

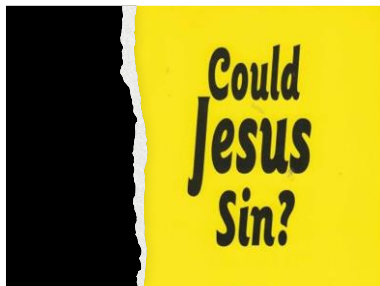
## Could Jesus Sin?

(A Defense of the Impeccability of Christ)

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Whether or not Jesus could have sinned in His humanity has been a subject of controversy for a long time. However, the controversy is with man and not with God's Word. There should not be disagreement among reputable Bible scholars on this matter. But some suggest that if Jesus was really a man and if the temptation was real, then theoretically it would have been possible for Jesus to sin. It is asserted that Jesus' divine nature could not be tempted or sin, but His human nature could. However, we must leave out the theoretical jargon and remember that Christ's two natures (the human and divine) are interrelated and united in their purpose to protect His deity and therefore the sinlessness of Jesus Christ (John 8:29, 58; 10:30).

All Bible-believing thinkers agree that Christ did not sin. However, the question is whether He could have sinned. J. S. Whale, a liberal of another day, said that Christ in the wilderness was able to sin, and even desired to sin, but did not. Charles Hodge affirmed the possibility of Jesus' sinning and Millard Erickson says, "While he could have sinned, it was certain that he would not." Michael Canham tries to walk the middle of the road by saying, "The preferred solution to the debate is that Christ in His incarnation was both peccable and impeccable, but in His kenosis His peccability limited His impeccability." This sounds like theological doubletalk!



Could Jesus sin while He was living here on earth? Did He possess the potential to sin because of the Devil's temptations? That's like asking if God can sin. The answer is emphatically and theologically - No! Can Jesus who is God sin? No! Jesus could not sin for He was God in the flesh (John 1:1, 14, 18) and God cannot sin. Period. Case closed. This is not a hard question to

answer. If Jesus is God and God cannot sin, then Jesus (the Godman) could not sin while living on earth nor can He sin in Heaven today as our High Priest (1 Tim. 2:5). The Scriptures, by affirming Christ's deity, also affirm His impeccability. We need to return to Biblical theology to find the answer to this all-important question and not jettison the doctrinal significance of the impeccability or sinlessness of Jesus Christ.

## God Cannot Sin

James 1:13 declares:

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.”

There is something we must understand from Scripture. God never tempts people to sin. When James says “God cannot be tempted with evil” he means that there is nothing innately sinful in God to which evil can make an appeal. In other words, God cannot be tempted to actually sin for no sinful inclination resides within Him. He is literally “untemptable.” God cannot be tempted with evil for there is nothing within God that would cause Him to follow sin. God possesses no capacity for evil or vulnerability to it. The theological and practical point James is making is this. Since God is intrinsically holy in His eternal being He cannot sin; therefore, He cannot be the instigator of temptation and evil for this would indicate God is sinful in His essence.

In Leviticus 11:44 and twice in 1 Peter 1:15-16 God is said to be holy (“I am holy”).

Habakkuk 1:13 declares:

“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity...”

God in His impeccable and intrinsic holiness cannot look upon sin, accept it in any way, and therefore cannot tempt people to sin. This means that if God could tempt people to sin, then He could not and would not be God.

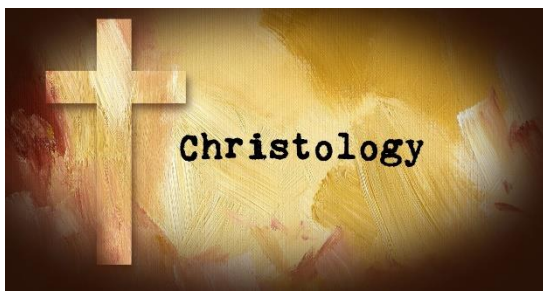


Some suggest that Jesus was only tested as a man and not as God since God cannot be tempted as James concludes (James 1:13). Therefore, as a man there was at least the *possibility* of His sinning. They insist that Jesus had freedom of choice or else He would not be truly human. Of course, this is pure conjecture and ignores the Biblical facts about Christ’s eternal relationship within the Godhead (Col. 2:9) and that He is innately, eternally, and impeccably pure – incapable of ever sinning.

Despite this, Richard DeHaan writes:

“I’m convinced, therefore, that the temptation of Christ was real. It had a genuine appeal to Him. He could have chosen to do wrong. Otherwise, no actual temptation took place. What the Lord Jesus faced would then have had no real significance ... In addition, for a temptation to be real, the forbidden must also be within the realm of possibility.”

On this particular subject DeHaan’s reasoning is faulty and not Biblical in nature. The Bible teaches that Christ’s temptations were very real and yet He was without sin for the very reason that He could not sin. Some reason that if Jesus could not sin or never sinned, He must not have been tempted to the degree that we are tempted. But this is not so. The one who resists to the very end knows the power of temptation in a greater way than the one who yields to sin sooner. Scripture clearly affirms that Jesus never committed sin (Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22). It also confirms that His temptations were real, not just playacting. We will deal with the validity of Christ’s temptations later in this study while upholding the doctrinal teaching of Christ’s impeccability.



We need to think theologically and Christological. Since Jesus walked on earth as God (John 1:18; 10:30), this means He could not sin, since God cannot commit sin because of His unchanging holy character or nature (Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16). “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5).

God consists of moral perfection. Pristine holiness is imbedded in the eternal nature of the Godhead. These verses and many others confirm that Jesus could not sin. There was no moral darkness or sin principle residing in Him that could cause Him to sin. Christ was not predisposed or inclined to sin for sin was not part of His eternal being and essence as the only true God who is “glorious in holiness” (Ex. 15:11).

For this reason, sin itself is abhorrent to God, He finds only holiness and righteousness His chief delight (“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness” - Ps. 45:7). The Lord Jesus Christ is said to be “the brightness of *his* glory” (Heb. 1:3). Light is the expression of the holiness of God. God emanates light from His throne room in Heaven to outwardly display His essential purity (Rev. 4:1-3). God is absolutely holy, absolutely righteous, and absolutely pure. God cannot look with

favor on any form of sin nor can sin ever be part of His eternal and unchanging character.

1 Timothy 6:16 declares this of God:

“Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.”



“Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we would render, O help us to see  
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.”

Getting a glimpse of the God of the Bible who dwells in the pure and resplendent light of holiness will lead to the conclusion that He is impeccable. Since Jesus shares the same eternal existence with Jehovah (John 8:58; Heb. 1:3, 8), He too is impeccable.

### **The Sinless and Sympathizing Jesus**

Hebrews 4:15 certainly defends the impeccability of Jesus Christ:

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (*in other words the opposite is true – Jesus is sympathetic toward our human frailties and weaknesses*); but was in all points tempted like as we are (*the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life*), yet without sin” (*totally separate and apart from sin – possessing no capacity or inward desire to sin – and therefore refused all offers of sin from the Devil*).

This is an important text that reveals several things.

First, Jesus is in Heaven today as our acting High Priest. His priestly ministry not only pertains to securing our salvation (Heb. 7:25) but also expressing sympathy toward the saints as He assists us through our times of temptation. He is our sympathizing Savior!

Second, Jesus was “without sin” (Gk. *choris* – separate or apart from sin) which certainly implies that He *did not sin* when refusing temptation, but this statement is also a very clear indication that He *could not sin* due to His divinity – He was God in the flesh. The Biblical statement that Christ was without sin (He never sinned) is a confirmation of the Christological truth of Christ’s impeccability (sinlessness) as the unchanging and eternal God (John 8:58). That Christ was “separate or apart from sin” is a statement of fact regarding Christ’s impeccable personhood. He had no internal disposition or inclination toward sin. He never possessed any internal desire or bent toward sin. The principle and propensity for sin did not exist within His personhood.

Third, the fact that Christ understands and sympathizes with our “infirmities” (weaknesses) does not mean that Christ experientially knew what it’s like to potentially sin and possibly follow the temptation set before Him. Jesus did not possess any propensity or inclination to sin because He was God who cannot be tempted with sin (James 1:13). Nothing resides within God (Jesus) that would cause Him to yield to sin. The human frailties or weaknesses refer to Christ passing through the human but non sinful effects that often accompany temptation such as emotional disappointment, grief, frustration, hunger, pain, weariness, and the awareness of the evil and dangers of sin. There are natural limitations that we face as humans such as heartaches, disappointments, sufferings, and hardships which Satan often uses as a springboard for temptation. Jesus went through it all because He was human. He certainly understands the “feelings of our infirmities” (Heb. 5:14) or limitations as human beings.

Faussett, the old commentator wrote:

“Not only as God He knows our trials, but also as man He knows them by experimental feeling.”

Jesus went through similar trials, hardships, and temptations and knows what it is to feel pain and temptation. Jesus can sympathize with you today! He knows what it is to be tempted and pass through trials. When your heart is broken, when you

have lost a loved one who was very close to you, when your heart yearns and aches because of infliction and illness. It's during these times that Jesus says, "I know what you are going through and I'm going to come along side of you and help you through it."

Of course, Jesus did not pass through a divorce, nor did He suffer with cancer while on earth. Jesus did not lose a wife to heart disease. The fact that Jesus is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities" does not mean that He must pass through every exact experience that we do to know how we are feeling. What it means is that Jesus experienced *the* same kind and level of "feelings" that we experience as we pass through many different trials, tests, and temptations. This is because Jesus passed through similar trials and temptations that we have – the greatest being the test and experience of the cross. If for some reason you cannot believe that Jesus fully understands about human hardships and difficulty, including temptation, then you have someone place a crown of thorns on your head and nail spikes in your hands and feet, and hang you on a cross in open shame and nakedness. Don't tell me Jesus doesn't understand about suffering and heartache! He is the sympathizing Jesus!

Charles Hodge, believing that Christ could sin, says "If from the constitution of His Person it was impossible for Christ to sin, then His temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with His people." However, the ability to sympathize with others is unrelated to being susceptible to sin. A person not involved in some sin can give help and compassion to another person in that sin (Gal. 6:1). Thus, Christ who is the sinless One can most adequately and completely aid and console believers when they face attacks by Satan.

Jesus is *sinless* but at the same time He is *sympathizing* to those saints who are passing through temptation. Not being able to sin or possessing the propensity or inclination to sin does not invalidate Christ from understanding what we pass through in the time of temptation. For instance, a cardiac surgeon may perform thousands of very complicated and successful heart operations without ever having had the surgery himself. But it is his knowledge of heart disease and his surgical skill in treating it that qualifies him, even though he never had the disease himself. The surgeon has great experience with the disease, much greater experience with it than any of his patients since he has dealt with the disease in a very intricate and complex ways.

In a similar way, Jesus never sinned, nor could He sin, but He understands sin better than any person that has ever lived. As God He understands sin's utter vileness (Matt. 5:21-22; 12:34; 18:6; 23:33; John 8:21) and the misery and troubles it brings into the lives of people (7:40-47; 8:34). He came to set people free from its slavery (Luke 4:16-20). He also demonstrated how to have victory over sin by declaring and defending the truth (Matt. 4:1-10). Jesus overcame sin by conquering its power (John 16:33) and paid its penalty on the cross (John 19:30). Yes, Christ knows everything there is to know about sin and temptation (its vileness, heartaches, slavery, power, and destruction) as He walked this earth for 33 years, and yet, He was without sin.

W. H. Griffith Thomas gives this helpful note about Christ's temptation:

"The question therefore arises: Can one whose human nature was both without any hereditary taint and also from its union with the divine nature necessarily incapable of sin, be said to have endured real temptation, or to have been "in all points tempted like as we are"? The answer seems to be that only he has felt the full force of temptation who has never yielded to it. Against Him who stood firm the whole conceivable power of temptation was exerted. He experienced it at all points. The fact that through the union of the two natures it was impossible for Him to yield takes nothing either from the force of the temptation which attacked Him or from the completeness of His knowledge of it."

Christ's temptations were infinitely greater in magnitude than our temptations. For this reason, Jesus truly understands the moral, spiritual, psychological, physiological, mental, and emotional aspects of temptation. This is because He passed through all these things while being tempted by the Devil during His earthly ministry. He shares the heaviness and sorrow, the emotional pain, the mental aspects of what it means to face trials and temptations. "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

"In every pang that rends the heart,  
The Man of Sorrows has a part."

Many years ago there was a medical missionary in Africa named George Harley. He built a small clinic and a chapel next to it. Very quickly the natives started coming to the hospital but for some reason they refused to go to the church. For the better part of four years the only people who entered that chapel were Dr. and Mrs. Harley and their young son.

One day Harley's son fell off a ledge and hit his head on a sharp rock. The missionary ran to the youngster's side, but he could not save the boy's life. A casket was made for the lad from old shipping crates and a memorial service planned. Only the two missionaries attended, and not a word was spoken. Dr. Harley recounted, "I could not speak, I could not pray, so finally I just picked up the casket and put it on my shoulder and started to carry it out to the place where he would be buried.

As we walked along the road, a man came alongside and asked, 'Great Father, what do you have in that box?' I replied, 'It's my son. He died last night.' Then the man took one end of the casket and I took the other, and we carried it to the graveside where I broke down completely and began to cry, 'Why, God, why?' The man looked at me and then ran back to the village with the announcement, shouting it from house to house, 'The Great Father cries, just like us. The Great Father cries just like us.' Then all the native villagers came running from all directions and put their arms around us, and tried to comfort us. And from that time on, every time we had a service in the chapel, those who were not in the clinic were in the chapel. And that's how we finally got through. But oh, the cost."

My friend, God knows how to cry! Jesus wept when He was here on earth and because of this we can know that He understands about human suffering, that He can sympathize with us and come to our aid in the time of need. Yes, our High Priest is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15). The idea that God could and would identify with men in their trials and temptations was revolutionary to Jew and Gentile alike. But the writer of Hebrews is saying that we have a God not only "who is there" but one "who has been here." The author of Hebrews was probably anticipating an objection: "You've just said that Jesus is the Great High priest who has passed through the heavens (Heb. 4:14). How can someone beyond the heavens relate to me and my problems?" The author responds, "No, Jesus is not unsympathetic. He understands your deepest feelings and what you are facing during the time of temptation."

Christ truly is "a man of sorrows" who wants to bear and carry our sorrows and bring us relief (Isa. 53:3-4). We all need someone to sympathize with our problems and weaknesses without condemning us. Sometimes that is enough to get us through, just to know that someone else understands what we're going through. Christ as our sympathizing High Priest truly understands what it means to pass through temptation and He comes to calm us, strengthen us, and enables us to pass



through our time of temptation. Essentially Jesus says, “I understand what you are going through for I’ve been there Myself. I want to help you. Open your heart to Me and I will carry you through.

“In temptation’s trying hour, You will need His keeping pow’r,  
Just trust in the Savior and be true; Tho’ the shadows ‘round you fall,  
He’ll be with you thro’ it all, And He will carry you thro’.”

I read about a boy who noticed a sign, “Puppies for sale.” He asked, “How much do you want for the pups, mister?” “Twenty-five dollars, son.” The boy’s face dropped. “Well, sir, could I see them anyway?” The man whistled and the mother dog came around the corner, followed by four cute puppies, wagging their tails and yipping happily. Then lagging behind, another puppy came around the corner, dragging one hind leg. “What’s the matter with that one, sir?” the boy asked. “Well, son, that puppy is crippled. The vet took an X-ray and found that it doesn’t have a hip socket. It will never be right.”



The man was surprised when the boy said, “That’s the one I want. Could I pay you a little each week?” The owner replied, “But, son, you don’t seem to understand. That pup will never be able to run or even walk right. He’s going to be a cripple forever. Why would you want a pup like that?” The boy reached down and pulled up his pant leg, revealing a brace. “I don’t walk too good, either.” Looking down at the puppy, the boy continued, “That puppy is going to need a lot of love and understanding. It’s not easy being crippled!” The man said, “You can have the puppy for free. I know you’ll take good care of him.”

Of course, this is a limited illustration of our Savior’s sympathy for our condition and what we pass through during the trials of life, including our temptations. Since Christ became a man and suffered all that we experience, He sympathizes with our weaknesses – specifically the human weaknesses that we experience during the time of temptation (sorrows, disappointments, frustrations, weariness, physical hardships, emotional heaviness, etc.). He demonstrates His compassion to us during our times of spiritual challenge. We have a sympathetic High Priest at the right hand of God! The phrase “No one understands like Jesus” in the well-known hymn is not only beautiful and encouraging but absolutely true. Jesus as our great

High Priest not only is perfectly merciful and faithful but also perfectly understanding. Unlike anyone else, Jesus has the capacity for sympathizing with us in every temptation and danger, in every situation that comes our way, because He has passed through the same points of temptation as we have (emotionally, psychologically, and physically).

“No one understands like Jesus;  
He's a Friend beyond compare.  
Meet Him at the throne of mercy;  
He is waiting for You there.  
No one understands like Jesus  
When the days are dark and grim.  
No one is so near, so dear as Jesus;  
Cast Your every care on Him.”

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of how Christ can truly sympathize with our own temptations and trials. But at the same time, we cannot emphasize enough that He was “without sin” for He was not able to sin, He did not possess the inner propensity to sin. Some will conclude that unless Jesus could have legitimately been tempted from within to commit actual sin, He cannot understand the process we pass through in the time of temptation. But this is mere conjecture and not the presentation of Biblical truth (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).

Jesus never sinned nor could He sin, but He understands sin better than any man. Because Christ was sinless, He can properly assess and understand sin. Jesus Christ did not sin, could not sin, and He had no capacity to sin. Yet His temptations were all the more terrible because His sinlessness increased His sensitivity to sin. This is important to understand. As the sinless Son of God, He was very sensitive to sin and the power, slavery, and wreckage it caused in the lives of others.

Hebrews 12:3 -4

“For consider him that endured such contradiction (opposition) of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood (*to the point of shedding blood on a cross and dying*), striving against sin.”

When we take our eyes of faith off Jesus, we begin to sink, like Peter did (Matt. 14:22–33). Jesus should be our primary model when it comes to persevering

because He is our primary source of strength for persevering through trials and temptations. If you want to meet someone who knows what sin is about, then keep looking unto Jesus (Heb. 12:2). Jesus endured the opposition of sinners in the crucifixion, the temptation to save Himself (Luke 23:37), the pain, humiliation, and the disgrace of the cross, but He passed through the trial victoriously, even when bearing the sin of the world upon Himself. Jesus Christ knows about sin, understands our human frailties, and wants to sympathize with us and come to our rescue. Whatever Satan brings our way, there is victory in Jesus Christ. He understands for He has been through temptation and won the victory every time! The temptations of Christ were real and centered upon His human nature, proving the genuineness of His humanity. The angels ministering to Jesus after His temptation also prove the validity of His temptations and humanity.

Lewis Johnson wrote:

“An invincible army may be really attacked. That He was really attacked, and that His testing centered in the human nature is evidenced by the statement that at the conclusion of the temptation ‘angels came and ministered unto him’ (cf. Matt. 4:11). Deity does not need, nor can it use, the help of its creatures.”

Dr. John Wilson often told the following story. Booth Tucker was conducting evangelistic meetings in the great Salvation Army Citadel in Chicago. One night, after he had preached on the sympathy of Jesus, a man came forward and asked Mr. Tucker how he could talk about a loving, understanding, sympathetic God. “If your wife had just died, like mine has,” the man said, “and your babies were crying for their mother who would never come back, you wouldn’t be saying what you’re saying.”

A few days later Mr. Tucker’s wife was killed in a train wreck. Her body was brought to Chicago and carried to the Citadel for the funeral. After the service the bereaved preacher looked down into the silent face of his wife and then turned to those who were attending. “The other day when I was here,” he said, “a man told me that, if my wife had just died and my children were crying for their mother, I would not be able to say that Christ was understanding and sympathetic, or that He was sufficient for every need. If that man is here, I want to tell him that Christ is sufficient. My heart is broken, it is crushed, but it has a song, and Christ put it there. I want to tell that man that Jesus Christ speaks comfort to me today.” The man was there, and he came and knelt beside the casket while Booth Tucker introduced him to Jesus Christ.

We have a sympathetic High Priest, whose priesthood is perfect and whose Person is perfect.

Pastor Steven Cole adds a comment on the sympathy and understanding of Christ in relation to our own temptations: “Jesus knew every type of temptation. He knew what it is like to be hungry, thirsty, and tired. He knew the horrible agony of physical torture, which He endured in His trial and crucifixion. He knew what it is like to be mocked, distrusted, maligned, and betrayed by friends. From the start of Jesus’ ministry to the very end, Satan leveled all of his evil power and strategies to try to get Jesus to sin. But he never succeeded. Jesus always obeyed the Father.”

Jesus could actually feel and sense temptation, or to put it in the Biblical words of Hebrews 4:15, He was “touched with the feeling” (the Greek “soom-path-eh-o” from which we derive our English word sympathy) of our infirmities.” Like no one else who has ever lived, Jesus as the eternal God felt and experienced the heaviness or weight of temptation when contemplating how terrible it would be to follow it, how it would break the Father’s heart, and the results it would bring upon the human race. He experienced the emotions, sorrows, righteous anger against sin, and physical hardships (thirst, hunger, pain, loneliness, abandoned friendships) that are often associated with temptations. Although Jesus could not sin, He dealt with temptation on a human level. For this reason, passing through temptation, Christ as our High Priest is able to sympathize with our weakness during the time of temptation.

Think of it this way. Jesus Christ was the only One who could resist the full brunt of temptation unlike any person that has ever lived on earth. He knows the full extent of its force. He experienced a level of temptation that no other person would ever pass through. Since Christ was the sinless One, who experienced the strongest temptation possible to man, He can sympathize with us when we pass through temptation. As our High Priest He has a greater capacity for compassion, more than any other person who has ever lived, to really understand what we are passing through in the time of temptation, and to help us deal with it and get victory over it.

Jesus understands and He is there for us in the time of all our trials – giving us the staying power to pass through them. No one understands, sympathizes, and helps us like Jesus during the time of temptation. He cares for us, and He is there for us!

We can be sure about this! He assists us through times of sadness, discouragement, loneliness, and weariness which can lead to the temptation to doubt God's sovereignty and sufficiency. He enables us to see the result of going down the wrong path and the blessing of walking in the right direction. He shares our burdens and woes and makes the pathway brighter! He gives us the victory!

“The Great Physician now is near,  
The sympathizing Jesus;  
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer,  
Oh, hear the voice of Jesus!

Sweetest note in seraph song;  
Sweetest name on mortal tongue;  
Sweetest carol ever sung:  
Jesus, blessed Jesus!”

Praise God for His understanding and delivering power!

Hebrews 4:16 gives us this reassuring promise:

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

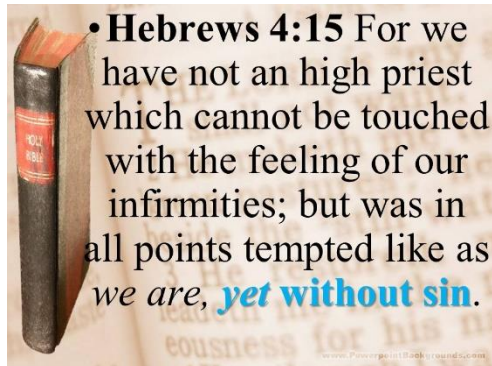
Proverbs 18:10

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous run to it, and are safe.”

John MacArthur adds a helpful note about Christ's temptations, sympathy, and His ability to understand our own temptations in this life. “Jesus not only had all the feelings of love, concern, disappointment, grief, and frustration that we have, but He had much greater love, infinitely more sensitive concerns, infinitely higher standards of righteousness, and perfect awareness of the evil and dangers of sin. Contrary, therefore, to what we are inclined to think, His divinity made His temptations and trials immeasurably harder for Him to endure than ours are for us.

“There is a degree of temptation that we may never experience simply because, no matter what our spirituality, we will succumb before we reach it. But Jesus Christ had no such limitation. Since He was sinless, He took the full extent of all that Satan could throw at Him. He had no shock system, no weakness limit, to turn off temptation at a certain point. Since He never succumbed, He experienced every

temptation to the maximum. And He experienced it as a man, as a human being. In every way He was tempted as we are, and more. The only difference was that He never sinned. Therefore, when we come to Jesus Christ we can remember that He knows everything we know, and a great deal that we do not know, about temptation, and testing, and pain.”



Yes, Jesus as our High Priest is sympathetic to our suffering as we pass through trials and temptations, but He Himself did not sin nor could He sin. Jesus was “without sin” (Heb. 4:15) as He passed through temptation for He shared the eternal existence of the Godhead which is thrice “holy, holy, holy” (Isaiah 6:3). This is similar to what James was conveying to us (James 1:13). Although Jesus as God was tempted to sin in every way as we are in this life through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16), yet He was always “without sin.” This means Christ was completely apart from, separated from sin – not merely in refusing to sin but “without sin” in a permanent way for He had no internal disposition or propensity toward sin.

The Bible is teaching the absolute absence of sin in Christ. It speaks of the impeccability and impossibility of Christ sinning. Though He was tempted to sin, not the slightest taint of it ever entered His mind or was expressed in His words or actions. Christ never had an internal battle with sin for the simple reason He did not possess the sin principle or any propensity for sin.

Based upon the doctrine of Christology, the simple reason Christ was “without sin” or that He did not sin was because He could not sin. We can conclude that the three assaults against Christ from Satan (Matthew 4:1-10) were entirely from *without* because there was no fallen sin nature within Him that could desire and yield to temptation. In other words, Jesus could not be inwardly tempted to sin for there was nothing within Christ that could respond to evil (James 1:13). To state it succinctly, the expression “tempted like as we are” (Heb. 4:15) does not mean that Jesus was tempted by indwelling sin as we are (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:14-23), struggling with an inner conflict of moral and immoral forces. This is because Christ possessed

no indwelling sin principle. Therefore, the solicitation to sin or do evil could only be external – not internal.

Here is the point. Although Jesus was divine and Adam and Eve were not, He was in some sense like Adam and Eve before the Fall. The actual temptation to sin had to come to Jesus from without, not from within. Nevertheless, it was proven that by itself unfallen nature is capable of sinning, as the fall of Adam and Eve show (Gen. 3:1-6). Therefore, Jesus also possessed the divine nature of God which made it impossible for Him to sin. As the Godman He could not sin.

When it says that Jesus was “in all points tempted like as we are” (Heb. 4:15), it doesn’t mean He experienced every conceivable temptation that relates to a myriad of specific sins (gambling, substance abuse, murder, adultery, unforgiveness, jealousy, etc.). This would be impossible. It means that Christ was bombarded with the basic components of evil – the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 John 2:16) from without and yet He experienced the same inner feelings, hardships, and emotional pains associated with temptation without the possibility of sinning and destroying the divine essence of the Godhead.

Once again, Jesus never had an internal battle or struggle with sin during any temptation for as God there was nothing innately sinful in His existence and essence. Jesus was tempted. However, His battle was not to see whether He would sin but to fight for righteousness, holiness, virtue, and to follow God’s perfect will. This is vividly seen in the account within the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus surrendered to the purpose of the Father and experienced inner grief and sorrow at the prospect of the cross, anticipating His separation from the Father and the time when sin would be legally transferred upon Him (Luke 22:42).

Think of Christ’s temptations in this way. The solicitation to sin and do evil would essentially bounce off Christ. Temptation to sin would always hit a wall for there was no sinful inclinations in Christ. Sin came at Christ, but it could never find any foothold in Him at all for He was God and was untemptable (James 1:13).



So, Christ could not be tempted to sin from an internal perspective. Christ's internal battle during the time of temptation was not to ignite sinful passion within Him (this could never happen), it was a fight to honor God's holiness, uphold perfect righteousness, and to retain God's honor and glory. Jesus was not fighting against sin; His battle was to maintain truth, righteousness, and holiness when responding to Satan's temptations (Luke 4:8-10). The perfect and sinless heart of Christ was broken over the thought of God's righteousness and the Father's plan being ignored.

Jesus did not struggle with sinful thoughts during His temptation, but He struggled with the emotional pain of contemplating the damage Satan wanted to do by getting Him to sin and break His intimate and eternal fellowship with the Father, and to destroy the Father's redemptive plan for mankind. He also experienced internal frustration when viewing the evil and wicked nature of sin in relation to His own sinless perfection. During His temptation Christ was reminded of the exceeding sinfulness of sin against the backdrop of His own deity. He experienced the hardships and difficulties often associated with and which accompany temptation such as hunger, lack of sleep, sorrow, and disappointments. He battled to maintain righteousness, holiness, and virtue while Satan was hurling the fiery darts of temptation at Him. He repeatedly said, "It is written" (Matt. 4:4,7,10). Yes, Jesus fully understands what we pass through in the time of our temptation. No one understands like Jesus!

However, at the same time, Jesus could never follow Satan's temptations and sin for He was God. This is what James was really teaching. In God's eternal essence or being He cannot sin (James 1:13). There is no potential or possibility of Him ever sinning. This is what theologians call the impeccability of Christ. There was nothing in Jesus that could cause Him to follow temptation. Jesus could not sin! It was not possible for Christ to sin for He was the revelation (logos) of God's eternal being and existence (John 1:1). Jesus did not have the propensity to sin. If He did, then He would not have been God for God cannot sin as James teaches. It's true that Jesus during His earthly ministry and time of temptation was "able not to sin" but more importantly He "was not able to sin." This is because He was God incarnate whose personal character and existence never changes.



## The Limitations of Christ's Humanity

Hebrews 2:14 also provides a Biblical defense for the impeccability of Christ:

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

This speaks of Christ's true humanity. He “took part” of the same as all people who have lived on earth in the sense that He became man (human). He had to bridge the gap between God and man. But while taking part in humanity (the human experience) He was without sin and even the possibility of being able to sin. The part that was lacking or missing was the inherited sinful nature from Adam, since James declares, “God cannot be tempted” to sin (James 1:13) for He cannot sin and would never follow sin.

The verb “took part” (Gr. metecho) means to choose a portion of the whole in contrast to the whole. We had no choice; everyone was born inheriting Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12). But our Lord voluntarily “took part” of humanity (flesh and blood) without the virus of sin affecting Him. The wording of Scripture by the Holy Spirit is very important for it protects the impeccability of Christ. Jesus identified Himself with humanity but in limited sense only (Heb. 10:5). He did not partake or share in the sin of Adam's race and therefore He could not sin. There was no Adamic sin residing within Jesus Christ which confirms the sinlessness of the Son of God. Christ did not possess the potential or the propensity (inclination) to sin. How could He? He was God and therefore did not possess any taint of sin within His human existence.

## The immutability and impeccability of Christ



The question of the impeccability of Christ boils down to the question whether the attributes of God can be harmonized with a doctrine of peccability. The concept of peccability in the person of Christ is contradicted principally by the attribute of His immutability. As God,

being fully divine, Jesus is immutable or unchanging in His character of holiness and righteousness.

Malachi 3:6 says, “For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

James 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

Hebrews 13:8

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

“Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same,  
All may change, but Jesus never glory to His name!  
Glory to His name! Glory to His name!”

As Christ was holy in eternity past, it is essential that this attribute be preserved unchanged eternally. In other words, if it is unthinkable that God could sin in eternity past, it must also be true that it is impossible for God to sin in the person of Christ incarnate. The same is true about Christ today as our High Priest in Heaven (Heb. 1:3). The nature of Christ’s person forbids any susceptibility to sin in His past, present and future.

“He is Almighty, Unchangeable God,  
King of kings, Lord of lords, robed in majesty.  
He rules and reigns, for all eternity,  
Almighty, Unchangeable God.”

The immutability and impeccability of Christ cannot be separated. God is unchanging in His character and eternal existence. For this reason, there could never be any time that Jesus Christ as the Godman could potentially sin or actually commit sin during His earthly life. It would be impossible for God never changes. He is immutable and unable to change His flawless and matchless character of holiness. To introduce the possibility that Christ could sin puts a question mark on several doctrines – the deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth of Christ, and the immutability of the Godhead.

While it was possible for Christ in the flesh to suffer limitations such as weakness, suffering, fatigue, sorrow, hunger, righteous anger, and even death - none of these created any complication which affected His immutable holiness. Think about this.

If sin were possible in the life of Christ, the whole plan of the universe hinged on the outcome of His temptations. However, the doctrine of the sovereignty of God would forbid any such haphazard condition like this from occurring (Acts 2:23-24).

Christ's sinlessness as the unchanging God is an important part of Christological teaching that can be summarized with the following Biblical statements and facts.

- The temptations Jesus faced weren't designed to see if He *would* sin, but to prove that He *couldn't* sin.

Dr. McGee gives an illustration from his boyhood days in west Texas. "My dad built cotton gins for the Murray Gin Company, and we lived in a little town that was near a branch of the Brazos River. In the summertime there wasn't enough water in that river to rust a shingle nail, but when it began to rain in wintertime, you could almost float a battleship on it. One year a flood washed out the wooden bridge on which the Santa Fe railroad crossed the river. They replaced it with a steel bridge, and when they completed it, they brought in two locomotives, stopped them on top of the bridge, and tied down both of the whistles.

"All of us who lived in that little town knew for sure that something was happening. We ran down to see what it was—all twenty-three of us! When we got there, one of the braver citizens asked the engineer, 'What are you doing?' The engineer replied, 'Well, we built this bridge, and we are testing it.' The man asked, 'Why? Do you think it's going to fall down?' That engineer drew himself up to his full height and said, 'Of course it will not fall down! We are proving it won't fall down.' For the same reason, Jesus was tested to prove that you and I have a Savior who could not sin. God cannot be tempted with sin, and God will not tempt you with sin."

- Jesus could not sin since He escaped the sin principle (Rom. 7:17, 20). 1 John 3:5 declares that "in him is no sin" (a singular number referencing the sin principle – Adamic sin nature). The sin principle or sinful nature was not part of the Lord Jesus Christ's humanity which means He could not sin. The Scriptures guard the sinless perfection of the Lord Jesus and we should too. He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), He "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22), and there was no sin in Him (1 Jn. 3:5). All of this clearly indicates that Jesus could not sin. His theanthropic person (both divine and human) was manifested in His sinlessness.

- There is no possibility that Christ could sin since James declares that “God cannot be tempted with evil” (John 1:13) in a way that would cause Him to sin and become sinful or immoral. This is because there is nothing evil residing within the glory of the Godhead. Just as there is no spark of divinity in sinners of the human race there is no spark of sin in the Son of God for He is the “express image of his person” (Heb. 1:3).
- If Jesus could have sinned as a man on earth, what is to prevent His sinning as a man in Heaven? He did not leave His humanity behind when He ascended to the Father’s right hand. He was impeccable on earth, and He is impeccable in Heaven. Hebrews 7:26 declares: “For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” The writer of Hebrews does not distinguish between Christ’s sinlessness in relation to His earthly or heavenly ministry as our High Priest for on earth and in Heaven He is forever “the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5). You cannot have it both ways. If Jesus could have sinned while on earth, He could sin today in Heaven. Perish the thought!

### **The Virgin Birth and Christ’s Sinlessness**

The declaration of the sinlessness of Christ defends the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ and His deity. We need to remember this in our defense of the impeccable nature of Jesus Christ in His humanity. In fact, the doctrines of the deity, Virgin Birth, and sinlessness of Jesus Christ cannot be separated. To protect Christ’s deity, Christ had to be conceived in a virgin’s womb and since Christ was born of a virgin, He did not possess a sin nature like everyone else in Adam’s race. This means Jesus was *not able to sin* for He did not share or participate in the sin passed down through Adam’s loins.



Isaiah 7:14 is a prophecy of the miraculous conception and birth of Christ: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (*God with us*).

Matthew 1:23 confirms this prophecy:

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

Luke 1:35

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing (*the miraculous conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit*) which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

Jesus was “holy” and “Immanuel” (God with us) when He was conceived and therefore perfect in intrinsic holiness and righteousness. Adam was never termed as holy. This means Christ was free from Adamic sin. He did not share the sin of Adam.

Dr. Lehman Strus wrote:

“Any discussion of the sinlessness of Christ must of necessity include His birth. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is linked inseparably with His sinlessness. There are those who insist that sin is associated with all humanity, even Christ’s. But such reasoning is far from the truth. Christ was in no way implicated or represented in the original sin of Adam. And thus in no way is He involved in it. In His conception and birth He was super-naturally protected from the principle and pollution of sin.”

We are told that Christ was “made in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7) but this does not mean Christ assumed the sinful nature of man and emptied Himself of His deity. The presence of the sinless man Christ Jesus among sinful men is one of the great miracles of Christianity. Jesus asked his critics, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” (John 8:46). This challenge remains unanswered to this day. There was no sin in Jesus, nor could there ever be for He was God incarnate – the divine exegesis of God’s existence (John 1:18).

Earl Radmacher illustrated how Jesus could not have sinned in His humanity:

“Suppose you had a thick iron bar and a thin wire. The bar represents Christ’s divine nature and the wire His human nature. The bar cannot be bent, but the wire can. Yet, if the wire is fused to the bar, the wire cannot be bent either. Thus the fusing of Christ’s divine and human natures meant that He could not sin.”

Again, some will make the case that if this is true (Jesus could not sin) then the temptations of Jesus were not real like the ones we pass through today. They reason that if Jesus could not have sinned in His humanity, then what He went through is not the same what we pass through in our time of temptation.

George MacDonald deals with the argument in this way:

“If you put gold to the test, the test is not less valid because the gold is pure. If there were impurity, the test would show it up. Similarly it is wrong to argue that if He could not sin, He was not perfectly human. Sin is not an essential element in humanity; rather it is a foreign intruder. Our humanity has been marred by sin; His is perfect humanity.”

Adam was more human before he sinned than after he sinned. (Gen. 1:26-31). So, Jesus was fully human and yet divine (He was God) and not capable of sinning, unlike Adam who was not divine and could sin and eventually did sin. Nevertheless, as a man (Christ possessing humanity) He could feel and sense the weight and reality of the temptations He was passing through much like a giant and immovable boulder can bear the brunt of a raging sea, but it will never be moved. During temptation, Jesus sensed how terrible it would be to follow sin though He never could and would sin. He sensed how it would break His Father’s heart even though He could not and would not sin. He sensed the eternal heartache and misery it would bring upon all of mankind forever.

Tom Constable comments:

“Actually, Jesus’ temptations were greater than ours because He never yielded to them. By the same principle a prizefighter (Jesus) who defeats the champion (Satan) endures more punishment than other contenders who throw in the towel or are knocked out before the end of the fight.”

However, those promoting Christ’s peccability (He could sin) add to their argument that for Jesus Christ to be a true representative for man, He also had to be free to choose between good and evil. They say if Jesus were impeccable (could only choose good), He would have no real choice and the temptation would not be real. Therefore, it is argued, Jesus Christ had to be peccable. However, this is an unbiblical view of true freedom. Moral freedom is not based on opportunities to choose between good and evil or right and wrong. Rather, it is found in the ability to determine what is good and right without any coercion toward evil (Joshua 1:8).

Christ being tempted does not carry a logical or theological possibility that He would or could sin and vice versa, the incapability of committing sin does not mean Christ was not genuinely tempted. In other words, Christ did not have to sin or even possess the desire to sin to experience true freedom. The determination to follow God's standard of truth is the way to experience freedom (John 5:30; 8:29, 32; 36). Freedom is always experienced when we determine to do what we know is right. Philippians 1:10 says, "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." This is true freedom. It's the determination to do right because it is right!

"Darkness around me, sorrow surrounds me;  
Though there be trials, still I can sing.  
For I have this treasure - my God reigns within me,  
And I am determined to live for the King."

Hebrews 2:18 gives us this wonderful promise:

"For in that he himself hath suffered (*emotionally, mentally, physically*) being tempted, he is able to succour (*help, bring aid*) them that are tempted."

This once again resurfaces the question, "How can an impeccable person be tempted?" Those believing in Christ's peccability reason that if He were impeccable, He could not be a moral agent in the same sense as man, since His will was infallibly inclined to holiness. However, the idea that temptability implies susceptibility is unbiblical and unsound. While the temptation was real, Christ possessed intrinsic purity and infinite power to resist all temptation; therefore, Jesus Christ is impeccable. So how did the impeccable Christ suffer while being tempted? As we have already documented, Christ "suffered" during His time of temptation when seeing the open evil and wicked nature of sin, when He experienced the hunger, lack of sleep, sorrow, persecution, loneliness, and disappointments so often associated with temptation, when He battled to maintain truth, righteousness, holiness, virtue, and God's glory during Satan's temptations (Matt. 4:4,7,10), when He contemplated how Satan sought to break His intimate fellowship with the Father, and ultimately destroy God's plan of salvation for mankind.

Looking at Christ's temptation from another angle, He also "suffered" when being tempted knowing that Satan wanted Him to be something other than God. To think that He was tempted to sin and be something other than God brought great

emotional pain and suffering to His own heart. This was not the suffering of knowing that He might sin (He could not sin) but the suffering of being tempted to break the Father's will and cease from being God. Both Jesus and Christians living today have suffered through temptation but in a different way. We suffer the fear of actually sinning and stepping outside of God's will whereas Jesus suffered the pain that Satan brought into his life by tempting Him to be something other than the infinitely holy and righteous Son of God, who was perfectly in step with the Father's will and rightly related to Him "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). Again, Jesus' suffering was not the pain related to failure but the pain of knowing that Satan wanted to destroy God and His purpose for mankind, which is salvation through God's sinless Son, who was to be sacrificed on the cross.

In a 1961 addition of Bib Sac John Walvoord gives a lengthy but helpful note on the genuine nature of Christ's temptations. "While Christ never experienced the inner struggle of two natures deadlocked as in Paul's case in Romans 7, there is abundant evidence of the reality of temptation. The forty days in the wilderness at the close of which He was tempted marks a trial to which, no other human frame has ever been subjected. The temptation to turn stones into bread was all the more real because Christ had the power to do it. The temptation to make a public display of God's preservation of Christ by casting Himself from the temple was also most real. No other has ever been offered all the glory of the world by Satan, but Christ was so tempted, and did not sin. While, on the one hand, it is true that Christ did not experience the temptations arising in a sin nature, on the other hand, He was tried as no other was ever tried. Added to the nature of the temptation itself was the greater sensitivity of Christ. His body being without sin was far more sensitive to hunger and abuse than that of other men. Yet, in full experience of these longings, Christ was completely in control of Himself.

"The final test of the reality of His temptations is found in the revelation of His struggle in Gethsemane and His death on the cross. No other could know the temptation of a holy person to avoid becoming the judgment for the sin of the world. This was Christ's greatest temptation, as evidenced in the character of His struggle and submission. On the cross the same temptation is evident in the taunt of His enemies to come down from the cross. Christ willingly continued in suffering and of His own will dismissed His spirit when the proper time came. No greater realm of temptation could be imagined. While Christ's temptations, therefore, are not always exactly parallel to our own, He was tried in every part of His being even



as we are tried, and we can come to Him as our High Priest with the assurance that He fully understands the power of temptation and sin, having met it in His life and death (Heb. 4:15).”

The wonderful promise is that our sympathizing High Priest (the exalted Christ) understands what we pass through during temptation (Heb. 5:14) and He wants to “succour” us (Heb. 2:18) or come to aid and comfort us during our times of distress, disappointments, and devilish temptations. I remember when one of our children would fall on the driveway and start crying or when they would have a scary dream at night and start crying. As parents, we would jump out of bed and come to their rescue! This is what Jesus does for us. He comes to aid and help us when we cry. This is not only true in the time of Satanic temptation but in the times of general adversity as we face the manifold trials of life (James 1:2).

Why do Christians take tranquilizers and anti-depressants? Why do they think that they need the latest psychological fix? For the most part it’s because they are not experiencing their sufficiency in Christ (Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:13). As our High Priest, Jesus sympathizes with us and at the same time supplies us with the strengthening, sustaining, and sanctifying grace we need to pass through all the trials and temptations of life victoriously (Heb. 4:15-16).

The genuine humanity of Jesus reminds us that Christ knows what temptation feels like. Jesus knows what it is like to feel the onslaughts of temptation and experience Satan’s approaches.

John Albert Bengel wrote:

“Because of his sinless nature, the mind of the Savior much more acutely perceived the forms of temptation than we who are weak, not only during his earthly ministry but also during his service as the exalted high priest. He anticipates temptations we are going to face, sympathizes fully with us, and ‘is able to help [us] who are being tempted’ (Heb. 2:18).”

### **The Two Natures of Christ**

#### **Revelation of God in Hypostatic Union**

Because Jesus’ human nature was united to His divine nature within His personhood, Jesus could not have sinned. His human will was always supported by His divine will in the commitment to remain holy (Matt. 26:39). Christ’s two natures

(human and divine) never contradicted each other within the mystery of the hypostatic union but worked harmoniously together to support Christ's divinity and impeccability. What can be affirmed of one nature can be affirmed of the other in the one person of Christ. This is because the union of these two natures do not act independently of each other in the revelation of Christ's deity and perfections that He shares within the Godhead.

In volume two of his systematic theology, Rolland McCune states:

"It is not correct to divide the activities of Jesus and to ascribe some purely to His human nature and some to His divine nature. In the actions of Jesus He may have *manifested* one nature over the other, yet all His actions were still those of the one person. All that Jesus did and said was done theanthropically, by the one indivisible God-man with the two natures. Whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of the one person."

It's very clear that both the human and divine natures within Christ were united in defending Christ's deity and sinlessness. This means that Christ's human nature could not sin and override the divine nature. Shedd comments: "what might be done by the human nature if *alone*, and by itself, cannot be done by it in this union with omnipotent holiness." In other words, a mere man may be overtaken by temptation, but the Godman cannot! The divine nature Jesus possessed had all the qualities of deity, and the divine nature became the controlling factor in the *union* of the two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ. Since the divine nature controlled the Godman, Jesus had only one direction in moral decisions—to do His Father's will (Heb 10:7). Christ's impeccability is guaranteed by the union of the divine and human nature in one theanthropic person.

The joining together of the two natures is seen in Romans 9:5: "Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came* (*the human nature of Christ*), who is over all, God blessed for ever (*the divine nature of Christ*). Amen." The joining together of the two natures is known as "the mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16) – the time God was manifested in the flesh. The union of the two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ is necessary for Him to be the mediator between God and mankind (1 Tim. 2:5). We know that Jesus was completely sinless in His human nature and His commitment to the Father's will was absolute (Heb. 10:7; John 6:38; 8:29, 55). In Christ's case, since His motivation and delight to follow the

Father was eternal (“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me” – John 4:34), He would be impeccable. He had no inner desire to sin or compulsion toward sin.

Lewis Johnson is correct when stating:

“The foundation of Christ’s person was His divine nature not His human nature. He was the God-Man and not the Man-God. It is the divine nature, and not the human which is the basis of Christ’s person. The second trinitarian person is the root and stock into which the human nature is grafted.”

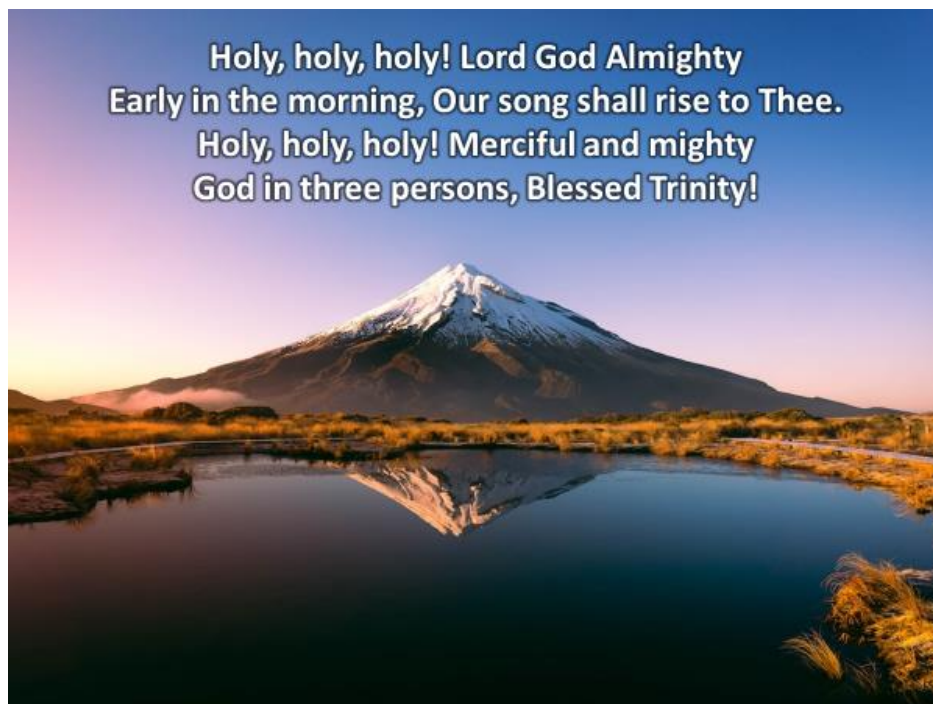
Christ possessed a genuine sinless human nature, and as a person He was impeccable. To state anything else is to question the character of God.

Lewis Sperry Chafer stated:

“Since this bond of union which unites Christ’s two natures—for He is one Person—is so complete, the humanity of Christ could not sin. Should His humanity sin, God would sin.”

It was impossible for Jesus to sin for He was God as well as man. No sin has ever resided in God nor ever will be part of His pristine, flawless, and unchanging character of holiness within His eternal nature and existence.

1 Peter 1:16 says, “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”



Let's set the theological record straight. God cannot sin (James 1:13). This means Jesus could not sin for He is God (Heb. 1:8) and shares the same essence or intrinsic nature of impeccable purity within the Trinitarian oneness of the Godhead (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9). But the good news is that Jesus Christ was also human and truly understands what it is like to confront sin and pass through temptation. He offers us His sympathy and sustaining grace in the time of need as the Godman and our personal High Priest (Heb. 4:16).

“Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged;  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
Can we find a friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness;  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!”

**THE**  
**IMPECCABILITY**  
**Of**  
**JESUS CHRIST**

Beloved, we should not disavow the doctrine of the impeccability of Christ by concluding that “Jesus could have sinned” for in doing so we can end up losing the doctrines of Christ’s Virgin Birth, deity, and His eternal existence as the unchanging Son of God (Isa. 9:6; Ps. 45:6; Heb. 1:8; John 3:13; 8:58). When on earth, He was the same as He was in eternity past—the sinless, eternal Son of God. Jesus Christ is God and for this reason He could never sin at any point in His eternal existence within the perfection and purity of the Godhead (Gen. 1:26; John 1:1; 1 John 5:7-8).

To question Christ’s impeccability in an attempt to make Him peccable and identify the Lord of Glory with sinful humanity is to question Christ’s essential deity.

John Walvoord, again writes:

“Orthodox theologians generally agree that Jesus Christ never committed any sin. This seems to be a natural corollary to His deity and an absolute prerequisite to His work of substitution on the cross. Any affirmation of moral failure on the part of

Christ requires a doctrine of His person which would deny in some sense His absolute deity.”

The doctrine of the impeccability of Christ must be guarded in an age of watered-down doctrine. We must Biblically and tenaciously defend Christology (1 John 4:3). Jesus could only be tempted from *without* for He could never respond to sinful inclinations from *within* since He possessed no principle of indwelling sin (no Adamic sin nature). The Bible emphatically states, “and in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5). For this reason, Jesus could not even respond to the temptations from without, as the Devil repeatedly tempted Him, since He does not possess any propensity or inclination to sin.

Mankind is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust (James 1:14) but this was not true of Christ for being the Logos of God (the divine revelation of God’s personal being and existence) He cannot be tempted (James 1:13). To entertain the thought that Christ in His humanity could potentially or possibly sin and that He struggled with sinful inclinations like the rest of humanity is totally foreign to the Scriptures. It is an affront on God’s eternal character of pristine holiness who from eternity past is constantly “dwelling in the light” (1 Tim. 6:16) and in whom “the light dwelleth” (Dan. 2:22). The glorious light that emanates from the “the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3) as He sits on the throne is a reflection of His absolute deity, purity, and impeccable nature as the eternal and unchanging God.



Outside the Mount of Transfiguration experience (Matt. 17:1-3), Christ gave up the outward display of this radiant heavenly glory in His kenosis (self-emptying) when entering the world (Phil. 2:6-8; John 17:5). However, the inward glory of Christ's purity and deity remained unchanged for He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) and this holiness and deity was displayed on a smaller scale during His earthly existence as the Godman who was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). He was the one "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." (1 Pet. 2:22).

Even Pilate who was an unbeliever said, "I find no fault in him" (John 18:38; 19:4, 6). Nor can any orthodox believing Christian find fault in Christ when understanding the truth of His eternal existence within the Godhead, His immutability, omnipotence, Deity, Virgin Birth, and resplendent holiness as the impeccable Lord of glory "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17).

"Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same,  
All may change, but Jesus never glory to His name!  
Glory to His name! Glory to His name!  
All may change, but Jesus never glory to His name!"