

# The NT Claims Jesus is God (Deity)

The fifth premise of our overall argument supporting the Bible as God's Word is "The NT claims that Jesus is God." Therefore, based on the premise that the biblical records are presenting a reliable portrait of Jesus Christ (see class notes 5), we seek to discover "who" Jesus claimed to be while at the same time placing emphasis on the rationality of the incarnation of the Son of God.

## I. Introduction

### A. Critics on Christ

#### Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

"When I tell you why I am not a Christian I have to tell you two different things: first, why I do not believe in God and immortality; and secondly, why I do not think that Christ was the best and wisest of all men, although I grant him a very high degree of moral goodness."<sup>1</sup>

"I do not believe that one can grant the superlative wisdom or the superlative goodness of Christ as depicted in the Gospels."<sup>2</sup>

#### Others say:

1. Jesus was a good man but not sinless deity (Secular Humanism)
2. He was a wise man like Buddha, Confucious, and Solomon who had Christ consciousness (NAM)
3. He never claimed to be the Son of God (Arianism/Jehovah's Witnesses)
4. He couldn't be God because God can't have a Son (Islam)
5. He should be categorized with the rest of those who claimed to be the Messiah (Rev. Moon, David Koresh, Charles Manson etc)
6. Mormons say He's the spirit brother of Lucifer

#### 2 Corinthians 11:4

For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different Spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you submit to it readily enough.

#### Galatians 1:8

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed.

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, Bertrand, *Why I Am Not A Christian* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

## B. Importance

1. If Jesus *is not* God there are several implications that follow:
  - a. He made false claims to be the “Son of God” (Mk 14:61-64; Mt 16:15-17; Jn 8:42; 9:35-37; 10:30-37; 11:4 cf. 17:1-5; Prov 30:4; Ps 45:6-7 cf. Heb 1:8-9)
  - b. He would not be a sufficient sacrifice to atone for the sin of the world (1 Pet 1:19) because of His sinfulness (Rom 3:23). Otherwise, any sacrifice would be sufficient to atone (Mt 26:39)
  - c. Christianity would not differ in kind from other religions (1 Cor 15:12-19)
  - d. There is no assurance that life exists beyond the grave (Phil 3:21; Rom 1:4; 1 Jn 3:2)
2. If Jesus *is* God there are several implications that follow:
  - a. He is the only way to salvation (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12)
  - b. There is assurance of life after death (Jn 6:68; Jn 14:1-3)
  - c. Man has a moral obligation to worship and obey Him (Acts 17:30-31)

## II. Jesus is the God-Man: Biblical Testimony

### A. Jesus as *God*

<b>Jesus</b>	<b>Jehovah</b>
Is the “shepherd” (Jn 10:11)	Is a “shepherd” (Ps 23:1)
Is the “I AM” (Jn 8:24, 58; 13:19)	Is the “I AM” (Ex 3:14; Isa 43:10)
Is the “creator” (Jn 1:3; Col 1:15-17)	Is the “creator” (Gen 1:1; Isa 40)
Is the “first and the last” (Rev 1:17)	Is the “first and the last” (Isa 44:6)
Is “God” (Jn 1:1; 20:28; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:8)	Is “God” (Isa 43:10; 45:22)
Is the “savior” (Acts 4:12; Rom 10:9)	Is “savior” (Isa 45:21; 43:3, 11)
Is the “forgiver” of sins (Mk 2:7, 10)	Is a “forgiver” of sins (Jer 31:34)
Is “addressed in prayer” (Acts 7:59)	Is “addressed in prayer” (Dan 6)
Is “confessed as Lord” (Phil 2:10)	Is “confessed as Lord” (Isa 45:23)
Is “worshipped” by angels (Heb 1:6)	Is “worshipped” by angels (Ps 148:2)
Is “worshipped” by men (Mt 14:31-33)	Is “worshipped” by men (Ex 34:14)
Is “unchanging” (Heb 13:8)	Is “unchanging” (Mal 3:6)
Is “eternal” (Jn 8:58; Heb 13:8)	Is “eternal” (Deut 33:27)
Is “omniscient” (Jn 2:24-25)	Is “omniscient” (1 Jn 3:20)
Is “omnipresent” (Mt 18:20)	Is “omnipresent” (Ps 139)
Is “all powerful” (Col 2:10; Mt 28:18)	Is “all powerful” (Ps 139)

## Pre-existence and Eternality of the Son

**Psalm 45:6-7** Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. (cf. Hebrews 1:8-9)

**Psalm 110:1** The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’ (cf. Matthew 22:41-46: “If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”)

**Proverbs 30:4 (Psalm of Agur)** Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!<sup>3</sup>

**Isaiah 9:6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; . . . And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, *Mighty God, Everlasting Father* . . .

**Micah 5:2** But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from *old*, from *ancient times*.

**John 1:1** In the beginning *was* the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was *with* God in the beginning. (“was” in the Greek *imperfect tense* stresses continual existence in past time; “with” in Greek speaks of *face to face* relationship)

**John 3:16-17** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not *send His Son into the world* to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

**John 8:58** . . . before Abraham was, I am. (“I am” is present tense meaning Christ was *continuously existing* before Abraham’s birth)

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<sup>3</sup> See comments by Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 273-78, and R. Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, and D. Brown, *A Commentary – Critical, Experimental, Practical – on the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 508.

**Acts 3:15** You killed the *author of life*, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

### ***Deity***

**John 1:1** . . . the Word was with God, and the *Word was God*.

**John 1:14** And the *Word became flesh* and dwelt among us, . . .  
(implies preincarnate existence)

**John 17:5** And now , O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the *glory which I had with You* before the world was. (cf. Isaiah 42:8)

**Philippians 2:6** . . . Christ Jesus, being in the *form of God* . . .  
("form" *morphe* is same word used to describe the human "form of a bondservant" Phil 2:7)

**Hebrews 1:8-9** But to the Son he [God] says "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; . . . Therefore God, Your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness . . ."

### ***Supernatural Creator***

**Colossians 1:15-17** He is in the image of the invisible God, the firstborn (cf. Psalm 89:27) over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in him all things consist (hold together).

### ***Omniscient***

**John 16:30** Now we [disciples] are sure You *know all things* . . . By this we know you came forth from God.

**John 21:17** And he [Peter] said to him "Lord, you *know all things*; . . ."  
(See John 2:25; 4:18)

**Colossians 2:2** the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of *wisdom and knowledge*.

## ***Omnipotent***

**Matthew 28:18** *All authority* has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

**Mark 2:5-7** He [Jesus] said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” (only God has the power to forgive sins – Isa 43:25; 55:7; Matt 9:2; Lk 7:47).

**Colossians 2:10** . . . and you have been given the fullness of Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

## ***Omnipresence***

**Matthew 28:20** Jesus came and spoke to them saying, . . . “I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”

**Matthew 18:20** For where there are two or three gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.

**John 1:48-50** ...because I saw you under the fig tree . . .

**Indwelling** of every believer *demands* Christ be omnipresent (John 14:23; Ephesians 3:17; Rev. 3:20)

**\*Question:** What about Christ’s physically resurrected glorified body?

## ***Immutability***

**Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the *same* yesterday, today, and forever.

## ***Holiness (moral purity; sinless)***

**Hebrews 4:15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – *yet was without sin*.

**Hebrews 7:26** Such a high priest meets our need – one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.

**1 Peter 2:22** He [Jesus] committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

***Jesus was worshipped in the NT (cf. Deut 5:6-8; Ex 20:1-4)***

1. Healed Leper (Mt 8:2)
2. Ruler knelt before him (Mt 9:18)
3. Disciples Worship (Mt 14:33)
4. Mother of James and John Worship (Mt 20:20)
5. Thomas (Jn 20:28)
6. Angels worship (Heb 1:6)
7. Geresene demoniac (Mk 5:6)
8. Disciples Worshipped again (Mt 28:16-17)
9. Blind man (Jn 9:38)
10. Canaanite Woman before Jesus (Mt 15:25)

**B. Jesus as *Man***

1. He was “born” of a woman (Mt 1:24-25)
2. He increased in “wisdom and stature” (Lk 2:51-52)
3. He became “thirsty” (Jn 4:7)
4. He became “tired” (Jn 4:6; 19:28)
5. He was “tempted” (Mt 4:1, 4, 7, 10)
6. He “wept” (Jn 11:35)
7. He felt “forsaken” (Mt 27:46)
8. He physically “experienced death” (Jn 19:33)

**C. Conclusion**

- 1) Jesus is God (*theos*)
- 2) Jesus is Man (*anthropos*)
- 3) Therefore, Jesus is the God-Man (*theanthropos*)

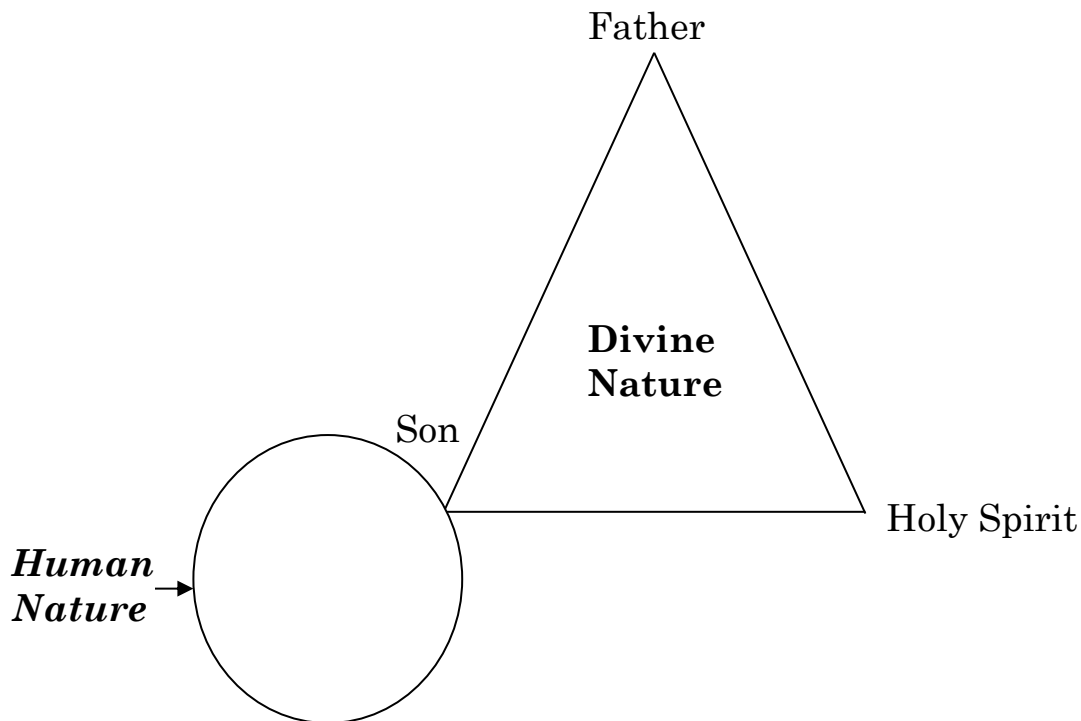
**Note:** Whenever one speaks about Christ he must always consider His dual nature<sup>4</sup> and ask two questions of Him: one about Christ as God, and the other about Christ as man. (e.g. was Jesus limited in knowledge? Yes as man, no as God)

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# The Incarnation of Christ Explained

Christ possesses *two* distinct natures, one divine and the other human, united in one person, the Son (Jesus). Both natures are touching but not confused (*theanthropos*) (also called *hypostatic union*)

***Is incarnation a Contradiction?*** No more contradictory than adding a circle to one tip of a triangle.



***\*Jesus could operate from either nature. One nature was limited (Human) and the other nature was unlimited (divine) (Lk 2:52 cf. Jn 16:30; Col 1:15-16).***

Reasons to Accept the Incarnation:

1. If Jesus is fully God and fully man, He is *eligible* to *redeem* (Heb 2:14-18) and *judge* humanity (Jn 5:22, 27).
2. This view corresponds to *Scripture* (Jn 1:1, 14; 5:17-18; 8:58; 1 Tim 2:5).

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<sup>4</sup> The “hypostatic union” in theology is the mysterious uniting of two distinct natures (divine and human) within one person (God the Son). These two natures remain distinct, without mixture, yet touching one another. See Council of Nicea (325 AD) and Council of Chalcedon (451 AD).

3. It is consistent with major *church councils* throughout the centuries.<sup>5</sup>

The Niceno-Chalcedonian Creed (451 AD) says:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in God head and also perfect in manhood; **truly God and truly man**, of a reasonable soul and body; **consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead**, and **consubstantial with us according to the Manhood**; . . . one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the **distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union**, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person . . . **not parted or divided into two persons**, but one and the same Son . . .<sup>6</sup>

4. It accounts for the seeming *complexity* present within Christ regarding His attributes (e.g. He knew all - Jn 2:24-25, and He did not know all - Mk 13:32; Lk 2:52).
5. It accounts for the *two wills* present within Christ, one divine and one human (Mt 26:39).<sup>7</sup>
6. This view of Christ renders love meaningful and self sufficient within the context of a triune God. God's love needs nothing external to His nature to act as its object.

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<sup>5</sup> See Council of Chalcedon I (451 AD) and Constantinople II (553 AD).

<sup>6</sup> Schaff, Philip, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. II, 62-63.

<sup>7</sup> The heretical belief that Christ only possessed one will is called "monothelitism." The third Council of Constantinople (680 AD) affirmed that Christ had two wills unopposed, with His human will in submission to the divine will.