

Is Jesus God?

I) Several ways Jesus Claimed to be God.

1) "I Am" phrase – Mark 14:62

- Caiaphas, the High Priest, asked Jesus, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"
- The phrase "The Son of the Blessed" is a divine title.
- Jesus responded, "I Am".
- At this Caiaphas tears his priestly garments and screams "You've heard the blasphemy."
- Why did he tear his priestly garments?
- The job of the high priest was to go into the Holy of Holies and make a sacrifice for the Jewish people
- He had to go through a cleansing ceremonial process that included his priestly garments.
- In ripping his priestly garments, he was saying that Jesus by claiming to be God these garments are tarnished and can never enter the Holy of Holies again.

2) "Son of Man" phrase – Mark 14:62

- When Jesus said "Son of Man", all the Jewish hearers would understand this a reference to Daniel 7:13 which states, "the Son of Man will come on a cloud of glory to judge the living and the dead".
- Only God comes on a cloud of glory and only God has a right to judge the living and the dead.
- Jesus is claiming to be God!

3) "I and the Father are one." John 10:30

4) "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." John 14:9

5) Forgiving of sins...Mark 2:1-12

- Story of 4 friends who brought their friend to Jesus and had to lower him through the roof because of the crowds.
- What did Jesus do when that paralyzed man appeared before Him?
- He forgave him of his sins.
- Why did the paralyzed man go to Jesus? To get healed.
- Jesus forgave his sins.
- People began to ask, "Who is this man who forgives sins" which only God can do?
- That's the point!!
- Jesus is claiming to be God by forgiving sins.
- As the story continues, he turns to the paralyzed man and says, "So that you may know that I have the authority to forgive sins"...he heals the paralyzed man to show that He is God.

6) "Son of God" phrase – Matthew 16:16

- If you are the Son of God, you have the same essence as God Himself, making you God as well.

7) Claims Jesus makes that He is God

- John 8:58 – "...I Am..."
- Mark 14:62 – "...The Son of Man..."
- Luke 22:70 – "...The Son of God..."
- Matthew 9:2 – "...Your Sins are Forgiven..."
- Claiming to be God doesn't make you God, but it does limit your options of understanding who Jesus is.

II) What are the options of understanding who Jesus is?

- 1) Legend
- 2) Liar
- 3) Lunatic
- 4) Lord

1) Legend – This means don't know anything about Him, His claims and you can't say anything about Jesus in a historical way.

2) Liar – Jesus knew He wasn't God, but claimed it anyway.

-- He deceived people into thinking He was God.

3) Lunatic – Jesus wasn't God, but He thought He was and that makes Him crazy.

4) Lord – Jesus is exactly who He claimed to be...God Himself.

-- What is important to notice is not the 4 above options on the list, but what's off the list.

-- There is no option in saying that Jesus is just a good teacher.

a) If Jesus is not God, then teaching that He is God...that's not a good teacher.

b) If He's a legend, we can't say He's a good teacher.

c) If He's a liar, then He's not a good teacher...lying is bad, not good.

d) If He's a lunatic, He's not a good teacher.

e) If He's Lord, He's not just a good teacher...He's the God of the Universe.

Quote of C.S. Lewis from his book Mere Christianity

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God. That's the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he's a poached egg – or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either that man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

III) Is there anyway to know that Jesus' claims are Accurate?

1) Messianic Prophecies...predictions of a coming Savior.

A) Old Testament predictions that are fulfilled in the New Testament

i) Messiah would be descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Genesis 12:3,7

ii) Soldiers would gamble for His garments. Psalm 22:18

iii) Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2

iv) Messiah would have His sides and feet pierced and no bones broken. Psalm 22:16, Psalm

34:20

- v) Messiah would be crucified with criminals. Isaiah 53:12
- vi) Messiah would be buried among the rich. Isaiah 53:9
- vii) Messiah would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. Zechriaiah 9:9

2) Four possible explanations of how Jesus fulfilled these prophecies.

- 1) Manipulation
- 2) Chance
- 3) Written after the fact
- 4) Genuinely fulfilled

A) Manipulation – Idea that Jesus being a Jewish individual would know the Messianic predictions and situated his life in such a way that he would fulfill these predictions.

- a) Riding into Jerusalem on a donkey is one that he could truly fulfill on his own accord.
- b) How do you make sure you're a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?
- c) How do you make sure you're crucified with criminals?
- d) How do you make sure you're buried in a rich man's tomb?

- These are beyond the control of Jesus.
- Therefore, manipulation is not a possibility.

B) Predictions written after the life of Jesus.

- The Church controlled the Old Testament documents for hundreds of years until the middle ages, so that would have given them plenty of time to write in the predictions of the Old Testament.
- But in 1947 when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, that took this away as a possibility.
- Dead Sea Scrolls contains every book in the Old Testament except the book of Esther and was written 100 years before the life of Jesus.
- When we examine the Dead Sea Scrolls today, it has the Messianic predictions in them.
- Can compare the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Masoratic Text of 900 AD.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls were written in 100 BC...fills in a thousand year gap.
- When compare the 2, the transmission process of the Old Testament was unbelievably accurate.

C) Mark 15:34 Jesus says from the cross, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me."

- Jesus is not talking about Him being separated from God, He is saying to the people around Him...Look up the Psalm that begins with the line, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me."
- The Psalms weren't numbered back in Jesus' day and they would reference each Psalm with the first line.
- Psalm 22 is the Psalms that begins with the line, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me."
- If you look through this Psalm, it lists the prediction of how the Messiah would be killed...it says His hands and feet would be pierced, his clothes would be gambled for, just as predicted.
- This is an exact description of crucifixion hundreds of years before the Romans invented it!
- All of the above are examples of how the Messianic prophecies are genuinely fulfilled by Jesus.

