

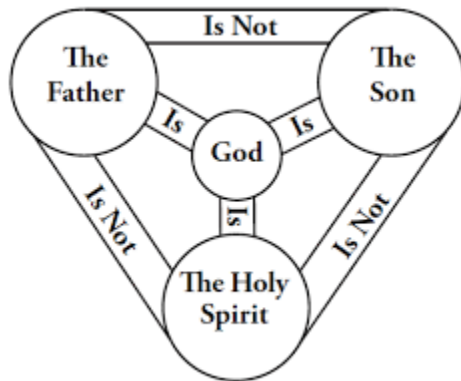
## 10 Scriptural Reasons For The Deity Of Jesus.

### 1. The Bible Teaches There Is One True God

Deut. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

I Cor. 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

*JESUS' DIVINITY IS PART OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.*



- It states: within the one Being that is God, there exists eternally three co-equal and co-eternal persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Each is a distinct person, yet each is identified as God: God the Father [I Cor. 8:6], God the Son [John 1:1-3; Romans 9:5], and God the Spirit [Acts 5:3-4].
- Remember: It wasn't the Father or the Spirit who became incarnate; it was the Son [John 1:14]. He was born under the Law [Galatians 4:4].
- This is why, in his humanity, Jesus prays to the Father [Matthew 26:39, 42]

The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed between the Old and New Testaments through the incarnation of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God did not change between the Old and New Testaments, being a Unitarian God in the Old and a Trinitarian God in the New. God has always been Triune, but the specific revelation of the divinity of Jesus takes place in the New Testament.

### 2. The Bible Teaches Jesus Pre-Existed Before The World Was

The NT clearly teaches Jesus existed in eternity past before his birth in Bethlehem.

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word (*logos*) and that the Word was not only with God but was God. This Word is the one who brought all things into being at creation [John 1:3].

- ❖ The Word is eternal, has had an eternal relationship with the Father, and the Word as to His nature is deity.

In his prayer in John 17:3-5 Jesus both refers to his pre-existence and uses terminology that can only be used about deity:

*And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now,*

*Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

To have eternal life is to know two persons: both the Father and Jesus [John 14:6-7; 16:3]. Notice, Jesus is distinguished from the Father because Jesus is the one speaking to the Father. The personal pronouns [me, your, you] clearly show that this is one person speaking to another. In this conversation, the Son is speaking of the glory he has shared with the Father before the world was. The words "in your own presence" refer to their sharing of divine glory.

John 17:3-5 is not an example of the "human side" praying to the "divine side" but of a divine, yet incarnate [John 1:14] person, the Son, communicating with a divine, but non-incarnate person, the Father in heaven.

Paul's words in Phil. 2:5-8 teach not only the deity of Jesus but also the distinct personhood of the Son prior to his incarnation. Paul exhorts the Philippians to have the same attitude as Christ Jesus who "existed in the form of God." These words come before the verbs *emptied*, *taking*, and *becoming* and point to the pre-existence of the one "existing in the form of God."

Moreover, Jesus did not regard the equality he had with God the Father, in eternity past, something to be held on to. Instead he "made himself nothing" by doing two things: taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. Having entered into human existence he humbled himself to death on the Cross. Because of this, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord [Phil. 2:10-11]. It is only God who is to be worshipped as Lord [Isaiah 45:23].

### 3. Jesus Is Creator Not Creature

Jehovah's Witnesses believe Paul's statement in Col. 1:15 that the "firstborn of all creation" teaches that Jesus was a created being. However, the Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching resembles the view of the ancient Colossian heresy that Paul had to combat.

The Colossian false teachers advocated the idea that Jesus was the first of many other created mediators between God and men. By using the specific Greek word *prōtotokos*, "firstborn," Paul rules out the idea of Jesus as a created being.

"Firstborn" does not mean "first created." Rather, Paul uses a term that was based on the ancient designation of the authority, or pre-eminence, metaphorically given to the firstborn [Gen. 49:3-4; Ex. 4:22]. In the same way, David, the youngest of Jesse, was named "firstborn" [Psalms 89:20-27] who ruled Israel. Manasseh was born to Joseph first, but Ephraim, his younger brother, was "firstborn" due to his position as given by Jacob/Israel [Genesis 48:13-20, Jeremiah 31:9].

**BY DESCRIBING JESUS AS THE "FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION," PAUL IS SAYING THAT HE IS THE ABSOLUTE RULER OVER ALL CREATION.**

Furthermore, if Paul had wanted to describe Jesus as a created being, he could have used the Greek word *protoktistos*, which means "first created." So why didn't he use it?

Because Paul did not believe Jesus was created.

In fact, the evidence that Jesus is supreme over all creation comes in Col. 1:16.

Paul absolutely rules out the idea that Jesus is a created being because he presents Jesus as the Creator of the entire universe which exists by His creative power [John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2, 8-10]. The reason Jesus can "create all things" is that "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" [Col. 2:9]. The Greek word for "Godhead," *theotēs*, refers to "the state of being God." It is only God who can create [Isaiah 42:5, 44:24, 45:18].

#### 4. Jesus Identifies Himself as Divine

At the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths in his encounter with the Pharisees (John 8:13), Jesus told them, "I told you that you would die in your sins, for Unless You Believe That I Am He you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). The Jewish people reacted to Jesus' statement by asking him, "Who are you?" (John 8:25).

Jesus told the Jews exactly who he is: "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). This "I am" (*ego eimi*) statement was Jesus' clearest example of His proclamation, "I am Yahweh," from its background in the book of Isaiah (Isaiah 41:4)

These are the very words (*ego eimi*) that caused the Roman soldiers to fall to the ground after they came to arrest Jesus (John 18:6). Jesus' explicit identification of himself with Yahweh of the Old Testament is why the Jewish leaders wanted to stone him for blasphemy [John 5:18; 10:33].

#### 5: The Apostles Identified Jesus as Divine

Both Jesus and his apostles identified him as divine. The Apostle Peter described Jesus as "our God and Savior" (II Peter 1:1; cf. Titus 2:13) and called on believers to "honor Christ the Lord as holy" (I Peter 3:15). Jesus' own half-brother James, who was an unbeliever at first (John 7:5), described him as "the Lord of glory" (James 2:1; I Cor. 2:8; Psalm 24:7-8). What man or prophet could be described in this way? The Apostle John also attributed titles to Jesus that were used only of God by describing him as the "Alpha and Omega" and the "first and the last" (Rev. 22:13; 1:8, 17-18; cf. Isaiah 44:6). In Hebrews 1, the author identifies Jesus (the Son) as superior to any prophet (vv. 1-2), above the angels (v. 5), worthy of our worship (vv. 6-8; cf. Psalm 45:6-7), and the creator of all things who is unchangeable (vv. 2-3, 10; cf. Psalm 102:25). The author of Hebrews further states that Jesus is "seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2; cf. Acts 2:30).

#### 6: The Jewish Leaders Recognized Jesus' Claim to Divinity

One of the clearest evidences of the deity of Jesus is the Jewish leaders' reaction to Jesus' words and actions. In Mark 2, Jesus not only heals a paralytic but also forgives his sins (Mark 2:5). This is the reason that the scribes cry blasphemy, for it is God alone who can forgive sins (Mark 2:7).<sup>19</sup>

In his trial before the Sanhedrin Jesus is once again charged with blasphemy because of his response to the high priest's question: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (Mark 14:61) Jesus responded, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62). Then the high priest tore his

clothes, charged Jesus with blasphemy, and condemned him to death (Mark 14:64). Why did the high priest respond that way? Because Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13-14 and applied the words to himself. In Daniel 7 the divine Son of Man comes before the Ancient of Days, and all peoples and nations serve him. The Pharisees recognize Jesus' divine claim here and charge him with blasphemy, intending to put him to death.

#### 7: The Early Church in the New Testament Prayed to Jesus

Prayer is something that should be addressed to God alone, but Jesus calls his disciples to pray to him (John 14:13-14; 16:26). In the book of Acts when Stephen is being stoned to death, he calls out to the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit (Acts 7:59). Interestingly, the term for "calling on" (*epikaloumenon*) recalls the appeal of Peter to the people in Acts 2:21 to "call on" (*epikaleshtai*) the Lord to be saved. Paul also describes the Corinthians as those who "call upon [*epikaleo*] the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 1:2). In the OT, people "called on" on the name of Yahweh (Joel 2:32). The Corinthians addressed Jesus as Lord in prayer.

#### 8: The Early Church in the New Testament Worshipped Jesus

Jesus accepted worship from people (Matthew 2:2, 14:33, 28:9). One of the greatest examples of this comes from the lips of Thomas when he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). If Jesus was not divine, then Thomas made a serious error; but Jesus made no effort to correct Thomas in his worship. Yet Peter (Acts 10:25-26), Paul (Acts 14:14-15), and the angel in Revelation (Rev. 22:8,9) all corrected others for trying to worship them. The confession of deity here is unmistakable, clearly demonstrating that worship belongs only to God (Rev. 22:9) because Jesus accepted Thomas's worship of him (John 20:29).

What's more, in the book of Revelation, the elders and every creature in heaven and upon earth ascribe universal worship to "him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (Rev. 5:11-14)

#### 9: Jesus Made Claims That No Human Being Could Ever Make

Jesus not only identified as God, but he also indicated his deity through his words and actions. Jesus said that to enter the Kingdom of Heaven we must call him Lord (*kurios*, Romans 10:9; cf. Matthew 7:21). Just saying that Jesus is Lord does not get you into the Kingdom, but to enter the Kingdom you must confess Him as Lord. The entrance into God's Kingdom, according to Jesus, is dependent upon a person's knowledge of him and his reciprocal knowledge of the person (Matt. 7:23).

Jesus even promised rest to all those who come to Him (Matt. 11:28). Could Moses have ever made a claim like this? No! How could a human being give anyone rest from the Law?

Jesus also claimed, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). God never gave any man or prophet all authority in heaven and on earth, but this same authority was given to the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13-14 (also Matthew 26:64).

#### 10. Jesus Is the Son of God

It is often pointed out that the words "Son of God" are not an exclusive title for Jesus.

For example, in the Old Testament Israel was called God's son (Exodus 4:22-23; Hosea 11:1), the king was called God's son (Psalms 2:7), and the angels were called God's sons (Job 38:7). Even in the NT, Adam and believers are referred to as son/s of God (Luke 3:38; Romans 8:14).

There is, however, a difference between an adopted son and a relational Son of God, the latter being a deity by nature. More than anyone else who has walked this earth, Jesus the Messiah is uniquely entitled to be called *the Son of God* (John 1:49, 11:27) - "the unique One, who is himself God" (*monogenēs theos* - see John 1:18 NLT).<sup>23</sup>

*WHATEVER JESUS SAID ABOUT HIMSELF MUST HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY PROVOCATIVE ENOUGH FOR THE JEWISH LEADERS TO CALL FOR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT ON THAT CHARGE OF BLASPHEMY.*

In Jesus' trial before Pilate, the Jewish leaders clearly understood that Jesus' use of this term was not just generic, for they wanted him put to death: "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7; cf. John 10:36). According to the Law, it was blasphemy to use God's name (Leviticus 24:16). Therefore, by referring to himself as *the Son of God*, Jesus was claiming to share "the rights and authority of God himself (cf. [John] 1:34; 5:19-30)."<sup>24</sup> People who say that Jesus never claimed to be God must answer why he was crucified on the charge of blasphemy. Whatever Jesus said about himself must have been sufficiently provocative enough for the Jewish leaders to call for capital punishment on that charge of blasphemy.

The significance of this is that failure to believe in Jesus as the Son of God brings judgment because we are already dead in our sins (John 3:18, Ephesians 2:1), but believing in Jesus as the Son of God brings eternal life (see John 3:15-17, 6:40, 20:31).

The Bible directly states that Jesus is God in a number of passages.

The names of God are often applied to Jesus. He is called "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father" and "Immanuel" (meaning "God with us").

Elsewhere Jesus is called "The Lord (Jehovah) our Righteousness," "God" and "Son of God."

The Bible ascribes the characteristics of deity to Jesus Christ. He is described as eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent and immutable.

Jesus Christ is equal with God the Father. He is worshiped as God.

Christ performed works which only God can do. He is creator. He is the upholder of all things. He forgives sin. He will raise the dead and execute judgment.

Jesus Christ Himself claimed deity. He taught His disciples to pray in His name. He claimed that He and the Father were one and that He was the Son of God. He claimed that to know Him was to know God, to see Him was to see God, to receive Him was to receive God, to believe Him was to believe in God and to honor Him was to honor God, while to hate Him was to hate God.