

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Christology, Session 6, Modern Christology, Part 1, Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Christology, Session 6, Modern Christology, Part 1, Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This text is a lecture transcript focusing on **modern Christology**, specifically the influential ideas of **Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl** within 19th-century liberal Protestantism and Catholic modernism, set against the backdrop of the Enlightenment. The lecture outlines how these thinkers grappled with the relationship between **faith and modernity**, often emphasizing human consciousness and experience over traditional doctrines and authority, leading to **Christologies "from below"** that stressed continuity between humanity and the divine. It highlights Schleiermacher's concept of God-consciousness in Jesus as a supreme example and Ritschl's focus on Christ's work over his person, noting criticisms and the subsequent emergence of neo-orthodoxy as a reaction against these liberal trends. The session concludes by previewing future discussions on other key figures and movements in modern Christological thought.

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Christology, Session 6 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Christology).



Peterson_Christology_Session06.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Modern Christology, Part 1, Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl

Briefing Document: Modern Christology - Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl

Overview:

This session, the sixth in a series on Christology, provides background on the development of modern Christology, particularly focusing on the influence of 19th-century thought and the emergence of Liberal Protestantism and Catholic Modernism. Dr. Peterson examines the key ideas of Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Albrecht Ritschl, highlighting their approaches to Christology and their departures from traditional understandings. He emphasizes the shift from "Christology from above" (starting with the divine Christ) to "Christology from below" (starting with the human Jesus) and the tension between discontinuity and continuity between God and the created order.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

1. The Rise of Liberal Protestantism and Catholic Modernism:

- The 19th century in Europe was dominated by Protestant liberalism, which later spread to North America.
- On the Catholic side, Christology was not initially a point of major controversy after the Council of Trent (1545-1563).
- Catholic Modernism (1890-1910) emerged, sharing many ideas with liberal Protestantism despite modernist claims of distinctiveness. Some of these ideas later influenced the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).
- Both movements were apologetic, driven by the fear that Christianity was becoming outdated in the face of modernity. They aimed to reinterpret Christian faith by focusing on its "essence" rather than its "doctrinal encasing."

2. The Influence of the Enlightenment:

- The Enlightenment's emphasis on anti-authoritarianism, human autonomy, and inner consciousness significantly shaped 19th-century thought and, consequently, Christology.

- **Anti-authoritarian bias:** Distrust of the Bible and the Church as sources of meaning, with a turn towards the empirical world (history, human nature, natural world).
- **Emergence of human autonomy:** Seeking interpretation of life from the "unaided human interpreter" (referencing Descartes and the certainty of human consciousness).
- **Focus on inner consciousness:** A shift from external authority to the authority of the individual's inner experience.

3. The Impact of Kant and Freud:

- **Immanuel Kant:** Demolished confidence in pure reason, arguing that reason functions only with sensory perception. This led to the idea that we cannot know things "as they are in themselves" (noumenal realm) but only as they appear to us (phenomenal realm), resulting in skepticism regarding divine knowledge. However, Kant reintroduced the idea of God as a postulate necessary to explain moral consciousness.
- Quote: "Reason can only function in conjunction with the stream of sensory perception. This means we can know no more than our senses can deliver to us, and what we know is not to be directly equated with what exists, for reason categorizes and organizes the information received from the senses."
- Quote: "Unless we postulate the existence of God, we cannot explain the fact that we are moral creatures, but in explaining ourselves we cannot utilize the knowledge of God, for God has located himself beyond the range of reason."
- **Sigmund Freud:** Undermined the naive view of moral consciousness, arguing it is a societal construct to suppress "dark subterranean forces."

4. Friedrich Schleiermacher: The Father of Modern Theology:

- Schleiermacher replaced Kant's "moral consciousness" with a "religious consciousness," a universal "sense of absolute dependence" present in all people.
- Quote: "There is, he argued, within all people a sense of absolute dependence. It is this which Christianity clarifies, but its presence is not exhaustively contained within Christian communities, nor is it alone described by Christian theology."

- He viewed Jesus not as the sole dominating center of theology but as the "finest representative" of this God-consciousness, with the most acute sense of it. This is a "Christology from below" emphasizing continuity between Christ and culture.
- Quote: "In him, the moral consciousness was most acute, but he started from below. And so Jesus is a mere man, continuous with the world, not discontinuity between God and the creator order."
- Schleiermacher's theology was influenced by Romanticism, assuming human nature is the "natural receptacle of the divine." Jesus was important as he "focused, identified, and then submitted himself to the divine" in an unparalleled way, but he was not the God-man in the traditional sense.
- Quote: "Jesus, therefore, was important because in a measure unparalleled in anyone else, he focused, identified, and then submitted himself to the divine. But was he the God-man? No."
- He equated the "constant potency of his God-consciousness" with a "veritable existence of God in him," understanding this as the incarnation.
- Quote: "What set Jesus apart from others was not his humanity but, quote, the constant potency of his God-consciousness, which was a veritable existence of God in him. Close quote."
- Quote: "Schleiermacher equated the 'absolutely powerful God-consciousness quote unquote with the quote existence of God in him.' This represented what he understood by incarnation."
- Schleiermacher rejected traditional Christological statements like the two natures of Christ and the concept of "person" in the Trinity, making the "feeling of absolute dependence" his theological norm.
- He opposed the traditional understanding of the "communicatio idiomatum" (communication of properties) between the divine and human natures of Christ, fearing contamination of their essential characteristics. Dr. Peterson argues that the Bible itself teaches this communication (e.g., 1 Corinthians 2:8, Hebrews 2:14, 1 John 1:1-3), citing the attribution of human actions to one addressed with divine titles.
- Quote: "The communication of properties, however, needs to be banished from the system of doctrine, he said. Because the communication of divine qualities to

the human nature or of human qualities to the divine nature would result in contamination of their essential characteristics."

- Peterson critiques Schleiermacher's Christology as essentially one of "inspiration" rather than incarnation, starting from below and potentially leading to the divinization of all human beings. He argues that Schleiermacher's focus on the idea of God-consciousness over the person of Jesus ultimately diminishes the uniqueness and importance of Christ.

5. Albrecht Ritschl: Emphasis on the Work of Christ:

- Ritschl's Christology starts with the "work rather than the person of Christ," emphasizing a "functional Christology" over abstract discussions of essence and nature.
- He believed we know Jesus through his actions and their impact, aligning with the New Testament's presentation of Jesus "in motion."
- Dr. Peterson acknowledges the New Testament's functional aspects but argues that they are grounded in an "ontological Christology." He warns against reducing the biblical witness to mere functionalism, which denigrates the person of Christ.
- Ritschl viewed Jesus as a "mere man," but attributed "Godhead" to him in view of his accomplished work and service in founding the kingdom of God and influencing people towards love.
- Quote: "Jesus was a mere man to Albrecht Ritschl, but in view of the work which he accomplished and the service he rendered, we rightly attribute him to him the predicate of Godhead."
- Ritschl rejected the pre-existence, incarnation ("no Christology from above"), and virgin birth of Christ, considering them to have no basis in the "believing consciousness of the Christian community."
- Peterson critiques Ritschl's view as a form of liberalism that falls short of the full biblical understanding of redemption, which includes Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection. He also notes the similarity to the heretical doctrine of Paul of Samosata.

6. The Reaction and Future Directions:

- Neo-orthodox theologians like Karl Barth and Emil Brunner represented a strong break with the old liberal tradition, starting "from above with a real incarnation" and emphasizing the transcendence of God.
- Rudolf Bultmann's reductionist approach to the New Testament and the subsequent "new quest for the historical Jesus" are briefly mentioned.
- The lecture concludes with a preview of future sessions that will cover influential 20th-century theologians (Barth, Pannenberg, Küng, Rahner, Robinson, process theology) and the "myth of God incarnate" controversy, indicating a continuation of the discussion on various approaches to Christology in the modern era.

Key Takeaways:

- Modern Christology, heavily influenced by Enlightenment thought, witnessed a significant shift towards "Christology from below" and an emphasis on the continuity between God and humanity.
- Kant's philosophical framework and Freud's critique of consciousness provided a backdrop for these theological developments.
- Schleiermacher revolutionized theology by grounding it in religious consciousness, viewing Jesus as the supreme manifestation of this universal human experience, but at the cost of traditional doctrines like the two natures and the Trinity.
- Ritschl focused on the functional Christology of the New Testament, emphasizing the work of Christ while downplaying his ontological status, ultimately seeing him as a mere man elevated by his accomplishments.
- The old liberal theologies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl faced significant criticism from later theologians who sought to recover a more transcendent view of God and a more robust understanding of the incarnation.

This briefing doc provides a summary of the key themes and figures discussed in Dr. Peterson's lecture on early modern Christology. It highlights the intellectual context, the core ideas of central thinkers, and some of the critical responses to their perspectives.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Modern Christology, Part 1, Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl

Modern Christology: Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl

Study Guide

I. Introduction to Modern Christology (19th Century) * Define "Liberal Protestantism" and its timeline in Europe and North America. * Explain why Christology was not a central point of controversy for Roman Catholicism during the Counter-Reformation. * Describe Catholic Modernism and its relationship to Liberal Protestantism. Note its eventual fate and later influence. * Identify the key influence of the Enlightenment thinkers on both Protestant liberalism and Catholic modernism. * Explain the apologetic nature of these movements and their central concern. * Differentiate between "Christologies from above" and "Christologies from below," and relate these to the concepts of "discontinuity" and "continuity" between God and the created order.

II. The Impact of the Enlightenment on 19th-Century Consciousness * Identify and describe the three broad impulses central to the formation of 19th-century consciousness inherited from the Enlightenment: * Anti-authoritarian bias (including anti-clericalism and distrust of the Bible) * Emergence of human autonomy * Focus on inner consciousness * Explain how the empirical world became a substitute for the Church as a source of meaning. * Describe the shift in authority from external sources (Bible, Church) to the "unaided human interpreter" and the emphasis on human consciousness (referencing Descartes). * Explain how Kant and Freud challenged the sanctity and inviolability of inner consciousness. * Summarize Kant's critique of pure reason and its implications for theological knowledge (noumenal vs. phenomenal realms). * Explain Kant's argument for the postulation of God based on moral consciousness, noting its limitations. * Summarize Freud's view of morality and its challenge to Kant's concept of moral consciousness. * Discuss the impact of Kantian thought on modern epistemology and the atomistic view of experience and self. * Explain how the dissolution of the self contributed to a crisis of meaning in the 20th century. * Briefly mention the existentialist response to this situation.

III. Schleiermacher * Explain why Schleiermacher is considered the "father of modern theology." * Contrast Schleiermacher's theological starting point (religious consciousness/sense of absolute dependence) with Kant's (moral consciousness). * Describe Schleiermacher's view of the relationship between Christianity and other religions. * Explain Schleiermacher's understanding of Jesus as the "finest

representative" of God-consciousness. * Relate Schleiermacher's Christology to the concept of "Christology from below" and his emphasis on "continuity." * Explain Schleiermacher's view of human nature as the "natural receptacle of the divine." * Describe Schleiermacher's understanding of the significance of Jesus and his "constant potency of his God-consciousness." * Explain how Schleiermacher understood "incarnation" and how he differentiated it from pantheism. * Summarize Schleiermacher's rejection of traditional Christological statements (two natures, Trinity, person). * Explain Schleiermacher's view on the virgin birth and the doctrinal significance of New Testament stories related to it. * Describe Schleiermacher's understanding of the relationship between the divine and human in Christ (active/passive) and his rejection of the *communicatio idiomatum*. * Contrast Schleiermacher's "inspiration" view of Jesus with the traditional doctrine of incarnation. * Summarize the criticisms leveled against Schleiermacher's Christology, particularly concerning the uniqueness of Jesus and Christian faith.

IV. Albrecht Ritschl * Explain Ritschl's focus on the "work" rather than the "person" of Christ. * Define "functional Christology" and explain its emphasis. * Discuss the lecture's critique of reducing New Testament Christology to mere functionalism, referencing Hebrews 1 and 1 John 1. * Explain Ritschl's view of Jesus as a "mere man" whose "Godhead" is attributed based on his work. * Summarize Ritschl's rejection of the pre-existence, incarnation, and virgin birth of Christ. * Describe Ritschl's understanding of Christ's role in founding the kingdom of God and redeeming humanity through teaching, example, and influence. * Note the lecture's critique of Ritschl's understanding of redemption.

V. Transition to Later Modern Theology * Briefly mention the shift away from old liberalism represented by Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann, emphasizing their return to a "Christology from above" and the concept of a real incarnation. * Highlight the challenges arising from Bultmann's radical reductionism of the New Testament.

Quiz

1. How did the Enlightenment thinkers influence 19th-century Christology, and what was the primary concern of both Protestant liberalism and Catholic modernism in response to modernity?
2. Distinguish between Christologies from above and Christologies from below. How do these approaches relate to the concepts of continuity and discontinuity between God and creation?

3. Explain Immanuel Kant's critique of pure reason and its implications for knowing God. What was his basis for postulating God's existence?
4. According to the lecture, what were the three broad impulses central to 19th-century consciousness that shaped liberal theology? Briefly describe one of these impulses.
5. What was Schleiermacher's central theological starting point, and how did it differ from Kant's? How did Schleiermacher view the relationship between Jesus and the "God-consciousness" present in all people?
6. Summarize Schleiermacher's understanding of the incarnation. Why did he reject traditional doctrines like the two natures of Christ and the Trinity?
7. Explain Albrecht Ritschl's emphasis on a "functional Christology." How did he view the person of Jesus, and why did he attribute "Godhead" to him?
8. What is the *communicatio idiomatum*, and why did Schleiermacher reject this doctrine? Provide an example from the lecture of a biblical passage that illustrates this concept.
9. According to the lecture, what were some of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith that liberal theologians like Ritschl tended to deny?
10. How did the theological landscape shift after the era of old liberalism, as represented by thinkers like Barth and Bultmann? What was a key characteristic of their approach to Christology?

Answer Key

1. Enlightenment thinkers emphasized reason and human autonomy, leading 19th-century theologians to grapple with modernity. Both Protestant liberalism and Catholic modernism were primarily concerned with showing that Christianity was not antiquated and could be reconciled with modern thought.
2. Christologies from above start with the pre-existent divine Son becoming human, emphasizing discontinuity between God and creation in the Incarnation. Christologies from below begin with the human Jesus, potentially leading to an emphasis on continuity between God and the created order, viewing Jesus as the pinnacle of humanity.
3. Kant argued that reason is limited to the phenomenal realm (what we experience through senses, organized by our minds) and cannot access the noumenal realm

(things as they are in themselves), thus making direct knowledge of God impossible through reason alone. He postulated God's existence based on the inexplicability of moral consciousness.

4. The three impulses were anti-authoritarian bias, the emergence of human autonomy, and the focus on inner consciousness. Anti-authoritarian bias involved a distrust of traditional authorities like the Church and the Bible, seeking meaning elsewhere, such as in the empirical world.
5. Schleiermacher's central starting point was the "religious consciousness" or a "sense of absolute dependence" present in all people, rather than moral consciousness. He believed Jesus possessed this God-consciousness in its most potent form, making him the ultimate exemplar, but not fundamentally different in kind from others.
6. Schleiermacher understood incarnation as God's overwhelming self-communication within and through the man Jesus, not as the union of two distinct natures. He rejected traditional doctrines because he felt they were based on speculative metaphysics rather than the common experience of God-consciousness and led to theological confusion.
7. Ritschl emphasized understanding Christ through his actions and impact ("functional Christology") rather than through abstract notions of his being. He viewed Jesus as a human being but argued that due to his unique work in establishing the Kingdom of God and his redemptive influence, we are justified in attributing "Godhead" to him.
8. The *communicatio idiomatum* is the communication of properties or attributes between Christ's divine and human natures due to the unity of his person. Schleiermacher rejected it because he believed it would lead to a contamination of the essential characteristics of both the divine and the human. 1 Corinthians 2:8 ("they would not have crucified the Lord of glory") illustrates this by attributing the human action of crucifixion to one designated by a divine title.
9. Liberal theologians like Ritschl tended to deny doctrines such as the pre-existence of Christ, the incarnation (in the traditional sense), the virgin birth, the deity and miracles of Jesus, and the blood atonement, as they found these incompatible with modern thought and the focus on human experience.
10. Following the era of old liberalism, theologians like Barth, Brunner, and initially Bultmann represented a significant shift by rejecting the immanentism of

liberalism and returning to a "Christology from above" that affirmed a real incarnation and emphasized the transcendence and otherness of God.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the key philosophical shifts during the Enlightenment and explain how these shifts directly contributed to the development of liberal Protestant Christology in the 19th century, using specific examples from the thought of Kant.
2. Compare and contrast the Christological approaches of Schleiermacher and Ritschl. What were their primary points of divergence and convergence, and what underlying assumptions shaped their respective views?
3. Critically evaluate Schleiermacher's concept of "God-consciousness" as the foundation for Christology. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this approach, particularly in relation to traditional Christian understandings of Jesus Christ?
4. Discuss the lecture's critique of "functional Christology" as represented by Ritschl. What are the potential pitfalls of emphasizing the work of Christ to the detriment of his person, and how does the New Testament present the relationship between the two?
5. Trace the trajectory of modern Christology from the old liberalism of Schleiermacher and Ritschl to the emergence of neo-orthodoxy as represented by Barth and others. What were the primary reasons for the shift, and what fundamental theological differences characterized these movements?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Liberal Protestantism:** A theological movement in the 19th and early 20th centuries that sought to reconcile Christian faith with modern thought, often emphasizing human experience and reason over traditional doctrines and authority.
- **Catholic Modernism:** A late 19th and early 20th-century movement within Roman Catholicism that aimed to reinterpret traditional doctrines in light of modern philosophical and historical criticism, sharing some similarities with liberal Protestantism.
- **Enlightenment:** An 18th-century intellectual and cultural movement emphasizing reason, individualism, and skepticism towards traditional authority.
- **Christology from Above:** A theological approach that begins with the pre-existent divine nature of Christ and then considers his incarnation as a human being.
- **Christology from Below:** A theological approach that begins with the human life and ministry of Jesus and moves towards understanding his divine significance.
- **Discontinuity:** In Christology, the idea that there is a fundamental break or difference between God and the created order, often emphasized in Christologies from above.
- **Continuity:** In Christology, the idea that there is a fundamental connection or similarity between God and the created order, often emphasized in Christologies from below.
- **Anti-authoritarian Bias:** A skepticism or rejection of traditional sources of authority, such as the Church or the Bible.
- **Human Autonomy:** The belief that human beings are self-determining and capable of understanding the world and making moral decisions without external authority.
- **Inner Consciousness:** The focus on personal experience and subjective awareness as a primary source of knowledge and meaning.
- **Noumenal Realm:** In Kantian philosophy, the realm of things as they are in themselves, which is inaccessible to human understanding.
- **Phenomenal Realm:** In Kantian philosophy, the realm of things as they appear to us through our senses and as organized by our minds.

- **Religious Consciousness (Sense of Absolute Dependence):** Schleiermacher's central concept, referring to a universal human feeling of being utterly dependent on something beyond oneself, which he identified as the essence of religion.
- **God-Consciousness:** In Schleiermacher's theology, the awareness or feeling of dependence on God, which he believed was present in all people but was most fully realized in Jesus.
- **Communicatio Idiomatum (Communication of Properties/Attributes):** A theological doctrine affirming that the divine and human natures of Christ, while remaining distinct, share their properties because of the unity of his person.
- **Pantheism:** The belief that God is identical with the universe or nature.
- **Unypostatic Union:** A Christological concept (rejected by Schleiermacher in the way it was sometimes formulated) referring to the personal union of Christ's human nature with the divine Word (Logos) from the moment of conception.
- **Functional Christology:** An approach that emphasizes the work and significance of Christ rather than focusing primarily on his ontological being or nature.
- **Ontological Christology:** An approach that focuses on the being and nature of Christ, seeking to understand who he is in his essential reality.
- **Neo-Orthodoxy:** A 20th-century theological movement, largely associated with Karl Barth, that reacted against liberal theology by reasserting the transcendence of God and the authority of revelation.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Salvation, Session 6, Modern Christology, Part 1, Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Modern Christology (Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl)

1. What were the key historical and intellectual contexts that shaped modern Christology in the 19th century? The 19th century was dominated by Protestant liberalism in Europe and, later, in North America. This period coincided with the Enlightenment, which emphasized reason and individual autonomy, leading to an anti-authoritarian bias and a focus on inner consciousness. Thinkers like Kant and Freud challenged traditional understandings of reason and morality. This intellectual climate prompted both Protestant liberals and Catholic modernists to develop apologetic Christologies aimed at reconciling Christianity with modern thought, fearing that traditional doctrines were becoming obsolete.

2. How did Immanuel Kant's philosophy influence the development of modern Christology? Kant's critique of pure reason argued that human reason is limited to the realm of sensory experience (the phenomenal realm) and cannot access ultimate reality (the noumenal realm), where God exists. This raised significant challenges for traditional "God-talk." While Kant attempted to preserve Christian ethics through his "critique of practical reason" by postulating God's existence as necessary for moral consciousness, he placed God beyond the reach of rational knowledge, leading to skepticism regarding divine knowledge and impacting how theologians approached understanding Christ's divine nature.

3. Who was Friedrich Schleiermacher, and why is he considered the "father of modern theology"? Friedrich Schleiermacher is considered the father of modern theology due to the innovative method he established. Instead of grounding religious understanding in reason or morality (as Kant suggested), Schleiermacher located it in a universal "religious consciousness" or a "feeling of absolute dependence" present in all people. He saw Christianity, with Jesus as its supreme exemplar, as clarifying this inherent human experience of the divine. His approach shifted the focus of theology from objective doctrines to subjective human experience.

4. What was Schleiermacher's understanding of Jesus Christ and the Incarnation?

Schleiermacher viewed Jesus not as the divine Son who became human (Christology from above) but as a man with a uniquely potent "God-consciousness." He believed the "incarnation" was God's overwhelming self-communication within and through Jesus, who possessed the most intense awareness of the divine. While acknowledging Jesus' exceptionality as the perfect exemplar of God-consciousness, Schleiermacher rejected traditional Christological formulations like the two natures of Christ (divine and human) and the traditional understanding of the Trinity, as these were not directly derived from the common experience of God-consciousness. He favored a Christology from below, emphasizing continuity between Jesus and humanity rather than discontinuity between God and creation.

5. How did Albrecht Ritschl's Christology differ from traditional and Schleiermacherian views?

Albrecht Ritschl emphasized the *work* of Christ over his person, advocating for a "functional Christology" based on the New Testament's presentation of Jesus in action. He believed we come to know Jesus not through abstract discussions of his nature but through his accomplishments, particularly his founding of the Kingdom of God and his influence in motivating people towards a life of love. Ritschl considered Jesus a "mere man" whose significance and the attribution of "Godhead" to him stemmed from the work he accomplished and the service he rendered. He rejected the pre-existence, incarnation, and virgin birth of Christ, as he felt these concepts lacked a basis in the "believing consciousness of the Christian community."

6. What is the distinction between "Christology from above" and "Christology from below," and how do Schleiermacher and Ritschl exemplify the latter? "Christology from above" begins with the pre-existent divine Son of God who becomes human in Jesus Christ, emphasizing the discontinuity between God and creation in the Incarnation. Conversely, "Christology from below" starts with the human Jesus and attempts to understand his significance, often emphasizing the continuity between Jesus and humanity. Schleiermacher and Ritschl both exemplify Christology from below. Schleiermacher saw Jesus as the pinnacle of human God-consciousness, while Ritschl viewed him as an exemplary human whose work warranted attributing divinity to him. Neither began with the pre-existent divine nature of Christ.

7. What were some of the major criticisms leveled against the liberal Christologies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl? One major criticism, particularly from neo-orthodox theologians like Karl Barth, was that Schleiermacher's emphasis on human religious experience as the foundation of theology undermined the unique revelation of God in Jesus Christ and relativized Christian truth by suggesting truth in all religions. Critics argued that Schleiermacher failed to adequately explain Jesus' uniqueness and reduced him to a mere exemplar. Ritschl was criticized for reducing Christ's person to his function and for essentially adopting a Christology from below that denied core doctrines like the pre-existence and incarnation, thus falling short of traditional Christian understanding of redemption through Christ's atoning death and resurrection as grounded in his divine nature.

8. How did the liberal Christologies of the 19th century relate to the rise of theological liberalism and its subsequent challenges in the 20th century? The liberal Christologies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl were foundational to the development of theological liberalism in the 19th century. They sought to reconcile Christianity with modern thought by reinterpreting traditional doctrines through the lens of human experience and ethical action. However, in the 20th century, this liberal tradition faced significant challenges from neo-orthodoxy (emphasizing God's transcendence and the unique revelation in Christ) and later movements. The reductionistic approaches of some liberal theologians, such as Bultmann's demythologization of the New Testament, were seen by many as emptying the core of Christian faith. While liberalism aimed to make Christianity relevant to modernity, its critics argued that it did so at the cost of essential biblical truths, leading to debates that continue to shape theological discourse.