398 Christ (*Christus*)

According to Augustine, *De vera sermone* 3, c. 3,[[1]](#endnote-1) Jesus has one meaning, Christ another. Since however there is one Jesus Christ and our savior, Jesus is the proper name for that one. However, Christ is the name of the sacrament. Just as if a prophet is named, or a priest. So, Christ is commended as one anointed. Wherefore who is a liar if not he who denies that Jesus is not the Christ. Concerning this the prophet foretold, Lam. 4[:19]: *Christ the Lord, is taken in our sins: to whom we said: Under your shadow we shall live among the Gentiles*. However, the way by which Christ is captured is in our sins. It is like the way by which Codrus[[2]](#endnote-2) king of the Athenians was killed.

About which see above in the chapter [379] Victory (*Victoria*).

So, when for a long time there was a war between humanity and the demons, it was responded through the prophets that that people would conquer whose king would die in war. But Christ preferring to die rather than the people, having been raised up on the cross was overcome. He appeared in the habit of a poor man, because if the Jews had seen him coming in his proper attire, “if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory,” 1 Cor. 2[:8]. And on account of this habit he was found as a man, John 19[:34] who appearing thus “one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side.” And from then any faithful Christian conquered the crowds of demons. This says Valerius Maximus, *De gestis memorabilibus*,[[3]](#endnote-3) that after his end the Athenians wanted to deify Codrus. But concerning many it is as it is narrated in the *Historia Romana*,[[4]](#endnote-4) that the Romans while they were noble did not want to worship Christ as God because he was poor. And however, they owed him more. They worshipped him on account of us. He was made poor when however, he was rich. Wherefore also it was figured, 3 Kings 22[:30], through Achab about whom it is read that “The king of Israel changed his dress and went into the battle.” And so, by fighting up to the evening he died. The reason for this war was that the Syrians unjustly held Ramoth Galaad against the king of Israel whose city it also was. So, Christ joined a war against the devil on account of humanity, which he unjustly possessed in which also Christ himself died. Note here the narration of the great Dionysius *Ad Demophilum* concerning the vision of Carpus.[[5]](#endnote-5) Wherefore Augustine, *De duodecim abusionibus,* c. the last,[[6]](#endnote-6) we are not without Christ in this transitory time, will Christ be without us in the future. Where Ambrose, in the book *De virginitate*,[[7]](#endnote-7) says of Christ, if you are wounded, he is a physician. If you burn with fevers, he is a fountain. If you are burden by iniquity, he is justice. If you need help, he is strength. If you fear death, he is life. If you flee the darkness, he is the light. If you seek food, he is nourishment. If you desire heaven, he is the way.

¶ Concerning the death of Christ in truth, as for our utility, it is said in John. 12[:24]: “Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die.” So, it was concerning Christ who while he lived alone, he was with a small amount of fruit, but by his death from one root many branches sprouted. Wherefore Exod. 1[:7] it is read that when Joseph died, “The children of Israel increased, and sprung up into multitudes, and they filled the land.” Which Origen[[8]](#endnote-8) explaining said before our Joseph died, who was sold for thirty pieces of silver by one of his brothers, therefore few of the children of Israel. When in truth he died the people of the faithful were multiplied.

Again, Christ in his coming brought many goods to man because in his necessity it was the beginning of joy, Luke 2[:10-11]: “I bring you good tidings of great joy, for, this day, is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” And Matt. 1[:16]: “Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” Psal. [131:17]: “I have prepared,” through the spirit, “a lamp,” that is, Mary, “for my anointed.”

Second, in association the mirror of mercy, just as the eagle calls forth her chicks, Rom. [15:7]: “Receive one another,” in pardoning, “as Christ also has received you unto the honor of God.”

Third, in preaching the teachings of wisdom, just as the sun going about the earth spreading clarity, Rom. 15[:5-6]: “Now the God of patience grant you to be of one mind one towards another,” that is, what one knows of God, another may know, namely, “according to Jesus Christ,” that is, the doctrine of Christ, “that with one mind,” etc.

¶ Fourth, in tribulation the example of patience and innocence, just as the painter gives to his student. The example of painting, 1 Pet. 2[:21]: “Christ suffered for us,” namely, reproaches and blows, “leaving you an example that you should follow his steps.”

¶ Fifth, in death the price of redemption he wanted no more to die than not to pacify, [1] Tim. 2[:5-6]: “One mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all.” Dan. 9[:26]: “After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain.” [2] Cor. 5:14]: “One died for all.”

Sixth, in the resurrection the beginning of immortal life, 1 Cor. 15[:20]: “Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.”

Seventh, in remuneration of the first fruits of perfect glory, Col. 3[:3-4]: “For you are dead,” that is, properly called, “and your life is hid with Christ in God,” through his love. “When Christ shall appear, then you also shall appear with him in glory.”

1. Augustine, *In epistolam Joannis ad Parthos* 3.6 (PL 35:2000): Quis est mendax, nisi is qui negat quod Jesus non est Christus? Aliam significationem habet Jesus, aliam habet Christus: cum sit unus Jesus Christus salvator noster, Jesus tamen proprium nomen est illi. Quomodo Moyses proprio nomine appellatus est, quomodo Elias, quomodo Abraham; sic tanquam proprium nomen habet Dominus noster Jesus: Christus autem sacramenti nomen est. Quomodo si dicatur propheta, quomodo si dicatur sacerdos; sic Christus commendatur unctus, in quo esset redemptio totius populi Israel. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 18.19 (PL 41:576): Per idem tempus Codrus, rex Atheniensium, Peloponnensibus ejusdem hostibus civitatis se interficiendum ignotus objecit: et factum est. Hoc modo eum praedicant patriam liberasse. Responsum enim acceperant Peloponnenses tum demum se superaturos, si eorum regem non occidissent. Fefellit ergo eos habitu pauperis apparendo, et in suam necem per jurgium provocando.

   At this same time Codrus king of the Athenians exposed himself in disguise to the Peloponnesians, the enemies of his city, to be slain by them; and he gained his end. In this way they declare that he won his country’s freedom. For the Peloponnesians had received an oracle to the effect that they would win a final victory only if they had not killed the king of the Athenians. Accordingly, he tricked them by appearing in the guise of a poor man and provoking them by taunts to slay him. Hence Virgil says: “And the taunts of Codrus.” [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings* 5. est. 1 (LCL 492:520-521): id postquam cognovit, depositis insignibus imperii famularem cultum induit ac pabulantium hostium globo se obiecit, unumque ex his falce percussum in caedem suam compulit. cuius interitu ne Athenae occiderent effectum est.

   Learning this, the king put off the emblems of command and donning a servant’s dress put himself in the way of an enemy foraging party. He struck one of them with a sickle and drove the man to kill him. By his death Athens was saved from extinction. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Paul the Deacon, *De gestis Langobardorum*, 3.11 (PL 95:508=509). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Dionysius Areopagita, *Epistola* 8.6 (PG 3:1099): Et haec dicens, precabatur Deum ut simyul amborum vitam fuletro quopiam immisericorditer abrumperet. His dictis, repented se vidisse referebat domum, in qua consistebat, primum conquassatam a summor vertice bifariamque divisam, et quemdam ante se ingentis luminis rogum, eumque (sub dio enim jam locus ille videbatur) e coelo ad se usque delatum; coelum autem ipsum apertum, et in coeli cardine Jesum innumeris illi humana specie angelis astantibus. ...

   Cf. But, whilst saying this, he declared, that he seemed to see suddenly the house in which he stood, first torn asunder, and from the roof divided into two in the midst, and a sort of gleaming fire before his eyes (for the place seemed now under the open sky) borne down from the heavenly region close to him; and, the heaven itself giving way, and upon the back of the heaven, Jesus, with innumerable angels, in the form of men, standing around Him. This indeed, he saw, above, and himself marvelled; but below, when Carpus had bent down, he affirmed that he saw the very foundation ripped in two, to a sort of yawning and dark chasm, and those very men, upon whom he had invoked a curse, standing before his eyes, within the mouth of the chasm, trembling, pitiful, only just not yet carried down by the mere slipping of their feet; and from below the chasm, serpents, creeping up and gliding from underneath, around their feet, now contriving to drag them away, and weighing them down, and lifting them up, and again inflaming or irritating with their teeth or their tails, and all the time endeavouring to pull them down into the yawning gulf; and that certain men also were in the midst, co-operating with the serpents against these men, at once tearing and pushing and beating them down. And they seemed to be on the point of falling, partly against their will, partly by their will; almost overcome by the calamity, and at the same time resigned.

   And Carpus said, that he himself was glad, whilst looking below, and that he was forgetful of the things above; further, that he was vexed and made light of it, because they had not already fallen, and that he often attempted to accomplish the fact, and that, when he did not succeed, he was irritated, and cursed.

   And, when with difficulty he raised himself, he saw the heaven again, as he saw it before, and Jesus, moved with pity at what was taking place, standing up from His super-celestial throne, and descending to them, and stretching a helping hand, and the angels, co-operating with Him, taking hold of the two men, one from one place and another from, another, and the Lord Jesus said to Carpus, whilst His hand was yet extended, “Strike against Me in future, for I am ready, even again, to suffer for the salvation of men; and this is pleasing to Me, provided that other men do not commit sin. But see, whether it is well for thee to exchange the dwelling in the chasm, and with serpents, for that with God, and the good and philanthropic angels.”

   These are the things which I heard myself, and believe to be true.

   <https://exlaodicea.wordpress.com/2013/08/03/dionysius-the-areopagite-iii-the-vision-of-carpus/> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Augustine, *De duodecim abusionibus* 12 (PL 4:882): Non itaque simus sine Christo in hoc tempore [Col.0882B] transitorio, ne sine nobis Christus esse incipiat in futuro. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Ambrose, *De virginitate* 16.99 (PL 16:291): Si vulnus curare desideras, medicus est: si febribus aestuas, fons est: si gravaris iniquitate, justitia est: si auxilio indiges, virtus est: si mortem times, vita est: si coelum desideras, via est: si tenebras fugis, lux est: si cibum quaeris, alimentum est. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Origen, *In Exodum* 1.4 (PG 12:300): Antequam moreretur noster Joseph, ille qui distractus est triginta argenteis ab uno ex fratribus suis Juda, valde pauce erant filii Israel. Cum vero pro omnibus gustavit mortem, per quam destruxit cum qui habebat mortis imperium, id est diabolum, multiplicatus est fidelium populus, et diffuse sunt filii Israel, et multiplicavit eos terra et creverunt nimis valde. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)