish thinking about God's Word, the instrument by which God enacts his will in the world. So God spoke, and the worlds were created.

So it is no surprise that we usually find language of Christ as the agent of creation in New Testament passages that have overtones of the Jewish *Logos*. Thus John 1:1, 3 say, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made..." Similarly, the "Colossian hymn" of 1:15-16 says, "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him." [2]

Christians thus frequently speak of Christ as the **agent of creation**, although some do take this language more to speak of Christ as the ultimate meaning or significance of the creation.

5. The Apostles Creed says that Jesus was "born of the Virgin Mary." The Council of Chalcedon also clarified that Jesus was divine even when he was in the womb. Mary was the "Theotokos" or "God-bearer." The primary purpose of this language was not to exalt Mary but to make clear that Jesus was God even when he was in her womb.

The conception of Jesus by Mary when she was still a virgin has been a key belief of Christianity since before the great "Christological" controversies of the 300s and 400s that we mentioned above. There is technically a difference between the **virginal conception** and a virgin birth. Roman Catholics believe that Mary remained a virgin anatomically even during childbirth and that she remained a "perpetual virgin" for the rest of her life, never having sexual relations.

However, common Christianity only affirms that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus. When we commonly refer to the virgin birth and confess it in the creeds, we are confessing our faith in the virginal conception of Jesus.

Although the Virgin Birth is a core Christian dogma, it is significant to note what it is not. Jesus was not half man and half God. Therefore, there is no obvious reason why Jesus could not have had a human father and a human

mother too and still be fully God. His genes had both an X chromosome (from Mary) and a Y chromosome--which was a *human* chromosome the Holy Spirit must have created out of nothing. The Spirit did not have sex with Mary and contribute a divine Y chromosome!

This a significant point. The Y chromosome does not contain our sin nature, as if women with their XX genes have no sin nature. The male gene does not contain the sin gene. Therefore, there is no obvious reason why Jesus had to be born of a virgin either to be without sin or to be fully divine. All the same genetics necessary for him to be fully human had to be fully human anyway. Whether the Holy Spirit contributes the adenine, thymine, cytosine, and guanine--or if Joseph had--these are still fully human molecules.

Our faith in the virgin birth is thus a reflection of our faith in the common Christianity of the centuries and the historicity of this biblical story. Other than giving a sense of Jesus' greatness and the miracle of his entrance, there is no obvious truth about Jesus' nature that the virgin birth makes possible, at least from our current understanding of genetics.

4. If anything, Christians today probably minimize Jesus' humanity and overemphasize his divinity. Like Eutyches, it is common for Christians to have such a high view of Jesus' divinity that he is hardly like us at all. Yet, if diapers had existed in the first century, Jesus would have dirtied them. He had sexual urges, like the rest of us. If he had married, it would not have made him less holy.

Here is an important point and one that fits well within the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition. Is it not likely that Jesus "played by the rules of humanity" while he was on earth? That is to say, it is not likely that Jesus chose to do what he did as a human through the power of the Holy Spirit--the same Spirit who lives in believers today--rather than through his power as the second person of the Trinity?

It is a core Christian belief that Jesus never ceased to be God. We must believe that Jesus, as the divine Son of God, retained all his attributes as God. To that extent, any **kenotic theory** (from the Greek word for "emptying") that sees Jesus as losing his divinity when he came to earth is unorthodox.

However, it would fully fit with the biblical texts to believe that Jesus set aside in some mysterious way access to his divine powers while he was on earth. So Mark 13:32 indicates that Jesus did not know all things when he was on earth. In some mysterious way, the second person of the Trinity seems to

have bracketed many of his divine powers and prerogatives when he came to earth.

So Jesus did not come out of the womb speaking Aramaic, let alone English. He learned it like anyone else. Jesus did not hover through Nazareth but learned to crawl and walk. He was probably not fully aware of his full divinity when he was a child, let alone aware of what would be declared at the Council of Chalcedon.

This is also a mystery but it is the only way to be true both to Scripture and the consensus of Christianity. The Bible does not waver on the full participation of Jesus in humanity. We can plausibly suggest that when the earthly Jesus knew more than other humans, he was relying on the Holy Spirit. When Jesus performed miracles, he was relying on the Holy Spirit.

The special case of Jesus not sinning is perhaps more complicated. Presumably, his divine nature would not have let his human nature fall prey to sin. Yet we can plausibly suggest that he was relying on the Holy Spirit to have the power not to sin, just as we can rely on the Holy Spirit not to sin. Jesus indicates that it is not part of the essence of humanity to have to sin. [3]

So Christians believe that Jesus was fully God and that he came to earth and fully assumed humanity. He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made human. He is God's word made flesh. He is Immanuel, God with us.

Next week: Jesus on earth was a prophet of the kingdom of God.

[1] You can see where there was plenty of room within what the biblical texts say for someone like Apollinaris to argue for his position. Indeed, Christians probably stopped using language of Jesus as the Word in the late 300s because it was susceptible to interpretations that did not fit with what the Church would finally conclude.

[2] From the perspective of the original meaning, it is difficult to know the extent to which the New Testament authors were being poetic with this language. Nevertheless, we as Christians generally take this language literally today.

[3] And here we are talking about [intentional sin](#). We are not considering mistakes to be sin. It is possible that Jesus made mistakes while he was on earth (e.g., forgetting where he left the donkey), but this is not sin.