

JESUS CHRIST—WHO IS HE?

A. What Some People Say:

1. Jesus was only a Spirit—that is, God but not man.
2. Jesus was a great human teacher—but not God.
3. Jesus was none other than Michael the archangel.
4. There was no such historical person.
5. None of these descriptions fit with the Holy Scriptures. Who, then, is Jesus Christ?

B. Extra-Biblical Evidences of the Existence of Jesus Christ

1. Early writers
 - a. Christian: Clement, Ignatius, Justin Martyr
 - b. Roman: Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger.
2. Rapid spread of church from center in Jerusalem: It did not start from nothing.
3. Testimony of martyrs

B. The Deity of Christ

1. Co-equal with God (John 1:1; 10:30-38; Phil. 2:5,6; 1 Tim. 6:14-16; Heb. 1:8; 1 John 5:20).
2. Son of God (Matt. 11:27; 14:33; Mark 1:1; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 1:8; 1 John 4:9-14).
3. Image of God (Matt. 1:23; John 12:45; 14:6-11; Col. 1:15; 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3).
4. Revealer of God (John 1:18; 8:38).
5. Came from and returned to God (John 3:13; 8:42; 14:2; 17:5; 20:17).
6. Better than the angels (Heb. 1:4,5).
7. Received worship (Matt. 4:10; 14:33; 28:9; John 20:28; Luke 19:37-40; John 5:23; Rev. 5:13; contrast Acts 10:25,26; Rev. 5:13,14; 19:10; 22:8,9).

8. Manifested divine attributes:

- a. Eternal existence (John 1:1; 8:58; Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2).
- b. Omnipotent (all-powerful) (Matt. 9:6; 28:18; John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2,10-12).
- c. Omniscient (knowing all things) (John 1:30; 2:24,25; 16:30; 21:17).
- d. Omnipresent (present everywhere) (Matt. 18:20; 28:20).

9. Has characteristics of Jehovah of the Old Testament

- a. Saviour (Isa. 43:11; Hos. 13:4; Luke 2:11; Acts 4:10-12; 1 John 4:14)
- b. Redeemer (Psa. 19:14; Isa. 43:14; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:5-7; Heb. 9:11,12).
- c. The First and the Last (Isa. 44:6; Rev. 1:13,17,18; 22:12,13).
- d. Stone of Stumbling ... Rock of Offense (Isa. 8:13,14; 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Pet. 2:3-8).
- e. The Way Prepared in the Wilderness (Isa. 40:3; Mark 1:1-4).
- f. The Day ... the Name (Joel 2:31,32; Acts 2:16,20-24,36).
- g. King for Ever (Psa. 10:16; Luke 1:31-33).
- h. Immanuel, God with Us (Psa. 46:11; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:21-23).
- i. Creator (Gen. 2:4; 1 Chron. 16:26; John 1:1,3; Col. 1:12-16; Heb. 1:2,3).

C. The Humanity of Christ

1. Birth and growth.

- a. Conceived (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:31).
- b. Born (Matt. 1:25; Luke 2:5-7).
- c. Circumcised (Luke 2:21).
- d. Growing (Luke 2:40,52).
- e. Advancing in age (Luke 2:42; 3:23; John 8:57).

2. Manifestation of physical needs
 - a. Hungering and thirsting (Matt. 4:2; 21:18; John 4:7; 19:28).
 - b. Tired and sleeping (Mark 4:38; John 4:6).
3. Expression of human emotions
 - a. Affection and sympathy (John 11:35,36).
 - b. Compassion (Matt. 9:36).
 - c. Feeling troubled and in mental agony (Luke 22:44; John 12:27).
 - d. Desiring the company of others (Matt. 26:40).
4. Death and burial (Mark 15:37,46; John 19:33,34).
5. Human, yet superhuman:
 - a. Conceived by the Holy Spirit, not by a man (Luke 1:35).
 - b. Born of a virgin (Matt. 1:23).
 - c. Precocious (Luke 2:40-46).
 - d. Rose above physical needs (John 4:31-34).
 - e. Had power to lay down and take back His life (Matt. 27:50; John 10:18).
6. Human, yet without sin, holy (Matt. 4:1-10; 26:39; Luke 1:35; 4:34; 23:41; John 8:46; 18:38; Acts 2:27; 3:14; 4:27; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5).
7. Son of Man (Matt. 8:20; 16:13; Phil. 2:7).

D. Why Did the Eternal Son of God Become a Man? (1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1).

1. To be a perfect, holy, infinite sacrifice for man's sin (Matt. 1:21; Heb. 9:26; 12:2).
2. To redeem man—body, soul, and spirit—and make him like Himself (Rom. 8:23,29; 2 Cor. 10:5; Eph. 5:27; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2).
3. To experience suffering so He can sympathize with us and help us when we suffer (Heb. 2:17,18; 4:15,16).

4. To reveal God to man and help man to communicate with God (1 Tim. 2:5).
5. To be an example for believers to follow (John 13:15; Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 John 2:6).
6. To model submission and obedience among equals (Matt. 4:4; 26:42; Eph. 5:21-24).

E. Heresies Concerning the Deity and Humanity of Christ

1. Arian—Jesus was a created, lesser deity (Jehovah’s Witnesses).
2. Socinian—Jesus was a good man and a wise teacher, but not God (Unitarians, some liberal Protestants). Modified Socinian—Jesus was a divine being along with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, but not co-equal with God (Mormons).
3. Sabellian (Modalism)—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are just three different modes in which God has chosen to reveal Himself (Oneness Pentecostals).
4. Docetic—Jesus is fully God, but only appeared to be human (Gnostics).
5. Apollinarian—Jesus is fully God but not fully human: with a human body but not a human soul and spirit (Raven-Taylor-Boyd Brethren).
6. Nestorian—Jesus is two distinct persons, Son of God and Son of Man, rather than having divine and human natures united in one Person (certain churches in the Middle East).

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